



SCH No. _____

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

To: Responsible, Trustee, and Federal Agencies
From: California Department of Transportation
District 7 Environmental Planning, MS 16A
100 South Main Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report

Reference: California Code of Regulations, Title 14, (CEQA Guidelines) Sections 15082(a), 15103, 15375

Project Title: Interstate 710 Corridor Project

Project Location: On Interstate 710 (I-710) from Ocean Boulevard to State Route 60 (SR-60) in the cities of Bell, Bell Gardens, Carson, Commerce, Compton, Cudahy, Downey, unincorporated East Los Angeles, Huntington Park, Lakewood, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Lynwood, Maywood, Paramount, South Gate, Signal Hill and Vernon in Los Angeles County.

Project Description: The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) will prepare an Environmental Impact Report on a proposal for constructing freeway improvements to Interstate 710 (I-710) from Ocean Boulevard in the City of Long Beach to State Route 60 (SR-60) in Los Angeles County, California. A Major Corridor Study for this project was completed in March 2005. It identified a 10 general purpose lane next to a separated four lane freight movement facility as the Locally Preferred Strategy.

Caltrans will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the project identified below. Your participation as a Responsible or Trustee Agency is requested in the preparation and review of this document.

The purpose of this notice is: (1) to serve as the Notice of Preparation to potential Responsible Agencies, agencies involved in funding or approving the project, and Trustee Agencies responsible for natural resources affected by the project, pursuant to Section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines; and (2) to advise and solicit comments and suggestions regarding the preparation of the EIR, environmental issues to be addressed in the EIR, and any related issues, from interested parties other than those noted above, including interested or affected members of the public. Caltrans requests that any potential Responsible or Trustee Agency responding to this notice do so in a manner consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(b).

We need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information that is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency will need to use the EIR prepared by our agency when considering your permit or other approval for the project.

A more detailed project description, study area map, and a summary of the potential environmental effects are contained in the attached materials.

Caltrans is holding public scoping meetings to provide an overview of the project, summary of the environmental process and issues addressed, and receive input regarding environmental issues and the suggested scope and content of the EIR. An Agency Scoping Meeting will be held on September 10, 2008 from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm followed by a Public Scoping Meeting from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm at Progress Park in the City of Paramount. Two additional Public Scoping Meetings will be held on September 9, 2008 at Rowen Elementary School in East L.A. and September 11, 2008 at Cabrillo High School in Long Beach from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm.

A copy of the Initial Study is not attached.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice.

Please send your response to Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director, Division of Environmental Planning, Caltrans District 7, 100 S. Main Street, MS 16-A, Los Angeles, CA 90012; telephone (213) 897-0703. Please supply us with a name for a contact person in your agency.

Date: August 15, 2008

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ron Kosinski". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Ron Kosinski, Deputy District Director
Division of Environmental Planning

Attachments:

Project Description
Study Area Map



Additional Project Description:

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in coordination with the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) is initiating an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Interstate 710 (I-710) corridor project. The project proposes to improve I-710 in Los Angeles County from Ocean Boulevard in the City of Long Beach to SR-60, a distance of approximately 18 miles. The existing freeway currently experiences travel performance problems due to congestion and accidents, which will only worsen over time.

The general study area for the I-710 corridor project includes I-710 between Ocean Boulevard and SR-60. At the freeway to freeway interchanges, the study area extends one mile east and west of I-710 for the I-405, SR-91, I-105, and I-5 interchanges. It also includes the major arterial north/south and east/west highways from Wilmington Avenue to the west to Lakewood Boulevard to the east. Specific study areas will be defined for each project technical study.

The purpose of the proposed I-710 project is to:

- Improve air quality and public health
- Improve traffic safety
- Address design deficiencies
- Address projected traffic volumes
- Address projected growth in population employment, and economic activities related to goods movement

The proposed project includes the following alternatives:

- No Build
- Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM) and Transit – may include up to eight new ramp meters, improved signage, parking restrictions on major arterials, empty container management through policies and incentives, implementation of truck emission/safety enforcement facilities, expanded public transportation, and an expanded Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) to include entire study area.
- Goods Movement Enhancement by Rail and/or Advanced Technology
- Arterial Highway and I-710 Congestion Relief Improvements
- Mainline I-710 Improvements
 - Option A – 10 general-purpose lanes with no carpool lanes
 - Option B – eight general-purpose lanes with one carpool lane in each direction (total of 10)
- Locally Preferred Strategy Hybrid Design (I-710 Mainline Improvements with the addition of a separated four lane freight movement facility) - Includes ten general purpose lanes next to a separated four lane freight movement facility from the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach

(Ocean Boulevard) to the UP and BNSF intermodal yards southeast of the I-710/I-5 interchange. This alternative is a community-based recommendation from the previous I-710 Major Corridor Study; Major Opportunity/Strategy Recommendations and Conditions.

Letters describing the proposed action and soliciting comments will be sent to appropriate Federal Cooperating and Participating Agencies, State Responsible and Trustee Agencies, local agencies, and private organizations and citizens who have previously expressed or who are known to have an interest in this proposal. In addition, three public hearings will be held. Public notice will be given of the time and place of the meetings and hearings. The Environmental Impact Report will be available for public and agency review and comment prior to the public hearings.

IMPACTS

Various environmental and community resources are known to exist within the limits of the study area. These resources include, but are not limited to: air quality, aesthetics, biological resources, hazards and hazardous materials, public health, public services, utilities/service systems, cultural resources, hydrology/water quality, noise, recreation, land use/planning, population/housing, and transportation/traffic. A portion of the project is located in the coastal zone and will be analyzed for consistency with the California Coastal Act. Air Quality and public health are significant issues of concern. Sound walls, relocation assistance, construction impact management and other mitigation measures will be incorporated into the proposed project.

