



OPPOSITION GROUPS (PARTIAL LIST)

Caltrans Tenants of the 710 Corridor
Natural Resources Defense Council
East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice
Glassell Park Improvement Association
Far North Glendale Homeowners Association
Crescenta Valley Town Council
La Canada Unified School District
LA RED, El Sereno

GREEN SCISSORS 2011 REPORT GROUPS

Friends of the Earth
Taxpayers for Common Sense
The Heartland Institute
Public Citizen

**LOS ANGELES
NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS**

Arroyo Seco
Eagle Rock
El Sereno
Glassell Park
Highland Park
Sunland - Tujunga

CITIES

City of Glendale
City of Los Angeles
City of La Canada Flintridge
City of South Pasadena

INJUNCTION PLAINTIFFS

City of South Pasadena
Sierra Club
National Trust for Historic Preservation
California Preservation Foundation
Los Angeles Conservancy
Pasadena Heritage
South Pasadena Preservation Foundation
South Pasadena Unified School District
City of South Pasadena

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April 23, 2012

Congressman Adam Schiff
87 North Raymond Avenue, Suite 800
Pasadena, CA 91103

Dear Congressman Schiff,

Thank you for all of your past attention to the regional transportation issue we have here in northeast Los Angeles, the so called SR-710 "North Gap Closure." We appreciate your commitment to a fair and balanced approach by supporting the route-neutral Geotechnical Feasibility study, requiring a full cost-benefit analysis of the project, and insisting that the agencies explore a broad range of transportation options to relieve congestion that have equal or lower costs than a tunnel. We had hoped that with your strong influence, the affected communities would be able to present our ideas about alternatives to Metro and Caltrans and be heard. Sadly, this is not the scenario for this project; not in the least. Metro, Caltrans, and the Ports are more determined than ever to complete this extremely expensive and damaging freeway project via the Meridian route, in order to expand the level of goods movement from the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach by truck.

In support of this effort, the Southern California Association of Governments recently adopted its 2012 Regional Transportation Plan that specifies the SR-710 North Extension in the Constrained Plan as a tunnel with a cost of \$5.636 billion and includes revenue projections from tolls (See Highways and Arterials, PDF page 5, shown as page 3 and Executive Summary, PDF page 9, shown as page 7 at <http://rtpscs.scag.ca.gov/Pages/2012-2035-RTP-SCS.aspx>.) This inclusion of the tunnel in the Constrained Plan is highly inappropriate as the alternatives for study have not even been selected and there is no money appropriated for the project other than the Measure R money to study it. By placing the toll tunnel in the Constrained Plan, SCAG is attesting that funding for the SR-710 North Extension is "committed, available, or reasonably available"; however, this assertion is not supported by any evidence. No private partner has stepped forward with a written commitment to fund the tunnel, and no federal or state funds are available either. Once again, this proves that transportation officials throughout the County are not even considering viable options at the Ports like the SkyStorage GRID system for direct off-loading of ships to rail or MegaRail, a dual-mode CNG truck/electric rail system with trams that can go to inter-modal centers outside the city or leave the rails at any point to operate on streets like trucks.

Our group, the No 710 Action Committee, has been working right along side our elected officials and local leaders, promoting common sense solutions -- from small ideas to reduce congestion to grand ideas to revamp our shipping systems -- to fix all of our transportation problems. We see the congestion at the Ports and the future growth projections in commerce as the sole motivation behind the push to widen the 710 on the south and to extend the 710 on the north. These two projects coupled with the Southern California

International Gateway and High Desert Corridor further show a continued commitment by our transportation leaders to handle freight containers by truck rather than more efficiently with rail or other means.

The No 710 Action Committee is not a NIMBY group that does not want a tunnel in our own particular neighborhoods. We are a cross-jurisdictional collection of residents, business owners, healthcare professionals, tunnel experts, researchers, and community leaders representing most of the cities in the northeast. We are promoting fiscal responsibility and environmental forward-thinking to decision makers when they consider projects for the region. We are happy to work with Metro, Caltrans and their consultants to that end but they are not listening and frankly, are not playing fair.

We are particularly concerned that the agencies are downplaying the cost of the proposed tunnel, to gain more interest from PPP investors. When a contingent from our membership met with Metro and InfraConsult, the financial consultants on the project, we learned that their cost estimate of \$3.25 billion was based solely on the Alaskan Way Tunnel (Seattle) project bid using a cost per linear mile (\$840 million/mile) for boring only, without extras. The estimate was not based on a completed project with cost overruns. We all know that the Big Dig in Boston, at 3.5 miles long, was bid at \$2.8 billion then came in over \$20 billion at the end. The Meridian route is 4.5 miles which would make it the longest road tunnel ever built in the U.S and it is estimated by our professionals at well over InfraConsult's or SCAG's estimates.

