

## **Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) Implementation Climate Resilience and Adaptation, Kickoff Meeting**

May 12, 2022, 2022, | 11:00 am – 12:00 pm

### **Welcome and Session Overview**

Leah Fisher, Office Chief for Air Quality and Climate Change, Caltrans Planning

- **Agenda**
  - Welcome and Participation
  - State Adaptation Strategy and Approach
  - Caltrans Highway Investment Approach: Adaptation and Resilience
  - PROTECT Program
  - Survey Results
  - Questions and Discussion
  - Next Steps
  
- **Welcome**
  - Our focus today will be on the PROTECT Program
  - We are still waiting for more information and guidance from FHWA
  - We are also looking forward to hearing from all of you in today's discussion and going over the survey results with the group

### **State Adaptation Strategy and Approach**

Sloane Viola, Council Program Manager for the Integrative Climate Adaptation and Resilience Program, Governor's Office of Planning and Research

### **CA Climate Resilience Efforts**

- Foundation of climate adaptation work rests with the climate change assessment
- Data from assessments is used to make decisions on a scale that is relevant to California and local governments
- Other uses of data from assessments include agency strategy building and development organized around specific sectors and regions
  - Examples
    - Statewide Climate Action Plan
    - Regionally Focused Strategies
    - State Stewardship Plans
    - Sector Based Strategies

- All efforts come together in the Climate Adaptation Strategy released early 2022
- Information is aggregated and prepares the State for the onset of climate change

### **CA Climate Adaptation Strategy: 2021 Update**

- Updates required every three years
- Unique approach to break down silos and identify similar goals across sectors that are achievable through collaboration and partnerships
- Strategy includes success metrics so we can measure our progress and share with the public in a transparent manner on how those goals and priorities are being met
- Instead of large report the strategy is available on an interactive website – to ensure transparency and provide updates to the public and our partners
  - Six Climate Priorities (6):
    1. Strengthen Protections for Climate Vulnerable Communities
    2. Bolster Public Health and Safety to Protect Against Increasing Climate Risks
    3. Build a Climate Resilient Economy
    4. Accelerate Nature-Based Climate Solutions and Strengthen Climate Resilience of Natural Systems
    5. Make Decisions Based on the Best Available Climate Science
    6. Partner and Collaborate to Leverage Resources

### **Integrated Climate and Adaptation and Resilience Program (ICARP)**

- SB 246 – to drive a cohesive and holistic strategy for climate adaptation and resiliency
- Coordinates state and local adaptation efforts to promote comprehensive planning and accelerate implementation
- Centrally focused on climate equity and integrated solutions that help mitigate climate change at the root cause

### **Coordination and alignment of California adaptations efforts:**

- Policy and programmatic alignment
- 5th Climate Change Assessment
- Climate Services
- Investment programs
  - Adaptation Planning Grants
  - Regional Resilience Planning and Implementation Grants
  - Regional Resilience Planning and Implementation Grants
  - Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Grants

## **Caltrans Highways Investment Approach: Adaptation and Resilience**

- Guides investments on the State highway Systems to maximize use of the existing system to:
- Improve travel and accessibility
- Advance equity, environmental, climate, health, and safety goals
- Promote a shift away from single occupant vehicle use by providing competitive
- Strong shifts in investments in highway systems over the last few years due to recent policy and planning
- Opportunity for investments to align with policy and climate goals
- Investment framework for the State and guidance in the transportation plan
- Climate resilience is key and has started to be incorporated into risk assessment as a standard practice in transportation project development process
- **Big Question**
  - How do we maximize benefits while advancing equity, environmental, climate, health, and safety goals?
- Shifting away from new construction to developing more creative strategies that aim to provide benefits and reduce harm for disadvantage communities
- **Overall, using funds to help guide our planning documents as well as our projects; and hope this will be the same for local and regional adaptation efforts**

## **Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, Cost-saving Transportation Program (PROTECT) Program:**

- New formula CA - \$631 million over 5 years
- Purpose
  - Activities that assess and address vulnerabilities to current and future weather events and other natural disasters and changing conditions due to climate change.
- Eligible projects
  - highways and bridges, public transportation facilities, intercity rail, and port facilities including intermodal connectors.
- No more than 10% can be used for new construction projects
- FY22 60/40 split for State and local dollars
- Local grant program
- Eligible entities
  - MPOS
  - Tribes
  - Multi-state/jurisdictional groups
  - Other agencies/ organizations

