



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Caltrans, City of Oakland to Study Ways to Reconnect Communities Divided by Interstate 980 as Part of New Federal Program

Project is one of five in California receiving a total of more than \$35 million in funding

Oakland — Caltrans and the City of Oakland have been awarded \$680,000 in federal funding to explore ways to reconnect communities divided by transportation infrastructure along Interstate 980. The project is one of five in California to receive a first-of-its-kind Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program grant as part of the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

The I-980 corridor, completed in 1985, divides disadvantaged communities in West Oakland from downtown Oakland and is a barrier to travel and economic opportunities between these communities. The grant will allow Caltrans and the City of Oakland to study alternatives for reconnecting communities along the corridor with an expanded focus on community integration and environmental justice.

“We are excited to see five California projects receive funding as part of the U.S. Department of Transportation’s first Reconnecting Communities Pilot Project grant awards, including this project in Oakland,” said California State Transportation Agency Secretary Toks Omishakin. “Transportation should always improve access to opportunity and be a uniter not a divider. These awards, coupled with the forthcoming \$150 million state investment for a parallel [Highways to Boulevards pilot program](#), will allow California neighborhoods divided by transportation infrastructure – particularly historically disadvantaged communities – to take steps to remove literal barriers to opportunity and begin making up for past harms.”

“Reconnecting communities divided by transportation infrastructure is a historic step toward addressing injustices that tore apart neighborhoods, especially in communities of color,” said Caltrans Director Tony Tavares. “This is another example how historic levels of federal and state transportation infrastructure funding is directly benefiting

communities throughout California and putting our state on path to a more accessible, connected and equitable transportation system.”

“This grant will help us set the stage for reconnecting West Oakland and Downtown, part of our continuing effort to address decades worth of environmental injustices and deliver more equitable outcomes,” said Oakland Mayor Sheng Thao. “I want to thank Senator Padilla for his leadership in helping to secure these funds to engage the community in developing a plan to reimagine how this space can best serve Oaklanders.”

California will receive more than \$35 million through the first round of funding from the Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program. The program will fund the planning, design, demolition, and reconstruction of street grids, parks, or other infrastructure to reconnect communities divided by transportation infrastructure.

Other California projects receiving funding include:

- **\$30 million for the City of Long Beach** to reconfigure West Shoreline Drive to remove a roadway barrier and improve access and connectivity between Downtown Long Beach and public open space.
- **\$2 million for the City of Pasadena** to support the study of transportation and land use needs related to the future redevelopment of the I-710 “northern stub” that was recently transferred to the city.
- **\$2 million for the City of San Jose** to assess the feasibility and conceptual designs for converting Monterey Road from a highway to a “complete street” safe for all road users.
- **\$600,000 for the City of Fresno** to support planning activities for a pedestrian bridge that crosses State Route 99 and connects Parkway Drive and Roeding Park, primarily serving the Jane Addams Neighborhood.

More information about the Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program is available [here](#).

In a sign of the unique federal-state policy alignment and investment priorities, California’s multibillion-dollar transportation infrastructure package approved by Governor Gavin Newsom and the legislature in June included \$150 million for the Highways to Boulevards pilot to augment the federal program. Caltrans is holding guidelines workshops and expects to issue the call for projects in late spring or early summer, with award announcements by early 2024.

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