



# Highways to Boulevards Regional Study Project Advisory Committee (PAC 1)

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Meeting #1

January 30, 2024

[WWW.SCAG.CA.GOV](http://WWW.SCAG.CA.GOV)



**WELCOME!**

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**Welcome to the first Project Advisory Committee meeting for the Highways to Boulevards Regional Study**





# WELCOME + INTRODUCTION

## Part 1



# The Project Team



**Hina Chanchlani**

**PROJECT MANAGER**  
SCAG



**Kate White**

**PROJECT DIRECTOR**  
ARUP



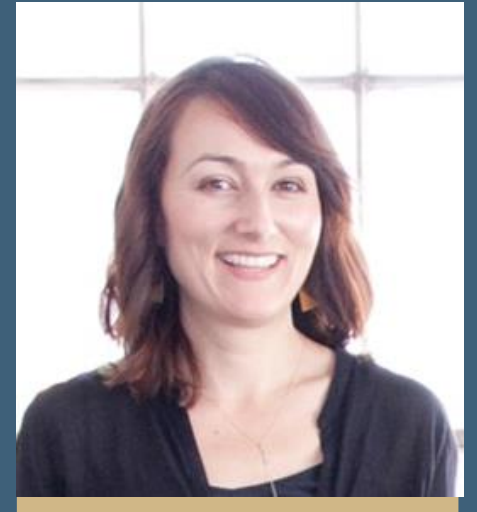
**Carleton Wong**

**PROJECT MANAGER**  
ARUP



**Nina Harvey**

**TECHNICAL TEAM**  
Nelson/Nygaard



**Amber Hawkes**

**PAC Facilitator + Designer**  
HERE



# Agenda

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- Part 1: Welcome + Introductions (10 min)
- Part 2: Outreach (10 min)
- Part 3: Policy + Planning Context (15 min)
- Part 4: Best Practices + Case Studies (20 min)
- Part 5: Breakout Groups (50 min)
- Part 6: Report Outs + Next Steps (15 min)

## Engaging today

Click on the following icons in your menu bar. Additional windows will appear with a list of participants and chat.

- Chat with other participants
- “Raise Your Hand”



- See names of other participants
- Mute or unmute yourself



# Introduce yourself!

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In the Zoom chat, please:

- Add your name, agency, and position to the chat

## Invited to today's meeting: Agencies

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- Arroyo Verdugo Communities JPA
- Caltrans
- Coachella Valley Association of Governments
- Gateway Cities COG
- ICTC
- LA Metro
- Las Virgenes-Malibu COG
- Metrolink
- North Los Angeles County Transportation Coalition JPA
- OCTA
- Orange County COG
- Port of Los Angeles
- RCTC
- SBCTA
- San Fernando Valley COG
- San Gabriel Valley COG
- South Bay Cities COG
- VCTC
- Western Riverside COG
- Westside Cities COG



# Invited to today's meeting: Cities & Organizations

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- Azusa
- Bell Gardens
- Industry
- Long Beach
- Los Angeles
- Montclair
- Pasadena
- Riverside
- Santa Ana
- Santa Monica
- Ventura
- Congress for New Urbanism

# Defining the Project

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## Highways to Boulevards Regional Study

Aims to identify areas to remove, retrofit, or mitigate the negative impacts of highways and railways through highway to boulevard conversions, freeway caps, and railroad conversions.



# Goals

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**Regional goals as defined by SCAG, but we want to hear about the needs and goals of this PAC.**

- Identify locations for conversion and mitigation
- Develop methodology to identify potential conversions
- Position the region for federal funding & implementation
- Reknit communities
- Lift up Priority Equity Communities
- Preserve and create safer & healthier communities



# OUTREACH

## Part 2

# Outreach

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Project Advisory Committee 1

Project Advisory Committee 2

SCAG Committee Briefings

Stakeholder Briefings

CBO Engagement

# Outreach





# Project Advisory Committee (PAC)

## PAC 1

- All of you!
- Cities, COGs, & CTCs to help set goals, methodology, and preliminary project locations
- 3 meetings

## PAC 2

- Agencies and CBOs that will take the lead on seeking funding and implementing identified projects
- 3 meetings



# Project Advisory Committee (PAC)

## PAC 1 Goals

- Help set the vision and goals for the study, define the methodology, determine corridors for future conceptual design, and review the draft Best Practices/Planning & Policy Context Report.

