



# EASTBOUND STATE ROUTE 91/ATLANTIC AVENUE TO CHERRY AVENUE AUXILIARY LANE IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

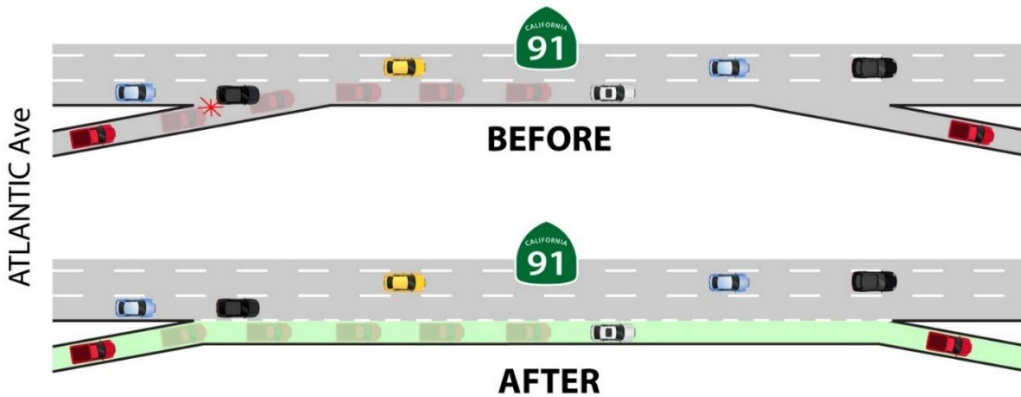
## Environmental Planning Phase: Frequently Asked Questions

### What Is The Eastbound State Route 91/Atlantic Avenue To Cherry Avenue Auxiliary Lane Improvements Project?

The Project implements a 0.86-mile auxiliary lane on Eastbound (EB) State Route 91 (SR-91) within a 1.4-mile segment from Southbound (SB) Interstate 710 (I-710) interchange connector to SR-91, to Cherry Avenue.

### What Is An Auxiliary Lane?

An auxiliary lane is a freeway lane that is constructed between on- and off-ramps of adjacent interchanges to facilitate the safer merging of vehicles to and from the freeway, reducing congestion bottlenecks separate from through traffic.



**Auxiliary Lane** - Separate on-and off-ramp merging from through traffic, create better balance and smoother maneuverability

### Where Is The Project Located?

The Project is located on EB SR-91, between the SB I-710 to EB SR-91 connector and Cherry Avenue, just east of I-710, in the Caltrans right of way, within the City of Long Beach, California.





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## Why Do We Need This Project?

The Project is needed to improve existing freeway conditions that result in traffic congestion and reduced safety due to the short weaving distances between the closely spaced interchanges of I-710 to EB SR-91 connectors, Atlantic Avenue, and Cherry Avenue.

This freeway congestion is anticipated to increase if no improvements are made. Accident rates on the freeway are also higher than the statewide average. The Project would improve vehicle operations along EB SR-91 between I-710 and Cherry Avenue off-ramp, helping to relieve congestion and the related accident rates.

## What Are The Project Alternatives?

There are two alternatives under consideration: a Build Alternative and a No Build Alternative.

The Build Alternative would construct the 0.86-mile auxiliary lane. Four bridge undercrossings at Atlantic, Myrtle, Orange, and Walnut Avenues would be widened on the south side. Noise barriers and retaining walls would be reconstructed.

The No Build Alternative would maintain the freeway, ramps, and local intersections as they are today with no improvements.

## Who Is Leading The Project?

Metro and Caltrans District 7 are leading the project, in collaboration with the Gateway Cities Council of Governments (GCCOG).

## What Is The Project Status?

The Project is currently in the environmental phase. This phase includes preliminary engineering and environmental technical studies, which identify any Project impacts and avoidance, minimization, and mitigation of those impacts. A Draft Environmental Document (DED) was circulated for public review and comment on December 17, 2020 with a 45-day review period ending on February 1, 2021. The public review period has been extended until March 1, 2021 and a virtual public hearing has been scheduled for February 18, 2021. All comments received will be addressed in the Final Environmental Document (FED).

## How Would The Project Benefit The Local Community?

The Project implements operation and safety enhancement benefits by increasing sight distance, reducing congestion related accidents, and improving traffic operations. The Project also includes lengthening the Eastbound Atlantic On-Ramp which would increase its capacity, reducing traffic spillover onto the local street. Metro and the City of Long Beach are coordinating the possible integration of concepts from the Hamilton Loop Park Project into this Project to maximize opportunities and benefits to the local community, including lighting, trees and plants, and additional park space.



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### What Outreach Efforts Have Been Done For The Project?

