

REPORT OF THE CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST

DATE: June 15, 2023

TO: Honorable Members of the Rules, Elections, and Intergovernmental Relations Committee

FROM: Sharon M. Tso 
Chief Legislative Analyst

Council File No. 23-0002-S60
Assignment No. 23-06-0321

SUBJECT: Resolution to SUPPORT SB 710 (Durazo)

CLA RECOMMENDATION: Adopt Resolution (De León – Krekorian) to include in the City’s 2023-2024 State Legislative Program, SUPPORT for SB 710 (Durazo) to require the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to establish and administer a Terminus Regional Planning Committee to report on potential land uses associated with the former State Route 710 Terminus Project.

SUMMARY

Resolution (De León – Krekorian), introduced on May 26, 2023, informs that in the 1960s, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) began purchasing properties north of State Route (SR) 710 for a project that would connect it with SR 210, referred to as the “State Route 710 Terminus Project.” The Resolution further informs that the project displaced many El Sereno residents and engendered controversy over the years, but was eventually cancelled in 2018. The Resolution further states that the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) recently allocated \$1 billion in local, state, and federal funds initially intended to fund the SR-710 Terminus Project to the cities of Alhambra, Monterey Park, Pasadena, Rosemead, San Gabriel, San Marino, South Pasadena, and the City and County of Los Angeles for alternative local and regional projects.

SB 710 (Durazo), currently pending before the State legislature, seeks to require Caltrans to establish and administer a Terminus Regional Planning Committee to report on potential land uses for properties associated with the former State Route 710 Terminus Project. SB 710 would ensure participation from affected communities to consider the types of projects, programs, and improvements for the land in the area. The Resolution therefore recommends that the City support SB 710.

BACKGROUND

During the 1960s, Caltrans purchased several hundred properties in El Sereno, Alhambra, South Pasadena, and Pasadena for a project to connect the 710 and 210 Freeways. Following the purchase of the homes, Caltrans has been the de facto landlord of the properties for over fifty years, as communities, government agencies, and courts debated whether or not the freeway expansion project should proceed. In 2018, the freeway project was cancelled, largely due to judicial injunctions and community opposition to the project. In October 2019, Governor Newsom signed legislation to definitively end six decades of attempts to construct the 710 Freeway extension. Caltrans is in the process of selling all of the properties it acquired for the project, which include a mix of multifamily homes, single family homes, and vacant land.

In 2021, SB 381 (Portatino) and SB 51 (Durazo) were enacted, describing how Caltrans properties in South Pasadena and El Sereno should be sold. In 2022, Caltrans released Notices of Solicitation to Occupants and

Tenants to purchase the properties and established the State Route 710 Sales Program to allow housing-related private entities to solicit interest in purchasing the surplus properties along the SR 710 corridor for use as affordable housing. Caltrans received bids for some of the properties in October 2022 that are still under review.

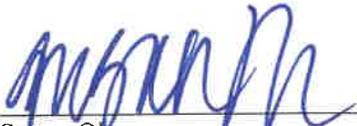
Given the controversial history of the 710 extension project that includes the displacement of communities of color through eminent domain, a racial discrimination lawsuit filed against Caltrans by El Sereno residents, and environmental impact concerns of the freeway expansion project, the State should provide a framework to engage neighboring communities to provide input for the future development of the properties. SB 710 would establish and administer a Terminus Regional Planning Committee composed of representatives from the City of Alhambra; City of Los Angeles; County of Los Angeles; LA-32 Neighborhood Council; California State University, Los Angeles; Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority; and one community-based organization. The Committee would meet quarterly and prepare a report for the Legislature by December 1, 2025 on projects and land use in the 710 corridor, including a summary and status of the Alhambra 710 Arterial Project, an arterial street plan in Alhambra funded by Measure R. The Committee would be tasked with discussing traffic issues, alternative transportation options, and potential land uses, including affordable housing, student housing, workforce development space, public university expansion, parks, and open space.

DEPARTMENTS NOTIFIED

Department of City Planning
Los Angeles Department of Transportation

BILL STATUS

2/16/23	Introduced
3/1/23	Referred to Committee on Rules
3/20/23	Amended, re-referred to Committee on Rules
3/29/23	Re-referred to Committee on Transportation
4/26/23	Passed, re-referred to Committee on Appropriations
5/8/23	Placed on Appropriations suspense file
5/18/23	Passed, as amended
5/31/23	Passed, ordered to the Assembly



Susan Oh
Analyst

Attachment 1. Resolution (De León – Krekorian)
 2. SB 710

ATTACHMENT 1

LOCAL ELECTIONS INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Resolution

WHEREAS, any official position of the City of Los Angeles with respect to legislation, rules, regulations or policies proposed to or pending before a local, state or federal governmental body or agency must have first been adopted in the form of a Resolution by the City Council; and