## PAC 2 Goals

- Provide guidance on the top 6 to 10 corridors identified, help determine next steps, and seek funding.

# Project Advisory Committee (PAC)

## PAC 1 Goals

### Meeting 1

- Introduction, visioning, goal setting, planning context, and case studies

### Meeting 2

- Methodologies, screening and prioritization criteria

### Meeting 3

- Corridor identification and selecting priority projects

## PAC 2 Goals

### Meeting 1

- Introduction, and showcase of context sensitive design strategies

### Meeting 2

- Preliminary designs and anti-displacement strategies

### Meeting 3

- Final designs, implementation, and funding strategies

# Outreach Briefings

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## Additional Meetings

- SCAG Safe and Active Streets Working Group (SASWG)
- SCAG Regional Transit Technical Advisory Committee (RTTAC)
- SCAG Committees (TC and EEC)
- Local Jurisdiction Guide Stakeholder Input Meeting
- Toolbox Tuesday Training

## **Brief Discussion**

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Are there other groups that should be part of PAC 1?



# PLANNING + POLICY CONTEXT

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## Part 3



## Leveraging Federal/State Policies and Initiatives

Federal/state policies and funding opportunities have been created to help local communities **repair the harm** that has been caused by previous highway and other major infrastructure projects, including:

- Cutting people off from schools, jobs, healthcare, or other destinations
- Dividing or damaging neighborhoods
- Poor air quality
- Greater Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

The focus for many is on repairing harm to lower income communities and communities of color.

**Example: Claiborne Avenue in New Orleans**



Source: Big Easy Magazine

## Leveraging Federal/State Policies and Initiatives

Additional **climate change and sustainability** policies aim to reduce VMT and promote walking, biking, transit, and resilient communities.

Federal/State Policies, Initiatives, & Funding Sources



FEDERAL

# Reconnecting Communities Program (RCP)

## WHAT IS IT?

RCP was created by the USDOT to restore community connectivity by **removing, retrofitting, or mitigating highways or other transportation facilities** that create barriers to community connectivity. \$1 billion in grant funding will be awarded from FY22-26.

FHWA RCP Program Fact Sheet

FEDERAL

# Reconnecting Communities Program (RCP)

## WHAT KINDS OF PROJECTS ARE ELIGIBLE?

Highway  
Caps



Highways  
to  
Boulevards



Rails to  
Trails



... and more! Communities can apply for **planning** and **construction** grants to pursue these types of projects.

FEDERAL

# Reconnecting Communities Program (RCP)

## WHAT KINDS OF PROJECTS ARE ELIGIBLE?

### PLANNING GRANTS

- ✓ Planning and outreach to evaluate and advance projects that improve connectivity, safety, mobility, the environment, and the economy with projects that aim to remove, retrofit, or mitigate an existing eligible facility.



FEDERAL

# Reconnecting Communities Program (RCP)

## WHAT KINDS OF PROJECTS ARE ELIGIBLE?

### CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION GRANTS

***Prerequisite:** Eligible projects must have completed all necessary feasibility studies and other planning activities. They may include:*

- ✓ The removal, retrofit, or mitigation of an eligible facility; and
- ✓ The replacement of an eligible facility with a new facility that — (i) restores community connectivity, and (ii) is sensitive to the context of the surrounding community and is otherwise eligible for funding under Title 23, United States Code. [§ 11509(d)(1) and (d)(3)]

FEDERAL

# Reconnecting Communities Program (RCP)

## HOW DOES IT WORK?

For FY22-26, RCP reserves include an average of

**\$50M** → *<\$2M each  
20% min. local match*  
planning grants +  
**\$150M** → *\$5M+ each  
50% min. local match*  
construction grants

Eligible applicants include:

### PLANNING GRANTS

- ✓ States
- ✓ Units of local government
- ✓ Tribal governments
- ✓ MPOs
- ✓ Nonprofit organizations

### CONSTRUCTION GRANTS

- ✓ Owners of eligible facilities
- ← *Owners may partner with any of these applicant types*

