THE CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

in partnership with

THE PAT BROWN INSTITUTE AT CAL STATE LA

2017 SELA SUMMIT OF POSSIBILITIES:
PEOPLE, COMMUNITY AND PROGRESS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2017

SELA Transportation: Critical Choices Ahead
A Summary Report



PAT BROWN INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS
Unleashing the Power of Participation

California COMMUNITY Foundation

WEINGART FOUNDATION

SOUTHEAST LA COLLABORATIVE

SUPERVISOR HILDA L. SOLIS



About the SELA Initiative and the Summit of Possibilities Series

The **Southeast Los Angeles (SELA) Initiative** is a multi-year endeavor designed to develop the regional influence of specified communities and cities within the broader area. The Initiative seeks to revitalize the landscape of civic engagement in Southeast Los Angeles and, as a result, refresh the policy decision-making environment in the region.

The **Summit of Possibilities Series** represents one component of the SELA Initiative. The Summit was developed through a partnership between the California Community Foundation and the Pat Brown Institute for Public Affairs at Cal State LA. The partners commission research reports with the intent to inform stakeholders about the ways in which Southeast Los Angeles can identify, harvest, and develop its unique assets and voice. The annual summits are milestones designed to bring the community together around common themes and accessible data.

This year's summit focused on transportation in Southeast Los Angeles and addressed questions regarding the allocation of Measure M funding, public transportation, high-density development, Los Angeles River revitalization, industrial and commercial activity, and pedestrian safety. Both Speaker of the California Assembly Anthony Rendon and Los Angeles County Board Supervisor Hilda Solis attended the event and spoke to the importance of community partnerships for the Southeast. The event put a spotlight on the key decisions facing the community, civic leaders and policymakers, and the ways in which transportation can help reshape the community at large.

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THE SELA SUMMIT OF POSSIBILITIES

SELA Transportation: Critical Choices Ahead

THURSDAY ■ 9 NOVEMBER 2017

9:00 AM Welcome and Introductions

Antonia Hernández
PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
California Community Foundation
@calfund

Anthony Rendon
SPEAKER OF THE CALIFORNIA ASSEMBLY
@Rendon63rd

Hilda Solis
SUPERVISOR, 1ST DISTRICT, *County of Los Angeles*
@HildaSolis

Fred Ali
PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Weingart Foundation

SELA Collaborative Rollout:

Oscar Cruz
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, *Families in Schools*
@oscarecruz

Leticia Chacon
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, *Human Services Association*
@hsala_org

Achieve LA Rollout:

William A. Covino
PRESIDENT, *Cal State LA*
@CalStateLA

Victor Dominguez
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT & CHIEF MISSION ADVANCEMENT OFFICER, *YMCA of Metropolitan Los Angeles*
@YMCALA

9:55 AM Presentation of Findings

Dr. Raphael J. Sonenshein
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, *Pat Brown Institute for Public Affairs at Cal State LA*
@PBI

Dr. Genevieve Giuliano
FERRARO CHAIR IN EFFECTIVE LOCAL GOVERNMENT, *USC*
DIRECTOR
METRANS Transportation Center
@METRANS_CENTER

10:40 AM Commentary

Dr. Manuel Pastor
TURPANJIAN CHAIR IN CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL CHANGE, *USC*
DIRECTOR, *USC Program for Environmental and Regional Equity*
DIRECTOR, *USC Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration*
@Prof_MPastor

11:05 AM Community Dialogue with Presenters

MODERATOR

Dr. Juan Benitez
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, *Center for Community Engagement, Cal State University, Long Beach*
@CSU_LongBeach

Veronica Gonzalez
COMMUNITY RESIDENT
MEMBER, *First 5 LA Best Start Southeast LA*
@F5LABestStart

mark! Lopez
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, *East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice*
@EYCEJ

Hilary Norton
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, *Fixing Angelenos Stuck in Traffic*
CO-CHAIR, *Biz Fed Transportation Committee*
@BizFed

12:45 PM SELA Collaborative / Break Out Session

SELA Collaborative Board Members
@SELACollab

1:50 PM Report on University Polls and the Southeast

Dr. Matt A. Barreto
CO-FOUNDER, *Latino Decisions*
PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND CHICANO/A STUDIES, *UCLA*
@realMABarreto

