

RECEIVED ON: May 10, 2022

Council Meeting: 05/10/2022

Agenda Item No. 3.D.

**From:** [Susan Cameron](#)  
**To:** [WebMail - CCD](#)  
**Cc:** [Joe Vinatieri](#); [Octavio Cesar Martinez](#); [Fernando Dutra](#); [Cathy Warner](#); [Jessica Martinez](#); [Brian Saeki](#)  
**Subject:** Public comment on Item 3D - Whittier Blvd.  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 10, 2022 3:00:35 PM

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Dear Mayor Vinatieri and members of the City Council,

I understand you are currently in negotiations to purchase Whittier Blvd. from the State of California, and that this is the subject of Item 3D on tonight's closed session agenda. I am writing to urge the utmost caution in making this move. Please consider whether the city can afford the cost of maintaining this state highway forever. Through Measure W, we voters have provided the city with additional revenue, but under the many restrictions California's voters have, since Prop 13 in 1978, placed on the ability to raise local taxes, the city's revenue stream is tightly constrained, and unless these laws are repealed, will continue to be for the foreseeable future.

Our neighboring city of La Habra Heights found themselves in financial trouble when a major roadway through their city was damaged, and they could ill afford to repair it. Because it, like Whittier Blvd, was a thoroughfare used more by motorists traveling through their city than by their own residents, this roadway should have remained the responsibility of the county or the state. I am at a loss to understand what benefit owning Whittier Blvd could possibly have for Whittier residents.

The Strong Towns organization, which I have recommended to you before, and which I believe a number of you view as a voice for fiscal prudence in city government, warns of the tendency for cities not to plan adequately for the cost of maintenance of their infrastructure. Please refer to this 2018 article, "[The More we Build, the Poorer we Get](#)" as one of many examples of such analysis by this fine organization.

Perhaps I, as a constituent, do not fully understand how the fiscal analysis of this particular proposal is intended to work. The fact that the discussions of the project are closed to the public makes it difficult. If I am mistaken about the fiscal impact, then I believe it is up to those of you who are privy to the facts to educate the people who elected you, and to do so while it is still possible for citizens to have input. If such an apparently unwise action has an upside that will benefit the city enough to justify the massive cost of maintaining this thoroughfare forever, please explain it clearly with supporting data.

In the meantime, please be cautious about committing to something that could potentially lead to our city's fiscal ruin.

Thank you very much for your serious (re)consideration of this risky move.

Susan Cameron

CC: CM; ACM; CA; Council; Original to CC; Public Binder; Department