

# IIJA Fix-It First Kick-Off Meeting

## February 4, 2022

The IIJA Fix it First Team kick-off meeting was used to get all parties to the same understanding level of the IIJA funding, federal funding programs, scope of the fix it first team, a breakdown of the bridge formula funding, and we began the discussion of the development of our action plan.

### **IIJA Team Structure and Web Resources**

CalSTA Team Structure and Resources – The overall team structure was presented to help provide a broad understanding of how the IIJA efforts are being parsed out. The CalSTA web page links were also provided as an ongoing resource: <https://calsta.ca.gov/subject-areas/infrastructure-investment-act>

### **Fix it First Definition**

There is not formal definition of “Fix it First” that the team could find so we developed a working definition for the purposes of our teams efforts.

“Fix it First” refers to the preservation, repair, rehabilitation and replacement of **existing transportation system assets**.

There was a lively discussion of this definition especially related to the need to expend bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and system resiliency. Other viewpoints believed the “First” work in “Fix it First” was intended to imply that we must fix the existing assets before we grow the system. System resiliency was discussed as integral with the system preservation focus of “Fix it First”. Subsequent to our meeting an internal coordination meeting was held with the System Resiliency Team lead to discuss how best to coordinate across out teams.

A sampling of chat comments:

Matt Randall: I agree with this statement as well. It might be useful to consider some kind of priority or clarifying statement... meaning, we are talking about the State and Local highway/roadway system... as opposed to transit facilities.

Aaron Azevedo: I like the working definition; however, I think it would be good to add a prioritization aspect in relation to prioritizing maintenance/funds ahead of capital expansion.

Jose Luis Caceres: I do not support adding "missing" facilities to the definition of fix it first. My region is missing bridges over the river that ought to have been built.

Mallory Atkinson: I agree that resilience is an important consideration in the realm of fix it first, as it has a direct connection to lifecycle costs for asset management plans. I also support keeping modernization elements (like bike/ped) as part of the conversation, even if it is not the direct focus

Jose Luis Caceres: I agree resilience will be a grayish area. I was thinking of that stretch of highway along the coast.

Louis Zhao: I agree with Mike and David. Preservation and resiliency goes hand and hand.

Samuel Shelton: The definition is "fix it" without the "first" part so far. Without a discussion of the investment tradeoffs, we're left with focusing on "best practices" of proactive cost-effective strategies to avoid expensive reconstruction.

Jose Luis Caceres: See I thought the "first" was to contrast against building new facilities until we could show that we're maintaining our existing facilities. I agree maintenance is more efficient than replacement of a failed facility, and also ought to be prioritized.

John Harvey: I would suggest that first need to define goals and whether goals such as adding missing features to existing facilities are being covered by other groups or not. That will then help define scope. Looking for synergies to fix and also add missing features can be part of prioritization discussion. Some understanding of project cost implications of adding missing features would be helpful as discussion continues.

chris long: Based on avoiding new construction, we would remove the FHWA work type... Initial Construction...

chris long: Suggest on the Resiliency we define the gray of how resilient is good enough. A performance analysis should be completed. I.e. what are the impacts from less reoccurring events (increase load/flooding etc.)? I.e. creating performance curves to try to find the optimal cost/benefit in making the asset more resilient.

James Hacker: Last point on fix it first - my understanding is that we're having this conversation in the context of IJJA funding. If we are getting funding for new infrastructure, we're going to use it for new infrastructure. "Fix it first" should be about how we prioritize funding for maintenance / rehab / replacement of our existing assets over the life of that funding.

### **Federal Funding Programs and Fiscal Levels**

Mike Johnson provided an overview of the Federal Funding Programs and relative increase California has received for the first year of IJJA. This help the team understand the relative magnitudes of funding we are considering in each of the federal funding programs. New eligible work for each of the federal funding programs was reviewed.

Caltrans presented their analysis of "who owns the bridges responsible for the bridge formula funding coming to California". This analysis deconstructed the entire National Bridge Inventory to determine what a "fair share" of the bridge formula funding is for each owner. This approach weighted the POOR area of bridge at 75% and the FAIR area of bridge at 25% as defined in IJJA. It was noted the final funding distribution was an iterative process that will involve the budget team.

A Sampling of Comments:

General verbal comments: The IJJA distribution is very transparent and understandable. After all, a distribution by this method is proportional to the condition based needs by owner.

Samuel Shelton: sqft formula is one thing, but many of the actual bridge projects will add capacity. How would we consider Fix it First costs vs. sqft deck area needs?

Aaron Azevedo: I work for a transit agency, and we have relatively small deck areas, but they serve many more passengers than a typical highway bridge would serve per sqft.

### **Defining the Fix it First Needs**

The team then turned our attention available resources that have defined and quantified the “Fix it First Needs” in California. Caltrans State Highway System Management Plan and the Local Streets and Roads Needs Assessment are fertile ground for making a compelling argument for “Fix it First”.

- State Highway System
  - Caltrans develops a State Highway System Management Plan (SHSMP) that assess needs for major State Highway System (SHS) assets.
    - Currently identified needs are double available funding (pre-IIJA)
    - The SHS in California is the most heavily used in the nation
    - The SHS bridges represent about 77% of all bridge area in California
  - Link - <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/asset-management/state-highway-system-plan>
- Local Roadways
  - The Local Streets and Roads Needs Assessment identified:
    - \$3.84 billion/year need to maintain local pavement at current levels (Pre-IIJA)
    - The condition of California’s local streets and roads has only improved 1 point since 2018
    - Cities and Counties own over 950 Poor condition bridges and have a \$430 million annual shortfall over the next 10 years
  - Link – <https://www.savecaliforniastreet.org/read-the-report/>

### **Next Steps**

The Team agreed to meet together to work on the making a compelling argument for the “Fix it First” needs in our next meeting scheduled for February 18<sup>th</sup> at 9 am. Invitation and web connection information has already been sent out for this meeting. If you did not receive the invitation please let me know.