



DATE: September 23, 2021

TO: Transportation Advisory Commission

FROM: Laura Rubio-Cornejo, Director of Transportation

SUBJECT: INFORMATION ITEM – State Route 710 Northern Stub Repurposing Status Update

BACKGROUND

The City continues to make progress on the State Route (SR) 710 Northern Stub Relinquishment process. Earlier this year, the City completed a Technical Feasibility Analysis to determine the technical feasibility of converting the existing SR-710/SR-134/I-210 freeway-to-freeway interchange into a local street network with connections to I-210 and SR-134. With the Technical Feasibility Assessment completed, the process has now moved into the next phase which includes a supplemental traffic analysis and the development of a relinquishment agreement, between the City and Caltrans.

Following the completion of the items above, and pending relinquishment of the 710N stub area, a Citywide planning effort will commence to revision the area, determine the land use, transportation network, and utility infrastructure. This planning effort will include significant public outreach and input. This multi-year effort is anticipated to begin in late 2022.

HISTORY

In the November 26, 2018 State Route 710 North Project Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIR/EIS), Caltrans identified the Transportation System Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM) as the locally preferred alternative. Since then, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) has coordinated the advancement of TSM/TDM efforts to be implemented in lieu of a 710 North connection.

Identifying the TSM/TDM as the locally preferred alternative has facilitated local, multi-modal capacity enhancement projects to advance and be implemented, however, this action alone did not preclude the possibility of a future 710 North freeway connection. As long as the gap corridor remains listed in the California freeway and expressway system, the potential of a future connection exists.

Pasadena's goal is to not only have the 710 North gap corridor delisted from the State highway system, but to have the streets within the SR 710 City boundaries (stub) to be relinquished to the City thereby regaining local control. Delisting the SR 710 North and

achieving relinquishment requires several interim steps, the first being reaching an agreement with Caltrans, with the California Transportation Commission (CTC) serving as the final decision making body.

As a result of legislation introduced by State Senator Portantino (SB 7) and Assemblymember Holden (AB 29), the California Street and Highways Code, Section 622.3 indicates that the CTC may make a determination to relinquish the portion of SR 710 that is contained within the City of Pasadena to the City if Caltrans and the City enter into an agreement providing for that relinquishment. The ongoing coordination with Caltrans and feasibility study has served as the first key step towards the City's efforts to securing an agreement from Caltrans.

On March 11, 2019, City Council authorized the City Manager to enter into a contract with PointC Consultants to aid the City in its efforts to secure relinquishment of the 710N stub area, resulting in the SR 710 Northern Stub Technical Feasibility Assessment.

SR710 REPURPOSING TECHNICAL FEASIBILITY ASSESSMENT

Since November 2019, staff has been engaged with Caltrans in ongoing working group and coordination efforts aimed at determining the technical feasibility of converting the existing freeway to freeway interchange into a local street network with connections to I-210 and SR-134. This initial step of defining the local connections is the first step in the City's long-term goal of regaining control over the 710N "stub" area, securing relinquishment and developing a land use and transportation plan for roughly, the area between Walnut Street and California Boulevard.

Two concepts were developed in order to demonstrate to Caltrans how the local to freeway connection could function while preserving their operational capacity. A traffic operations analysis was conducted which included collection of existing traffic volumes, an operations analysis for existing conditions and future year 2045 conditions, a collision analysis, and an analysis of vehicle miles travelled (VMT). Caltrans identified a third option late in the study process, for which a qualitative analysis was conducted. Although staff is not supportive of Concept 3, carrying it in the feasibility study and analyzing it further is important for the overall process and securing Caltrans support.

The technical feasibility assessment that included both a traffic analysis and an initial engineering analysis for this area was completed in January 2021. The feasibility assessment did not assume any land use considerations for the project area, but rather focused on the ability to eliminate the freeway-to-freeway interchange ramps and create local system connections to Interstate 210 and State Route 134. Based on the completed feasibility assessment developed through this collaborative effort, the City and Caltrans agreed to move forward with the next steps in the relinquishment process. On January 11, 2021, Caltrans District 7 Director, Tony Tavares, provided the City a letter stating that Caltrans was satisfied, based on the analysis conducted to this point, modifying the system from a freeway-to-freeway connection to a local-to-freeway connection would not create a significant effect on state

highway and/or federal highway operations or safety. As identified in the technical feasibility assessment, additional technical analysis was requested by Caltrans as part of the immediate next step.

The supplemental traffic analysis requested by Caltrans has commenced and includes developing a more defined analysis through a Vissim simulation model, intersection and freeway ramp queuing analysis and a freeway ramp weaving analysis. This analysis is anticipated to be completed in November 2021. In parallel with this effort, the existing freeway agreements are being reviewed and new freeway agreements and a relinquishment approval report and agreement are being developed to coincide with the completion of the supplemental traffic analysis.

NEXT STEPS

It is anticipated that the analysis and reports will result in Caltrans concurrence to having the 710N stub relinquished to the City. Staff expects to return to City Council in December 2021 with a staff recommendation to submit the reports to CTC for relinquishment approval in early 2022.

Following the State relinquishment of the SR 710 northern stub area to the City, a multi-disciplinary, community driven visioning process will begin to layout the future land use, transportation network, and utility infrastructure network needed to reconnect Pasadena. This planning effort will include significant public outreach and input to rework the stub back into the fabric of the City. This multi-year effort is anticipated to begin in 2022.

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