FEDERAL

# Reconnecting Communities Program (RCP)

## HOW COMPETITIVE IS IT?

For FY22:

**\$185M**

funding was available

**45**

communities received grant awards (10.8%)

**369**

did not

**39** planning grants



**6** capital construction grants



## 5 FY22 CALIFORNIA AWARDEES

### Planning

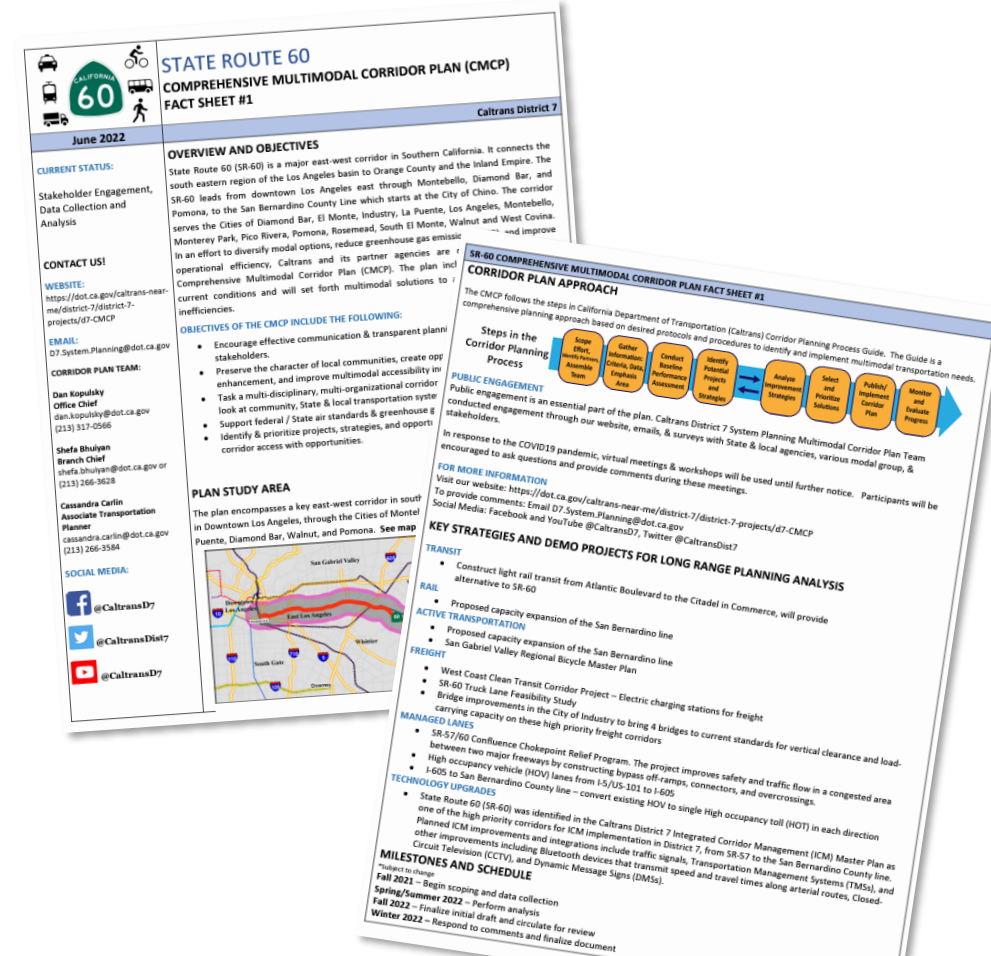
- **Oakland:** Vision 980 Study Phase 2 Feasibility Study (\$680k)
- **San Jose:** Monterey Road Highway to Grand Boulevard Design Study (\$2M)
- **Fresno:** Parkway Drive at State Route 99 Pedestrian Bridge
- **Pasadena:** SR-710 Northern Stub Re-Envisioning Project (\$2M)

### Construction

- Long Beach: Shoreline Drive Gateway (\$30M)

# STATE Caltrans Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plans

- Goal: Develop a strategy and identify a list of transportation projects that will achieve multimodal mobility goals.
- Districts conduct studies.
- State route and interstate corridors.
- **Relevant Policy Impact:**
  - Projects recommended by these plans often align with RCP “mitigation” measures, like implementing BRT, light rail, or trail projects parallel to highway corridors.
  - These corridor studies do not typically suggest highway removal or replacement.



