



## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. **What is the State Route 710 North Study?**

Caltrans and Metro are working together to find solutions that improve mobility and relieve traffic congestion between the western San Gabriel Valley and the east/northeast area of Los Angeles. The Study examines a 100 square mile area. It is funded by Measure R, which was passed by two-thirds of Los Angeles County voters in 2008, mandating transportation upgrades throughout the County including the 710 freeway. The measure specifically allocated \$780 million for the 710 North Study.

### 2. **Who is working on the Study, and what are the roles of Caltrans and Metro?**

Caltrans is the lead agency responsible for ensuring compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Metro is responsible for managing the study efforts in cooperation with Caltrans. Although Caltrans and Metro are project participants, other federal, state, regional and local agencies have a statutory responsibility to advise and provide comments throughout the environmental review process. These agencies are referred to as cooperating and/or participating agencies.

### 3. **Why is the Study needed?**

The existing transportation network in the Study area was started more than half a century ago but was never completed and not equipped to meet a growing population. From 1960 to 2010, the Study area population grew by more than half a million people, from 772,053 to 1,279,603 (US Census). By 2035, the Study area population is expected to reach 1.33 million people and have an employment base of 507,000 jobs (Southern California Association of Governments).

Caltrans reports that three of the top ten afternoon bottlenecks in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties are in or near the Study area. The weekday delays at these three bottlenecks costs taxpayers \$21 million annually and the associated increase in CO<sub>2</sub> emission is approximately 5,000 tons per year (Source: Annual Urban Mobility Report, 2012), equal to the approximate weight of 2,800 passenger vehicles.

Without changes or upgrades, the network will continue to operate at bottleneck levels, and worsen as traffic demands increase – meaning increased traffic accidents, air pollution and related illnesses, and diminish the Southern California economy and quality of life.

### 4. **What type of environmental/safety impacts does the Study look at for each of the alternatives?**

State and federal laws require that transportation projects be subjected to a detailed environmental assessment. A few of the environmental impacts that are being considered within the Study include, but are not limited to, air quality, water quality, noise, and potential health risks.

In addition, the Study looks at light rail transit tunnel and freeway tunnel seismic and ground control measures, and fire life safety provisions that include, fire detection and suppression systems and communication strategies with first responders.

## 5. What are the goals of the 710 North Study?

Identify transportation solutions that:

- > Improve travel time
- > Improve mobility and connectivity between the 10 and 210 freeways
- > Reduce congestion on the freeway system and local streets
- > Increase public transit ridership
- > Minimize environmental impacts due to traffic congestion
- > Assure consistency with regional transportation plans and strategies
- > Maximize tax payer dollars

## 6. What are the traffic alternatives being considered in this Study?

The Study is equally evaluating five alternatives:

- > Bus Rapid Transit
- > Freeway Tunnel
- > Light Rail Transit
- > No Build
- > Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management

### **Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)**

The BRT would operate as an express bus for longer distance travel at higher speeds, greater frequency bus service, minimal stops, and may potentially run in dedicated bus lanes during peak hours.

### **Freeway Tunnel**

The underground roadway would extend the 710 North freeway from where it currently ends, just south of Valley Boulevard, to the 210 and 134 freeway interchange in Pasadena. Variations being reviewed for this alternative include:

- > Single and twin tunnels
- > With or without tolls
- > With or without trucks
- > Possible express bus service lane at peak hours

### **Light Rail Transit (LRT)**

The LRT Alternative would have elevated and underground segments and would connect passengers to bus lines traveling to adjacent communities.

### **No Build**

The No Build alternative assumes zero transportation improvements beyond those already planned in the Southern California Association of Governments Regional Transportation Plan that are scheduled to be completed by 2035.

### **Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)**

This alternative builds on the existing transportation system with traffic signal upgrades and synchronization, street and intersection improvements, bus transit enhancement, and promotes commuter rideshare.

**7. If the tunnel alternative is selected, would it be tolled and primarily used by trucks to and from the ports?**

The Study is evaluating variations for the freeway tunnel alternative that would either allow or exclude trucks, and operate with or without tolls. Port trucks typically head east to major distribution centers located in the Inland Empire. To learn more about goods movement, read the Goods Movement FAQs in the Study webpage: [www.metro.net/sr710study](http://www.metro.net/sr710study)

**8. What is the cost to our economy if we do not take action?**

A 2014 Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) study shows that the status quo negatively impacts the economy and quality of life for Southern California commuters. The LAEDC found that travel delay in the approximate 100 square miles of the 710 North Study cost taxpayers \$852.9 million in 2008, and is expected to increase to \$1.2 billion annually in 2035, if nothing is done. The LAEDC Study confirms the existing transportation system in the Study area is a major contributor to the cost. Moreover, residents and businesses in the broader region are affected every day as traffic delays are estimated to increase an additional 61 hours (or 2 ½ days) annually to commuters.

**9. How can the public get involved in the process?**

A draft environmental document will be released and circulated for public review and comment in February 2015. Caltrans extended the standard 45-day public review and comment period to 90 days, and will hold two public hearings during this period. The public will have several options to submit comments:

- > In person at the public hearings
- > By U.S. Mail
- > Online through the Caltrans public comment website

To sign-up and get regular updates, visit the 710 North Study website: [www.metro.net/sr710study](http://www.metro.net/sr710study).

**10. When and where will the Study be available to the public?**

In February 2015, the draft environmental document will be posted on the Caltrans and Metro websites, and links will be provided on Metro social media platforms. Local libraries will be provided with CD copies of the document and will include print copies of the Executive Summary translated into Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Korean. Individuals in the 710 North Study database will be notified by e-mail when it is available.