

INVESTING *in* PLACE

September 12, 2023

Subject: Support for Council File [23-0919](#) – Capital Infrastructure Plan

Dear Council members,

I am writing to express support for Council File 23-0919, which sets into motion the development of a Capital Infrastructure Plan (CIP) in collaboration with key city departments. Since 2017, Investing in Place has been committed to this effort, and we believe that a comprehensive, multi-year CIP is urgently needed for the City of Los Angeles.

Background: For nearly a decade, leaders have advocated for a Capital Infrastructure Plan (CIP) in Los Angeles. In 2013, Councilmember Blumenfield initiated a [motion](#) to create a Capital Infrastructure Strategic Plan, aiming to prioritize projects, secure funding, develop mapping tools, and enhance public transparency. The Chief Administrative Office (CAO) committed to forming an interdepartmental working group as part of this motion. A FUSE Fellow was hired, a report was issued, but no further action was taken to advance a CIP.

(Of note: during the same year, "Save Our Streets LA," the \$3 billion bond proposal later turned into a sales tax ballot measure, didn't gain enough support for a 2014 vote, but continued to focus attention on the critical state of Los Angeles' streets.)

In 2021, Investing in Place contributed to a [motion](#) focused on defining and assessing equity in project lists, a key component to any viable CIP. The Chief Administrative Office is currently leading this effort.

Despite these past efforts and more than ten years later, we still lack a comprehensive Capital Infrastructure Plan.

What is needed:

The need for a CIP in Los Angeles has remained clear:

The City of Los Angeles requires a robust, multi-year CIP for our public right-of-way. This plan should encompass all aspects related to streets, sidewalks, trees, and public spaces within a given budget year. Furthermore, it should project funding needs for out-years (typically five to ten years) and incorporate provisions for addressing unfunded requirements and future funding opportunities and grants.

This CIP must extend beyond road surfaces to prioritize the cleanliness and regular maintenance of sidewalks and streets. This vision revolves around a transparent and accessible budgeted plan, ensuring that:

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- Community members, employees, and business owners are informed about what to expect in their neighborhoods, fostering reliability in city services.
- City Council members can align on a citywide vision and funding strategy.
- City staff benefit from a clear, multi-year work plan.

Our research, shaped by on-going discussions throughout the city and extensive data analysis from more than [30 CIPs from cities around the country](#), identifies three crucial initial steps for launching a successful CIP in Los Angeles:

1. **Develop, articulate, and adopt a vision:** for the streets and sidewalks that incorporates all competing uses this critical public space contains. Policymakers need to agree on outcomes the city wants to achieve in the public right-of-way over the next several years.
2. **Asset Inventory and Assessment:** Collect *all* department and bureau asset management inventories, starting with the five Public Works Bureaus and Department of Transportation. The City needs to inventory assets to understand the scale and conditions.
3. **Coordinate Planning Efforts:** Identify all of the existing, disconnected, and often conflicting efforts to plan for the public right-of-way from various city entities.

We continue to engage with community and business leaders across the City to explore opportunities and address challenges associated with tailoring a CIP to Los Angeles' distinctive needs. Simultaneously, we are conducting outreach to the general public through surveys, interviews, and community events such as LA Playstreets, CicLAvia, and at the upcoming Congress of Neighborhood Councils to capture valuable input and feedback directly from people who live and work in Los Angeles.

Our ongoing efforts build upon insights from our reports, "[The Bus Stops Here](#)" and "[We've Got LA's Number](#)," which underscore the need for comprehensive infrastructure planning in our city. We stand ready to collaborate with the Council and share our findings as we work to amplify the voices and priorities of community members throughout Los Angeles.

The City of Los Angeles urgently requires a multi-year CIP for our public right-of-way, incorporating transparency, accountability, and community engagement, and we look forward to working with the city to make this happen for all Angelenos.

Sincerely,



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