

RCTC

RIVERSIDE
COUNTY
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

2024 TRAFFIC RELIEF PLAN



A local strategy to improve traffic flow, safety, and economic opportunity in **Riverside County**

APRIL 2024



TRAFFIC RELIEF PLAN

Table of Contents

Overview of the Traffic Relief Plan.....	2
Funding the Plan and Accountability to Taxpayers	3
Equity Among Regions and Residents	5
Traffic Relief Plan: Your Guide to Projects and Services	6
Palo Verde Valley (Blythe)	7
Coachella Valley	8
Western Riverside County	13

OVERVIEW OF THE TRAFFIC RELIEF PLAN

Your Voice. Your Plan.

Riverside County residents have expressed their ideas about how to improve transportation in Riverside County. From freeways that move faster, to roads with fewer potholes, to more available public transportation, and protecting infrastructure from natural hazards like floods and earthquakes, residents and their representatives said these improvements will make a difference in their life and benefit Riverside County's growing economy.

We've listened.

The Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) developed the Traffic Relief Plan (Plan) based on feedback from Riverside County residents and their elected representatives. The Plan is a countywide transportation blueprint designed to reduce traffic congestion, implement roadway safety measures, and offer greater mobility options for communities across Riverside County. With the addition of 500,000 more residents anticipated over the next 25 years, improving transportation now and preparing for the future is crucial.

Highlights of improvements include:

- ✓ **Improving freeway traffic flow** on Interstates (I) and State Routes (SR), including on I-10, I-15, I-215, SR 60, and SR 91.
- ✓ **Improving traffic flow and safety on major roads** including but not limited to Temescal Canyon Road, Cajalco Road, Ramona Expressway, Gilman Springs Road, Grand Avenue, Bob Hope Drive, Fred Waring Drive, Highway 111, and Indian Canyon Drive.
- ✓ **Improving the condition of existing roads** by providing funds for basic pothole repairs, paving dirt roads, and synchronizing signals throughout Riverside County.
- ✓ **Adding safety improvements for pedestrians, equestrians, and bicyclists on sidewalks and trails.**
- ✓ **Increasing frequency of and access to bus and rail public transportation** by adding new tracks, new stations, more trains, more bus service, bus shelters, safety and security measures, and technology to make public transit safer and more reliable.

✓ **Bringing daily rail service to the Coachella Valley and San Geronimo Pass from Los Angeles, Orange County, and Riverside.**

✓ **Connecting Riverside County by**

- Acquiring right of way for the realigned County Road formerly known as the State Route 79 Realignment Project from the Temecula Valley through Hemet and San Jacinto
- Widening and improving safety on Cajalco Road
- Improving roads between Lake Elsinore and Perris to shorten commutes on I-15 and I-215
- Improving Van Buren Boulevard
- Constructing a bypass to I-10 east of Banning toward the Coachella Valley

✓ **Providing more independence and opportunity** for residents who rely on public transportation services, such as seniors, veterans, individuals with disabilities, students, residents of rural communities, and those who choose to use public transportation.

✓ **Using new technologies** that can improve the efficiency and safety of the current roadway and public transit systems, paving the way for the future.

Implementation of the Traffic Relief Plan's projects and services will require significant new funding. Potential funding sources could include a new sales tax measure dedicated to transportation projects, increased transportation spending by the federal government, and securing state and federal grants. A sales tax measure will require local voter approval by Riverside County residents.

Questions?

If you have questions about the Traffic Relief Plan, please contact the Riverside County Transportation Commission at info@rctc.org or 951-787-7141.

FUNDING PROJECTS IN THE PLAN AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO TAXPAYERS

Funding Projects in the Plan

The funding strategy for the Traffic Relief Plan is designed to anticipate the need for local, state, and federal resources. However, it's important to note that strict legal requirements often bind state and federal funding usage. Moreover, funds for significant transportation improvements are typically distributed through competitive grants, pitting Riverside County against regions across the state and nation for limited resources. In such a scenario, local funds become a lifeline, enabling the delivery of regional transportation projects even when state and federal funds fall short. While some projects and services may be eligible for state and federal funds, the majority of projects can only be realized with the infusion of new local funding. Local funding as proposed by an ordinance and expenditure plan is required to be approved by Riverside County voters.

Local Funds

Local funds are not just a financial resource but a key to unlocking state and federal funding opportunities for transportation infrastructure projects. They are often a prerequisite to receiving other funding sources. Unlike their state and federal counterparts, local funds offer a unique advantage: flexibility. This means funding can be swiftly and directly applied to projects, bypassing state and federal bureaucratic processes that can often cause delays.

State and Federal Funding is Dwindling

While every local dollar generated for transportation infrastructure is used to leverage and maximize other funding opportunities, state and federal funding has become extremely competitive or funding priorities have shifted. This shift places a heavier burden on local funding to complete projects. Local funding is not just a potential solution but a necessary one to implement traffic relief projects that Riverside County residents urgently need.

Ordinance and Expenditure Plan

Local funds are tax dollars within Riverside County that voters of Riverside County have authorized with the explicit intent of funding transportation improvements in the county. By law, an ordinance and expenditure plan must specify how taxpayer funds will be utilized, and

it serves as a commitment to the residents of Riverside County to successfully complete the projects – on time and on budget.

Local Control and Efficiency

Local Control

Implementing the projects in the Traffic Relief Plan will be done through locally elected representatives and local public works professionals in partnership with RCTC, which is governed by local city council members or mayors of every city and all five members of the County Board of Supervisors.

No Money Diverted to Sacramento or Washington, D.C.

State and federal government officials cannot legally divert, take, or direct funds approved by Riverside County voters intended to implement the projects in the Plan.

