



Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL

June 17, 2002

FROM: PASADENA SR 710 DESIGN ADVISORY GROUP

SUBJECT: SR 710 MITIGATION PROJECTS AUTHORIZED BY HR 5394

RECOMMENDATION

The Pasadena SR 710 Design Advisory Group (DAG), supports the following list of projects for funding under the U.S. Congress Bill H.R. 5394, which has appropriated \$24.5 million to the City of Pasadena for transportation improvements in the 710 Freeway corridor. These projects, including the MTA/City of Pasadena required match of 11.47% would amount to a total of \$27,675,000. We recommend that these projects be approved by the City Council. Further, the DAG believes it urgent that the City move quickly with the implementation of these projects to protect the authorized funding and to assure that these potential traffic mitigation measures can begin to bring some traffic relief to our community which has now waited for many years after the initial Record of Decision authorizing this plan was approved. The projects listed in order of priority, together with their respective estimated costs, are:

1.	Raymond Avenue to SR 110 (Pasadena Freeway) Connector	\$6,500,000
2.	110 Freeway to 210 Freeway Connector/Marengo Interchange Emphases	300,000
3.	Right Turn Lane on Eastbound California Boulevard at Fair Oaks Avenue	400,000
4.	Arroyo Parkway Street Enhancements	3,600,000
5.	Raymond Avenue Widening, Del Mar Boulevard to Glenarm Street	4,700,000
6.	Lake Avenue/Walnut Street and Hill Avenue/Walnut Street Capacity Enhancements	1,000,000
7.	Construction of Right Turn Lane for Westbound California Boulevard at Raymond Avenue and Resurfacing from Fair Oaks to Raymond	1,600,000
8.	Traffic Control and Monitory System – Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)	9,575,000
	Total	\$27,675,000

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A summary description of each project is provided on Attachment 1.

DAG History and Approach

In April 1998 the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), issued its Record of Decision, State Route 710 Freeway Between Interstates 10 and 210, Los Angeles County, California (ROD). The ROD approved the environmental impact document permitting the project to progress, provided several conditions were satisfied. One condition was to direct The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to establish community design advisory groups (DAG or DAGs) in Pasadena, South Pasadena, Los Angeles (El Sereno) and Alhambra.¹

In Pasadena, on April 27, 1998, the City Council, on the advice of the Legislative Policy Committee, appointed six community members to serve on the Pasadena DAG (Attachment 2).²

The ROD contained a specific condition intended to provide immediate relief to the impacted communities by having the DAGs establish an expedited list of interim improvements and traffic management measures.³ The ROD authorized \$8 million for the interim transportation improvements. Although the Pasadena DAG members differ in opinions about the propriety of constructing the freeway extension, they all concur that traffic mitigation measures are imperative and should be implemented as soon as possible. The members of the Pasadena DAG began work in earnest recognizing that there would be substantial funds allocated to the individual communities for needed traffic mitigation. In the early months, the four DAGs met separately but soon urged Caltrans to host joint meetings so that traffic mitigation measures could be developed in cooperation along the proposed freeway corridor.

During early deliberations of the Pasadena DAG a good deal of discussion centered around the approach and methodology that should be used to identify projects that would produce the greatest good for the impacted community. Specifically, two key indicators were agreed upon by the Pasadena DAG that would be used to rank projects. Those two measures were the extent to which the proposed projects would:

- (1) Move traffic out of, and away from, neighborhood streets and on to major commercial traffic corridors, namely Fair Oaks, Raymond, Arroyo Parkway and Marengo north of Del Mar and
- (2) Improve mobility within these major commercial corridors.
- (3) On February 9, 1999, the City of Pasadena, in a letter to Caltrans, listed six projects that had been identified by the DAG as having the highest potential benefit based on the two key indicators/measures established by it. These projects were identified to comply with the constraint of \$1.8 million identified by Caltrans. The projects, in order of priority, were:

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1. Red Light violation photo enforcement on Orange Grove, Marengo, and Los Robles.
2. Fair Oaks Urban Corridor ITS improvements (signal upgrades, actuation, photo enforcement, and pedestrian amenities).
3. Raymond Corridor upgrade and southbound slip ramp to the 110 freeway.
4. Relocation of the 710 terminus from California to Del Mar (conversion of St. John to a local street).
5. California and Fair Oaks intersection widening for turn lanes.
6. Arroyo Parkway reconstruction and relinquishment by the State to Pasadena.

