

M e m o r a n d u m

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS

CTC Meeting: June 25, 2015

Reference No.: 2.2b (1)
Action

From: WILL KEMPTON
Executive Director

Subject: **COMMENTS ON DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE STATE ROUTE 710 NORTH STUDY PROJECT**

ISSUE:

Should the Commission, as a Responsible Agency, provide comments in response to the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the State Route 710 North Study Project located in Los Angeles County?

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Commission make no comments regarding the environmental issues addressed in the DEIR. However, staff recommends that a letter be sent to Caltrans that states the following:

- The Commission has no comments with respect to the alternatives or environmental impacts addressed in the DEIR.
- The final environmental document should not be brought forward to the Commission for project funding decisions or other purposes until a cost benefit analysis is distributed through a process that ensures sufficient opportunity for the public to review and provide comment.
- Early communication and coordination with the Commission is encouraged if it is anticipated that the Commission will be requested to approve the project for delivery through a public private partnership or for construction approval to allow for financing and tolling approval by the California Transportation Financing Authority.
- If, in the future, funds or other actions under the purview of the Commission are anticipated, notification should be provided to the Commission as a Responsible Agency.

BACKGROUND:

Caltrans is the designated CEQA Lead Agency responsible for this project. The DEIR can be viewed at http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist07/resources/envdocs/docs/710study/draft_eir-eis/.

Attachment:
Draft letter to Caltrans

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CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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June 25, 2015

Mr. Garrett Damrath,
California Department of Transportation, District 7
Division of Environmental Planning
100 S. Main Street, MS-16A
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Draft Environmental Impact Report/Draft Environmental Impact Statement for SR 710
North Study Project, 07-LA-710

Dear Mr. Damrath,

The California Transportation Commission (Commission), received the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) prepared by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) for the State Route 710 North Study Project in Los Angeles County. The DEIR examined the potential environmental impacts of the alternatives being considered for the SR 710 North Study. The DEIR identified a No-Build alternative and four build alternatives that are under consideration. The estimated project cost ranges from \$105 million to \$5.650 billion, depending on the alternative selected.

The Commission has no comments pertaining to the environmental impacts or the alternatives considered in the DEIR. However, the final environmental document should not be brought forward to the Commission for project funding decisions or other purposes until a cost benefit analysis is distributed through a process that ensures sufficient opportunity for the public to review and provide comment.

The Commission also recommends Caltrans and its partners ensure early communication and coordination with the Commission in the event it is anticipated that the Commission will be requested to approve the project for delivery through a public private partnership procurement consistent with provisions of Senate Bill 4 (SBX2 4, Statutes of 2009), or for construction approval to allow for financing and tolling approval by the California Transportation Financing Authority as provided for in Assembly Bill 798 (AB 798, Statutes of 2009).

The Commission should be notified as soon as the environmental process is complete since the Commission cannot allocate funds to a project for design, right of way, or construction until the final environmental document is complete and the Commission has considered the environmental impacts of the project and approved the environmentally cleared project for future consideration of funding.

If you have any questions, please contact Teresa Favila, Senior Transportation Planner, at (916) 653-2064.

Sincerely,

WILL KEMPTON
Executive Director

c: Katrina Pierce, Chief, Caltrans Division of Environmental Analysis

Memorandum

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS
CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CTC Meeting: June 25, 2015

Reference No.: 2.2b.(1)
Action Item

From: NORMA ORTEGA
Chief Financial Officer

Prepared by: Katrina C. Pierce, Chief
Division of
Environmental Analysis

Subject: **COMMENTS ON DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**

RECOMMENDATION:

That the California Department of Transportation (Department) recommends that the California Transportation Commission (Commission) review and comment at the May Commission meeting on the following Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR):

ISSUE:

07-LA-710, PM 26.7/32.1T

This project in Los Angeles County will study ways to improve the efficiency of the freeway and transit networks and reduce congestion on arterials on State Route 710, while minimizing the environmental impacts. The project is not fully funded. The project has \$780,000,000 in local funding available and the agency is working to identify additional funds. Depending on the alternative selected, the total estimated project cost is between \$105,000,000 and \$5,650,000,000.

Alternatives considered for the proposed project include:

- Transportation System Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM) Alternative : This alternative consists of strategies and improvements to increase efficiency and capacity for all modes in the transportation system with lower capital cost investments and/or lower potential impacts. TSM strategies include Intelligent Transportation Systems, local street and intersection improvements, and Active Traffic Management. The TDM strategies include expanded bus service, bus service improvements, and bicycle improvements. (\$105,000,000)
- Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Alternative: This alternative would provide high-speed high-frequency bus service through a combination of new and existing dedicated bus lanes, and mixed-flow traffic lanes to key destinations between Los Angeles and Pasadena. (\$241,000,000)
- Light Rail Transit (LRT) Alternative: This alternative would include passenger rail

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operated along a dedicated guideway similar to other Metro light rail lines. The LRT Alternative would begin on Mednik Avenue adjacent to the existing East Los Angeles Civic Center Station on the Metro Gold Line and end at Raymond Avenue, adjacent to the existing Fillmore Station on the Metro Gold Line. (\$2,420,000,000)

- Freeway Tunnel Alternative: This alternative would start at the existing southern stub of State Route 710 (SR-710) in Alhambra, just north of Interstate 10, and connect to the existing northern stub of SR 710, south of the Interstate 210/State Route 134 interchange in Pasadena. The Freeway Tunnel Alternative has two design variations: a dual-bore tunnel (\$5,650,000,000) and a single-bore tunnel (\$3,150,000,000).
- No Build Alternative.