2:00 PM Decision Makers

MODERATOR

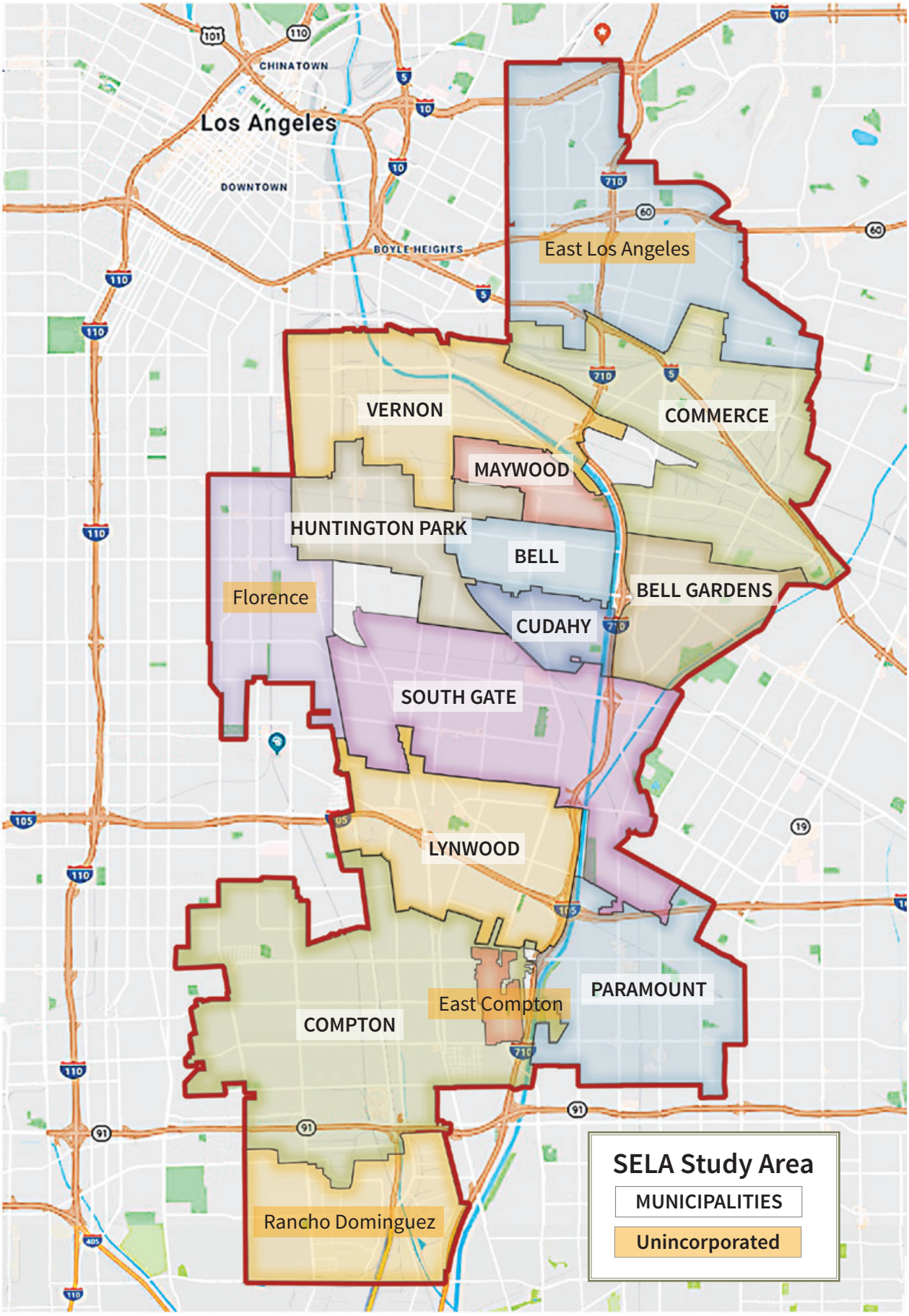
Dr. Raphael J. Sonenshein

Michael R. Kodama
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, *Eco-Rapid Transit*
@EcoRapidTransit

Jorge Morales
COUNCILMEMBER, *City of South Gate*
VICE PRESIDENT, *California Contract Cities Association*
@JorgeMoralesJr

