

AGENDA
ITEM

13



CALEXICO *California*

WHERE CALIFORNIA AND MEXICO MEET

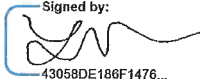
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CITY COUNCIL AGENDA STAFF REPORT

DATE: January 21, 2026

TO: Mayor and City Council

APPROVED BY: Benjamin Martinez, City Manager

PREPARED BY: Councilmember Lisa Tylenda 

SUBJECT: Request to Prioritize and Reallocate Local Transportation Authority (LTA) Funds for Street and Infrastructure Improvements in the Downtown Core, Around Schools, and Surrounding Churches, Including a "Light-Up-Downtown" Safety Initiative.

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I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this item is to request City Council direction to:

1. Prioritize the use of Local Transportation Authority (LTA) funds received through the Imperial County Transportation Commission (ICTC) for street and alley improvements in the downtown core, road and pedestrian infrastructure improvements around churches and schools, and safety-related improvements for school children who walk from the border to nearby schools.
2. Direct staff to evaluate and reallocate existing eligible LTA funds toward these priorities.
3. Direct staff to evaluate whether LTA funds may be used to support a "Light-Up-Downtown" safety and beautification campaign focused on alleyways, sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, and designated school routes.

II. BACKGROUND

Calexico's downtown core, surrounding churches, and schools experience heavy pedestrian, vehicular, and cross-border movement, especially during school commute hours. The infrastructure in these areas, including roads, alleys, sidewalks, and crosswalks, is in critical disrepair and lacks adequate lighting and safety features.

These conditions reduce walkability, create safety risks for students and families, deter private investment and economic activity downtown, negatively impact tourism and perception for border crossers, and limit the City's ability to revitalize its historic core.

The City currently receives Local Transportation Authority (LTA) Measure D funds via ICTC. These funds are eligible for street, road, and transportation-related improvements, making them an appropriate tool for the objectives described herein.

III. DISCUSSION

A. Infrastructure Priorities

Councilmembers Tylenda and Nuricumbo believe LTA funds should be prioritized for:

- Street rehabilitation and overlays downtown
- Sidewalk repairs and ADA improvements
- Alleyway grading and paving
- Crosswalk and pedestrian markings
- Traffic-calming elements around schools and churches
- Street lighting enhancements

Such improvements would benefit:

- ✓ Public safety
- ✓ School children walking to and from the border
- ✓ Residents accessing churches and community facilities
- ✓ Economic development and downtown businesses
- ✓ Tourism and pedestrian traffic
- ✓ Cleanliness and visual appeal

B. "Light-Up-Downtown" Safety Campaign Proposal

In addition to roadway improvements, the Councilmembers propose exploring a "Light-Up-Downtown" initiative utilizing LTA funds (if eligible), aimed at:

- Installing or upgrading alley lighting
- Decorative overhead string lighting in commercial corridors
- Wayfinding signage for pedestrians
- "Safe Route to School" sidewalk decals and safety markings
- Public art or future "Alleyways of Art" activations

The initiative would focus on the daily schoolchildren walking from the U.S.–Mexico Port of Entry to surrounding schools, some within walking distance. Improvements would create clearly marked safe routes, improve visibility and pedestrian safety, enhance the perception of safety in alleys and crossings, support downtown revitalization efforts, and attract future private and cultural investment.

C. Potential Partnerships

Councilmembers request that the City evaluate partnerships with regional agencies and community-based organizations—including but not limited to:

- Imperial Irrigation District (IID)
- Comité Cívico del Valle
- Imperial County Board of Supervisors
- ICTC

- Local schools and school districts
- Calexico business and faith communities
- Local arts groups

These partnerships may contribute funding, materials, workforce, or technical support.

IV. FISCAL CONSIDERATIONS

The City currently receives annual LTA allocations that can potentially be reprioritized or accelerated for use on street rehabilitation, sidewalk projects, lighting and safety infrastructure, and mobility and accessibility enhancements. Council direction is required to evaluate current obligations, available balances, and future-year allocations.

V. REQUESTED ACTIONS

Councilmembers Tylenda and Nuricumbo respectfully request that the City Council:

1. Discuss the proposal to prioritize LTA funds for downtown, church-adjacent, and school-adjacent infrastructure improvements; and
2. Direct staff to evaluate current and future LTA allocations to determine available balances and funding eligibility; and
3. Direct staff to return with options to reallocate or reprioritize LTA funds toward these improvements and establish a "Light-Up-Downtown" initiative; and
4. Direct staff to explore and coordinate with IID, ICTC, Comité Cívico, Imperial County officials, schools, and other stakeholders to support and potentially co-sponsor lighting, signage, and pedestrian safety enhancements.

VI. CONCLUSION

Reallocating and prioritizing LTA funding will enhance public safety for schoolchildren and families, support faith-based and community institutions, revitalize and beautify the downtown core, improve economic development potential, increase pedestrian visibility and perception of safety, and prepare the City for future cultural and artistic activation of alleyways.

Coordinated With:

None

Attachment(s):

1. None