

INVESTING *in* PLACE

What is a Capital Infrastructure Plan (CIP)? And why does L.A. need one?

Los Angeles doesn't have an overarching plan to guide the way it maintains its public right-of-way. The city needs one.

In this guide you'll learn:

1. What is a Capital Infrastructure Plan (CIP)?
2. Why Los Angeles needs a CIP.
3. How a CIP would help LA improve equity, local hire, and the City's management of public right-of-way.
4. How to find CIPs from 12 cities we've studied.

→ What is a Capital Infrastructure Plan (CIP)?

A Capital Infrastructure Plan, or a CIP, is a long-term plan for a city's infrastructure.

Capital – Infrastructure – Plan

What is a **capital** project? *Portland* defines it as a “project that maintains or improves a City asset.”

What counts as **infrastructure**? *San Diego* defines it as “a complex network of public works such as roads, bridges, airports, parks, facilities, and water utilities,” and other cities also include technology improvements such as broadband internet access.

In other words: all the things that help anyone and everyone (in an ideal world) live fully and move freely.

What kind of **plan**?

A CIP is a planning document that provides a long-term, unified direction for investment in a city's infrastructure – based on a vision for the city that was (ideally) inspired by the people who live there.

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A CIP:

- Covers a city's plan for its major assets
- Lists specific projects and programs
- Includes expected costs and timelines
- Encompasses all relevant sources of funding

The funding information is key.

- **A CIP lists how much infrastructure projects will cost and how they are funded.** This budget transparency allows community stakeholders to take part in the process of improving public infrastructure and to no longer have to rely on having relationships with multiple departments and Council offices to piece together what is happening in their neighborhoods.

How is a CIP created?

- A CIP is typically **informed by an existing long-range plan** (for example, Boston's 5-year CIP is guided by their comprehensive plan *Imagine Boston 2030*). It lists the various infrastructure projects that are either currently underway, or are slated to break ground.
- **CIPs provide opportunities for community input on infrastructure plans and projects.**
 - San Diego has a CIP committee that is required through city council policy to receive community input into the CIP.
 - Pasadena has its citizen commissions (Planning, Transportation Advisory, etc.) go over each aspect of the City Manager's recommended CIP budget before it goes to the finance committee.

→ Why Los Angeles needs a CIP

In 2017, FUSE Fellow Laila Alequresh identified the lack of a **Capital Infrastructure Plan (CIP)** as a leading problem in Los Angeles' management of public space. Her research found that Los Angeles is the only major U.S. city without a CIP.

It's 2022, and there's still no plan. It's time to change that and create a long overdue CIP for the City of Los Angeles.

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The City of LA has roughly \$1 billion each year for public works and transportation (primarily through the local return of four countywide transportation sales taxes), and even more from state and federal funds.

Where does all that money go? The sad, short (and true!) answer is: No one knows.

No one (truly, *no one*) has a clear picture of where BILLIONS of public works and transportation funds in the City of Los Angeles have gone over the years, and there is no publicly accessible funding plan for past, present, or future investments. A CIP can change that.

→ How would a CIP help LA improve equity, local hire, and the City's management of public space? What does a CIP actually do for the City?

- A CIP helps ***distribute power***. Developing and adopting a CIP can distribute power, knowledge, and coordination among agencies, policymakers, and people throughout the city. Without a CIP, it's almost impossible to know about planned projects and/or opportunities.
- A CIP helps ***facilitate local hire***. It has the potential to create jobs. With a forward-looking, committed project list, local job centers and apprenticeships can coordinate to develop a pipeline to ensure local hires and align with upcoming work.
- A CIP ***prioritizes equity***. For too long, the City Council's approach for allocating public works and transportation funds has been to "divide by 15": funds are divided equally among the 15 City Council districts. But equal is not equitable. Many LA neighborhoods have borne multi-generational racism, displacement, violence, segregation, and greed. Without a plan that identifies priorities and projects over the next 10 years, there's no accountability to make sure LA prioritizes the needs of communities of color and low-wage workers, in order to account for this history.
- A CIP ***provides transparency***. Because the City has no overarching plan with project lists, budgets, and a timeline for implementation, the public does not know where our own money goes and to what purpose: we do not know how much each City department gets, and what they are supposed to do with it.

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- A CIP **helps implement the Mobility plan**. In 2015, Los Angeles adopted a new Mobility Plan that included a Bicycle Enhanced Network, a Neighborhood Enhanced Network, a Transit Enhanced Network, and Pedestrian Enhanced Districts. These networks are “aspirational” – meaning they set the vision for modal priorities on corridors, but they require further conceptual design and project development and prioritization. A CIP would turn those mapped networks into plans: specific projects with assigned funding and a timeline for implementation.
- A CIP **enables coordination**. Los Angeles has up to 11 agencies working within the City’s public right-of-way, sometimes working toward the same outcomes but without a coordinated approach. Each bureau and department does things differently, often competing with each other for grants and often pursuing opposing visions for the streets and sidewalks. The CIP would give a clear focus and coordinated project list that everyone is working from.
- A CIP **takes work**. The reason a CIP has never been adopted in Los Angeles when cities like Boston, Chicago, Long Beach, New York, San Diego, and Seattle have one is because it takes work. Once the city decides to do this, financial and operational experts will need to collaborate to untangle decades of processes, data, and tradition. This won’t be easy, but it *can* be done.

→ What about other cities? These are CIPs from 12 cities we’ve studied so far:

- [Atlanta - Capital Improvement Program](#)
- [Boston - Capital Plan](#)
- [Chicago - Five Year Capital Improvement Program](#)
- [DC - Capital Improvements Plan](#)
- [Eugene - Capital Improvement Program](#)
- [Long Beach - Five-Year Infrastructure Investment Plan](#)
- [NYC - Ten Year Capital Strategy](#)
- [Pasadena - Recommended Capital Improvements Program](#)
- [Sacramento - Capital Improvement Program](#)
- [San Diego - Five-Year Capital Infrastructure Planning Outlook](#)
- [San Francisco City and County - Proposed Capital Plan](#)
- [Seattle-Capital Improvement Program](#)