Mark Pestrella
DIRECTOR, *L.A. County Department of Public Works*
@MarkPestrella

Michael Turner
DEPUTY EXECUTIVE OFFICER, *Government Relations, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority*
@metrolosangeles


CHINATOWN
Los Angeles
DOWNTOWN
BOYLE HEIGHTS
East Los Angeles
VERNON
COMMERCE
MAYWOOD
HUNTINGTON PARK
BELL
Florence
BELL GARDENS
CUDAHY
SOUTH GATE
LYNWOOD
PARAMOUNT
East Compton
COMPTON
Rancho Dominguez
SELA Study Area
MUNICIPALITIES
Unincorporated

Measure M and SB1: A New Era for Transportation

Measure M required two-thirds support and was passed by Los Angeles County voters in November 2016 with 71.5% of the vote. The measure provides the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Authority (Metro) with $120 billion over the next 40 years to improve and expand transportation throughout Los Angeles. Through an increase in sales tax, Measure M will expand existing subways and rail lines and build new ones, improve highways, and invest in the bus system and cycling infrastructure. Measure M will also provide cities throughout the County with the resources needed for local transportation projects and programs such as street and pothole repair, sidewalk expansion, and signal synchronization. As Therese McMillan, the Chief Planning Officer of Metro, explained at the Summit, "17% of the Measure M funding, which is called local return, goes back to the cities so they could make decisions at the community level. Metro is not making decisions about that money. There is a lot of flexibility where that money can be spent."

Passed by the California Legislature in April 2017, SB1 raises gasoline taxes and vehicle fees in order to help fund road and bridge repairs, improve traffic safety, and expand public transit throughout the state. As the first gas tax increase in 23 years, SB1 will augment state revenue for transportation by an average of $5.2 billion annually over the next decade. State-maintained transportation infrastructure projects will receive about half of the SB1 revenue; the other half will go to local roads, local planning grants, and matching funds for local agencies. Requiring a two-thirds vote, the project received the support of key state leaders such as Governor Jerry Brown, Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon, and State Senate President Pro Tem Kevin de León. In making the case for SB1, Governor Brown noted that "safe and smooth roads make California a better place to live and strengthen our economy. This legislation will put thousands of people to work."

BY THE NUMBERS

Measure M:

$120 BILLION over the next 40 years from a sales tax to improve and expand LA area transit, including rail, highways, bus systems, and cycling

71.5% of LA County voters approved Measure M in November 2016

17% of monies raised by Measure M go to local cities for community-level decision-making

California SB1:

$5.2 BILLION raised annually from increases in gasoline taxes and vehicle fees to augment current state transportation revenues

50/50 split between State-maintained transit infrastructure projects; and to local roads, local planning grants, and matching funds for local agencies



SELA Transportation: A Research View

The Transportation Summit was built on the premise that sound academic research can inform and empower community stakeholders and illuminate the key decisions that lie ahead for SELA. Helping to frame the conversation for the day, USC Professor **Genevieve Giuliano** presented her research and analysis of SELA's transportation system and the area's socioeconomic profile.* Dr. Giuliano surveyed the Southeast and found that it is an area with:

- A greater percentage of blue-collar jobs (led by manufacturing and warehousing) and a smaller proportion of white-collar jobs than Los Angeles County as a whole;
- Potential to become a key target for development in light of the housing affordability crisis throughout the County and general economic growth;
- High numbers of pedestrian and truck accidents in key safety hot spots;
- Heavy truck activity from industry and the port corridor;
- Higher levels of car pool and public transit use than Los Angeles County generally;
- Bus frequency and on-time performance lower than the County average;
- Commutes shorter than Los Angeles County as a whole, likely due to high job access.

In light of these findings, Giuliano provided her recommendations for enhancing transportation within SELA:

- Improve public transportation by identifying potential realignments and connections for service, adopting strategies to ensure on-time performance, and considering innovative feeder services;
- Planning for density and the gentrification challenge by creating special zones and districts that take into account the varied interests and needs of automobile drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists;
- Preparing for and adopting new communication technologies that could help manage high-volume corridors and improve pedestrian and bicycle safety.