Fiscal Accountability and Efficiency

Administrative salaries and benefits to administer the Plan would be limited to no more than 1% of net revenues approved by voters to implement the projects in the Plan. Implementation of this Plan will not require the creation of any new government entity. To achieve efficiency and local control, RCTC may delegate appropriate responsibilities for administering components of the Plan to existing local governments at its discretion.

Flexibility to Expedite Projects

RCTC, following applicable laws, may issue debt against future local revenues approved by voters to achieve the Plan's objectives and to expedite completion of projects, as the administer of local voter-approved transportation funding. The issuances of debt will undergo a feasibility analysis to ensure the lowest borrowing costs are incurred while repayment terms are advantageous.

To expedite priority projects and services, reduce costs to taxpayers, or avoid loss of other funding, RCTC may make maximum use of funds by temporarily loaning funds between transportation purposes set forth in the Plan. In borrowing and making loans, the proportionate shares for areas and purposes over the duration of the Plan may not be changed without an amendment of the Plan as required by law.

FUNDING PROJECTS IN THE PLAN AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO TAXPAYERS

Transparency and Openness

The use of local, state, and federal taxpayer funds requires transparency and good stewardship. Funding and implementing the projects in the Traffic Relief Plan will occur in compliance with opening meeting and disclosure laws.

Required Public Disclosure of Funds

RCTC will follow applicable state and federal accounting transparency and accountability requirements and report findings to the public which may include financial audits and reviews, reports, and/or disclosures annually upon approval of an expenditure plan by voters.

Maintenance of Effort

The Traffic Relief Plan understands the need for investments for cities and county transportation activities and improvements. Any new local funds received by cities and the county shall supplement existing local revenues and required developer improvements used for transportation purposes. As a condition of receiving new local funds, cities and the county shall maintain their existing commitment of local funds for transportation purposes. Environmental mitigation funds provided for land conservation shall supplement and shall not supplant existing mitigation fees paid by developers.





EQUITY AMONG REGIONS AND RESIDENTS

Equity Among Regions and Residents

Riverside County residents require a dependable and high-quality regional transportation system that connects communities, and promotes the economy. Considering the state mandate of constructing over 167,000 new housing units and the population estimated to grow to 3 million people in the next 25 years, the Traffic Relief Plan acknowledges that all regions in Riverside County need transportation improvements.

Many residents in Riverside County live in areas that lack adequate infrastructure and public transportation services. Significant numbers of residents are facing increasing traffic congestion. Implementing projects in the Plan requires fairness and equity for Riverside County residents. The Traffic Relief Plan supports the county's diverse communities in the following ways:

Geography

The Traffic Relief Plan recognizes the three distinct subregions of Riverside County and identifies project investments to support the unique needs of each community. This ensures that the funds raised through a future ordinance and expenditure plan for transportation improvements in a specific subregion will remain there and cannot be transferred to other parts of the county. These regions are:

- Palo Verde Valley (Blythe area)
- Coachella Valley
- Western Riverside County (Riverside and Corona areas, Moreno Valley and Perris areas, Hemet-San Jacinto Valley, San Gorgonio Pass, and Temecula-Murrieta-Lake Elsinore areas)

Small, Rural, Disadvantaged Communities

Prioritization of investments shall take into account the needs of residents in small, rural, and disadvantaged communities in Riverside County.

Mitigating Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

The Traffic Relief Plan mitigates VMT with VMT-reducing projects and services.

Decisions Based On Needs

Priority for investments in areas requiring significant infrastructure repairs and upgrades and public transportation will be determined based on objective needs.

Supporting Local Roads

The county and cities have a responsibility to keep roads in good condition. The Plan supports investments for this effort.

Increased Transportation Options for Residents

Traffic Relief Plan investments focus significantly on the needs of seniors, students, veterans, individuals with disabilities, and residents of rural and underserved communities who use public transportation regularly.

Balanced Transportation System

The Traffic Relief Plan recognizes all types of transportation needs for Riverside County. Proactively addressing the transportation issues in Riverside County requires a flexible and a comprehensive approach.

Compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act

The Traffic Relief Plan is not a "project" under CEQA and any adoption of the Plan is not a commitment to implement any particular project within the Plan; therefore, any adoption of the Plan is not subject to CEQA. Further, even if the Plan was subject to CEQA, it would be exempt from substantive environmental review as a planning and feasibility study. This is because the Plan is aspirational and a planning document and does not provide approval for any potential future projects and programs related to the Commission's provision of transportation or other services. Further, the Commission is not approving the construction of any projects or implementation of any programs that may result in a direct or indirect physical change in the environment. At such time as any of the projects or programs identified herein are proposed to be undertaken, any and all appropriate state and federal environmental review will be required and completed prior to any future approval of specific projects.

TRAFFIC RELIEF PLAN: YOUR GUIDE TO PROJECTS & SERVICES

Transportation Investment Needs

The Plan identifies transportation-related improvements across seven categories. In the Coachella Valley, all transportation-related improvements are prioritized through the valley wide Transportation Project Prioritization Study (TPPS). In Western Riverside County, the projects are categorized by needs. In the Palo Verde Valley (Blythe), projects can be completed in any of the categories below.



Safe Streets and Roads – Pothole repair and road maintenance; sidewalks and pedestrian safety infrastructure; protected bicycle lanes; roadway improvements in high-accident areas; bus shelters; bridge repairs; improvements to railroad crossings, including bridges to separate roads from railroad tracks; traffic calming measures; bypass roads; median barriers; protecting roads, sidewalks, and bicycle facilities from flooding and other natural hazards; traffic signals, including technology to synchronize and interconnect signals; improvements to provide accessibility for persons with disabilities.