STATE

# Caltrans Highways to Blvds Pilot Program

- Reconnecting Communities: Highways to Boulevards (RC:H2B) Pilot Program.
- \$149 million established in 22/23 State Budget to plan for and fund the conversion of key underutilized highways into multi-modal corridors.
- Addresses historical harm.

**Before**



**After**





STATE

# Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI)

- Plan for investing \$5 billion annually in California discretionary transportation funds to “aggressively combat and adapt to climate change”.
- **Relevant Policy Impact:**
  - Aligns with RCP
  - Encourages CalSTA funding programs to focus on these principles in selecting project applicants
  - Fast tracks CAPTI-aligned projects
  - Creates an Equity Index to evaluate Caltrans projects
  - Creates a working group to enable transportation programs to incentivize anti-displacement
  - Explores a “highways to boulevards” conversion pilot program



**CAPTI**  
Climate Action Plan for  
Transportation Infrastructure



July 2021 • Final Draft



# BEST PRACTICES + CASE STUDIES

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## Part 4

## Past and Current Regional Efforts

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- Hollywood Central Park (101 Freeway)
- Space 134 (134 Freeway in Glendale)
- Reconnecting Communities Program Awardees
  - Pasadena
  - Long Beach
  - Port of Los Angeles
- Other efforts you are aware of?



## MANDELA PARKWAY

Location	Project Type	Context	Project Status	Total Cost
Oakland, CA	Freeway Replacement to Urban Boulevard	Urban, 1.5 miles	Completed (2005)	\$13 M



Part 4: Planning + Policy Context













# Project Results

- Substantial neighborhood air quality improvements.
- Provides a key link in the 500-mile Bay Trail.
- Spurred needed residential and commercial development that continues today.
- Did not consider anti-displacement mechanisms thus likely displacing former residents.