Caltrans reviewed all of the proposals and decided to recommend funding for two of these projects (Item 2 and Item 5). Funding in the amount of \$1.8 million was authorized. That \$1.8 million expenditure is now included in the Pasadena CIP and designated for construction in FY 2002.⁴

The DAG voiced concern to Caltrans that the funding provided to Pasadena for its proposed mitigation measures fell far short of the needs of the City and also that one of the projects funded was lower on our priority list than those unfunded.

Additional Federal Funding

Based on pressure and lobbying by Pasadena and South Pasadena Neighborhood Associations and previously expressed concerns by several of the DAGs that additional funding was needed to provide any measure of possible traffic relief and mitigation along the proposed freeway corridor, the U.S. Congress passed H.R. 5394 in October 2000. This bill provides funding for national transportation projects including specifically \$46 million earmarked for surface transportation improvements to mitigate traffic congestion in the SR-710 Corridor resulting from the freeway gap. Attached to the H.R. 5394 was a list of the interim traffic measures to be funded.

The funds authorized by the bill are to be shared by the cities of Pasadena, South Pasadena and Los Angeles (El Sereno) with the following total allocations:

City of Pasadena	\$24.5 million
City of South Pasadena	\$11.5 million
City of Los Angeles	\$10 million

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The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) will be administering the funds through the Office of Local Assistance and Alameda Corridors. Requirements for the use of these funds include:

- Projects must be programmed in the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP)
- The \$24.5 million in federal funding for Pasadena requires a local match of 11.47%. Local matching funds can be provided by successfully requesting funds through the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Authority (MTA) 2001 Call for Projects and/or providing property or services by the City of Pasadena.

As requested by Caltrans, a letter has been signed by representatives of the three cities agreeing to the above distribution of the \$46 million appropriated through U. S. Congress Bill H.R. 5394. A copy of that letter is provided as Attachment 4.

Pasadena city staff began the process of obtaining the federal and state matching funds through the appropriate MTA channels. On January 29, 2001 the Pasadena City Council authorized the submission of a grant application to MTA for the local matching funds for eight projects identified in the accompanying agenda report (Agenda Report, Attachment 3).⁵ The Pasadena DAG did not completely concur with the recommendations put forth in the Agenda Report. In its letter of April 26, 2001, the DAG provided its recommendations regarding the identification and prioritization of projects to be funded under Bill H.R. 5394 (Attachment 5).⁶ The Pasadena DAG continued to meet and refine the recommended mitigation measures. An integral and critically important component of that process was to assure that its recommendations would complement other traffic mitigation measures proposed as a result of other new development projects in the vicinity.

Following many more months of meetings with Caltrans and its consultants, city staff and the other corridor city DAGs, the Pasadena DAG, at its meeting of May 13, 2002, formally approved the proposed projects previously referenced and outlined in Attachment 1. This list of projects is being recommended based on its potential to most improve traffic operations in the SR 710 Freeway corridor, taking into consideration (i) the long term goals and objectives of the City of Pasadena, such as the successful development of the Fair Oaks/Raymond Biotech Corridor and (ii) the impact of specific development projects identified for this area, such as the development of the former Ambassador College site. Furthermore, consideration was given to the list of projects to determine their compatibility and conformance with the goals of the General Plan Mobility Element Update currently underway, as well as the two key indicators/measures previously referred to above. Enhancements provided by developers of these projects should further complement these sets of measures, collectively.

With Council approval, staff will submit this list of projects to the Caltrans Office of Local Assistance, which must give its formal approval that these projects conform and qualify as SR

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710 traffic mitigation measures. The Pasadena DAG has determined that these projects provide a comprehensive traffic mitigation package that will enhance and improve traffic mobility in the SR 710 corridor both in the short and long terms.

Finally, the Pasadena DAG also has endorsed modern technology and "smart signals" as a very cost-effective relief for traffic congestion in the southwest area. The DAG has continued to urge Public Works to pursue and implement a state-of-the-art traffic management system. In the event that any of the projects outlined in Attachment 1 do not qualify based on Caltrans' review, or that the aggregate cost to implement the identified projects is less than the amount budgeted, the DAG strongly supports the allocation of any remaining funds to be used for advanced traffic control technology to facilitate mobility through the 710 Corridor.

We urge the City, Caltrans, and other approving bodies to move these projects forward with the utmost speed. Too much time has already passed without the needed improvements.

Respectfully submitted:

The Pasadena Design Advisory Group

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¹ ROD, Conditions and Commitments, p. 4.