Highways – Improving traffic flow on State Routes 60, 91, 111 and Interstates 10, 15, and 215 by constructing new lanes, improving highway interchanges (on- and off-ramps and bridges) and public transportation facilities, expanding Freeway Service Patrol roadside assistance, and utilizing innovative technologies.



Public Transportation – Increasing frequency and safety of trains and buses; building new tracks, parking, and stations; extending rail service from Perris to Hemet and San Jacinto; exploring mass transit options on the I-15 corridor; extending rail service to the Coachella Valley and San Gorgonio Pass (Banning/Beaumont/Calimesa/Cabazon area); sustaining operation of rail service throughout the county; expanding bus service options including rapid/express buses; on-demand transit options known as “micro-transit;” modernizing and adding zero-emission buses; providing targeted transit services and keeping bus fares low for seniors, veterans, students, and individuals with disabilities; upgrading bus stops and amenities; maintaining and expanding carpool/vanpool service and partnering with employers to create incentives for alternative commute methods; and improving connections between home, school, and employment centers.



Regional Connections – Constructing multi-modal transportation corridors that connect parts of Riverside County, relieving congestion on existing highways and local roads, improving safety such as realigning State Route 79 as a county road, creating a bypass to I-10 between Banning and Coachella Valley, improving Van Buren Boulevard, and providing a new Elsinore-Ethanac Expressway.



Active Transportation – Improving safety and expanding access to pedestrian and bicycle facilities such as sidewalks and bicycle lanes, in addition to improving and expanding recreational trails and access to open spaces and natural areas.



Flood and Blowsand Control – Reinforcing roadways and infrastructure against natural hazards in the Coachella Valley.



Environmental Mitigation – To construct the traffic relief improvements in this Plan, mitigation will be required to preserve and improve quality of living, including in disadvantaged communities. Additionally, public infrastructure is increasingly under threat from natural disasters. Further, population growth and development puts pressure on natural areas that make Riverside County a desirable place to live. To achieve balanced growth of the region, ensure transportation projects can move forward, withstand natural hazards, and provide for a high quality of living for current and future generations of Riverside County residents, the Traffic Relief Plan makes meaningful commitments to environmental stewardship.

TRAFFIC RELIEF PLAN: PALO VERDE VALLEY

The Traffic Relief Plan aims to improve all aspects of local transportation in the Palo Verde Valley region. The Blythe City Council has the responsibility to prioritize and identify transportation investments within the city limits, while the County Board of Supervisors is responsible for implementing transportation investments in unincorporated areas of the region. All revenues raised through a future expenditure plan for projects in the Palo Verde Valley region will remain in the Palo Verde Valley and returned directly to the City of Blythe and the County Board of Supervisors.

Both the City of Blythe and the County must adhere to open meeting laws, as well as public disclosure of funds and reporting requirements when implementing the investments in the Plan. This ensures transparency and accountability in the process, and benefits the residents of the Palo Verde Valley region.

To address transportation needs in rural areas, such as the Palo Verde Valley, and to strengthen the agricultural economy and tourism, new investments will focus on:

- Safety and maintenance of local streets and roads
- Ensuring public infrastructure complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Closing sidewalk gaps and enhancing bike lanes for improved pedestrian access to and from schools



- Improving the condition of interchanges at Interstate 10, including landscaping and gateway enhancements
- Establishing a new vanpool program for residents commuting to major employment areas, such as Ironwood and Chuckawalla Valley prisons, Coachella Valley, and Arizona
- Providing reduced or free-fare public transit to increase access to education, healthcare, employment, and services
- Replacing and expanding the bus fleet to improve air quality with low- and zero-emission vehicles
- Upgrading transit operating and maintenance facilities to maintain transit vehicles and infrastructure in good condition
- Increasing frequency and expanding public transit options for education, healthcare, employment, and services in underserved neighborhoods

Investing in transportation infrastructure, like those identified in the Plan, can stimulate economic development in the community. Improving the transportation network will leverage other public and private investments and encourage new economic investments.



TRAFFIC RELIEF: COACHELLA VALLEY



This map is illustrative of projects that could be completed.

Highways	Regional Connections	Active Transportation	Public Transportation	Safe Streets & Roads	Flood & Blowsand Control	Environmental Mitigation

TRAFFIC RELIEF: COACHELLA VALLEY

The Traffic Relief Plan calls for improvements to all aspects of local and regional transportation systems in the Coachella Valley. The Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) will implement projects identified in the Plan in the Coachella Valley. CVAG is a public agency governed by an Executive Committee consisting of the mayor or an elected official representing every city council in the Coachella Valley and the City of Blythe, all five County Supervisors, and the Tribal Chairs from the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, Cabazon Band of Cahuilla Indians, Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians, and Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians.

Funds Generated in the Coachella Valley Stay in the Coachella Valley

Implementation of Plan projects and services will require an expenditure plan to be approved by Riverside County residents in addition to increased state and federal investment. Funds generated in the Coachella Valley through a future ordinance and expenditure plan, will remain in Coachella Valley for transportation investment. Funding will provide investments for projects in communities that fully participate in, and are compliant with, the Coachella Valley's Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fee (TUMF) and the procedures approved by the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission for the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP). The Traffic Relief Plan understands the need for flexibility. The transportation improvements identified in Coachella Valley could span one or more of the project categories as they have multiple benefits.



Establishing and Updating Regional Priorities

Since 1989, CVAG has been entrusted to manage the regional transportation network. CVAG establishes its priorities according to the Transportation Project Prioritization Study (TPPS), which is a merit-based method of prioritizing all regional projects in the Coachella Valley. Project priorities are based on criteria adopted by the CVAG Executive Committee, as recommended by civil engineers and public works professionals, and publicly reviewed by elected officials representing every CVAG member jurisdiction. The TPPS is updated every few years as the Coachella Valley's population grows and becomes more diverse in order to address different mobility needs, new technologies, state and federal policy, as well as worldwide climate and economic trends.

