



MEDIA RELEASE

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## **“Beyond the 710,” A Game-changing Plan to Replace SR-710 Tunnel Debate with 21<sup>st</sup> Century Smart Mobility Measures to Connect People and Relieve Congestion for All Communities, is Launched**

*Congressman Adam Schiff Joins Coalition of Cities, Communities, and Allies at Union Station Press Conference to call on LA County Metro and Caltrans to Rethink 710 Plan: Scrap the tunnel and study modern mobility strategies*

**Los Angeles – May 28, 2015** – A group of cities and organizations today dramatically reshaped the debate over the 710 Tunnel today by announcing **“Beyond the 710,”** an effort to reimagine how to resolve the conflicts over congestion and mobility that have divided the western San Gabriel Valley for decades.

A key insight of **Beyond the 710** is to understand that more than 85% of commuters exiting the 710 Freeway at Valley Boulevard are intent on reaching local destinations, and the vision of **Beyond the 710’s** plan is to use 21<sup>st</sup> Century planning solutions (such as well-planned transit lines, Great Streets concepts, and traffic mitigation) to reduce congestion and promote smart growth rather than 1960s freeway-oriented approaches.

“Today is a new day in the 710 debate, and we are committed to finding solutions that work for everyone,” said Ara Najarian, mayor of Glendale, member of the LA County Metro Board, and chair of **Beyond the 710.** “Just as my city and my neighbors will never accept a tunnel through our communities, we must recognize that a solution to the congestion created by the 710 in Alhambra and their neighbors must be addressed intelligently. That’s why we are presenting a starting point for new discussions on how to resolve these issues amicably.”

**Beyond the 710** presented a plan that by removing the freeway “stubs” at both the 10 and 210 freeways, can free up land for smart development, employ transit to connect people to

### **Beyond the 710: Moving Forward**

A New Initiative for Mobility and Community

A project of Connected Cities and Communities, which includes the Cities of Glendale, La Canada Flintridge, Pasadena, Sierra Madre, and South Pasadena, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Natural Resources Defense Council

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important local destinations and other transit lines, and employ modern strategies for increasing bikeability and walkability. The plan is available at [www.beyondthe710.org/better alternatives](http://www.beyondthe710.org/better_alternatives), located on the new Beyond the 710 website, which launched today as well.

"For too long, the debate over the 710 freeway has been fought with a 20th Century mindset that emphasizes more highways and all of the congestion and pollution that comes with them," said Rep. Adam Schiff (D-Burbank). "We need to adopt a new approach – more fitting for the times – that moves past the tunnel debate, and offers a range of options that will improve both the quality of life and transportation in our region. I support a broad set of transportation and air quality solutions that emphasize more mass transit, more parks, more bikeways, and more efficient goods movement over more concrete and more exhaust." Congressman Schiff recently wrote a letter opposing the 710 tunnel. It can be found at [www.beyondthe710.org/adam schiff](http://www.beyondthe710.org/adam_schiff).

**Beyond the 710** is a project of the Connected Cities and Communities, comprised of the cities of Glendale, La Canada Flintridge, Cities of Glendale, La Canada Flintridge, Pasadena, Sierra Madre, and South Pasadena, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Natural Resources Defense Council.

"Our communities have come together because while the tunnel is completely unacceptable to us due to the significant damage it would cause, we know that something must be done to relieve congestion in all the neighboring communities," said Marina Khubesrian, South Pasadena councilmember and vice chair of Beyond the 710. "It is really unfortunate that the alternatives process that Caltrans and Metro have conducted so far has been so deeply flawed and considered nothing like what we are putting out for discussion today."

**Beyond the 710's** Plan is the result of many months of study and collaboration to seek solutions that work for all the affected communities. The effort was led by Nelson\Nygaard, a full-service transportation firm, with offices across the United States, committed to developing transportation systems that promote vibrant, sustainable, and accessible communities. The firm's Los Angeles office is led by Paul Moore, who has led complex projects that have successfully transformed cities, neighborhoods and agencies throughout the United States.

"Pasadena has suffered the negative impacts of freeway 'solutions,' and we recognize that better options exist, such as great streets and smart transit," said Michael Beck, city manager of the City of Pasadena. "Our city council recently voted to oppose the tunnel, and instead we've

adopted a progressive approach to improving north-south connectivity that is very consistent with Beyond the 710.”

The Economic Benefits analysis was led by The Maxima Group LLC, a principal-led consulting firm specializing in real estate market and economic analysis. A summary is located at [www.beyondthe710.org/smart\\_growth](http://www.beyondthe710.org/smart_growth), was written by Patricia Flynn, one of the founding Principals of the Maxima Group. Flynn has over 25 years of experience in real estate and fiscal impact analysis. She has been responsible for many studies of transit-oriented development in Southern California, including two corridor-wide studies of the impact of transit-oriented development along the Gold Line Foothill Extension and several project-level studies for Metro.

“While the 710 Tunnel would cost many billions of dollars and not promote economic development at all, **Beyond the 710**’s plan would create thousands of long-term jobs, promote sustainable growth, and create opportunities for new housing and recreation,” said John Harabedian, councilmember of the City of Sierra Madres. “It’s based on four pillars of modern planning: community-serving transit, congestion reduction, Great Streets concepts that encourage bike use and walking, and managing traffic demand.”

“Like everyone here today, the City of La Cañada Flintridge acknowledges that the current situation is not tolerable, and something must be done, said Jonathan Curtis, mayor pro tem of the City of La Cañada Flintridge. “Unfortunately, the Caltrans / Metro approach is so deeply flawed that it cannot be a basis on which to move forward. Metro and Caltrans did not really listen to the ideas that came out of the scoping sessions, which is shown by the fact that among the 100 alternatives that they examined, none of them included eliminating either the north or south stubs. Caltrans and Metro must take a new look at how best to connect people to their destinations, and use transit and great streets to sustainably grow communities, and improve everyone’s quality of life.”

“The National Trust for Historic Preservation is proud to join the cities, institutions, and organizations supporting ‘**Beyond the 710**: Moving Forward’ as committed advocates for more effective and equitable regional transportation solutions suited to the 21st century needs of this dynamic, diverse, and growing metropolis,” said Stephanie Meeks, president and CEO of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. “Today, we are announcing Historic Communities of the 710 as our newest National Treasure—our signature advocacy program focusing on critically important and threatened historic places across the country. The National Trust supports and advances policies that promote urban livability, and we firmly believe that a transportation plan focused on the needs of the entire region will yield a much better solution



for the residents and business owners who live and work in some of the oldest, most historic communities in Los Angeles and the San Gabriel Valley."

"The No 710 Action Committee has been leading the opposition to the tunnel for many years, and over that time, we've built a broad community coalition united by support for preserving the communities in which we live and opposed to a project that would not only have devastating effects on our communities, but would not really help the communities in the south," said Claire Bogaard, representing the No 710 Action committee. "And while we have of course advocated for mobility-based alternatives in the past, we are thrilled with **Beyond the 710**'s Plan, and see it as a real opportunity to end this debate, and allow people to build a better quality of life."

**"Beyond the 710's** transportation plan is the only plan that can deliver positive solutions for all of the affected communities," said Anthony Portantino, a former member of the state Assembly. "By restarting the discussion with a focus on contemporary strategies we can avoid the negative consequences and astronomical cost of the tunnel disaster."

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