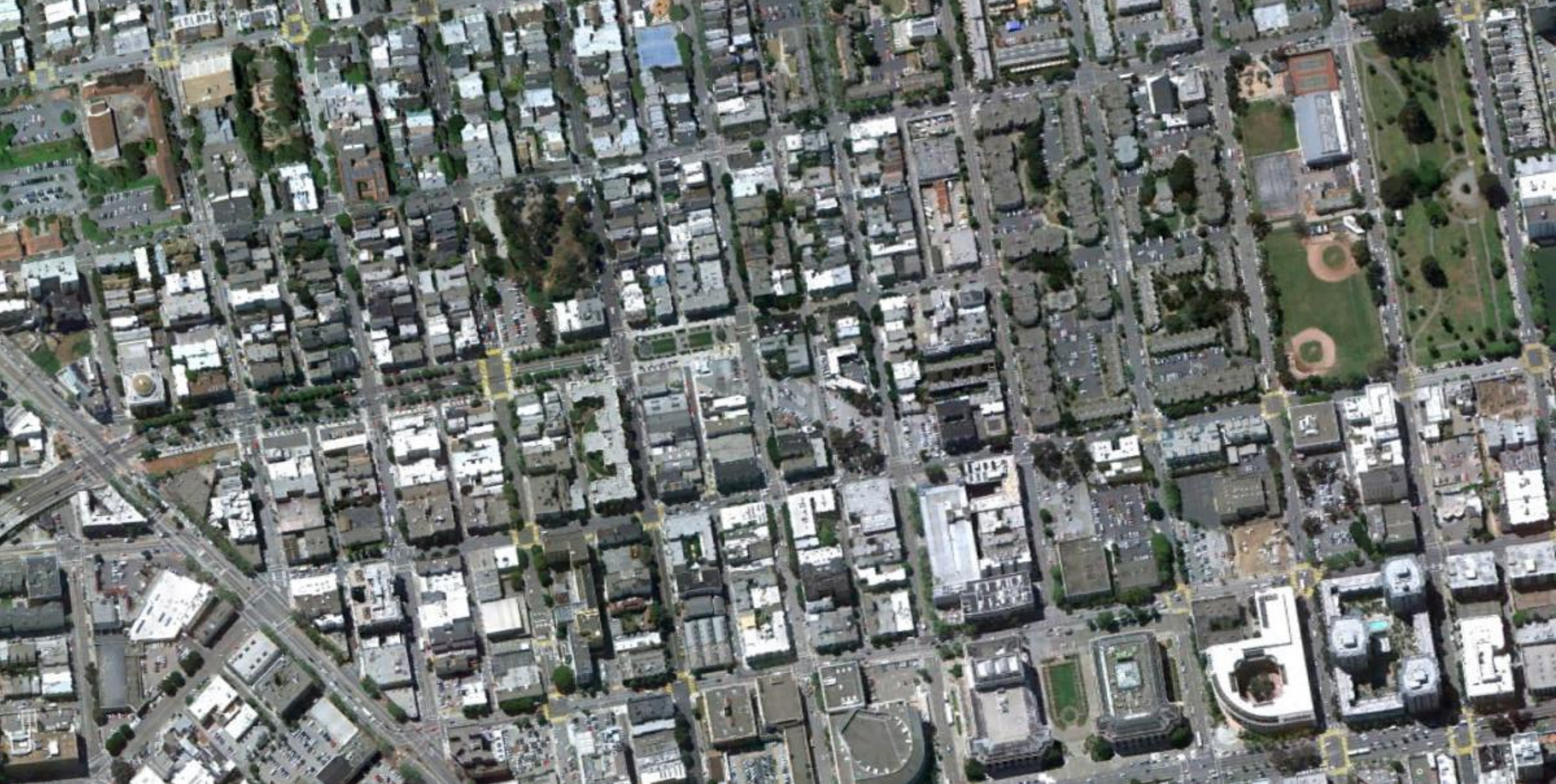
# OCTAVIA BOULEVARD

Location	Project Type	Context	Project Status	Total Cost
San Francisco, CA	Freeway Removal	Urban	Completed	\$50 M











August 2, 1965. Source: San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library







SPEED  
LIMIT  
30



Haight

F.V.Y.

Bike







## Project Results

- Removal of the Central Freeway opened up ~7 acres of land for new development.
- Project resulted in new landscaping, side lanes for local traffic and parking, special design considerations and pedestrian amenities, and a new park, Patricia's Green.
- Increased development in the area resulted in increased rental costs.





# CHEONGGYECHEON STREAM

Location	Project Type	Context	Project Status	Total Cost
Seoul, South Korea	Expressway demolished and restored as a stream.	Urban, 3.6 miles	Completed (2005)	\$380 M



Before





After











삼일교

Samilgyo







## Project Results

- Removed a dilapidated elevated roadway with 168,000+ cars and restored the original river.
- Critical reduction in noise, water and air pollution.
- Dozens of new species re-introduced.
- Incorporated upgrading ITS, wide-scale bus and rail redesign, saw 6-10% increase in ridership.