Funding for TPPS projects follows CVAG's cost-splitting policy that requires a local match to unlock regional funding. Local funding is an element of the Maintenance of Effort requirements employed by RCTC and CVAG. CVAG will continue to work with RCTC to ensure new regional funding resources do not supplant current funding and commitments; rather the funding pie grows larger for all. In addition to

overall mobility related goals described under this Plan, the TPPS process shall include the following objectives:

- Achieve balance and equity
- Achieve climate resiliency
- Provide economic opportunities
- Address statewide and regional housing needs by supporting transit-oriented development and affordable housing
- Address safety by continually reducing serious accidents and fatalities on the roadways
- Reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)
- Promote public health and safety, including improving air quality

The TPPS includes upgraded, safer, and more accessible regional roadways and bridges. These regional multi-modal facilities connect the Coachella Valley and ensure the transportation network helps support a stronger, more sustainable economy for the community. Some of the arterials and other roads that will continue to be improved are depicted on the map and listed at the end of this section.

TRAFFIC RELIEF: COACHELLA VALLEY



Highways

The TPPS has included projects to substantially improve connections to federal and state freeways and highways, particularly Interstate 10, Highway 111 and State Route 86. Upgrades to existing interchanges as well as new interchanges are planned and are awaiting funding to be constructed. This Plan will also allow for improvements such as managed lanes or toll lanes on I-10. Such facilities will make it easier and safer to travel along Interstate 10. Additionally, the Plan will include grade separations for State Route 86, including a new bridge at Avenue 50, and improving other areas where high numbers of accidents and fatalities occur. The TPPS process is flexible enough to incorporate improvements to connecting regions, including Highway 62 and Highway 74. Additionally, the Plan identifies projects that could substantially improve the overall condition of these roads as CVAG works in partnership with Caltrans. The Freeway Service Patrol could be expanded to I-10 in the Coachella Valley to quickly clear incidents from the freeway and keep traffic flowing.



Regional Connections

To catch up with and prepare for continued population growth, the TPPS identifies regional corridors in every community of the Coachella Valley. It also will expand to address new needs, such as an I-10 bypass and extending Avenue 50 between I-10 and State Route 86 to reduce traffic gridlock on existing highways, improve safety, open economic opportunities to disadvantaged communities, and reduce the miles traveled by drivers who must drive inefficient routes to get from one end of the region to another.



Active Transportation

This Plan and the TPPS include active transportation projects that make it easier and more accessible for people to walk or bike safely. In the Coachella Valley, eligible improvements often accommodate electric vehicles such as golf carts and low-speed electric vehicles, which are part of a multifaceted approach to meet varying degrees of mobility and independence among seniors, individuals with disabilities and underserved communities. Such projects may be stand-alone projects, such as CV Link extensions to North Shore and Desert Hot Springs, and others may expand on the existing active transportation network, such as the Palm Desert Link and bike improvements to the La Quinta village. It also may include incorporating active transportation into the design of complete streets and creating multi-modal connections, such as improvements along Dillon Road. Linking such projects to public transportation and facilitating first mile, last mile connectivity shall be a priority.



Public Transportation

Public transportation investments, such as CV Rail, is an utmost priority in this Plan. Many of the improvements needed to create consistent service between the Coachella Valley and Los Angeles have already been identified and are awaiting funding to be constructed. With Plan funding, the TPPS will be updated to include CV Rail and a fair share "local commitment" from the Coachella Valley for rail investments and operational costs of CV Rail and train stations. Those investments will be paired with investments from the Western Riverside component of this Plan to match federal and state funding. It also will facilitate the movement of goods along the rail lines, which is critical to economic opportunities. Under the TPPS update process, additional benefits to public transportation can be considered, such as transit priority lanes for buses, zero-emission buses and transit facilities, and bus shelters that are sustainable and enhance the passenger experience. The Plan supports public transportation options for veterans, individuals with disabilities, seniors, students, and disadvantaged communities, including improving access and keeping these transit options affordable. The Plan calls for partnering with employers in the Coachella Valley to encourage alternative forms of commuting, including rideshare and vanpool/carpool as a means to reduce congestion and improve air quality and safety.

TRAFFIC RELIEF: COACHELLA VALLEY



Safe Streets and Roads

The Coachella Valley portion of the Plan will also fund investments that extend the useful life of regional transportation corridors as identified in the TPPS. Identical to other projects in the TPPS, these programs would follow a formula and approach to ensure the regional investment enhances, not replaces, investments being made by local cities and Riverside County.

This Plan will provide for a regional pavement program implemented by CVAG in coordination with its members, with a focus on the rehabilitation and reconstruction of roadways that handle substantial amounts of non-local traffic. This program will reduce the burden borne by cities and the County by creating a cost sharing partnership. By coordinating this work across jurisdictions in the Coachella Valley, a regional pavement management program will provide for consistent quality, economies of scale and properly timed lane closures.

