

March 9, 2015

The Honorable Bill Bogaard
Mayor, City of Pasadena

Mr. Michael Beck
City Manager, City of Pasadena
100 North Garfield Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91109

Subject: SR-710 Alternatives Working Group

Dear Mayor Bogaard & Mr. Beck:

As members of the State Route (SR) 710 Alternatives Working Group, which was convened in September 2014, we have concluded a series of meetings to identify an “Alternative that is best for Pasadena” for consideration when Metro releases the SR-710 Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) / Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Our membership includes Geoffrey Baum, Joel Bryant, Alan Clelland, Sarah Gavit, David Grannis, Jennifer Higginbotham and Stephen Acker. Our committee was staffed by Fred Dock and Bahman Janka.

Our discussions began with an effort to identify and reliably evaluate the mobility needs that exist, and thereafter how best to meet the needs in a manner consistent with Pasadena’s history and character. A consensus was reached that a priority of any proposal should be on moving people, rather than vehicles. Other important priorities identified included ensuring consistency with Pasadena’s General Plan, enhancing travel options for underserved communities, improving safety, minimizing environmental impacts, reducing surface street traffic, and providing transportation choices to the public.

There is general agreement that the Pasadena Preferred Alternative to the SR-710 Project be a multi-modal alternative with the following elements:

1. Light Rail Transit (LRT)
2. Expanded Bus Service
3. Local Street Network (LSN) Improvements, and
4. Bicycle Transit.

This multi-mode alternative may include variations on the LRT, BRT and Transportation System Management (TSM) / Transportation Demand Management (TDM) alternatives considered in the SR-710 Project Alternatives Analysis Report; however, we believe that there are also other meaningful options that have yet to be considered. This includes, but is not limited to a BRT line along the Rosemead corridor and an east-west LRT or BRT connecting the current

Gold Line to points west in Glendale and Burbank. Because of rapid advances in transportation technology, there was also general agreement that smarter utilization of existing roadways can be made, and that opportunities exist to more effectively move people in the study corridor through introduction and use of new technologies and operational enhancements.

There were several other areas of agreement. Any proposal should recognize the need to preserve and protect local neighborhoods as new transit routes are developed, so that options such as BRT and LRT do not negatively impact residential neighborhoods. Regional or high density population areas should be served and special attention be given to ensuring connectivity to both the existing and the planned local and regional transportation network to address the challenge of making public transportation convenient and accessible. These solutions should leverage current and planned transit investments by Metro.

Specific concerns were expressed by members of the committee about certain topics. No additional at-grade LRT road crossings should occur in view of the adverse impacts that the Gold Line street-level crossings have had on mobility. Furthermore, at-grade LRT crossings are a safety concern. Any LRT that does enter Pasadena should connect directly to the existing Gold Line as any proposal that does not do so, even if separated by a mere block or two, would be an added burden on Pasadena's streets. Additional parking should be considered at the Fillmore Station and adequate transit security is an ongoing necessity. Also, the conditions that have resulted from the SR-710 stub area excavation should be addressed to improve safety and the Pasadena street network.

Finally, the Working Group concludes that the proposed tunnel is **not** a preferred alternative for Pasadena. Moreover, whether the tunnel proposal would reduce congestion and north-south corridor travel times rather than simply shift existing traffic onto a newly created route without measurable improvements to the network or positive impact on local traffic in Pasadena could not be determined. As an example, recent increases in transit ridership call for a reassessment of traffic forecasts. This should be the subject of careful analysis based on the Draft EIR/EIS.

A more detailed report regarding our suggestions briefly summarized in this letter will be provided to you no later than April 6, 2015 to assist the City in its technical review of the Draft EIR.

Thank you for the opportunity to conduct this interesting and important evaluation process. We look forward to discussing our work with you.

State Route 710 Alternatives Working Group

cc: Members of the City Council
Fred Dock, Director of Transportation