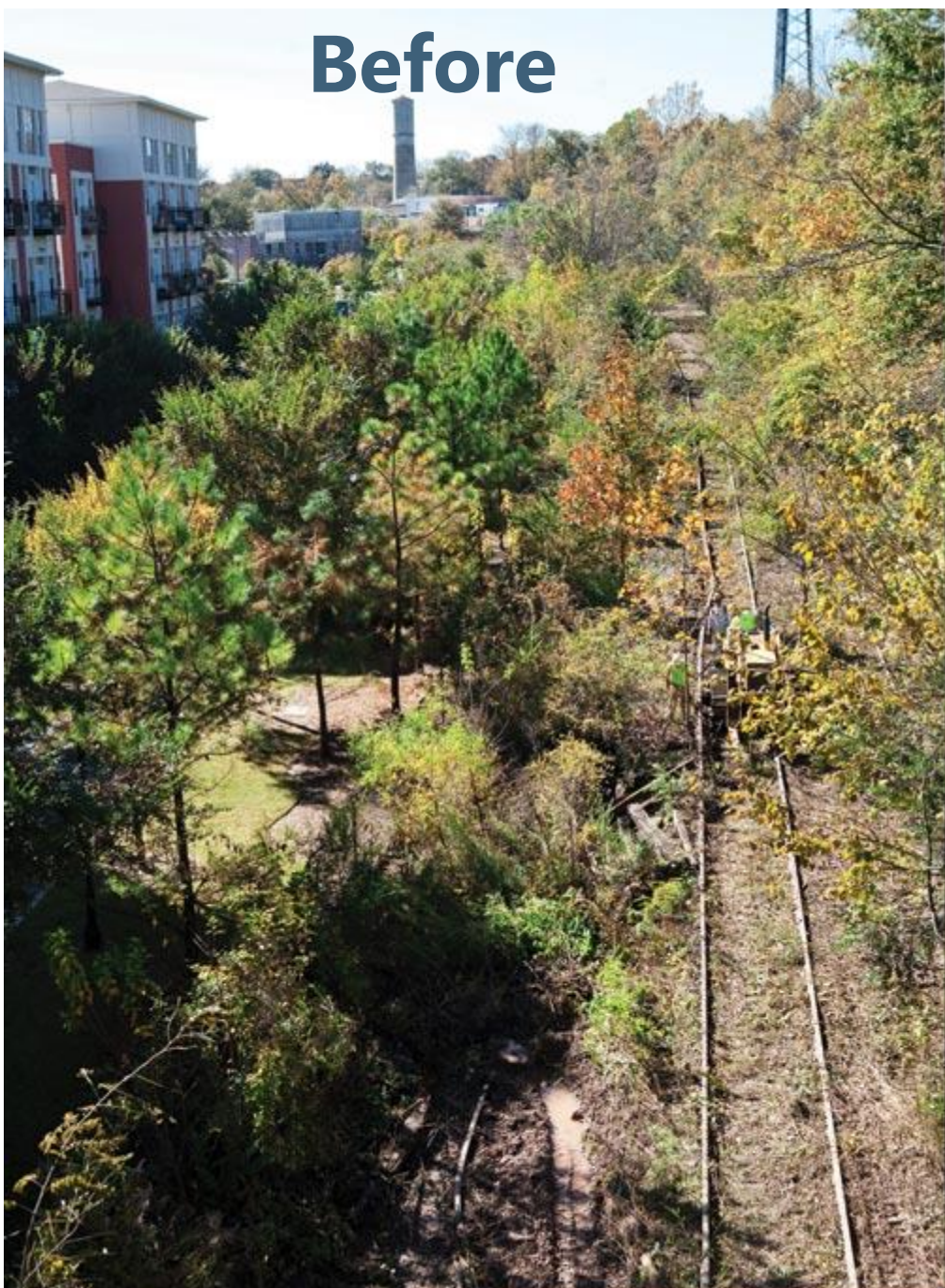


# ATLANTA BELTLINE

Location	Project Type	Context	Project Status	Total Cost
Atlanta, GA	Rail conversion to multiuse path and potential for future LRT	Suburban, 22-mile rail corridor	Partially complete	\$2.8 B



**Before**



NOVEMBER 2009

**After**



DECEMBER 2012





Before



After







# Before



# After







Red Hat  
BREWING COMPANY  
Marietta, GA





Shannon



# THE FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PARTNERSHIP GRANT 2019-2021

**\$262,700**  
*invested*  
TO CATALYZE  
SMALL BUSINESSES  
WITHIN THE  
BELTLINE CORRIDOR



A/C CLUTCH BICYCLE SHOP  
FAÇADE COMPLETED IN 2020

2020 PILOT

- 2** *façades improved*
- 2** *artist partners employed*

2022

- 3** *façades will be improved*
  - 3** *artist partners will be employed*
- all located in the equity priority areas*