## **PROTECT Formula Program**

- **Planning** – including projects that: develop a resilience improvement plan.
  - resilience planning, predesign, design; development of data tools; technical capacity building; evacuation planning and preparation
- **Community Resilience and Evacuation Routes** – includes support for emergency and recovery activities
- **Resilience Improvements** - improving resilience of existing surface transportation infrastructure; natural or nature-based infrastructure; flood protection measures
- **At-Risk Coastal Infrastructure** – Resilience of coastal highways and culverts to flood/waves/sea-level rise

## **Survey Results**

Erika Espinosa Araiza, Transportation Planner, Office of Air Quality and Climate Change, Caltrans

## **Main Themes of Survey Questions and Results**

1. Desired outcomes and priorities for participants
2. Challenges and Risks to implementation
3. Questions for FHWA on guidance

## **Desired outcomes and priorities**

- Guidance on Adaptation planning and how to prioritize and identify projects
- Information-sharing on adaptation planning and projects
- Grant support and resources for implementation of resiliency projects
- Equity considerations and framing policies to support disadvantaged communities

## **Challenges and Risk**

- Staffing and resource constraints – hard to keep up with IIJA
- Funding shortfall

## **Federal Requirements**

- Clarification on PROTECT program, definitions, criteria, and timeline
- Resilience Improvement Plans

## **Questions and Discussions**

- Are there other desired outcomes and priorities for this working group?
- Are there challenges to your organization that should be addressed?

Fraser Shilling, U.C. Davis

- Would it be useful to think about a product that we can all develop/OPR? Some kind of white paper that bring this feedback and information all together for legislators.

Answer:

- CalSTA would need to approve if the group wanted to pursue this option, but we can discuss further.

Timothy Doherty, San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency

- Flood design guidelines for our project managers moving capital projects forward – are there other transportation agencies that have flood design guidelines that can be integrated into current capital projects? This would help us be more resilient in the future and plan for infrastructure.

Answer:

- The Caltrans Highway Design Manual provides some guidance on sea level rise at this time, but it may not be exactly what you are looking for.
  - Follow-up: Connect Tim to State's Fifth Climate Change Assessment team at OPR and CEC to discuss research priorities for electricity infrastructure.

Brenda Powell-Jones , Caltrans

- As we move forward, it will be important to know how requirements for NEPA and Environmental Justice considerations will work together with this process. At some point there will need to be a requirement to include on the NEPA side as new requirements come forward.
- Other thing – keep in mind is that there may be NEPA requirements to include and consider adaptation and resilience efforts in environmental documents for the NEPA side. This would require a great deal of work and effort on the Caltrans side, so I wanted to flag this and make sure members are aware of this potential requirement.
- Another thing to consider is the environmental justice and equity considerations. They have very legally defined parameters and it is important to keep in mind how these will impact future efforts and projects.

Sarkes Khachek, Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG)

- Do you have any information yet on the distribution of the 40% of formula funds to the regions/locals?

Answer:

- Our understanding is that it will likely go through the Commission. However, we do not have any further details on this topic at this time.

Paul Golaszewski, California Transportation Commission

- One thing to keep in mind is that there has been proposed State general funds for adaptation that are similar to the federal PROTECT funds.

- One thing to consider is how the federal funds will work in conjunction with the State funds.
- Part of the discussion that this work group process should aim to answer questions like this.

Liz O'Donoghue, Nature Conservancy in California

- Do we have a definition for resilience? Have we landed on a definition that would reflect the prior policy and to put that into action how or what would that look?

Answer:

- Definitions have been set by the Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program; however, FHWA may apply their own from a transportation lens.:
  - Resilience: Resilience is the capacity of any entity – an individual, a community, an organization, or a natural system – to prepare for disruptions, to recover from shocks and stresses, and to adapt and grow from a disruptive experience.
  - Adaptation: Adjustment in natural or human systems to a new or changing environment. Adaptation to climate change refers to adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects, which moderates harm or exploits beneficial opportunities.

Denise Arriaga, Orange County Transportation Authority

- Just thinking about and encouraging Caltrans to educate the program staff so they are up to date on non-traditional project scope and delivery so that they can help us get these projects up and running more efficiently than in the past.

Grecia Elenes, Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability

- Equity component – "consideration of equity" – we really want to go beyond that.
- Promoting community engagement and I think that we can all agree that members of the community know their needs best.
- How are we going to create solutions for rural parts of the State? How do we support local communities in achieving climate goals/solutions?
- When we're talking about resources, and how monies can be used with other programs it's important to think about how we are going to provide support for rural communities to ensure they can move towards climate resiliency

Answer:

- Caltrans is certainly looking at putting the justice and equity lens first when preparing and developing metrics for prioritization. Caltrans is committed to implementing the recommendations of the Equity Sub Working Group.