WHEREAS, in the 1960's, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) began purchasing properties north of the SR-710 freeway in order to connect it with the SR-210 in Pasadena, named the "State Route 710 Terminus Project;" and

WHEREAS, the proposal displaced many El Sereno residents through eminent domain and engendered ongoing controversy over the years; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, Caltrans determined that traffic light and intersection improvements, along with other local roadway improvements, would replace the plan to construct a freeway connection; and

WHEREAS, as funding for the SR 710 gap closure was no longer required, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Authority (Metro) recently allocated more than \$1 billion in local, state, and federal funds to the Cities of Alhambra, Monterey Park, Pasadena, Rosemead, San Gabriel, San Marino, South Pasadena, and the City and County of Los Angeles, for alternative local and regional projects; and

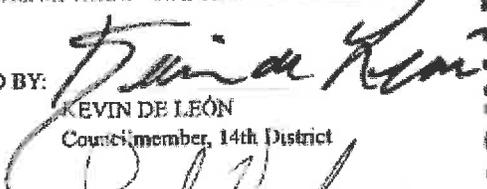
WHEREAS, Senator Maria Elena Durazo introduced SB 710 to require Caltrans to establish and administer a Terminus Regional Planning Committee (TRP) that would meet quarterly and complete and submit a report to the Legislature on issues of traffic and potential land use related to land originally purchased for the "State Route 710 Terminus Project;" and

WHEREAS, the composition of the TRP Committee would include representatives from the City of Alhambra, the City of Los Angeles (including the LA-32 Neighborhood Council), the County of Los Angeles, Metro, and one community-based organization; and

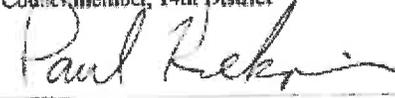
WHEREAS, it is critical for the affected communities to participate in the process to consider the types of projects, programs, and improvements for the land in this area;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that by adoption of this resolution, the City of Los Angeles hereby includes in its 2023-24 State Legislative Program, SUPPORT for SB 710 (Durazo), which would require the California Department of Transportation to establish and administer a Terminus Regional Planning Committee to prepare a report for the Legislature relative to potential land uses associated with the former "State Route 710 Terminus Project."

PRESENTED BY:


KEVIN DE LEÓN
Councilmember, 14th District

SECONDED BY:



ORIGINAL

PK MAY 26 2023

ATTACHMENT 2

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 18, 2023
AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 20, 2023

SENATE BILL

No. 710

Introduced by Senator Durazo

February 16, 2023

An act to add *and repeal* Section 118.8 to of the Streets and Highways Code, relating to surplus property.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 710, as amended, Durazo. Sale of excess state highway property: State Highway Route 710 Terminus.

Existing law provides that the Department of Transportation shall have full possession and control of the state highway system and associated real property. Existing law, if the department determines that real property, or an interest in the property, acquired for highway purposes is no longer necessary for those purposes, authorizes the department to sell or exchange the property or property interest in the manner and upon terms, standards, and conditions established by the California Transportation Commission, as provided. Existing law authorizes the California Transportation Commission to relinquish a portion of State Highway Route 710.

This bill would require the department to establish and administer a Terminus Regional Planning Committee, as provided, to meet quarterly and complete and submit a report to the Legislature on the issues of traffic and potential land use related to ~~this portion of Route 710: the State Route 710 Terminus adjacent areas, as defined.~~ *The bill would repeal these provisions on January 1, 2027.*

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 *SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the*
 2 *following:*

3 *(a) The State Route 710 Terminus was purchased by the*
 4 *Department of Transportation for use in building a Route 710*
 5 *connection to Route 210. This use of eminent domain displaced*
 6 *many in the El Sereno neighborhood in the City of Los Angeles,*
 7 *as hundreds of homes were purchased with the intent to eventually*
 8 *remove the structures and construct an extension to Route 710 to*
 9 *close a 4.5-mile unconstructed gap between the City of Alhambra*
 10 *and the City of Pasadena. The State Route 710 Terminus is also*
 11 *bordered by the California State University, Los Angeles.*

12 *(b) The Legislature added Section 622.3, authorizing the*
 13 *commission to relinquish this portion of Route 710, and Section*
 14 *253.9 to exclude, as of January 1, 2024, the section of Route 710*
 15 *between Route 10 and Route 210 from the California freeway and*
 16 *expressway system.*

17 *(c) Therefore, much of this land is no longer needed by the*
 18 *Department of Transportation and can be put to other uses.*

19 *(d) Additionally these changes raise the need to address traffic*
 20 *flow in the area. Currently, Route 710 north ends abruptly just*
 21 *north of Route 10, causing traffic and congestion and affecting*
 22 *the City of Los Angeles as well as the Cities of Alhambra, South*
 23 *Pasadena, and Pasadena.*

