

**SR-91/I-605
PROPOSAL FOR
MAJOR CORRIDOR STUDY
AND
RSTIS PEER REVIEW**

Presented by
Gateway Cities Council of Governments

To
Southern California Association of Governments

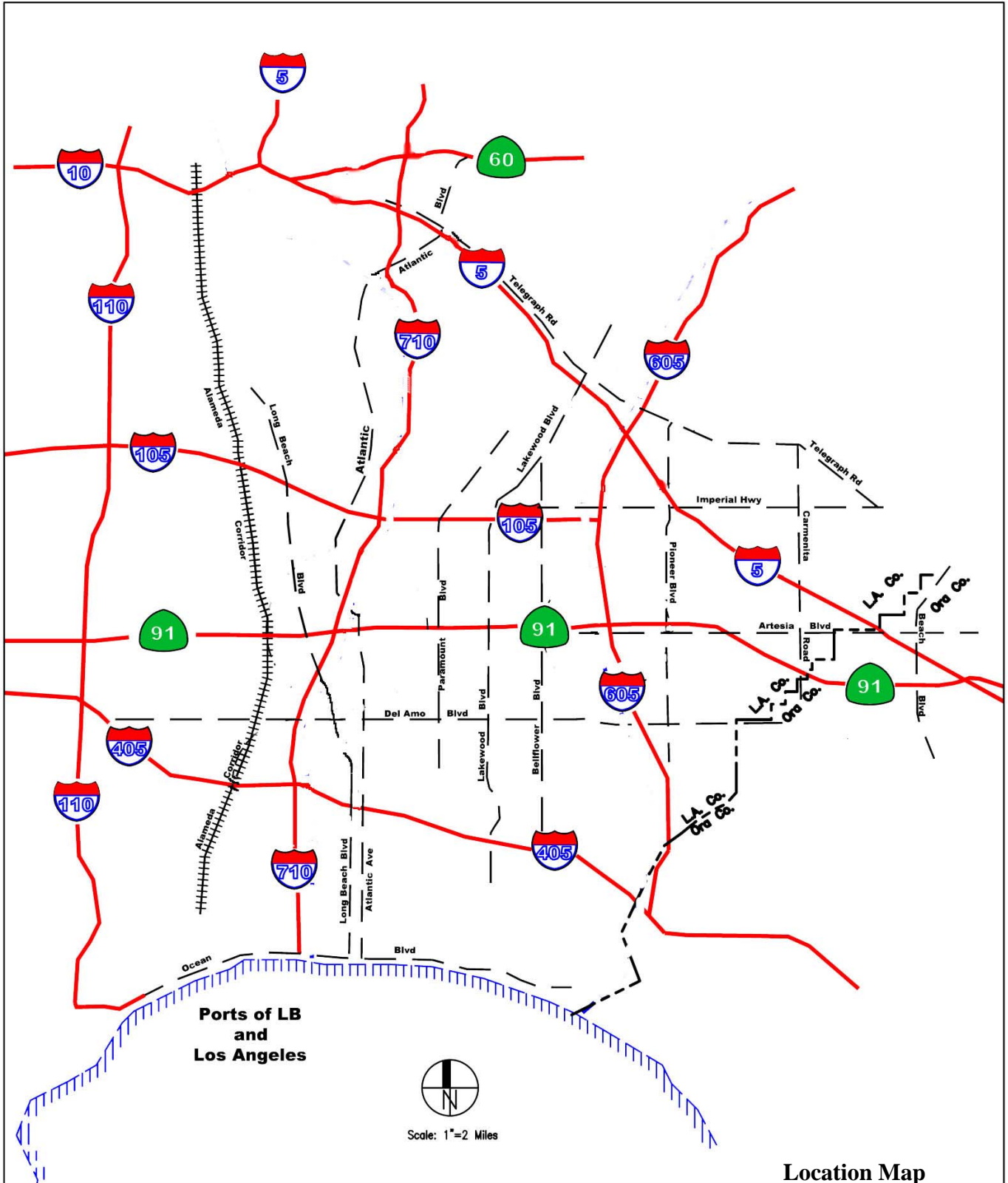
October, 2006

Background and Introduction

In recognition of the traffic problems in Southeast Los Angeles County, a Major Corridor Study (MCS) was undertaken for the I-710 freeway from its southern border at the ports (the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles are major traffic generators in the area) to its interchange with the SR-60 freeway. Figure 1 (page 2 of this proposal) shows the freeway system for Southeast Los Angeles County.

The I-710 MCS was finalized in 2005, approved and included in the RTP amendment as the locally preferred strategy, consisting of 10 general purpose lanes next to four, separated truck lanes (“hybrid design”). An EIR/EIS for the I-710 freeway is expected to be underway by early 2007. Included in the EIR/EIS are origin/destination studies for the port-related cargo and an examination of the possible use of alternative goods movement technologies that could replace some of the heavy-duty truck trips in the future.

