

SR-710 North Tunnel Project – Poll Results

Briefing Paper

PURPOSE

This briefing paper provides a high level summary of the poll results, brief background about the poll, and recommended talking points for mayors, council members, and city managers.

TOP LINE SUMMARY

Respondents in both Los Angeles County and cities near the proposed 710 tunnel support the project by a very strong 2-to-1 margin.

This level of support was maintained even after highly negative claims were made against the 710 tunnel.

SUMMARY POLL RESULTS

- Traffic congestion on local streets is an important issue to 76% of those surveyed
- There was strong initial support for the project (i.e. respondents initial reaction before being given any information about the project)
 - LA County was 3.5-to-1 in favor of the 710 North tunnel (46% favor vs. 13% oppose)
 - Affected areas were 2-to-1 in favor (51% to 25%)
- After supportive arguments, support increased (supportive arguments included statements touting job creation, congestion relief, reduced emergency responses times, etc.)
 - LA County support rose to more than 4-to-1 (69% favor to 16% oppose)
 - Affected areas support rose to better than 3-to-1 (67% favor to 21% oppose)
- Even after presenting respondents with highly negative arguments against the project, support remained high (negative arguments included statements about possible cost overruns, tunnel safety, etc.; respondents were asked for the responses below immediately after negative arguments were presented and still fresh in their minds; this polling sequence can be biased against the project, i.e. every effort was made to make sure critics could not say that the poll design favored the project)
 - LA County support was still 2-to-1 (56% favor to 27% oppose)

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- Affected areas support was even stronger – also 2-to-1 – than LA County (59% favor to 30% oppose)
- The margin of error was ± 4.0 percentage points for the Los Angeles County respondents and ± 4.6 percentage points for the affected areas respondents (e.g. this means in a worse-case scenario, support would be up to 4.0% less than stated above and opposition would be up to 4.0% higher for Los Angeles County)
- Jobs, improved fire/police response times, improved pedestrian safety, and reduced traffic congestion are the most compelling arguments for supporting the project
 - 62% of respondents are more likely to support the 710 tunnel if fire/police response times are cut

POLL BACKGROUND

The poll was conducted by Fred Yang of Hart Research Associates (who conducted polling for Mayor Eric Garcetti's campaign for Mayor in 2013) between June 23 and June 29, 2014.

One thousand registered voters were surveyed through a statistically valid random selection process: 600 in Los Angeles County and 400 in 12 affected areas.

The affected areas polled include: Alhambra, Glendale, La Canada Flintridge, Los Angeles (Council Districts 1 and 14, including El Sereno), Monterey Park, Pasadena, Rosemead, San Gabriel, San Marino, Sierra Madre, and South Pasadena.

Because 62 of the 600 respondents for the Los Angeles County respondents were in the affected areas, those responses were excluded from the Los Angeles County data and added to the original 400 affected area respondents.

TALKING POINTS

Feel free to re-phrase or put talking points in your own voice and speaking style

Short Version

- Our constituents continue to support this important congestion relief project by a very wide margin
- Support is two-to-one both countywide and in nearby cities
- We need to keep moving this project forward, which will create over 40,000 new jobs

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TALKING POINTS (continued)

Long Version

Poll results are very positive

- Our constituents continue to support this important congestion relief project by a very wide margin
- Support is two-to-one both countywide and in nearby cities
- 56% of Los Angeles County supports the 710 tunnel and 59% of nearby cities also support the project

Project brings important benefits both locally and regionally

- Construction creates 40,300 new jobs
- These are high quality jobs, with average annual earnings of \$63,000 per job
- Cut through traffic on local streets will be reduced by 80,000 trips daily

Note: We are not claiming any air quality benefits at this time because the updated analysis in the final environmental impact statement/report (EIS/EIR) is not available yet

Voters understand the importance of this project

- Our constituents are smart: they know that we need to invest in transportation infrastructure
- Our constituents also know that doing nothing will not improve our quality of life
- Finally, even spurious attacks by opponents do not diminish the wide support for the 710 tunnel

We are on the right track

- We are very pleased with the results of this poll
- It confirms what we've known all along: building the 710 tunnel and closing the gap in our freeway system is the right thing to do