

Tunnel Is Environmentally Irresponsible: An Inconvenient Truth

Posted by [William A. Bry](#) on February 25, 2010 at 5:49pm

The notion of authorizing funds to generate the energy and to expend the energy that would be required to tunnel traffic below Coronado is unconscionable in the current climate of heightened sensitivity to global environmental issues...to mankind's impact to the earth... to our carbon footprint.

How many are the people who recently purchased hybrid vehicles, solar power, and energy saving appliances, whose good-faith efforts at reducing excessive loads on our environment, would be negated by a Coronado decision to tunnel traffic below ground. And worse, to learn that the decision would save only a few minutes worth of driving around a several block area, that temporarily inconveniences a small number of the world's most privileged citizens in what is by comparison to urban environments, barely a pseudo rush-hour traffic volume.

That the citizenry is still even considering a tunnel appears un-informed and irresponsible. That the city council is still waffling on this issue, shows a deficiency in leadership at a time when leadership is needed most.

How many "carbon credits" will it take to run the tunneling machine, to run the construction vehicles---earthmovers/alphalt layers/backhoes/work trucks? How many will it take to dig the raw materials from the earth and then to process it into concrete, steel, and asphalt? How many to run the ventilation systems and sump pumps inside the tunnels 24/7 forever to maintain a habitable atmosphere below ground? How many will it take for the maintenance crews to perform their regular maintenance sustainment tasks, not to mention the inevitable corrective or upgrade maintenance that will be required on long-term engineering projects; for example the Coronado Bridge's massive earthquake upgrades?

Consider that instead of encouraging more green forms of transportation, the tunnel would instead be encouraging the proliferation of individual passenger vehicles, each contributing their own degradation to the global environment. Whether gasoline, electric, or hybrid, each vehicle still needs to obtain energy from some source that is ever more limited in supply.

Anyone who thinks that Coronado has a traffic problem, needs to get off the "island" and spend more time in the real world. Compared to the 405 freeway and to truly serious traffic problems in high concentration areas like New York, New Jersey, and Illinois, Coronado has no traffic

problem. If it exists at all, it exists only in the imagination of a small number of temporarily inconvenienced citizens that think the rest of the world should bear the burden of making their lives easier.

The tunnel is irresponsible and should be summarily removed from further consideration by responsible leadership ---recognizing that the world is not the same place as it was when the tunnel was first considered, that the world has priorities even human disasters far worthier of action. Consider that the unanticipated rapid acceleration of sea levels rise could place some percentage of Coronado under water, even before the tunnel's lifespan. What then? Should we begin investing in dykes to hold back the sea?

Just say NO to the tunnel.