*For Genevieve Giuliano's research report, see *Southeast LA Transportation Study.*



Following Dr. Giuliano's presentation, USC Professor **Manuel Pastor** helped to explain the larger social conditions that have shaped the SELA region:

1. These cities are overwhelmingly Latino and have a large presence of undocumented residents. While the undocumented are a permanent part of the SELA landscape, it is difficult to plan for them because they are not eligible for federal workforce dollars.
2. Because of heavy industrial and transit activity, SELA is especially vulnerable to pollution.
3. Traditionally, the region has lacked political power and received little attention from state officials.

Dr. Pastor added that any effort to improve SELA's transportation system must also identify and prioritize equity goals. Equity, according to Pastor, requires correcting past disadvantages, involving communities in the planning process, and planning for a more inclusive future. This can help to change the image of SELA as a struggling industrial suburb and transform the area into a place where immigrants strive and succeed and young residents increasingly take pride in their communities. Given that other communities throughout Southern California are facing similar transportation challenges, SELA can serve as a model for change.

> "If we change the narrative of SELA to one of hope and thriving and possibility, that is something that is going to attract the positive attention of the rest of the state."
>
> Manuel Pastor
> *USC Professor*



The Research from a Community Perspective



"The buses do not arrive at the times they are scheduled. It happens to me and it happens to my son. The impact is that is that he is late to school. I have decided not to send him on the bus anymore."



Veronica Gonzalez
Member, First 5 LA
Best Start Southeast LA

Responding to the research presentations, SELA residents and activists explained how transportation affects the daily life of the community. **Veronica Gonzalez**, a SELA resident and First 5 LA Best Start member, described her frustrating experiences with public transportation. Gonzalez said the buses in her neighborhood do not arrive according to schedule. This situation has made it quite difficult to get her son to school on time. She asked public officials to consider **adding more buses to local routes** in order to ease daily stress and make the morning commute more reliable.

mark! Lopez of East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice spoke about the work of on-the-ground community organizations that are addressing many of the transportation issues that seem to be threatening quality of life and community health throughout the Southeast. East Yard is involved in the fight against the proposed widening of the 710 freeway to protect SELA residents and businesses from displacement. The organization has also been working to push local leaders and agencies to invest in zero-emission technologies to combat pollution. Underlining the importance of democratizing the planning process and empowering the grass roots, he **encouraged elected officials to look toward and partner with community organizations** like his own that are engaging community members, developing vision, and proposing solutions. East Yard wants to ensure that improvements benefit those who currently live in SELA and do not lead to higher rents, gentrification, and displacement.

"The data clearly show that the folks who need it are the folks who we should be planning for and the folks who need it should be involved in that planning."



mark! Lopez
Executive Director
East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice



Hilary Norton, representing both Fixing Angelenos Stuck in Traffic (FAST) and the Biz Fed Transportation Committee, added that the business community in Los Angeles is undergoing a moment of intense soul searching. It wants to see the County, especially the Southeast, become a more prosperous place and have a healthier workforce. Norton believes that business leaders could help the Southeast thrive by working to correct inequities and investing in local projects that serve the interest of the community. Indeed, the organizations she is affiliated with have made tangible progress in this area by:

- **Advocating for the acceleration of the West Santa Ana Branch line**, which would connect the Southeast to Downtown Los Angles by rail;
- **Supporting the electrification of cars and low-income car-sharing programs;**
- Helping to **ensure access to electric car charging stations;**
- Encouraging the **expansion and the electrification of the bus fleet**.

> "Regional collaboration equals regional prosperity. It is important to make sure that we are all together, we are staying focused."
>
> — Hilary Norton
> *Executive Director, FAST*



Community Voices

Our Summit attendees also provided their impressions of the research that was presented and the panel that followed. They were divided into 26 groups, each with a scribe to help record feedback. Reflecting the diversity of the attendees, there were English-speaking groups and Spanish-speaking groups as well as a youth-focused one, though each discussed and responded to the same three questions about the presentation:

What stood out to you about what was presented today?

"Thinking of all of the pollution on or around the 710"

"The amount of time that it takes for the buses is excessive"

What are the issues and policies that are most important to consider regarding transportation in the region?

"Region is underserved; resources are going elsewhere"

"Increasing the number of buses, routes, and zero-emission/ electrical buses"

What is your position on the recommendations and findings?