The decision to prepare an EIR was made due to the scope of the project, the substantial amount of public controversy surrounding the project, and the anticipated significant impacts to environmental resources associated with the project. Impacts of the project include:

- Cultural Resources
- Transportation and Traffic
- Land Use and Planning
- Visual/Aesthetics
- Cumulative Impacts

The proposed project includes measures to minimize harm and an Environmental Commitment Record has been prepared and is included in the DEIR.

Attachment

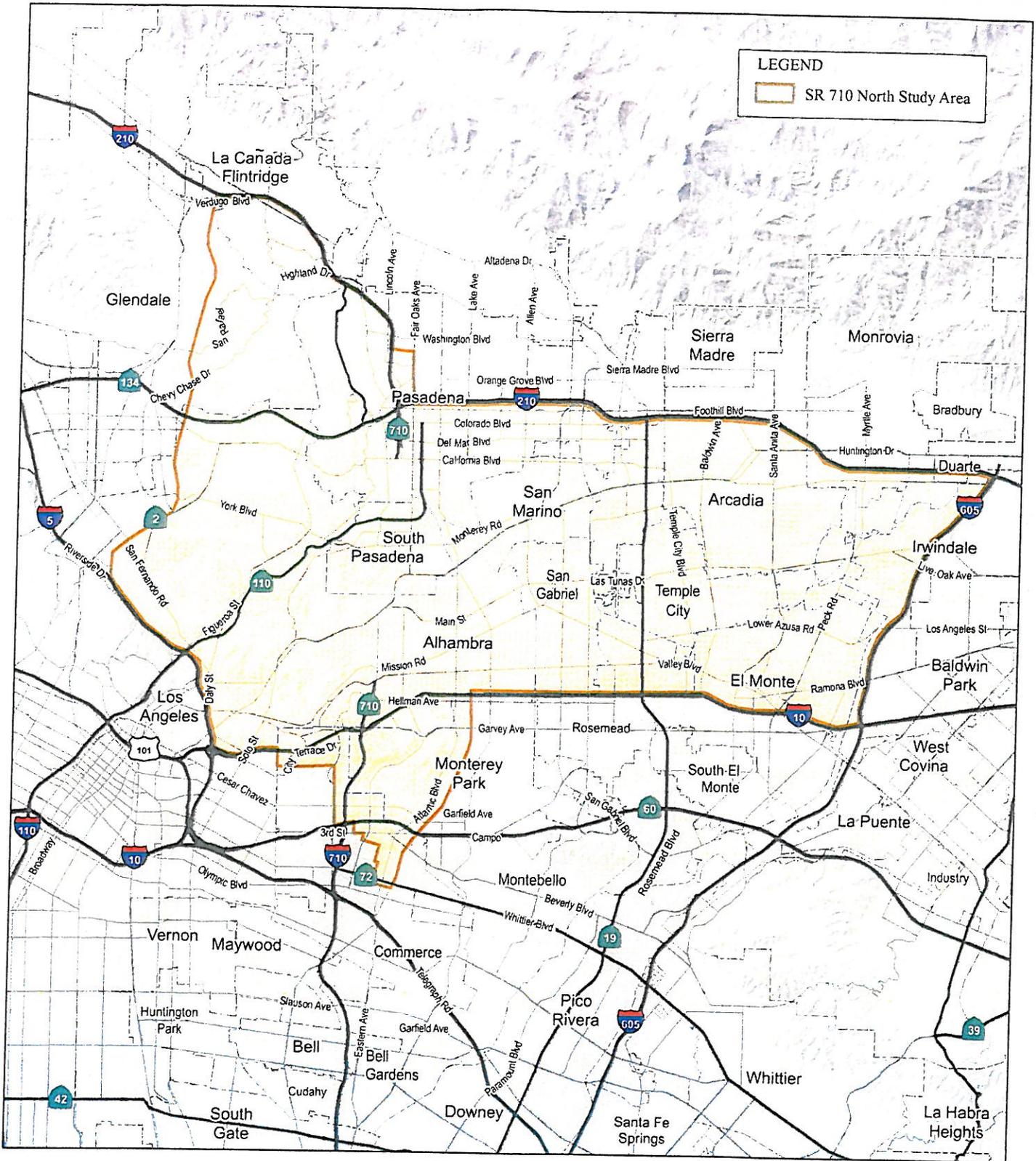


Figure ES-1: SR 710 North Study Area