



# NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **CALTRANS PURSUING FEDERAL GRANTS FOR UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES CORRIDOR STUDY AND WILDLIFE CROSSING**

**LOS ANGELES** – In an effort to address two ongoing transportation issues for the Los Angeles region, Caltrans has submitted planning proposals seeking a total of \$4 million from the 2014 Federal Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant program to finance a corridor study in the underserved and economically disadvantaged communities of southeastern Los Angeles County, as well as a wildlife crossing over U.S. Highway 101.

### Southeast Los Angeles Corridor Study

Caltrans requested \$2 million in federal funds, plus \$500,000 in state and local funding, for the Southeast Los Angeles Interconnected Corridors Study, a multi-modal corridor study which will examine two critical goods movement highway corridors and the communities in southeastern Los Angeles County surrounding them.

The results of the study will be used to improve performance of multi-modal operations while reducing traffic congestion throughout a densely developed area of disadvantaged, low-income communities. Upon completion of the plan, remaining funds will be used to expedite delivery of key projects so they can be “shovel ready.”

“This plan will show how to best integrate various modes of transportation into this area, while also providing a safe, sustainable and efficient transportation system that respects and maintains the quality of life for communities in our region,” said Caltrans District 7 Director Carrie Bowen. “Improving the mobility of this region’s residents and the movement of goods is crucial for our continued economic development, improved quality of life and environmental sustainability.”

The Interstate 710 and Alameda Corridor are two critical transportation corridors in this study that distribute goods nationally from the nation’s two busiest seaports, the Port of Los Angeles and the Port of Long Beach. They also suffer from some of the worst congestion in the state and nation. Due to the vital role the routes play in freight movement, it is important that these transportation services be as effective and efficient as possible for their role in national and international economies.

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Local cities within the Integrated Corridors Plan study include the Bell, Bell Gardens, Cudahy, Huntington Park, Los Angeles, Lynwood, Maywood, South Gate and, Vernon. Unincorporated communities also within the study area include Broadway-Manchester, Central-Alameda, Florence, Florence-Firestone, Green Meadows, Historic South Central, South Park, Watts and Walnut Park.

## Liberty Canyon Wildlife Crossing

This TIGER grant seeks \$2 million in funding for the environmental document and engineering design phases of a future wildlife crossing over U.S. Highway 101 at Liberty Canyon Road in Agoura Hills.

“This new crossing will better integrate the environment and transportation systems, fostering better wildlife connectivity on either side of the 101 and increasing public safety by reducing the risk of collisions between vehicles and wildlife,” Bowen said.

Roads and other infrastructure can fragment animal habitats, creating barriers to their movement and increasing the risk of collisions between vehicles and animals. US Highway 101 is an impassible barrier for wildlife migrating into or out of the Santa Monica Mountains. Animals with large home ranges, such as mountain lions, are essentially trapped within the mountain range, which can result in inbreeding and high mortality rates. This wildlife crossing promises to provide for an improved habitat connection across a fragmented landscape, which will help sustain and improve the genetic diversity of mountain lions, deer, coyotes and other native species.

Support for this project has come from a broad coalition of local, state and federal agencies, as well as several elected officials and non-profit organizations. Caltrans is working with these local and regional partners to integrate critical and sustainable environmental considerations into the region’s transportation network. Partner agencies also pledged matching funds and in-kind services to assist in this effort.

The TIGER program, which began as part of the federal Recovery Act, offers federal funding possibilities for large, multi-modal projects. These federal funds leverage money from private sector partners, state, local governments, metropolitan planning organizations and transit agencies. Since 2009, California has received a total of \$71.4 million for transportation projects across the state. 2014 TIGER grant awards are expected to be announced later this year.

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