"I agree with the findings. But how do we bring the data to life? Where do you find more Veronicas to tell their story?"

"The discussion has been centered on electric vehicles. However, we need to also consider this a gradual process and also support natural gas, especially for commercial vehicles and public transporting."

Q&A

We invited five major transportation decision makers to answer questions and share their knowledge about the future of transportation in SELA. Dr. Raphael J. Sonenshein of the Pat Brown Institute moderated the panel:

"Can transportation help to create jobs and improve economic opportunities for SELA residents?"

"The money that is coming from Metro and SB1 will convert to maintenance and operation jobs. I do believe that will create an increase in jobs generally. I am thinking that because of the decisions that are being made by our elected officials in the County to direct us to focus on local hire and disadvantaged communities, that we would be directing jobs for folks that live in these communities."

Mark Pestrella
Director, LA County Department of Public Works

"Eco-Rapid Transit isn't about the train or the transportation but about where we are going to and how we will make it work for the community members. In terms of concept, we are really an economic development and community development project, connected by train. We want your input to make it work."

Michael Kodama
Executive Director, Eco-Rapid Transit



Eco-Rapid Transit is a joint powers authority created to develop an environmentally friendly and energy-efficient transit system that connects Burbank, Downtown Los Angeles, and the Southeast.

"The reality is upsetting — the jobs coming will not help to sustain this community. When it comes to green jobs, there is a lot of talk about it but they aren't coming here. I do see that there will be a lot of opportunity in the construction world. But as for the jobs that will lead our next generation into being providers, I just don't see it. It is unfortunate."

Jorge Morales
Council Member, City of South Gate
Vice President, California Contract Cities Association

"Finding regional solutions is critical. This area of SELA for many years has been neglected. And the interesting thing that many don't realize is that the area is an economic engine important to the vitality of LA County."

Antonia Hernández
President and Chief Executive Officer
California Community Foundation



"What advice do you have for SELA cities and communities looking to apply for transportation funding?"

"One very important transportation entity is called the Council of Governments, the COG. SELA is part of the Gateway COG. They can be viewed as the first stage for transportation coordination. I would urge everyone here to think about working with your COG."

Therese McMillan
Chief Planning Officer
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Authority

"The LA County Department of Public Works is playing a larger role in regional planning efforts. We can provide resources to locals in terms of applications and making communities aware. Our department can provide that kind of service to the cities. Leverage the County of Los Angeles."

Mark Pestrella
Director, LA County Department of Public Works

"Work together along a corridor so the various cities aren't competing against one another for the funds to support local projects. That is the best project to submit."

Carrie Bowen
District 7 Director
California Department of Transportation

"What I learned today is definitely going to change how I view elected officials as people who are approachable. We should be more willing to reach out to them, to have them reach out to us, and to encourage them to ask us what our concerns are and what kind of changes we want to see in our communities."

Monserrat Ramirez
Political Science Major
Cal State LA



Q&A (continued)

"Why haven't we been able to get to regional collaboration more effectively?"



Alf Brandt
Senior Counsel for
California State Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon

"I can't answer why we have been slow on collaboration. Our issues transcend borders. It is common sense that we should be working together but there were always these competing interests. These days though, collaboration is all we are about."

Jorge Morales
Council Member, City of South Gate
Vice President, California Contract Cities Association

"I keep hearing about equity, collaboration, and transparency in order to move forward with all these initiatives. How can we help put the community at ease when it comes to the decision-making process?"

Jose Chavez
Graduate Student, Cal State LA

"As a local agency, the County of Los Angeles is always looking for citizens to be advising us with the decisions regarding infrastructure and wants you to be involved. A great example is what's happening with AB530 and the Lower LA River master plan; we are engaging this community in the decision-making process with respect to what they want to see. We have adopted a community-first approach with respect to these decisions."

