



# IIJA

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT AND JOBS ACT

## CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND ADAPTATION ACTION PLAN: *PROTECT PROGRAM*

NOVEMBER 2022

## BACKGROUND

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA, P.L.117-58) is a federal bill that addresses provisions related to Federal-aid highway, transit, highway safety, motor carriers, research, hazardous materials, and rail programs of U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT). It also includes federal policy direction and funding in the areas of climate action, zero-emission vehicle deployment, social equity, goods movement, and multi-modal transportation investment sought by the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) and many California transportation stakeholders.

CalSTA is leading the statewide IIJA Transportation Implementation Working Group comprised of state and local transportation agencies, the Federal Highway Administration, and other transportation stakeholders. Each entity plays a vital role in implementing this new law and should work collectively to develop a common understanding of IIJA and develop action plans for successful implementation.

IIJA created the first dedicated transportation infrastructure program for climate adaptation and resilience, the Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) Program, which is allocating ~\$631M to California over five years in formula funding. In California, the State Legislature created two capital programs to oversee these formula funds and augmented the funding in a one-time allocation through SB 198: the State Transportation Infrastructure Climate Adaptation Program (State Program) and the Local Transportation Infrastructure Climate Adaptation Project Program (Local Program).

## IIJA SUB-WORKING GROUP PURPOSE

Caltrans senior staff is leading 14 Sub-Working Groups who have been tasked with developing questions and answers for the U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT), discussing federal guidance, and having in-depth discussions on specific policy areas like Active Transportation, Transit and Rail, Goods and Movement, Tribal Transportation, Social Equity, and other policies that may impact transportation and infrastructure in California. The Sub-Working Groups will also develop IIJA Implementation Action Plans for the federal programs within their respective policy areas.

## SUB-WORKING GROUP SCOPE

The Climate Resilience and Adaptation Sub-Working Group was established on January 28, 2022. Though FHWA had not yet released information about the PROTECT program, the Sub-Working Group held the kickoff meeting on May 12, 2022. This Sub-Working Group serves a platform for state/local agencies as well as other stakeholders to come together to exchange their knowledge, expertise, and experiences so they can identify priorities, potential risks, and play a vital role in successfully implementing Climate Resilience and Adaptation specific provisions of IIJA with a focus on the PROTECT program.

The Sub-Working Group will weigh in on priorities, challenges, and opportunities to collaborate on PROTECT implementation, with a focus on the PROTECT opportunity to develop Resilience Improvement Plans. The Sub-Working Group will inform guidelines development for the Local Transportation Infrastructure Climate Adaptation Project Program and for the Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program's adaptation planning grants, one-time funding to support local/regional/Tribal adaptation planning that was also established in SB 198.

## GOALS AND DESIRED OUTCOMES

1. Develop a description of what the Sub-Working Group will be discussing.
2. Identify and confirm goals for each Sub-Working Group.
3. Determine Sub-Working Group meeting cadence and duration and meet as often as necessary to discuss implementation issues in the respective issue areas.
4. Develop an Action Plan for the Sub-Working Group.
5. Determine whether new state implementing legislation is necessary.
6. Discuss equity implementation and challenges, and implement recommendations of the Equity Sub-Working Group into PROTECT implementation.
7. Identify strategies to facilitate the timely implementation of PROTECT and applicable SB 198 programs.
8. Inform Sub-Working Group members of other state and federal funding programs related to climate resilience and adaptation
9. Track opportunities and share information on new or existing State policies, strategies, and other programs related to climate resilience and adaptation, to encourage alignment with state and federal requirements.

## IDENTIFIED ISSUES

Potential threats and issues that may limit the availability or accessibility of IIJA funding include:

- The federal expenditure deadlines may make it challenging to develop scope changes to projects to include climate adaptation strategies and to deliver those projects in time.
- The lack of prior/existing dedicated climate adaptation planning funding for transportation projects means that in many cases, projects for adaptation needs may not already be programmed in local/regional transportation plans, creating a possible challenge in having projects ready to be implemented in the short term. As more dedicated funding becomes available, local and regional agencies will be more prepared in identifying critical projects in their regions.

## OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities to leverage funding and meet State, local, and/or regional transportation goals include:

- Collaborate with local and regional agencies on the development of the State Resilience Improvement Plan, including exchanging ideas and best practices for any jurisdiction that would like to pursue their own Resilience Improvement Plan
- Gather feedback about the Transportation Infrastructure Climate Adaptation Strategy Grant Program and the Local Transportation Infrastructure Climate Adaptation Project Program to ensure adequate policies and procedures are incorporated to facilitate effective program implementation.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Sub-Working Group (SWG) recommendations, analysis, and/or insight include:

- The SWG should continue to provide input on the implementation of PROTECT programs (the State Transportation Infrastructure Climate Adaptation Program, Local Transportation Infrastructure Climate Adaptation Project Program and local planning grants), and discuss challenges and successes regarding the implementation of the programs.
- The SWG should provide a forum to inform the development of the State Resilience Improvement Plan to achieve a reduction in cost-share for PROTECT formula funds.
- Once FHWA releases the guidelines for the PROTECT Discretionary program, the SWG should discuss opportunities for program applications including the optional development of Resilience Improvement Plans by other jurisdictions.
- The SWG should serve as an ongoing forum for alignment and discussion of challenges and opportunities for transportation adaptation planning and project development. Future meetings will serve as a place to exchange ideas, support the development of plans, and to identify opportunities for collaboration and alignment between jurisdictions.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for their input in the preparation of this action plan.