This plan includes funding to improve the aesthetic appeal of major corridors and gateways in the Coachella Valley, particularly Interstate 10 and Highway 86. The Coachella Valley corridors and gateways should better reflect the desert's unique characteristics and appeal to visitors and residents alike. Additionally, the program will enhance existing efforts to promote uniform standards, keep transportation infrastructure in good condition, and extend the life cycle of Coachella Valley's transportation infrastructure. Regional corridors and gateways span cities and unincorporated communities and include, but are not limited to:

- Interstate 10
- Highway 111
- Ramon Road
- Cook Street
- Fred Waring Drive
- Gene Autry Trail/Palm Drive
- Indio Boulevard
- Highway 86
- Washington Street
- Monterey Avenue
- Bob Hope Drive
- Dinah Shore Drive
- Date Palm Drive
- Little Morongo Road
- Avenue 50

CVAG regularly reviews and amends the TPPS to incorporate new and innovative strategies that help reduce traffic congestion and increase economic productivity. The TPPS embraces regional mobility concepts and technologies such as signal synchronization and Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) technologies, which better connect the Coachella Valley's workforce to the workplace and reduce seasonal and traffic bottlenecks related to major events. Such concepts are also employed during emergencies to ensure access to hospitals and the best mobility possible for first responders and emergency vehicles. ITS technologies will allow for bus priority or transit signal priority to improve service and reduce delay for mass transit vehicles at intersections on regional corridors. Technologies that eliminate or reduce vehicle miles travelled, vehicle trips, and lay the groundwork for high-speed broadband access, will also be a priority.



Flood & Blowsand Control

Building bridges and other resilient infrastructure is a very high priority in the Coachella Valley. Critical roads, such as Indian Canyon, Gene Autry Trail, and Dillon Road are regularly closed due to blowsand and rainstorms. With increasing frequency, there are prolonged closures and roads are destroyed during major rain events in the communities of Palm Springs, Desert Hot Springs, and Cathedral City. Such flood impacts can occur anywhere in the Coachella Valley but are often associated with areas that have not had similar flood control and road investments in the past, such as the eastern Coachella Valley. Projects to address the persistent flooding along Box Canyon Drive and other areas will be included in this Plan and future TPPS updates.

TRAFFIC RELIEF: COACHELLA VALLEY



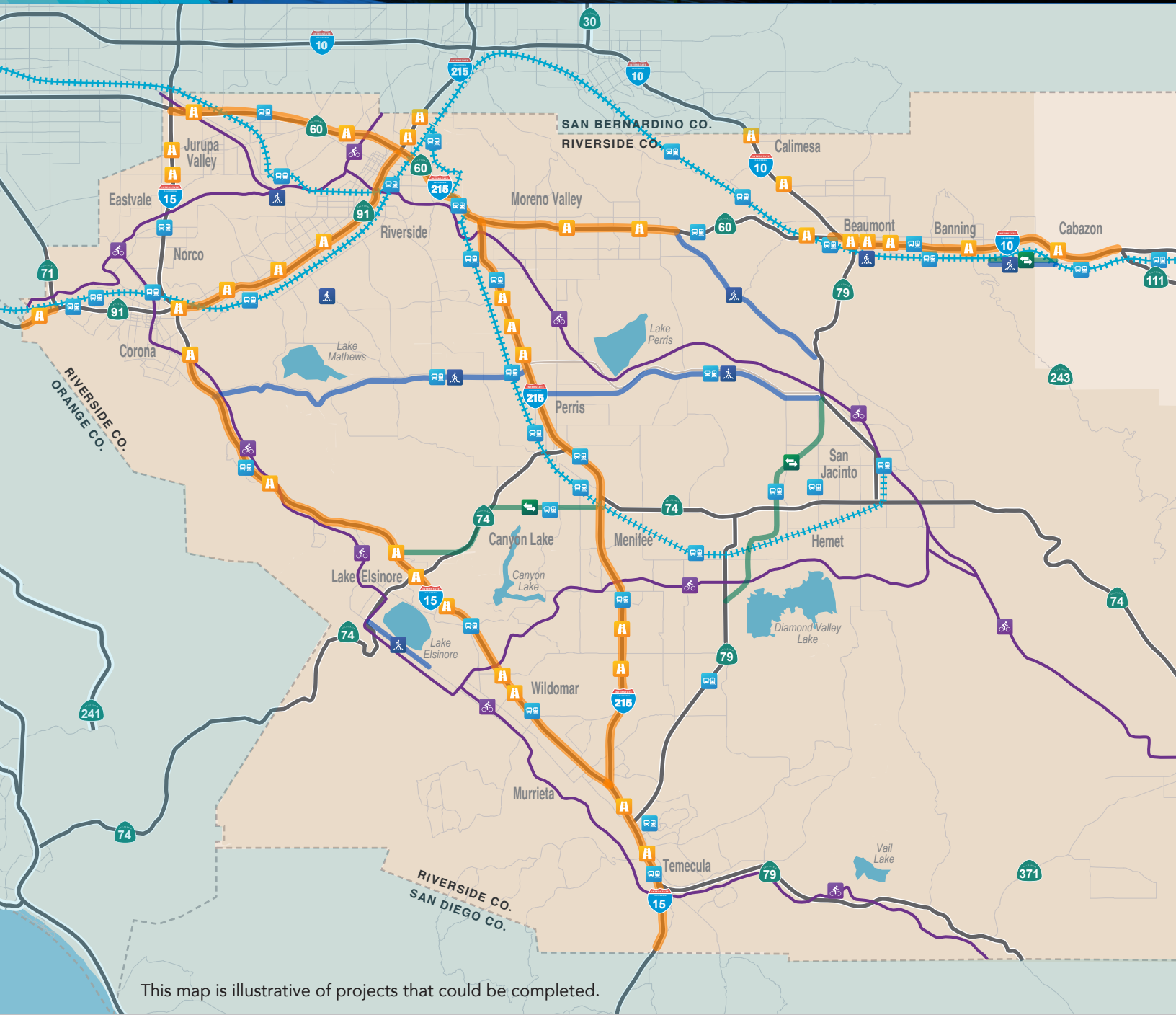
Environmental Mitigation

Population growth and development puts pressure on open spaces and natural areas, such as the sand dunes and mountains, that make the Coachella Valley a desirable place to live.