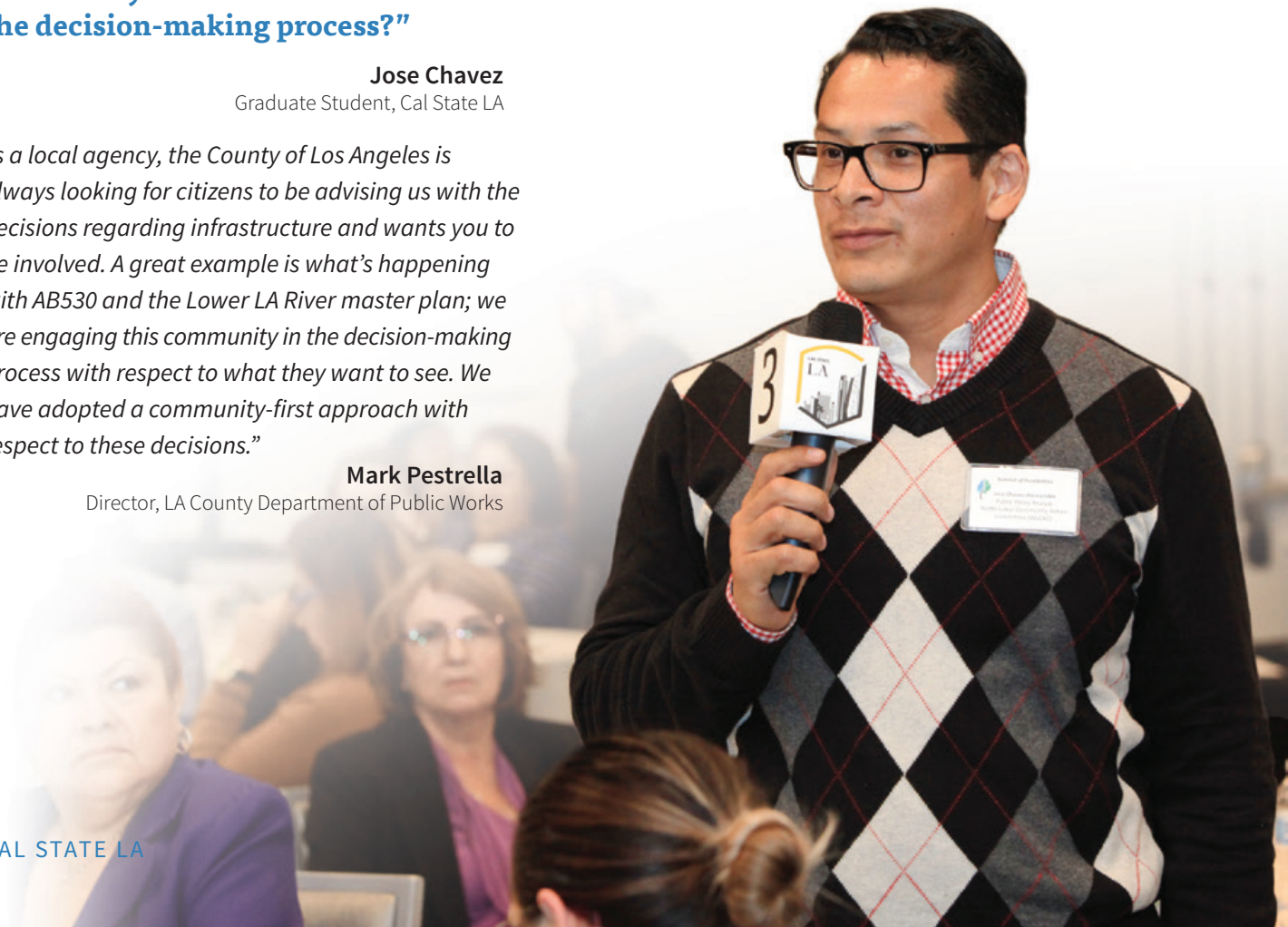
Mark Pestrella
Director, LA County Department of Public Works

"One of the obstacles I have found with Measure M is the local match funding for cities in SELA. The budgets in these cities are very tight. How are you addressing these obstacles?"

Summit Participant

"With Metro, one of the things we have been trying to do is to be as flexible as we can in terms of how certain financial obligations from cities can be met. We have made provisions for communities to pool and redistribute where those contributions come from so a smaller city and larger city can pool their obligations and split them up in a different way; or we will allow investments in those areas to count toward a cash investment."

