

Summary

Sometimes the solution to a problem requires intensive study by experts, years of research, and perhaps even a scientific break-through. Other times, the solution may be so obvious that in our zeal for technological achievement, we miss the simple, straight forward opportunities. That is exactly what has transpired with the 710 freeway. No one disagrees with the facts showing a need for improving travel opportunities in the 710 corridor. It is in meeting those needs that differing opinions surface. The concept of a Low-Build Approach has been fostered by South Pasadena as an alternative to the 710 freeway extension. This report high-lights the Low-Build Approach opportunities, describes why it is such an attractive option, and offers a comparison to the Build Alternative.

Termed "The Multi-Mode Alternative", the Low-Build Approach is keyed on using a wealth of transportation resources to meet the needs of travel in the corridor. Chief among our resources is the Pasadena Blue Line which mirrors the legendary Red Car routes and gives us hope that we are returning to a "healthy" form of urban transportation. Other resources include a vast array of existing arterial streets and additional transit tools. The Multi-Mode Alternative presented in this report is a sketch plan that gives us a picture of "what could be". Further work is needed, many details must be ironed out. The concept is valid, we know enough about it to know that it will work, and it is presented in the spirit of seeking a solution that works for everyone without the unconscionable effects of a freeway.

In summary, The Multi-Mode Alternative is characterized by the following traits:

- ▶ There is no "swath" cut through pristine neighborhoods and no taking of historic homes. In fact, The Multi-Mode Alternative could be largely accomplished with little or no additions to existing right of way.
- ▶ This approach is very consistent with the 1990 Clean Air Act, ISTEA, the policies of all affected cities, and State mandated growth management policies; the freeway alternative simply isn't.
- ▶ Rather than encourage wholesale redevelopment along a freeway corridor, The Multi-Mode Alternative offers economic vitality to a broader range of arterial streets and communities in a sense consistent with existing businesses.
- ▶ This approach builds on the investment we are making in rail, bus, and electric trolley transit facilities rather than detracts from it as a freeway will likely do.

- The Multi-Mode Alternative seeks to resolve traffic issues without creating side effects. Whereas a freeway would claim to improve traffic flow, studies have shown that congestion on many arterials actually worsen with the addition of a freeway.
- There is a unique "built-in" funding for this approach which could allow for further study, design, and implementation of the Multi-Mode Alternative. If the State were to sell the properties acquired (but outside of the Meridian alignment) conservatively \$9 million would be available. In addition, the State owns some 467 residential units within the Meridian alignment which, if sold, could provide over \$100 million for implementation of the Multi-Mode Alternative. This means that area wide street and transit improvements could be made without any impact to other funding sources. Building the freeway will cost an nearly \$1 billion; this is something we can't afford.