The Traffic Relief Plan recognizes regional, state, and federal environmental protection requirements when building infrastructure projects, including compliance with the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP) administered by the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission, and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Funding related to this Plan shall not relieve any Permittees under the MSHCPs of their pre-existing obligations to the fulfillment of the CVMSHCP. Funding efforts like these have an inherent benefit to the environment but also help expedite permitting and completion of transportation projects.



TRAFFIC RELIEF: WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY



This map is illustrative of projects that could be completed.



Safe Streets
& Roads



Highways



Regional
Connections



Public
Transportation



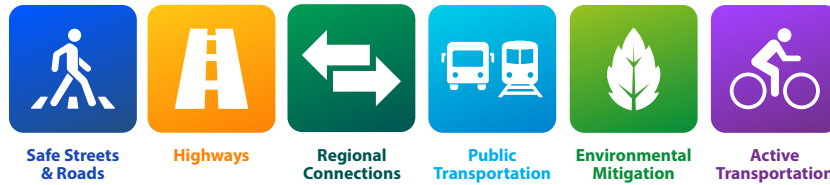
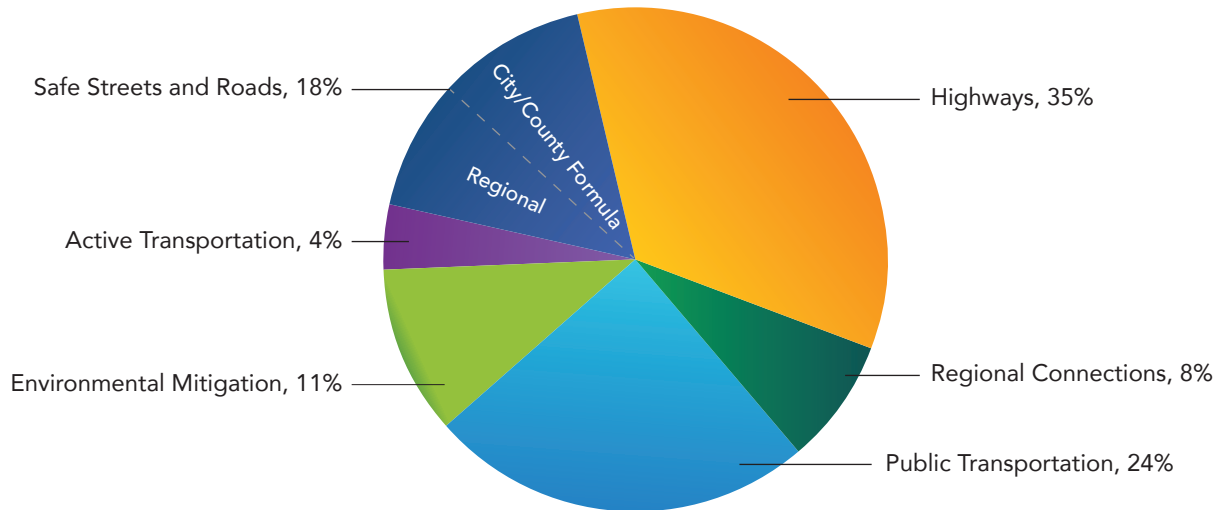
Environmental
Mitigation



Active
Transportation

TRAFFIC RELIEF: WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY

Western Riverside County Traffic Relief Investment Needs



Safe Streets and Roads

Every city and the unincorporated communities of Western Riverside County should receive its fair share of investments for safety improvements

to local streets and roads and pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Additionally, major roadways that connect the region need safety improvements that will help reduce accidents, injuries, and fatalities, as well as provide emergency relief to regional corridors with few or no alternative routes.

The County of Riverside and cities are essential to local transportation improvements. Fifty percent of the needs in the Safe Streets and Roads category are identified by cities and the county to keep roads in good condition. Any local funds approved by voters in a future ordinance and expenditure plan would be distributed by formula (based on population) to each city and the county for unincorporated communities.

RCTC will distribute the other half of any local funds approved by voters to major regional safety projects.

Investments may include but will not be limited to:

- Pothole repair and road maintenance
- Sidewalks and pedestrian safety infrastructure
- Protected bicycle lanes
- Roadway improvements in high-accident areas
- Bus shelters
- Bridge repairs
- Improvements to railroad crossings, including bridges to separate roads from railroad tracks
- Traffic calming measures
- Bypass roads
- Median barriers

TRAFFIC RELIEF: WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY

- Protecting roads, sidewalks, and bicycle facilities from flooding and other natural hazards
- Traffic signals, including technology to synchronize and interconnect signals
- Improvements to provide accessibility for persons with disabilities

Specific regional corridors identified for safety improvements include:

- Cajalco Road
- Gilman Springs Road
- Grand Avenue
- Ramona Expressway / Mid County Parkway
- I-10 Bypass between Banning and Cabazon
- Van Buren Boulevard



Highways

Improving the flow of traffic saves time, reduces stress, and improves safety, air quality, and economic productivity.