1. Caltrans will establish community design advisory groups (DAG) with each of the impacted communities, including El Sereno, to consider the specific community mitigation needs of their community. These mitigation measures will include, but are not limited to, additions and deletions to the interim improvement measures, traffic operations and pedestrian issues; school impact and mitigation measures; historic impact mitigation including measures to protect and secure relocated or replaced structures; neighborhood preservation; visual impact and urban landscape considerations including pocket parks and joint use; and community integrity and cohesion issues including structural considerations (such as pedestrian overpasses, underpasses, and cut and cover tunnels), relocation assistance and replacement housing, property management, construction impacts and community targeted job opportunities and training programs. The FHWA will be involved on the advisory groups and in the selection of members. Technical assistance, as needed, will be provided by Caltrans to the DAG's. Memberships on the DAG's will include local officials, neighborhood representations, preservationists and other interests (e.g., schools, safety advocates, environmental interest, etc.). Furthermore, FHWA and Caltrans will work with interested groups and agencies to determine their interest in serving or being represented on the DAG's.

² The City Council at its meeting on Monday, April 27, 1998, appointed Claire W. Bogaard, Victor Ell, Noel Hanson, Subodh Kumar, Kathryn Nack and David L. Worrell as the DAG representatives for the City of Pasadena (see Attachment 2).

³ ROD Conditions and Commitments, p. 6.

8. In order to provide immediate relief to the impacted communities, Caltrans will work with SCAG and the DAG's to establish a list of interim improvements and traffic management measures in their communities, such as those discussed below, to be advanced in parallel with the project geometric design phases. It is expected that implementation of these measures will be expedited so that they may serve current traffic needs as the project is being designed. Additional corridor improvements may be advanced by Caltrans or the local governmental agencies. The projects listed or other replacement projects are eligible for the National Highway System and Surface Transportation Program funds apportioned to California as well as any other funds for which the main line RS710 project is eligible. The FHWA will work with the corridor Cities, Los Angeles County Transportation Authority (LACMTA), SCAG, and Caltrans to facilitate the inclusion of the projects in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

INTERIM TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS MEASURES

- Make traffic engineering improvements to Fair Oaks Avenue, Raymond Avenue, and Arroyo Parkway to improve traffic flow.
- Calm residential street where appropriate.
- Make parking/access improvements, including rear access, vest pocket parking, directional signs, planted medians, and system management.
- Improve Fremont Avenue south of Huntington Drive in the city of South Pasadena to match the existing street geometrics in the city of Alhambra by restriping to four lanes, providing parking management and voluntary acquisition.

- Reconstruct intersection of Fair Oaks Avenue with Huntington Drive to provide for higher roadway capacity.
- Construct Hellman ramps to Cal State University Los Angeles.
- Construct new bridges at Westminster Avenue and Palm Avenue to enhance north-south traffic flow.
- Construct major intersection improvements at Valley Boulevard with Fremont Avenue.
- Provide additional traffic operational improvements to reduce congestion on impacted arterials in the corridor such as improved signalization, provision of turn lanes, etc.
- Deploy motorist assistance patrols on the improved arterials during peak hours of operation.
- Provide additional traffic mitigation measures to reduce traffic/pedestrian conflicts in school areas including such measures as upgraded signs and markings, additional transit, lighting, crossing patrols, etc.

9. All projects proposed under the provisions of item #8 will be thoroughly reviewed and discussed with the DAG's at key points of their development during design and construction. In the early design stages of each project, detailed traffic mitigation studies will be made by Caltrans and reviewed by the appropriate DAG's

- ⁴ The improvements are designated as "710 Interim Traffic Improvements on S. Fair Oaks Ave. – Intelligent Transportation System (75027). The project description is as follows:

This project includes traffic system improvements for the Fair Oaks Avenue corridor. The improvements consist of various upgrades to provide intelligent transportation system capabilities, including (1) interconnect communication system between existing signals; (2) signal upgrades at selected intersections to provide multi-phase operations; (3) installation of incident management and surveillance capabilities via closed-circuit television cameras; (4) traffic detection system and signal controller upgrades; and (5) connection to the traffic Management Center.

The CIP description also lists the specific intersections to be signalized.

- ⁵ Agenda Item No. 4, City of Pasadena Council Meeting of 01/29/01 (see Attachment 3).

- ⁶ DAG letter dated April 26,2001 (see Attachment 5).