Therese McMillan
Chief Planning Officer
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Authority

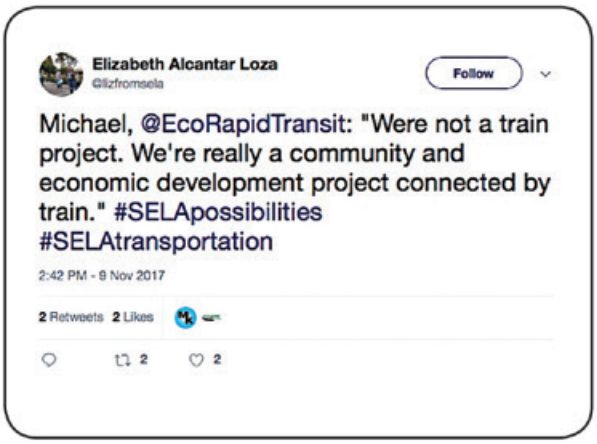


Summit Buzz









Agencies to Contact:

California Contract Cities Association
https://www.contractcities.org ■ (562) 622-5533

California Department of Transportation
http://www.dot.ca.gov ■ (916) 654-2852

Eco-Rapid Transit
http://eco-rapid.org ■ (562) 663-6850

Gateway Cities Council of Governments
http://www.gatewaycog.org ■ (562) 663-6850

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Authority
https://www.metro.net ■ (213) 922-6000

Los Angeles County Department of Public Works
http://dpw.lacounty.gov ■ (626) 458-5100

Local Transportation in the News

Metro Backs Away from Controversial Plan to Widen the 710 Freeway, Opting for More Modest Changes

Los Angeles Times ■ March 1, 2018

In an effort to allay traffic and congestion along the 710 freeway, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's board agreed to rebuild certain intersections and ramps. However, because of protests from local activists concerned about pollution and displacement, Metro is currently reluctant to add new lanes.

California Today: Traffic Is Terrible, but Californians Keep Buying Cars

The New York Times ■ February 6, 2018

Even though Los Angeles County voters supported Measure M to improve and expand the public transit system, Metro ridership is declining. The reason—according to a report from the Institute of Transportation Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles—is that Southern Californians are increasingly purchasing cars.

The Takeaway from the Sudden Death of California's Most Controversial Housing Bill in Years

CalMatters ■ April 17, 2018

Senate Bill 827, which sought to override existing single-family zoning and allow for more apartments and condominium developments near transit stops, was recently defeated in committee. While the bill was meant to address California's housing crisis, its opponents believed that the bill would promote gentrification and residential displacement and took too much power away from local governments. Even so, SB 827's author, Senator Scott Weiner plans to reintroduce a modified version of the bill in 2019.

New Plans Could Reshape 19 Miles of the LA River, from Vernon to Long Beach

Curbed Los Angeles ■ December 14, 2017

The Lower Los Angeles River Working Group, under the leadership of State Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon, recently released its Lower LA River Revitalization Draft Plan. Focusing on a 19-mile stretch of the river from Vernon to Long Beach, the plan includes the development of new walkways, green spaces, and bicycle trails.



"I believe that our communities have the potential to be an economic and cultural hub and that a shared identity as 'the Southeast' is the best way to increase that influence and that success."

Anthony Rendon
Speaker of the California Assembly

About the Summit of Possibilities Partners

The California Community Foundation has served as a public charitable organization since 1915, empowering donors to pursue their personal passions and collaborating with them in addressing the root causes of challenges in Los Angeles County. CCF stewards $1.5 billion in assets and manages nearly 1,600 charitable foundations, funds, and legacies.

The **Pat Brown Institute at Cal State LA,** a presidentially chartered center, is dedicated to the quest for social justice and equality of opportunity, enlightened civic engagement, and an enhanced quality of life for all Californians. The nonpartisan Institute is committed to sustaining the vision and legacy of former California Governor Edmund G. "Pat" Brown through convening public policy forums, engaging multi-sector stakeholders and diverse communities, and conducting timely policy research and community-driven initiatives.

The **Southeast Los Angeles Collaborative** (SELA Collaborative) is a group of stakeholders who have joined together to strengthen Southeast Los Angeles. The mission of the Collaborative is to create an infrastructure in the region capable of supporting the nonprofit sector and the community engagement efforts of residents and organizations, all of which will maximize their power and their ability to more effectively address local issues. By doing so, the Collaborative seeks to foster a community with an informed, engaged, and empowered focus.

CREDITS

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