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<b>Charles Roberts</b>	<i>Highland Consulting</i>
<b>Christine Casey</b>	<i>California State Assembly</i>

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

<b>Clint Holtzen</b>	<i>Sacramento Area Council of Governments</i>	<b>Isael Ojeda</b>	<i>Stanislaus Council of Governments</i>
<b>Crystal Franco</b>	<i>Los Angeles Department of Public Works</i>	<b>Ivan Garcia</b>	<i>Butte County Association of Governments</i>
<b>D'Mitri Williams</b>	<i>San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission</i>	<b>Jacklyn Cuddy</b>	<i>California Association for Coordinated Transportation</i>
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<b>Emma Goldsmith</b>	<i>Stanislaus Council of Governments</i>	<b>Joseph Vaughn</b>	<i>Department of Transportation</i>
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<b>Haley Currier</b>	<i>Save SF Bay</i>	<b>Kenichi Soga</b>	<i>University of California, Berkeley</i>
<b>Hana Creger</b>	<i>Greenlining Institute</i>	<b>Kevin Gilhooley</b>	<i>Southern California Association of Governments</i>
<b>Henry Symons</b>	<i>San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District</i>		

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

<b>Kimberly Clark</b>	<i>Southern California Association of Governments</i>	<b>Michael Harrodson</b>	<i>California Air Resources Board</i>
<b>Kristin Jacinto</b>	<i>Orange County Transportation Authority</i>	<b>Michael Morris</b>	<i>Department of Transportation</i>
<b>Laura Pennebaker</b>	<i>California Transportation Commission</i>	<b>Michael Pimental</b>	<i>California Transit Association</i>
<b>Lauren Sato</b>	<i>Orange County Transportation Authority</i>	<b>Michelle Glickert</b>	<i>Tahoe Regional Planning Agency</i>
<b>Leila Hakimzadeh</b>	<i>Governor's Office of Planning and Research</i>	<b>Mike Woodman</b>	<i>Nevada County Transportation Commission</i>
<b>Leslie Aguayo</b>	<i>Greenlining Institute</i>	<b>Mikhael Skvarla</b>	<i>Gualco Group</i>
<b>Linda Hunter</b>	<i>Rincon Consultants</i>	<b>Minh Le</b>	<i>Los Angeles County Internal Services Department</i>
<b>Lisa Colicchio</b>	<i>Southern California Regional Rail Authority</i>	<b>Monica Torres</b>	<i>California Transportation Commission</i>
<b>Liz O'Donoghue</b>	<i>The Nature Conservancy in California</i>	<b>Nicholas Dybas</b>	<i>Madera County Transportation Commission</i>
<b>Lori Pepper</b>	<i>CalSTA</i>	<b>Nick Haven</b>	<i>Tahoe Regional Planning Agency</i>
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<b>Mallory Atkinson</b>	<i>Bay Area Metro (MTC)</i>	<b>Olivia Seideman</b>	<i>Leadership Counsel</i>
<b>Marina Espinoza</b>	<i>California State Association of Counties</i>	<b>Patrick Pittenger</b>	<i>Department of Transportation</i>
<b>Mark Graziano</b>	<i>Highland Consulting</i>	<b>Paul Golaszewski</b>	<i>California Transportation Commission</i>
<b>Mark Watts</b>	<i>Smith, Watts &amp; Company</i>	<b>Paul Hernandez</b>	<i>East Bay Energy</i>
<b>Mary Nguyen</b>	<i>Federal Transit Administration</i>	<b>Rachael Hartofelis</b>	<i>Bay Area Metro</i>
<b>Matt Arms</b>	<i>Port of Long Beach</i>	<b>Randy Chinn</b>	<i>California State Senate</i>
<b>Matt Baker</b>	<i>Planning &amp; Conservation League</i>	<b>Rebecca Light</b>	<i>California Transportation Commission</i>
<b>Maura Twomey</b>	<i>Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments</i>	<b>Ryan McCarthy</b>	<i>Weideman Group</i>
<b>Meg Prince</b>	<i>Merced County Association of Governments</i>	<b>Samuel Johnson</b>	<i>Transportation Corridor Agency</i>
<b>Michael Germeraad</b>	<i>Bay Area Metro</i>	<b>Sara Olsen</b>	<i>Greenlining Institute</i>
		<b>Sarkes M. Khachek</b>	<i>Santa Barbara County Association of Governments</i>
		<b>Sean Skidmore</b>	<i>Los Angeles County Public Works</i>

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

<b>Shannon Thaggard</b>	<i>Tuolumne County Transportation Commission</i>
<b>Sloane Viola</b>	<i>Governor's Office of Planning and Research</i>
<b>Sriram Narasimhan</b>	<i>University of California Los Angeles</i>
<b>Stephanie Tong</b>	<i>Los Angeles Department of Public Works</i>
<b>Susan Freedman</b>	<i>San Diego Association of Governments</i>
<b>Suzanne Smith</b>	<i>Sonoma County Transportation Authority</i>
<b>Ted Matley</b>	<i>Department of Transportation</i>
<b>Teresa Favila</b>	<i>California Transportation Commission</i>
<b>Tess Lengyel</b>	<i>Alameda County Transportation Commission</i>
<b>Tim Doherty</b>	<i>San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency</i>
<b>Tim Sobelman</b>	<i>California Transportation Commission</i>
<b>Tyler Madary</b>	<i>Riverside County Transportation Commission</i>
<b>Valarie McFall</b>	<i>Transportation Corridor Agency</i>
<b>Vanessa Velasco</b>	<i>Department of Water Resources</i>
<b>Vic Mireles</b>	<i>Orange County Transportation Authority</i>
<b>Virginia Gomez</b>	<i>Transportation Corridor Agencies</i>
<b>Yana Waldman</b>	<i>San Francisco County Transportation Authority</i>
<b>Yesenia Perez</b>	<i>Greenlining Institute</i>
<b>Zhongren Wang</b>	<i>Caltrans</i>