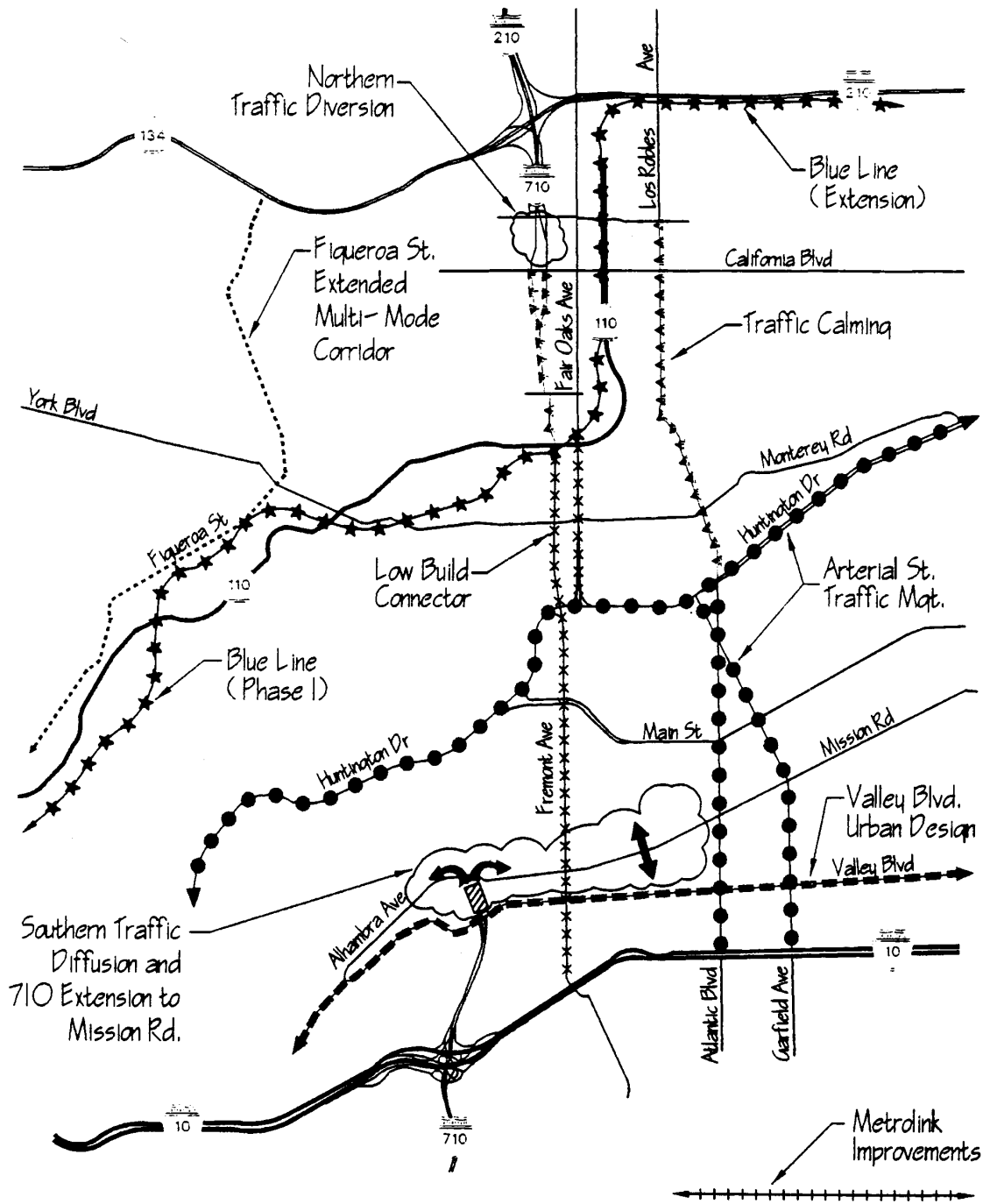
In summary, The Multi-Mode alternative is a promising solution and clearly merits further investigation. The following steps are recommended to carry this "win-win" opportunity forward:

1. Establish a blue ribbon committee of local agencies, citizen action groups, State and Federal agencies to pursue consensus definition of the Low-Build approach.
2. Commission an in-depth study and full report on The Multi-Mode Alternative to be done under the auspices of the blue ribbon committee.
3. Develop an information program to educate decision-makers, business owners, residents, and motorists of the features and advantages of The Multi-Mode Alternative.

This concept was developed in a workshop setting on August 23, 1993 by the following individuals:

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|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| AlvaLee Arnold | Diana Stoney | Eileen Garcia |
| Clarice Knapp | James C. Hodge, Jr. | Joanne Nuckols |
| Brad Rosenheim | Ken Farfsing | Lorna L. Moore |
| Don Jones | Tony Rossmann | Claire Bogaard |
| Kathryn Bums | Elizabeth Merritt | Terry James |
| Jesse Granados | Jim Van Winkle | Mary Ann Parada |
| John Laur | Pete Ewing | Ernie Arnold |
| David Czananske | Margaret Wallace | Claudia Nissley |
| Elizabeth Pomeroy | Bill Delvac | |

This report will assist the President's Council on Environmental Quality, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation to define and evaluate a genuine "low-build" alternative to the Route 710 freeway proposed in Caltrans 1992 Environmental Impact Statement.



Summary of Actions