As a result of the I-710 MCS, it is apparent that existing and future port-related truck traffic impacting the I-710 freeway will also impact the other freeways in Southeast Los Angeles County east of the I-710 freeway. These freeways include the SR-91, I-605, I-405 and I-105 freeways. Recognizing this, the cities that border these freeway corridors sponsored a Needs Assessment Study. The results of this study showed that these freeways will be overwhelmed with general purpose, car-pool and heavy-duty truck traffic in the future, clearly identifying a need for further analysis and mitigation. After completing the Needs Assessment, the sponsoring cities requested that a Major Corridor Study be undertaken for these freeways.



Location Map
SR-91/I-605-I-405
Major Corridor Study
Figure 1

Since the Needs Assessment was completed, the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) has improved the SR-22 freeway and is planning to improve the I-405 freeway to the Los Angeles County line. The improvements to these two freeways will put pressure on the adjacent freeways of Southeast Los Angeles County by creating “bottle-necks” at the county line similar to the current situation at the county line at the I-5 freeway. In recognition of this, MTA and OCTA have undertaken studies to coordinate transportation planning at the county line, which will impact the freeway corridors discussed as part of this proposal.

Finally, the Gateway Cities Council of Governments has been coordinating with the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments, SANBAG and RCTC to the northeast of the GCCOG boundary concerning related transportation issues that would affect all three COGs, including addressing goods movement.

Because of the extensive transportation needs, and significant local recognition of the problem, it is recommended that a major corridor study be undertaken at the first opportunity. The cities that border these freeways are already providing funding through City assessments to initiate this work and MTA has agreed to provide some initial funding as well.

Proposal

1. **Introduction** - In order to proceed with a Major Corridor Study, federal funding is required. Therefore, Regionally Significant Transportation Investment Studies (RSTIS) requirements need to be followed. This project (and its freeway) qualifies as a RSTIS project as any highway (or freeway) improvements will involve substantial costs (over \$500 million) that will have a significant effect on capacity, traffic-flow, level of services, potential mode share at the transportation and sub area level and will also affect the movement of goods.

Based on the preceding, and as outlined herein, a RSTIS is recommended for these freeway corridors in partnership between the GCCOG (representing the local cities), Caltrans, SCAG and MTA.

2. **Transportation Need and Problem** – The 2005 SR-91/I-605 Needs Assessment identifies the problem. The attached Figure 6 from that report (page 8 of this proposal) indicates that the future (2030) arterial daily traffic volumes for selected arterial highways in Southeast Los Angeles County will greatly exceed existing street capacities. Also, the attached Figure 9 from the report (page 9 of this report) indicates that future freeway volumes for all of the freeways for general purpose, car-pools and heavy duty trucks will greatly exceed the capacities of the existing freeway system capacity (The SR-91/I-605 Needs Assessment is included as a reference document for this proposal in its entirety).

A RSTIS is needed for this corridor for the following additional reasons:

(1) I-710 – The EIR/EIS for this freeway will be underway in 2007 and could result in more port truck traffic using the other freeways to the east of it assuming the implementation of the locally preferred strategy by adding truck lanes to the I-710 freeway that would expedite truck movements from it toward these other freeways that are the subject of this proposal.

(2) OCTA – Orange County is proceeding with improvements to SR-22 which will be completed in 2006/07 and is planning on beginning detailed analysis to improve the I-405 freeway up to the Los Angeles County line, where it interchanges with the south end of the I-605. In recognition of this, MTA and OCTA are implementing studies to address transportation issues at the county line. Also, environmental studies are just being initiated for the I-5 freeway between I-605 to SR-60. The future capacity and design for the I-605 freeway is needed at its interchange with I-5 in order to calculate the environmental impacts on the I-5.

(3) Congestion “Hot” Spots – The SR-91/I-605 Needs Assessment identified numerous design deficiencies that are creating congestion and safety problems and should be addressed as soon as possible at major freeway-to-freeway interchanges.

(4) Inland Transportation Systems – The sub-regional COGs as well as SCAG and others are addressing the inadequacies of the inland transportation system. Coordination for the northern boundary with these other transportation systems is needed. The continued inland developments for both population and goods movement will continue to add pressure to these freeway corridors.

(5) Goods Movement – Continued port growth is placing ongoing pressure on the freeway corridors that are the subject of this proposal. Existing and future heavy-duty truck volumes and the possible application of alternative goods movement technologies will continue to impact these corridors.

