

California Department of Transportation

DISTRICT 7
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February 7, 2022

Ms. Stephanie Wiggins
Chief Executive Officer
Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority
1 Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Ms. Wiggins:

As currently constituted under the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) 5C in the EIS/EIR, the I-710 South Corridor Project (the Project) will not meet air quality conformity requirements per the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and, consequently, will not receive a Record of Decision (ROD). In response to this outcome and due to the long-standing concern about community displacement along the corridor, Caltrans expressed concern moving forward with this project in its current format.

The Metro Board of Directors has suspended additional work to advance the Project EIS/EIR and instead has directed (via Motions 47 and 48, May 2021) that Metro staff work with local communities and corridor stakeholders to re-envision a new Project that is multimodal and community sensitive. As a result, Metro created the 710 Task Force, a joint effort led by Metro and Caltrans District 7.

With the 710 Task Force moving forward toward creating a new Investment Plan for the I-710 South Corridor, Caltrans wishes to move forward with selecting the 'No Build' alternative as the LPA. We believe that this determination is responsive to current concerns related to property, equity, and environmental/air quality impacts. Further, this determination allows the District to focus on clean transportation alternatives, the reduction of Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT), and brings proper closure to the I-710 environmental process. As a project partner for many years, as well as the NEPA and CEQA lead agency, Caltrans would appreciate Metro directing the consulting team to work with our staff to complete the Final EIR/EIS and Project Report.

The selection of 'No Build' as the LPA will mean that no elements of Alternatives 5C or 7, including the previously proposed "Initial Stage" Project candidates, can be

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implemented under the auspices of this now-suspended EIS/EIR process. With this said, it is important to note that a significant portion of both the technical studies and documentation developed for the EIR/EIS can be utilized in the development of new improvement options that the I-710 Task Force may recommend. Further, Metro and Caltrans may consider mitigation measures that are based upon community insights to the No Build FEIR/EIS, Statement of Overriding Considerations and ROD.

Caltrans understands that there are active projects related in the I-710 Corridor being led by the cities of Long Beach and South Gate, as well as the "early action" soundwall and Integrated Corridor Management projects led by Metro. These projects will not be affected by the 'No Build' decision; as they each have separate environmental documents and approvals and have demonstrated independent utility.

We look forward to our continued partnership and collaboration in this critical corridor and we continue to support efforts that bring communities together with regional stakeholders to develop a unified vision for improving the I-710 South Corridor.

Sincerely,



TONY TAVARES
District Director