See Metro's Planning & Programming Committee, PPP Program, Item 15, dated 4-18-12 at http://www.metro.net/board/items/2012/04_April/20120418P&PItem15.pdf) that will likely be brought to the Board soon. Here you will see the plan outlining P3 funding/bundling strategies for the SR 710 Gap Closure Project, along with the I-710 Freight Corridor and the High Desert Corridor. You will note on PDF page 46 (shown as page 18, Infraconsult Exec Summary, Attachment B), that it states that the SR 710 North Tunnel will have \$4.09 billion in total capital construction costs, a completion date of 2022, an annual average daily traffic volume of 190,000 vehicles (35% diversion rate) by 2030 and a \$5 starting toll escalating by 3% per year.

This paragraph on PDF page 18 (shown as page 10, LACMTA PPP, Attachment A) is particularly noteworthy:

"The SR 710 Gap Closure Project will be a 5 mile connection between the 1-10 and the I-210 Freeway to the north. While the environmental and engineering studies currently underway by Metro will result in a final ROD and preferred alternative for the project, a nominal tunnel project has been assumed for undertaking the P3 business planning process. As a P3, this project would be recommended to be undertaken as a toll concession, with the concessionaire taking toll revenue risk, owing to the projected financial strength of the toll revenue stream. As a "gap closure" rather than a "greenfield" project, traffic volumes – and hence toll revenue – are projected to be extremely high from opening day forward. The Business Plan concludes that there is a strong likelihood the SR 710 Gap Closure Project will be successful in attracting a DBFOM consortium to implement and operate the project at a cost to Metro less than that allocated in the Measure R Program."

For the Alternatives Analysis portion of the EIR, three bodies have been formed to provide the EIR consultant (and tunnel builder), CH2MHill, with feedback and recommendations. A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), comprised of city staffers and lobbyists, has been meeting since January and was initially presented with a list of 42 alternatives to consider. Metro's outreach team also formed a Stakeholder Outreach Advisory Committee (SOAC), comprised of planners, transportation and town council members. In addition, the general public and business owners are to be represented by Community Liaison Councils (CLC) from the communities in the study area. Notably absent from this committee structure is an opportunity for the elected officials of cities within the study area to participate. In fact, in a letter inviting cities to nominate members for the SOAC, Metro specifically excluded elected officials from participation.

At the most recent meeting of the TAC, the consultants proposed a narrowing of the alternatives to: one surface and three tunnel freeway options in Zone 2 and 3 (one option wasn't even included in the Geotechnical Feasibility Study), one tunnel rail alternative via the Meridian route in Zone 3, two bus rapid transit routes, and two arterial improvements. The SOAC and the CLCs have not even met yet, let alone had the opportunity to offer ideas, consider any proposals, collect community input, or provide feedback on the original list of 42 alternatives. This is unacceptable and extremely frustrating.

We are writing to you today to let you know about this situation, should you wish to send a representative to join the next TAC meeting to check up on the progress of the EIR. It will be held on:

Wednesday, May 9, 2012 at 1:00 pm

Metro, One Gateway Plaza, UCR Room, Los Angeles, CA 90012

- We can confirm the date and time that week in case there are changes.

If you would like to attend the Metro Board meeting this week, it will be held on:

Thursday, April 26 at 9:00 am

Metro, One Gateway Plaza, Board Room, Third Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90012

- The agenda is posted at <http://www.metro.net/about/meetings/board/rbm-0426-2012/agenda/> and it does not appear that Item 15 will be presented.

We will also be happy to send additional support materials you need beforehand to bring you up to speed. We are attaching the list of alternatives as proposed by CH2MHill and the analysis recommending the narrowing of the choices. We also have a great deal of research at our fingertips including an interview last year with Doug Failing, Metro Executive Director by a Long Beach news outlet, <http://www.everythinglongbeach.com/metro-transportation-projects-2011/> (see: Transportation from The Ports) in which Failing states that the two 710 freeway projects and the High Desert Corridor are for goods movement. The TAC is being told that the Purpose and Need discussion will only address commuter traffic without trucks because modeling shows that only 3% of trucks will choose to use the new route. This appears to be a complete deception, or at the very least, a distraction to the participants.

We appreciate all that you have done over the years on behalf of Los Angeles County and look forward to continuing your relationship with us in the future. This is your home too. If there is anything that our grassroots group can do to help you, please let us know. Representatives from our group would like to meet with you this week while you are in town. We would be happy to quickly pull together a meeting at your convenience to discuss this matter.

Sincerely,

No 710 Action Committee