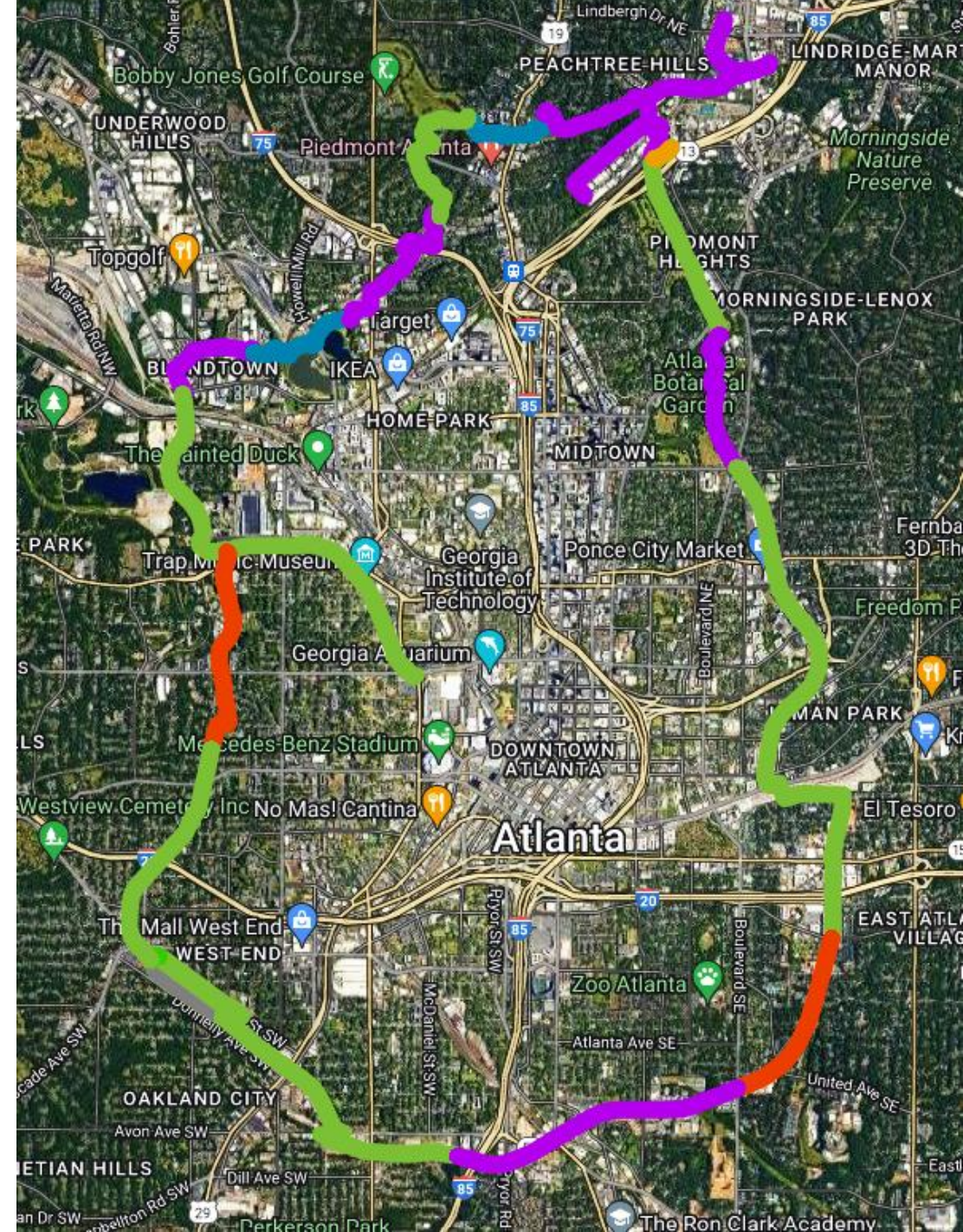


RED'S BEER GARDEN  
FAÇADE COMPLETED IN 2020



# Project Results

- Design for corridor includes trails, parks, and light-rail extension.
- BeltLine Affordable Housing Trust to preserve affordable housing and provide resident assistance along the trail.
- Strong partnerships: Government, non-profit, private, philanthropic.
  - Providing support to small businesses in equity-focused neighborhoods along the BeltLine.



# Poll

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- What impact do you hope this study has on Southern California and your community?





# BREAKOUT GROUPS

## Part 5

## Breakout Group Discussion Questions

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- What are your vision and goals for the project?
- Which case study or studies do you think offer the best models for our region?
- What concerns do you have about implementing this type of project in our region?
- Do you have any ideas about potential opportunities?
- Now understanding the scope of this project, are you the best person to provide input for your jurisdiction?





# REPORT OUTS

## Part 6



# Breakout Group Report Outs

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**Thanks for a fruitful discussion!**

Please briefly describe the main takeaways from your breakout group.



## Next Steps

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- [Brief Survey](#)
- **Project Advisory Committee Meeting #2 will be held in April 2024.**
- **We will reach out to you closer to the date to schedule the meeting.**