Agency and public participation for this Project have included interagency coordination meetings, public meetings, public notices, and Project Development Team (PDT) meetings.

The GCCOG 91/605/405 Technical Advisory Committee receives monthly Project updates and the PDT has kept City of Long Beach staff and Vice Mayor Richardson's office apprised of the Project Status, including the most recent Public Meeting held on December 16, 2020. Meetings would continue to be held between Metro, Caltrans, GCCOG, and the City of Long Beach to coordinate the Project development process.

### Would Property Be Needed For This Project?

No, all Project improvements would be completed within public right of way.

### Are Noise Barriers Included In This Project?

Yes, mitigation for noise impacts include construction of new noise barriers. Existing noise barriers would be removed and reconstructed within Caltrans right of way, approximately 10 to 15 feet to the south of, and parallel to, the existing noise barriers.

### What Is The Project Schedule?

The environmental phase of the Project is anticipated to be complete in Summer 2021 with the detailed design phase complete in Spring of 2022.

### When Is Construction Scheduled To Start?

Construction is anticipated to begin in early 2023 and would last approximately two years.

### What Strategies Would Be Used To Minimize Temporary Impacts?

- **Noise:** Demolition and construction of noise barriers would be conducted in four segments along the Project to minimize noise impacts on nearby residences. Construction activities shall comply with the Long Beach Municipal Code, which states that construction activities shall only occur on weekdays from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- **Dust/Air Quality:** The construction contractor must comply with all applicable laws and regulations related to dust and air quality. Measures to reduce dust include implementing a dust control plan, applying water and soil binder to control dust, washing vehicles, and covering soils before transport.
- **Access:** Full closures of ramps in the Project area would occur for a period of approximately 55 hours to less than ten days at SR-91/Atlantic Avenue EB off-ramp, SR-91/Atlantic Avenue EB on-ramp, and SR-91/Cherry Avenue EB off-ramp. No consecutive ramps would be closed at the same time. A 6-month full closure of the section that connects the southbound I-710 to eastbound SR-91 connector to the Atlantic Avenue off-ramp is anticipated. A Traffic Management Plan would be implemented, which would identify alternate routes, detours, and access points for motorists.



*Full Ramp Closure - A 6-month full closure of the section that connects the southbound I-710 to eastbound SR-91 connector to the Atlantic Avenue off-ramp is anticipated*

Appendix A of the DED has a complete list of all strategies to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts.

#### Who Has Received Notification Of The Public Comment Period?

Owners or occupants of approximately 600 properties within the area surrounding the Project received notice of environmental document circulation and public hearing, including all properties located to the south of East 68th Street, to the north of Artesia Boulevard, to the east of I-710, and to the west of the Union Pacific Railroad located between Cherry and Paramount Avenues. Newspaper ads have also been published in two local newspapers: the Long Beach Press-Telegram (in English) and La Opinion (in Spanish). The public comment period, public hearing information, and details on how to comment have also been posted to the Metro website.

#### How Can I Become Involved In The Process?

Interested parties are encouraged to participate in the upcoming public hearing and to send comments by email or mail. The virtual public hearing will be held on **Thursday, February 18, 2021, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.** The public comment review period has been extended until March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.

#### Public Hearing Information

Caltrans invites you to attend the public hearing at the following date and time via computer or phone using the access information below. You can also submit comments by email or mail any time before and after the hearing date with a deadline of March 1, 2021. The virtual public hearing will be held by computer or phone on **Thursday, February 18, 2021** from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at:

Webinar link: [tinyurl.com/j6e22u2t](https://tinyurl.com/j6e22u2t), Passcode: 228047

Dial in by phone: (877) 853-5247 (Toll Free), Webinar ID: 964 0026 4546

The virtual public hearing will include a presentation by the project team followed by public comments. Each speaker will be given a time limit of two minutes. Access to a Spanish translator will be available during the public hearing.



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### How Can I Submit Comments?

Please submit any comments and suggestions on the Draft IS/EA no later than **March 1, 2021** to:

[D07.91AtlanticToCherry@dot.ca.gov](mailto:D07.91AtlanticToCherry@dot.ca.gov)

or  
Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director  
California Department of Transportation  
Division of Environmental Planning  
100 South Main Street MS-16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
Attn: Eastbound SR-91/Atlantic to Cherry Project

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact Thoa Le, Senior Environmental Planner, Caltrans District 7, at [D07.91AtlanticToCherry@dot.ca.gov](mailto:D07.91AtlanticToCherry@dot.ca.gov) or (213) 269-0238.

### Stay Connected

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[www.metro.net/projects/i-605-corridor-hot-spots-program/SR-91-early-action-projects/](http://www.metro.net/projects/i-605-corridor-hot-spots-program/SR-91-early-action-projects/)