

FREEWAYS DO NOT NEED TO BE “FINISHED”

Freeway and expressway revolts

Excerpt from Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freeway_and_expressway_revolts

The freeway revolts (sometimes expressway revolts) were a phenomenon encountered in developed countries in the 1960s and 1970s, in which planned freeway construction in many cities was halted due to widespread public opposition; especially of those whose neighborhoods would be disrupted or displaced by the proposed freeways, and due to various other negative effects that freeways are considered to have.

Such "revolts" occurred mainly in American cities, such as Baltimore, Boston, Cleveland, Los Angeles, Memphis, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, New Orleans, New York, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Portland, San Francisco, Seattle, and Washington, D.C. In many cities, there remain unused highways, abruptly-terminating freeway alignments, and short stretches of freeway in the middle of nowhere, all of which are evidence of larger projects which were never completed.

In Canada, similar revolts occurred in Vancouver, Toronto, Halifax, and Montreal. Road protest in the United Kingdom occurred since the 1960s, and in Australia protests on a smaller scale occurred later in the 1970s.

Background

After World War II, there was a major drive to build a freeway network in the United States, including (but not limited to) the Interstate Highway System. Design and construction began in earnest in the 1950s, and many cities (as well as rural areas) were subjected to the bulldozer. However, many of the proposed freeway routes were drawn up without considering local interest; in many cases the construction of the freeway system was considered a regional (or national) issue which trumped local concerns.

Starting in 1956, in San Francisco, when many neighborhood activists became aware of the effect that freeway construction was having on local neighborhoods, effective city opposition to many freeway routes in many cities was raised; this led to the modification or cancellation of many proposed routes. The freeway revolts continued into the 1970s, further enhanced by concern over the energy crisis and rising fuel costs, as well as a growing environmentalist movement. Responding to massive anti-highway protests in Boston in 1970,[1] Governor Francis W. Sargent of Massachusetts ordered a halt to planning and construction of all planned expressways inside the Route 128 loop highway, with the exception of the remaining segments of the Central Artery. However, some proposals for controlled-access freeways have been debated and finalized as a compromise to build them as at-grade expressways.

Los Angeles

The Laurel Canyon Freeway (SR 170) would have been aligned through western Hollywood, the Mid-City West area, and western Inglewood en route to its terminus at the San Diego Freeway (I-405) near Los Angeles International Airport. It was scrapped in the face of community opposition

from these districts and its namesake Laurel Canyon. Only the portion traversing the Baldwin Hills was finished, later being designated as La Cienega Boulevard. _

The Beverly Hills Freeway (SR 2) would have run from the Hollywood Freeway (US 101) in southern Hollywood to the San Diego Freeway (I-405) in Westwood along the alignment of Melrose Avenue and Santa Monica Boulevard. It went through several proposed iterations including a cut-and-cover tunnel before its mid-1970s abandonment in the face of opposition from residents of Beverly Hills, the Fairfax District, and Hancock Park. Caltrans acquired and cleared the land needed for the freeway in the city of Beverly Hills; the right-of-way later became a long greenway. _

The Slauson Freeway (SR 90), originally known as the Richard M. Nixon Freeway and intended to run across southern Los Angeles and northern Orange counties between the Pacific Coast Highway (SR 1) and Riverside (SR 91), was truncated as a result of opposition to its construction through South Central Los Angeles. The only portions completed to freeway level are the short Marina Freeway that runs between Marina del Rey and southern Culver City and the Richard M. Nixon Parkway in Yorba Linda. _

The Glendale Freeway (SR 2) terminates roughly 1.5 miles (2.4 km) northeast of its intended terminus at the Hollywood Freeway (US 101), due to opposition from residents of Silver Lake.

The Pacific Coast Freeway (SR 1) would have upgraded the existing Pacific Coast Highway to freeway standards. Opposition by residents of Malibu, Santa Monica, and the coastal cities of the South Bay region led to the project's abandonment. One segment, between Oxnard and the Point Mugu Naval Air Station, was built in the 1960s before the project was abandoned.

The Redondo Beach Freeway (SR 91) would have linked the Pacific Coast Freeway in Redondo Beach or the San Diego Freeway (I-405) in Torrance to the Long Beach Freeway (I-710). Opposition by Redondo Beach and Torrance led to its truncation to its current terminus at the Harbor Freeway (I-110) in Gardena; the California legislature subsequently renamed it the Gardena Freeway.

The Century Freeway (I-105), itself the subject of an unsuccessful freeway revolt in Hawthorne, South Central Los Angeles, Lynwood, and Downey that lasted nearly two decades, was truncated at the San Gabriel River Freeway (I-605) instead of its intended terminus at the Santa Ana Freeway (I-5) due to opposition from the city of Norwalk. One of the compromises allowing the freeway to be built caused the inclusion of a mass transit line in the freeway median. This is the LACMTA Green Line, which opened with the freeway in 1995.

The Long Beach Freeway (I-710) was originally intended to go from the port complex all the way north to Pasadena, linking up with the Ventura and Foothill Freeways (SR 134 & I-210), completing a bypass of Downtown Los Angeles to the east. The freeway was completed to just past I-10 in Alhambra, and a half-mile stub was built in Pasadena (still unsigned, but officially SR 710). Opposition came from the small city of South Pasadena which would have been cut in half, impacting its small but lively downtown. A six mile (10 km) gap currently exists and Caltrans is still attempting to build some sort of link, the latest idea of which has been a pair of tunnels.

Opposition to the building of the 710 extension through South Pasadena has, for some 30 years, resulted in the suspension of plans to build an extension from the 210 freeway through West Pasadena and South Pasadena. The ramps exist and a stub is in place at California Avenue, but much of the land taken for the freeway has been resold by Caltrans to private parties. In 2006, the idea of completing the freeway by means of an underground tunnel was first proposed. This idea is currently under a funded study by the LACMTA.

A proposed rehabilitation and widening of the aged Long Beach Freeway (I-710) between the Pomona (SR 60) and San Diego (I-405) freeways, which would have removed over 2000 residences in five cities and one unincorporated area, generated such opposition that Caltrans and the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) abandoned it within days of its unveiling in 2004. Caltrans and MTA have issued a new plan that would use MTA-owned utility right-of-way along the Los Angeles River and require the taking of fewer than ten residences.

During the 1980s, Caltrans proposed extending the Orange Freeway (SR 57) from its terminus at the "Orange Crush" interchange to the San Diego Freeway (I-405) by means of an elevated alignment along the bed of the Santa Ana River. Pressure from environmental groups led Caltrans and the Orange County Transportation Authority to abandon the plan.

The portion of the Foothill Freeway (I-210) running through the Crescenta Valley was not completed until the early 1980s, largely due to opposition by the wealthy city of La Cañada Flintridge. As part of the legal settlement allowing for the freeway's construction, it was built so far below grade that two creeks crossing its alignment traverse the freeway by means of aqueducts.