24 *(e) The City of Alhambra has identified funding for a project*
 25 *to transform the State Route 710 Terminus into an arterial,*
 26 *transitioning between Route 710 and Valley Boulevard, which is*
 27 *being developed in conjunction with the Department of*
 28 *Transportation as the Alhambra 710 Arterial Project. Other*
 29 *stakeholders may have an interest in studying additional projects*
 30 *in the State Route 710 Terminus adjacent areas that address land*
 31 *use, multijurisdictional planning, and transportation beyond the*
 32 *scope of the Alhambra 710 Arterial Project.*

33 ~~SECTION 1.~~

34 *SEC. 2. Section 118.8 is added to the Streets and Highways*
 35 *Code, to read:*

36 118.8. (a) For purposes of this section, ~~“State the following~~
 37 *definitions apply:*

1 (1) “State Route 710 Terminus” means the Route 710 Terminus
2 in the City of Alhambra, north of Route 10, built and currently
3 operating as State Route 710.

4 (b) The Legislature finds and declares the following:

5 (1) ~~The State Route 710 Terminus was purchased by the~~
6 ~~department for use in building a Route 710 connection to Route~~
7 ~~210. This use of eminent domain displaced many in the El Sereno~~
8 ~~neighborhood in the City of Los Angeles, as hundreds of homes~~
9 ~~were purchased with the intent to eventually remove the structures~~
10 ~~and construct an extension to Route 710 to close a 4.5-mile~~
11 ~~unconstructed gap between the City of Alhambra and the City of~~
12 ~~Pasadena. The State Route 710 Terminus is also bordered by the~~
13 ~~California State University, Los Angeles.~~

14 (2) ~~The Legislature added Section 622.3, authorizing the~~
15 ~~commission to relinquish this portion of Route 710, and Section~~
16 ~~253.9 to exclude, as of January 1, 2024, the section of Route 710~~
17 ~~between Route 10 and Route 210 from the California freeway and~~
18 ~~expressway system:~~

19 (3) ~~Therefore, much of this land is no longer needed by the~~
20 ~~department and can be put to other uses.~~

21 (4) ~~Additionally these changes raise the need to address traffic~~
22 ~~flow in the area. Currently, Route 710 north ends abruptly just~~
23 ~~north of Route 10, causing traffic and congestion and affecting the~~
24 ~~City of Los Angeles as well as the Cities of Alhambra, South~~
25 ~~Pasadena, and Pasadena.~~

26 (2) “The State Route 710 Terminus adjacent areas” means any
27 department-owned areas or any areas impacted by past department
28 planning for State Route 710, within the geographic area in any
29 jurisdiction of the County of Los Angeles bounded by North Eastern
30 Street to the west; Huntington Drive, west of the intersection of
31 Huntington Drive and West Main Street, and West Main Street,
32 east of that intersection, on the north; South Fremont Avenue on
33 the east; and Route 10 on the south.

34 (e)

35 (b) (1) The department shall establish and administer a
36 Terminus Regional Planning Committee, composed of
37 representatives from the City of Alhambra; the City of Los
38 Angeles; the County of Los Angeles; the LA-32 Neighborhood
39 Council; the California State University, Los Angeles; the Los
40 Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority; and one

1 community-based organization, *with the requirement to incorporate*
2 *robust community engagement*, that shall meet quarterly and
3 complete and submit a report to the Legislature in compliance with
4 Section 9795 of the Government Code, by December 1, 2025, on
5 *projects and land use in the State Route 710-Terminus: Terminus*
6 *adjacent areas, including a summary and status of the Alhambra*
7 *710 Arterial Project*. The committee shall discuss, and the study
8 shall address, but need not be limited to, the issues of traffic in
9 ~~connecting to Route 10~~ and potential land uses, including
10 affordable housing, student housing, workforce development space,
11 public university expansion, parks, open space, and alternative
12 transportation.

13 ~~(2) The requirement to submit a report imposed pursuant to~~
14 ~~paragraph (1) is inoperative on December 1, 2029, pursuant to~~
15 ~~Section 10231.5 of the Government Code:~~

16 (2) *In selecting members of the committee, the department shall*
17 *ensure jurisdictional balance.*

18 (3) *Notwithstanding any other law, the report required to be*
19 *submitted pursuant to paragraph (1) shall not be considered a*
20 *land use study.*

21 (4) *Upon completing its duties required under paragraph (1),*
22 *the committee shall dissolve.*

23 (5) *Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize the*
24 *committee to impede a local jurisdiction's ability to implement*
25 *additional projects at the State Route 710 Terminus or in State*
26 *Route 710 Terminus adjacent areas.*

27 (c) *This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2027,*
28 *and as of that date is repealed.*