Population is growing in Riverside County. Without action, traffic congestion will also continue to grow. The highways in Riverside County were built decades ago, in some cases severing communities and impacting local traffic circulation. Additionally, Riverside County has an incomplete highway network that does not adequately serve our residents or economy. The Traffic Relief Plan seeks to improve traffic flow by building new infrastructure and using technology to improve efficiency of how the transportation system operates. Projects may include but will not be limited to:

I-15 Corridor/Corona, Eastvale, Norco, Temescal Valley, Lake Elsinore, Wildomar, Murrieta, Temecula

- Add Express Lanes in each direction on I-15 between Cajalco Road in Corona and State Route 74
- Add at least one lane in each direction on I-15 between State Route 74 to the San Diego County line
- Construct auxiliary lanes on I-15 in Corona

- Construct the final phase of the French Valley Parkway interchange at I-15 in the Temecula and Murrieta area, which includes:
 - Widening ramps at Winchester Road
 - Constructing on and off ramps to I-15 from French Valley Parkway and a bridge over I-15
 - Constructing the French Valley Parkway from Jefferson Avenue to Ynez Road
 - Adding collector/distributor lanes for southbound I-15 from I-215 to Winchester Road
- Reconstruct interchanges at:
 - Cantu-Galleano Ranch Road in Eastvale
 - Sixth Street in Norco
 - Nichols Road in Lake Elsinore
 - Central Avenue (State Route 74) in Lake Elsinore
 - Wildomar Trail (formerly Baxter Road) in Wildomar
 - Bundy Canyon Road in Wildomar
- Construct a new interchange on I-15 at:
 - Campbell Ranch Road/Temescal Canyon Road in Temescal Valley
 - Franklin Street in Lake Elsinore

I-215 Corridor/Riverside, Moreno Valley, Perris, Murrieta, and Menifee

- Add at least one lane in each direction between State Route 60 and Van Buren Boulevard
- Construct auxiliary lanes on I-215 between Moreno Valley and Murrieta
- Construct new interchanges (on and off ramps) on I-215 at:
 - Keller Road in Murrieta
 - Garbani Road in Menifee
 - Columbia Avenue in Riverside
 - Center Street near Riverside

TRAFFIC RELIEF: WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY

- Reconstruct interchange at Harley Knox Boulevard in Perris
- Add express lanes on I-215 between the 60/91/215 interchange and the 60/215 junction

91 Corridor/Corona, Riverside

- Add at least one new lane on State Route 91 between:
 - State Route 241 and State Route 71 in the eastbound direction
 - I-15 in Corona and Pierce Street in Riverside in both directions
- Reconstruct interchanges on State Route 91 at:
 - Adams Street in Riverside
 - Tyler Street in Riverside
 - Construct auxiliary lanes on SR-91 in Riverside
- Construct a rapid transit connection from the 91 Express Lanes to the North Main Corona Transit Center/Metrolink station

60 Corridor/Jurupa Valley, Moreno Valley

- Add at least one lane in each direction on State Route 60 in Moreno Valley
- Reconstruct interchanges on State Route 60 at:
 - Etiwanda Avenue in Jurupa Valley
 - Rubidoux Boulevard in Jurupa Valley
 - Redlands Boulevard in Moreno Valley

I-10 Corridor/Calimesa, Beaumont, Banning, Cabazon

- Reconstruct interchanges on I-10 at:
 - State Route 79 (Beaumont Avenue) in Beaumont
 - Highland Springs Avenue in Beaumont and Banning
 - Pennsylvania Avenue in Beaumont
 - Morongo Parkway and Main Street in Cabazon

- County Line Road in Calimesa
- Cherry Valley Boulevard in Calimesa
- Add express lanes on I-10 between State Route 60 in Beaumont and Highway 111 in Palm Springs

Freeway Service Patrol

When accidents occur on highways or when vehicles break down, traffic can build quickly, creating delays and additional safety hazards to motorists. Freeway Service Patrol provides roving tow trucks to quickly assist motorists so that traffic can flow again. This public service is operated with strict performance and accountability measures by the California Highway Patrol, Caltrans, and RCTC ensuring that Freeway Service Patrols reduce congestion, increase safety, and decrease air pollution.

The Plan will sustain and increase Freeway Service Patrol levels on Interstates 15 and 215 and State Routes 60 and 91, including weekend service. The Plan will also enable new service to begin on Interstate 10 and possibly other routes as determined by benefit-cost analysis.

Countywide Interconnected Highways

Using technologies that have been proven effective around the world, as well as emerging innovative technologies, investments will be made to interconnect highways, street and ramp signals, and automobiles to create more efficiency in the entire transportation network. With roadways and vehicles that can talk to each other, traffic flow can be increased and safety improved by reducing the potential for human error on the road.



Regional Connections

To catch up with and prepare for continued population growth, regional corridors are necessary to reduce traffic gridlock on existing highways, improve safety, open economic opportunities to disadvantaged communities, and reduce the miles traveled by drivers who must drive inefficient routes to get from one end of the region to another. Three regional corridors are in various stages of preparation and need

TRAFFIC RELIEF: WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY

additional funding to become a reality for Riverside County residents. These transportation facilities will include features that accommodate public transit and bicyclists and will be consistent with the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) for the protection of the environment. Investments will be prioritized based on readiness to be constructed and available funding:

- State Route 79 Realignment
- Elsinore-Ethanac Expressway
- I-10 Bypass



Public Transportation

Bringing reliable public transportation to more areas of Riverside County is a priority of the Traffic Relief Plan. Increased investment and greater access to bus, rail, and new modes of public transportation will offer Riverside County residents choices for how they travel and ensure public transportation is available for those who need it most.

