



## PASADENA STATE ROUTE 710 DESIGN ADVISORY GROUP

**DATE:** February 28, 2011

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council

**THROUGH:** Legislative Policy Committee (February 23, 2011)

**FROM:** Pasadena State Route 710 Design Advisory Group

**SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATION TO SUNSET THE PASADENA STATE ROUTE 710 DESIGN ADVISORY GROUP**

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Council sunset the Pasadena State Route 710 Design Advisory Group.

### **BACKGROUND:**

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 four community design advisory groups (DAG or DAGs) in Pasadena, South Pasadena, Los Angeles (El Sereno) and Alhambra, respectively.

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. The City Council at its meeting on Monday, April 27, 1998, appointed Claire W. Bogaard, Victor Eil, Noel Hanson, Subodh Kumar, Kathryn Nack and David L. Worrell as the DAG representatives for the City of Pasadena. (During the period since the establishment of the Pasadena DAG, both Victor Eil [2005] and Kathryn Nack [2008] sadly have passed away, leaving the Pasadena DAG with its four current members.)

02/28/2011

Item 8

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. The ROD authorized \$8 million for the interim transportation improvements. Although the Pasadena DAG members differed in opinions about the propriety of constructing the freeway extension, they all concurred that traffic mitigation measures were imperative and should be implemented as soon as possible.

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, the Pasadena DAG adopted two key guiding principles that would be used to rank projects. Those two guiding principles 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.

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 guiding principles.

Caltrans reviewed all of the proposals and decided to recommend funding for two of Pasadena's projects. These were:

- a. Fair Oaks Urban Corridor ITS improvements (signal upgrades, actuation, photo enforcement, and pedestrian amenities).
- b. California and Fair Oaks intersection widening for turn lanes.

Funding in the amount of \$1.8 million was authorized for these projects.

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, in October 2000, the United States Congress passed H.R. 5394 that funded transportation projects throughout the nation. The bill specifically allocated a total of \$46 million for surface transportation improvements to mitigate traffic congestion in the State Route (SR) 710 Corridor due to the freeway gap. The funds were to be shared by the cities of Pasadena, South Pasadena and Los Angeles (El Sereno) with a

total allocation to Pasadena of \$24.5 million, which amount was in addition to the \$1.8 million previously authorized (discussed above).

Thereafter, the Pasadena DAG continued working with staff to develop a list of projects based on their potential to improve traffic operations throughout the City taking into consideration their compatibility and conformance with (i) the goals of the General Plan Mobility Element and (ii) the two guiding principles adopted by the DAG (discussed above).

On June 17, 2002, the City Council approved the SR 710 Mitigation Project, which was comprised of eight separate transportation improvement projects. In addition to the \$1.8 million provided under the ROD, and the \$24.5 million provided through H.R. 5394, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Authority (Metro) provided a grant of \$2.77 million. The remaining project cost was funded with City funds (local match) in the amount of \$7.73 million for a total project cost of \$36.8 million.

The eight improvement projects with a brief description were as follows:

1. Raymond Avenue to SR 110 (Pasadena Freeway) Connector  
This project involved the widening of Glenarm Street between Fair Oaks Avenue and Arroyo Parkway/SR 110, construction of a slip ramp from eastbound Glenarm Street to southbound SR 110 and construction of an auxiliary lane on southbound SR 110 from Glenarm Street to the State Street exit.
2. 110 Freeway to 210 Freeway Connector/Marengo Interchange Emphasis  
Directional signs and striping modifications were installed to guide motorists on to Marengo Avenue and Arroyo Parkway to make the connection between the 210 and 110 freeways.
3. Right Turn Lane on California Boulevard at Fair Oaks Avenue  
The south side of California Boulevard west of Fair Oaks Avenue was widened to construct a separate eastbound to southbound right turn lane.
4. Arroyo Parkway Street Enhancements  
Improvements on Arroyo Parkway between Colorado Boulevard and Glenarm Street included the modification of the median islands to increase the length of left turn lanes and the width of travel lanes; roadway rehabilitation and reconstruction, including a rubberized asphalt concrete overlay; localized sidewalk, curb and gutter repairs and the installation of median landscaping and irrigation. Other project components that were incorporated into this project, but were not funded under the SR 710 Mitigation project, included the installation of palm trees in the parkway and medians, palm tree uplighting, installation of in-pavement crosswalk

lights at Fillmore Street and the widening of Del Mar Boulevard at Arroyo Parkway to install a separate right turn lane from westbound Del Mar Boulevard to northbound Arroyo Parkway.

5. Raymond Avenue Widening

Raymond Avenue between Del Mar Boulevard and Glenarm Street was widened from the previous width of 56 feet to 60 feet, providing for four through travel lanes and left turn lanes at the intersections.

6. Lake Avenue at Walnut Street Intersection Mobility Improvement

This project widened the east side of Lake Avenue from Walnut Street to approximately 300 feet south of Walnut Street to install a separate northbound right turn lane.

7. Right Turn Lane on California Boulevard at Raymond Avenue

The north side of California Boulevard east of Raymond Avenue was widened from 53 feet to 63 feet to provide a separate westbound right turn lane.

8. Traffic Control and Monitoring System – Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)

This project installed fiber optic communications and various degrees of smart signal technology (vehicle detection, left turn signals, system detectors and other equipment upgrades) at various intersections on 11 corridors and provided for the implementation of a new traffic signal control system in the city's Traffic Management Center. The project also included the installation of a closed circuit television camera and provided for a portable changeable message sign.

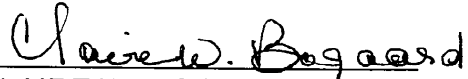
The \$24.5 million in federal funds was administered through the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). After preliminary engineering/design and right-of-way acquisition was completed, the City obtained construction authorization for all eight projects from Caltrans in 2004. Construction of the work authorized under the ROD and all eight improvement projects authorized under H.R. 5394 now has been completed, with the last of the physical improvements being completed in 2009. Traffic signal timing and fine tuning work as part of the Traffic Control and Monitoring System-ITS project was completed in early 2010.

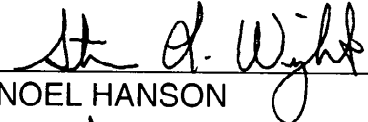
The City has invoiced Metro for 100 percent of the Metro funds, of which 95 percent has been received. The remaining five percent will be released by Metro pending an audit of the project, which is currently in progress. The City has been reimbursed for approximately 97 percent of the federal funds. The balance of the federal funds should be received by this fall pending State/Federal accounting.

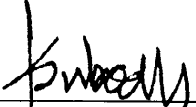
Considering the status of the project (which is that it is essentially fully completed), it is recommended that the Pasadena SR 710 DAG be sunseted. The Pasadena SR 710 DAG appreciates the opportunity to have served on the SR 710 Mitigation Project, which has benefited not only the residents in the SR 710 corridor, but the community at large.

Respectfully submitted,

PASADENA SR 710 DESIGN  
ADVISORY GROUP (DAG):

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
CLAIRE W. BOGAARD

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
For NOEL HANSON

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
SUBODH KUMAR

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
DAVID L. WORRELL