3. **RSTIS Peer Review Request** – Based on the preceding, the Gateway Cities Council of Governments (the sponsor, on behalf of the other transportation agencies already identified) is requesting a RSTIS Peer Review is requesting for these freeway corridors. The Gateway Cities Council of Governments presents the following:

- (1) Pertinent Corridors:
 - a. SR-91 freeway (Alameda St. to Orange County line)
 - b. I-605 freeway (I-405 to SR-60)
 - c. I-405 freeway (at its interchange with I-605 as a minimum)
 - d. I-105 (I-710 to I-605)

- (2) Anticipated capacity increase – Based on the SR-91/I-605 Needs Assessment, additional lanes are required on all the freeways for both general purpose and carpool traffic. In addition, the heavy-duty truck volumes projected in the Needs Assessment identify the need for separate truck lanes or corridors and/or for corridors for possible goods movement by alternative technology.
- (3) Estimate Improvement Cost – Based on the results of the I-710 MCS, it would be anticipated that the improvement cost for the freeways that are subject of this proposal would be between \$2 to \$4 billion.
- (4) Study Sponsor – Study sponsor is the Gateway Cities Council of Governments in association with MTA, Caltrans and SCAG.
- (5) Investment Alternatives – Possible investment alternatives include the following (but not limited to):
 - Additional general purpose lanes
 - Additional car-pool (or HOV) lanes
 - Cargo movement corridor improvements (truck lanes and/or alternative goods movement technologies)
 - Transit improvements (bus service (regional and local), Metro-link, possible Orange line)
 - Arterial highway improvements and signal synchronization plus implementation of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) in the sub-region.
- (6) Federal funding source – Not identified at this time.
- (7) List of agencies and personnel
 - Caltrans – Doug Failing
 - SCAG – Alan Thompson
 - MTA – Ernest Morales
 - OCTA – Paul Taylor
 - San Gabriel Valley COG
 - SANBAG
 - Local Cities Staffs
 - FHWA/FTA (in an advisory role)
- (8) Date and Time for review – At the earliest possible date.
- (9) Other pertinent information – See proposal that follows.

4, **Proposal** – The proposal to prepare a MCS for these freeway corridors will include all the requirements for a RSTIS:

- (1) Updated Purpose and Needs Statement
- (2) Alternatives (potential)
 - Constrained (do nothing)
 - Additional general purpose lanes
 - Additional car-pool (or HOV) lanes
 - Cargo movement corridor improvements (truck lanes and/or alternative goods movement technologies)

- Transit improvements (bus service (regional and local), Metro-link, possible Orange line)
 - Arterial highway improvements and signal synchronization plus implementation of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) in the sub-region.
- (3) Technical Activities – The technical activities to be completed are those that are required to obtain approval of the RSTIS and include placing the subsequent locally preferred projects in the RTP. It will include as a minimum:
- Updated Purpose and Needs
 - Traffic modeling (with heavy-duty trucks and considering goods movement options)
 - Alternative Goods Movement Technology Development (continuing work done by the ports and for the I-710 EIR/EIS)
 - Alternatives Development
 - Preparation of base maps and geometric plans
 - Design Deficiencies
 - Alternatives Analysis
 - Effectiveness and Cost Effectiveness in achieving local, state and national goals and objectives
 - Impacts of:
 - Recurrent traffic congestion
 - Goods Movement
 - Economic Effects
 - Overall Environmental Impacts, including:
 - a. Social Effects (Environmental Justice)
 - b. Air Quality
 - c. Noise
 - Safety
 - Operating efficiencies
 - Land use and economic development
 - Financing
 - Energy Consumption
 - Property Impacts and Land Use Constraints
 - Aesthetic
 - Transit
- (4) RSTIS Responsibilities – The GCCOG will be responsible for the preparation of the RSTIS in partnership with Caltrans, SCAG and MTA.
- (5) Milestones – Based on the previous work and studies that have been completed (or are in progress), the completion milestone for this RSTIS is approximately two years after Notice to Proceed (perhaps 2009).

- (6) Products – Major Corridor Study for a locally preferred strategy complying with RSTIS requirements
- (7) Public Participation – The cities that border these freeways have requested the public participation process that was used to complete the I-710 Major Corridor Study. This would include the formation of and coordination with local community advisory committees and a corridor community advisory committee, as a minimum. The involvement and input of these committees would begin at project initiation and continue until the MCS was completed.
- (8) NEPA Approach – It is recommended that any environmental documents (CEQA or NEPA) be prepared after the completion of the MCS (unless any significant impact is discovered that could potentially derail the project).
- (9) Project Study Report – A Project Study Report conforming to Caltrans requirements will be completed by Caltrans staff using the products from the MCS as a basis.
- (10) Estimated Cost – Based on the level of planning already performed, the completion of the I-710 MCS, and other factors, the estimated cost to prepare the MCS is approximately \$3.0 million over a two year period. This will depend on the number of alternatives that the RSTIS Peer Review Group proposes for this MCS, as well as the level of detail delineated in the scope of work.