



SAN RAFAEL
NEIGHBORHOODS ASSOCIATION

July 27, 2012

Via E-Mail & First Class Mail

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**Re: San Rafael Neighborhoods Association Concerns Regarding
SR-710 Study And Proposed Alternatives**

The San Rafael Neighborhoods Association (SRNA) strongly opposes any SR-710 freeway and highway proposals that would result in the destruction of Pasadena homes, businesses, parks, schools, and open space. We join in the multitude of concerns raised by the West Pasadena Residents Association in their letter to you dated July 19, 2012, and we support the efforts of other organizations that are dedicated to protecting all of Pasadena's rich historical and cultural heritage from poorly conceived highway schemes. We also have very serious concerns about the wasteful expenditure of taxpayer money on projects that would cause needless harm to our community and to our neighboring communities.

The SRNA's mission is to represent the interests of Pasadena residents who live west of the Arroyo Seco and south of the 134/Ventura Freeway. Although we share many concerns with our neighboring communities, we wish to express our particular concerns with two proposals that would devastate our neighborhood – proposals H-2 and F-5.

The process used to include proposals H-2 and F-5 as Alternatives in the SR-710 Study was seriously flawed. While some effort was made to notify our community generally that the 710 was being "studied" through the Metro "open houses" in May, no notice was given that these open houses would unveil alternative routes into neighborhoods that, until now, had never been in the proposed path of the 710 Freeway. Moreover, the open houses were superficial in how they presented the effects on our neighborhoods.

Attendees left with little understanding of the details of each Alternative, and often with more questions than answers. Indeed, it was only through our independent review of hundreds of pages of highly technical documents (some of which were only made public a week ago) that anyone in our neighborhood had any idea that Metro was proposing the wholesale destruction of entire blocks of our homes.

By our estimates, more than 200 west Pasadena homes and businesses are threatened with destruction between the H-2 and F-5 proposals. Certainly, no one in our neighborhood was advised of that before or during any of Metro's "open houses." We have yet to find any "notice" that told residents of our neighborhood that their homes, businesses, parks, and school yards would be destroyed.

In any event, the H-2 and F-5 Alternatives simply make no sense. They would be built on land that the state does not own, and through neighborhoods that were never in the 710 Freeway route. Although the F-5 proposal is promoted as a "tunnel" alternative, it would require more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of "cut and cover" and above-ground construction through the middle of our neighborhood. The H-2 proposal would cut off neighborhood streets, isolating residents from their neighbors and essential public services. Both the H-2 and F-5 would expose our neighborhood to unacceptable levels of noise, pollution, and traffic.

The H-2 and F-5 Alternatives also would require very steep grades, cross known earthquake faults, and require bridging or tunneling under the environmentally sensitive Arroyo Seco. Both alternatives would interfere with natural streams and lakes and run through areas with significant groundwater.

Neither the H-2 nor F-5 Alternative would terminate at the existing 710/210/134 Interchange. Rather, both would require traffic to merge onto the existing 134 Freeway and then again onto the 210 Freeway. In addition to taxing the capacity of the 134 Freeway and interfering with the east-west movement of traffic, the routes would force drivers to make multiple transitions between freeways over a relatively short distance, increasing traffic congestion and raising serious safety concerns. No mention has been made as to how the existing 134 Freeway bridge over the Arroyo Seco and 710/210/134 interchange would handle this additional transitioning traffic.

The H-2 or F-5 Alternatives would cost billions of dollars, either in taxpayer money, or in tolls paid to private bondholders who we will all end up paying at least indirectly. There are many important transportation projects within Los Angeles County that both are in need of funding and have widespread community support. There is no justification for spending billions of scarce dollars to build highways of questionable utility through communities that do not want them.

In short, the H-2 and F-5 Alternatives are non-starters. They should be dropped from consideration immediately.

We further ask that the SR-710 Study process be extended by at least 90 days, so that interested parties can have more time to consider the proposed Alternatives and to provide input. As noted, we share the concerns of our neighboring communities that the entire SR-710 Study process is flawed. The negative consequences of these proposals have not been adequately shared with our community, or with the many other communities that may be affected.

The SRNA believes that it would be a tragic mistake for Metro to proceed to the draft Environmental Impact Study/Report (EIS/EIR) stage without further notice and consideration of the Alternatives that would be compared in the draft EIS/EIR. The inclusion of flawed Alternatives in the EIS/EIR will render the entire process a waste of time and taxpayer money, while subjecting thousands of citizens to stress, legal processes, and declining property values while their homes and businesses stand in the path of possible destruction. The exclusion of better Alternatives from the EIS/EIR process (including, for example, Gold Line improvements between Pasadena and Los Angeles, which have not even been considered by Metro) likewise will render the EIS/EIR a pointless, and wasteful, exercise.

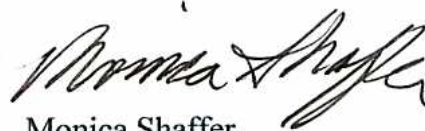
In summary, we find it wholly unreasonable for Metro to have included Alternatives F-5 and H-2 as potential routes for the SR-710 extension. We ask that you immediately remove them from consideration. If you do not, then be assured that we will fight these Alternatives and will do whatever is necessary to protect our San Rafael neighborhoods.



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