Passenger Rail

Riverside County is home to several railroad rights-of-way that connect our growing communities. These rail lines serve as a public transportation backbone for our region. Projects may include but will not be limited to:

- Increase train service frequency on existing commuter rail (Metrolink) lines such as the 91/Perris Valley Line and Inland-Empire Orange County Line, with trains eventually as frequent as every 30 minutes during peak periods
- Expand rail service into new areas of Riverside County such as the Beaumont/Banning/Cabazon/Calimesa area, the Coachella Valley, and Hemet and San Jacinto
- Construct new or additional railroad tracks and supporting infrastructure within existing rail rights-of-way to allow more trains to operate and to increase efficiency and on-time performance of trains

- Construct new rail stations, such as at the Ramona Expressway, in Winchester, and in Beaumont/Banning/Calimesa/Cabazon area
- Maintain and enhance security and safety at rail stations
- Maintain and enhance management of publicly owned railroad rights-of-way to ensure proper maintenance and safety
- Enhance existing rail stations (there are currently nine stations in Corona, Riverside, Jurupa Valley, Perris, and near Moreno Valley), including:
 - Construct improvements to provide better accessibility for persons with disabilities
 - Construct new parking capacity at stations in Corona, Riverside, and Perris
 - Construct train boarding platforms, pedestrian bridges, and crossings
- Maintain and operate existing and future rail stations
- Invest in zero-emission trains
- Study and implement options for passenger rail expansions and connections along the region's highway systems, such as the I-15, I-215, SR-91, and SR-60, if determined to be technically viable and financially feasible with state and federal funding support.

Bus

The Traffic Relief Plan identifies bus transit as a method to reduce traffic congestion, increase sustainability, and provide more options to residents who rely on public transit to access medical care, employment, education, and other services. Projects may include but will not be limited to:

- Sustaining and expanding where feasible local fixed-route bus services
- Exploration of mass transit alternatives for the I-15 corridor
- Sustaining and expanding rapid/commuter bus services along major corridors in Riverside County to destinations such as

TRAFFIC RELIEF: WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY

San Diego, Orange, and San Bernardino Counties, downtown Riverside, Temecula, Moreno Valley, Coachella Valley, Hemet/San Jacinto, Beaumont/Banning/Calimesa, Corona, and Perris. These routes can connect to commercial airports in the region, major educational, business, and retail/entertainment destinations

- Improving safety and security on bus transit
- Zero-emission buses and related capital, maintenance, and operation costs
- Maintenance and operation of transit centers/hubs and bus stops/shelters
- Roadway technologies that improve bus travel times
- Micro-transit (on-demand) public transit technologies
- Partnering with employers to encourage alternative forms of commuting, including rideshare and vanpool/carpool as a means to reduce congestion

Investments in support of specialized transportation providers that serve seniors, veterans, students, individuals with disabilities, and rural and underserved communities are critical. The Citizens and Specialized Transit Advisory Committee, with representatives from these populations, will assist RCTC in administering and providing oversight to the program. Investments may include but will not be limited to:

- Expansion of destinations and hours of operation for paratransit services such as Dial-A-Ride
- Keeping transit fares low for seniors, veterans, students, and individuals with disabilities
- Improved access to and from schools, colleges and universities, and employment centers for low-income families and rural communities
- Free or reduced bus fares for those who require access to medical appointments, job interviews, or other needed services

- Bringing infrastructure into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Continued operation of vital community transportation resources such as the 2-1-1 network, which provides individualized assessments with transportation and social service specialists



Environmental Mitigation

To construct the traffic relief improvements in this Plan, mitigation will be required to preserve and improve quality of living, particularly in disadvantaged communities. Additionally, public infrastructure is increasingly under threat from natural disasters. Further, population growth and development puts pressure on natural areas that make Riverside County a desirable place to live. To achieve balanced growth of the region, ensure transportation projects can move forward, withstand natural hazards, and provide for a high quality of living for current and future generations of Riverside County residents, the Traffic Relief Plan makes meaningful commitments to environmental stewardship.

The Plan recognizes environmental mitigation can include but will not be limited to:

- Actions to benefit the environment and to expedite permitting and completion of transportation projects
- Promoting public health and safety by improving air quality or safeguarding local transportation infrastructure from natural hazards, including, but not limited to, floods, fires, earthquakes, or blowsand
- Preserving Riverside County's natural areas, including fulfillment of the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) obligations
- Mitigating Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)
- Supporting transit-oriented development and housing

TRAFFIC RELIEF: WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY

- Establishing and maintaining recreational use of public open spaces by non-motorized means

The Traffic Relief Plan recognizes regional, state, and federal environmental protection requirements when building infrastructure projects, including compliance with the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) administered by the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (RCA), the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).



Active Transportation

Transportation options that do not require a motorized vehicle are an important element of healthy, connected communities in Riverside County. The Traffic Relief Plan includes pedestrian and bicycle facilities, trails, and access to open space and planning. Projects in this category may include but will not be limited to:

- Sidewalks and bicycle lanes
- Infrastructure that provides safer routes to school for children to walk or bike to school and decreases injuries and fatalities
- Recreational trails so that Riverside County residents can enjoy better access to our world-renowned natural open spaces
 - o Amenities that support these facilities such as trailheads, parking lots, restrooms, and signs are eligible for these funds; however, maintenance and operations shall be the responsibility of the local government agency, not RCTC
 - o Major regional trails identified in the master plan for the Riverside County Parks & Open Space District which include but are not limited to:
 - Butterfield Overland Trail/Southern Emigrant Trail
 - Santa Ana River Trail
 - Salt Creek Trail



The projects and services listed in the Traffic Relief Plan will require coordination with local, state, and federal partners and regulatory agencies. RCTC is required to follow state and federal law when implementing projects.



TRAFFIC RELIEF: NOTES



TRAFFIC RELIEF: NOTES

Questions?

If you have questions about the Traffic Relief Plan, please contact the Riverside County Transportation Commission at info@rctc.org or 951-787-7141.



TRAFFIC RELIEF PLAN

Riverside County Transportation Commission
(951) 787-7141 • www.rctc.org
4080 Lemon Street, 3rd Floor
P.O. Box 12008 • Riverside, CA
92502-2208