Fraser Schilling, U.C. Davis

- Development of transportation centers of excellence. I am developing one for our regional Transportation of Resilience and Center of Excellence – I encourage you to join us because there will be a lot of parallels to this groups, so we welcome any interaction.
- A collaboration about a dozen institutes – primarily universities but also include many partners.
- Regional Transportation Resilience and Adaptation Center of Excellence -  
- 4-state collaboration led by ITS at UC Davis (fmshilling@ucdavis.edu)
  - Follow-up: Leah/Caltrans will connect Fraser to the State's Fifth Climate Change Assessment team at OPR.

Mike Woodman, Nevada County Transportation Commission

- Climate Adaptation Plan- evacuation from wildfires. Finding funding to improve evacuation chokepoints.
- Key to look at how to improve evacuation readiness – one thing our study showed is that several choke points in these rural foot hill regions are a significant challenge.
- Finding funding to improve and eliminate choke points – we need to be able to safely eliminate evacuation choke points.

Leslie Aguayo, Greenlining Institute

- Justice40 is ensuring the benefits are going to underserved communities but what is the definition of equity and how can we measure these goals? How will this work be aligned with Justice40?
- A recent report from LAO on the climate impacts in the state and impacts on transportation sector – our equity analysis shows there is not a lot around the workers and how it will impact the workforce and people as a whole. We want to be thinking about benefits to people and not just place.
- There is this issue of accessibility versus deployment

Answer:

- We hope Justice40 alignment will be looked at for all programs and that FHWA will lead that alignment. We are also working on a Caltrans Climate Action Plan where we hope to identify actions spanning equity, climate impacts, and impacts to people and communities.

James Hacker, California Senate

- From the legislative perspective, developing some sort of recommendations with dollar amounts for various needs would be helpful.
- Looking at the goals for state adaptation strategy – are there any fiscal considerations? Are these baked into the goals or is this something we are not looking at yet.

Answer:

- Yes, they are baked into those goals especially, through an economic lens. We want to ensure that these considerations are clear, so thank you for bringing this up.

Matt Baker, Planning and Conservation League

- Anti-displacement strategies and infrastructure - we have to be aware of gentrification and need to ensure anti-displacement protects the current residents and does not further gentrification and push people out of their homes.

Michael Gemeraad, Bay Area Metro

- We do see long term integration for the RTP SCS but not until 2025.
- Concern with Resilience Improvement Plans (RIP) and how much effort it will take to develop them.
- What does an interim approach may look like now?
- Maybe create a patchwork RIP we can use? Is there a plan to create at the State level?
- Should we be finding some sort of patchwork to fill the gaps in the short-term?

Answer:

- We would like to have a focused conversation with the group on this topic. Also please note that you don't have to have the plan to get the dollars through formula funds; however, with a RIP you need less non-federal cost share.

### **Next Steps**

- Our team will work to incorporate discussion and recommendations on Resilience Improvement Plans, information sharing across local and regional agencies, and how to support coordinated and aligned resilience planning in California during future sub-working group meetings.
- Our team is following up with FHWA on PROTECT fund distribution and any additional guidelines. Information will be shared over email and in future working group meetings.
- We plan to schedule the next meeting once we know more from FHWA.

### **Shared Links:**

- <https://resilientca.org/apg>
- [https://opr.ca.gov/docs/20220425-ICARP\\_Impact\\_Report.pdf](https://opr.ca.gov/docs/20220425-ICARP_Impact_Report.pdf)
- <https://www.congress.gov/117/bills/hr3684/BILLS-117hr3684eas.pdf>
- <https://resources.ca.gov/-/media/CNRA-Website/Files/Initiatives/Climate-Resilience/2022-Final-Extreme-Heat-Action-Plan.pdf>
- <https://lao.ca.gov/reports/2022/4576/Climate-Change-Impacts-Transportation-040522.pdf>



- <https://climateresilience.ca.gov/>
- <https://resilientca.org/case-studies/?q=sb>
- <https://greenlining.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Making-Equity-Real-in-Climate-Adaption-and-Community-Resilience-Policies-and-Programs-A-Guidebook-1.pdf>
- [https://opr.ca.gov/docs/20200720-Vulnerable\\_Communities.pdf](https://opr.ca.gov/docs/20200720-Vulnerable_Communities.pdf)