



Corridor Advisory Committee Meeting #8

September 17, 2009

6:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Progress Park

15500 Downey Avenue, Paramount

MEETING SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

On Thursday, September 17, 2009, the I-710 Project Team met with the Corridor Advisory Committee (CAC) at Progress Park in Paramount. The purpose of the meeting was to:

- Review Meeting #6 and #7 draft summaries
- Provide updates from the Engineering Team, Environmental Team, Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the Subject Working Groups.
- Review Alternative 6b
- Provide an update on issues related to significance thresholds

In attendance from the Project Team were Ernest Morales, Devon Cichoski and Adrian Alvarez (Metro); Jerry Wood (GCCOG); Jack Waldron (URS); Jayna Goodman (LSA); Garrett Damrath (Caltrans); and Pat McLaughlin, Esmeralda Garcia, and Anita Punja (MIG).

CAC members in attendance were:

Glenna Amos, City of South Gate LAC

Eileen Aparicio, City of Paramount LAC

Malcolm Carson, Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles

John Cross, City of Long Beach Council District 7 Appointee

Clifford Dunbar, CAC Appointee (Bell Gardens LAC)

Donna Ethington, Harbor Area Communities

Bob Eula, CAC Appointee (City of Commerce LAC)

Belinda Faustinos, San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy

Robert Hildebrand, City of Long Beach District 1 Appointee

Raymond Park, City of Carson LAC

Mario Sotelo, City of Commerce LAC

Harold Tseklenis, CAC Appointee (City of Downey)



Charlie Honeycutt, Alternate representing the TAC for Bill Pagett
Isella Ramirez, Alternate representing East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice

AGENDA OVERVIEW

Pat McLaughlin of MIG opened the meeting with a round of self-introductions. She then introduced Ernest Morales, the Project Director for Metro. Ms. McLaughlin explained to the Committee that Mr. Morales has been a resource at recent Subject Working Group meetings and asked the CAC if the group would like to have Mr. Morales sit with the Committee and be available to answer any immediate questions. The group welcomed Mr. Morales to the table. She then reviewed the meeting agenda which included a public comment period; review of the summaries of the previous CAC meetings, held on June 18 and August 27; an update on project schedule and progress from the engineering and environmental teams; a presentation on Alternative 6b and the TAC amendment; and an update from the Project Team on issues related to significance thresholds.

Esmeralda Garcia of MIG invited Spanish-speaking participants to listen to a live translation of the meeting on the headphones provided.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. McLaughlin called speakers from the audience to the microphone. There were no public comments.

REVIEW OF MEETING #6 AND #7 SUMMARY

Ms. McLaughlin referred the Committee to printed handouts of the on June 18 and August 27 meeting summaries.

CAC member Mario Sotelo noted a mistake in Meeting Summary #5 in which a sentence incorrectly indicates a double-decking design alternative was supported by the community. In fact, the discussion had not been open to the community at that time; it was internal to the LAC. Based on Mr. Sotelo's correction, Ms. McLaughlin asked if it would suffice to amend the sentence to state "he had indicated that the Commerce LAC had discussed double-decking."

The Committee had no additional comments or questions related to the meeting summaries.

Requested Materials

Ms. McLaughlin referred participants to the schedule for completion of the environmental studies included in their handout materials. She indicated that, at the request of the CAC, the technical team has made some recommendations on those studies that would be of greatest interest to the Committee. These include the Air Quality/ Health Risk Assessment, the Community Impact Assessment, the Draft Relocation Impact Report, the Noise Impact Study, the Traffic Operational Analysis, and the Visual Impact Assessment. Ms. McLaughlin asked

participants to indicate other studies on the schedule that may lend themselves to an in-depth discussion by the Committee.

CAC member Belinda Faustinos suggested that the Committee learn more about the Los Angeles River Impact Study.

CAC member Donna Ethington indicated that she is interested in the Water Quality and Water Runoff study. Ms. Faustinos also agreed, and inquired as to the content of these presentations. She shared that she would be interested in the water resources study if the presentation included the following elements: impacts to open space, the infrastructure of the river, and the Los Angeles River Master Plan.

Jayna Goodman of LSA explained that the water resources study presentation would include a biological analysis, whereas the Community Impact Assessment addresses recreation facilities around the river or on the levees.

Mr. Sotelo also suggested the Committee add the Utility Impacts. Ms. McLaughlin asked the group if there were any others. The Committee agreed the list reflected the group's preferred direction.

Ms. McLaughlin turned the committee's attention to the cumulative projects list handout. The list includes all planned and existing projects in the corridor. Ms. McLaughlin suggested that any changes or additions to the cumulative projects list be emailed to the project team.

Ms. Ethington asked if the list includes projects associated with I-710 as well as other developments. Ms. Goodman explained that the list includes major past, present and future projects. She emphasized that the list is a living document and includes the Committee's feedback and input. She explained that the cumulative list is inherent to some of the technical studies, such as the noise study, air quality, and health risks.

CAC member Robert Hildebrand asked what the boundary is for project inclusion in the cumulative list since it includes projects on the Garden Grove 22 Freeway, which is not adjacent to the I-710. Ms. Goodman explained that there is not a prescribed boundary and that projects are included that may impact traffic volumes, congestion, or other aspects.

Ms. McLaughlin noted that the final request made by the Committee at its last meeting was the early actions project list. Mr. Morales explained that the early actions project list will include some projects that are completed before the I-710 widening. CAC member Glenna Amos informed the group of a grant-funded project in the City of South Gate that may need to be accelerated since the funding will expire and, therefore, may qualify for the early action list.

Jerry Wood from the Gateway Cities Council of Governments, provided the group with background information regarding the Early Action list. Measure R, which passed in November 2008, adds an additional half-cent tax for freeway projects and includes the following funding allocations: \$600 million for I-710 early action projects and \$600 million for the 91/605/405. MTA's long range plan, due out in October 2009, includes funding allocations for identified highway projects. In order to ensure that certain projects were included in MTA's long term plan, the TAC worked with the consultant team to identify potential Early Action projects. Potential projects were determined based on accident rates and safety issues. The long-range plan includes funding for the I-710 and the 91/605/405. The TAC tabled any further discussion on the Early Action list. The TAC plans to revisit and vet this list upon reviewing geometric plans, as well as other information.

Mr. Wood further explained that the Early Action projects are stand-alone projects that are built consistent with the ultimate project. He confirmed that the Atlantic Bandini project is included in the Early Action list.

UPDATES

Ms. McLaughlin introduced the Engineering, Environmental, and Community Outreach Teams' update presentations.

Engineering

Jack Waldron of URS provided an update on the engineering team's progress. He explained that the team developed the refined geometrics and the traffic operations analyses over the summer, and is planning to complete these analyses by the end of September 2009. The engineering team maintains ongoing utility coordination with Edison and DWP, meeting monthly. The three entities have discussed realignment and relocation options for electric transmission facilities to accommodate the proposed build alternatives, and are determining a preferred option.

The engineering team is also coordinating with the Los Angeles County Flood Control District and the Corps of Engineers to address impacts on the Los Angeles River. The electrical transmission facility realignment options will be narrowed before options regarding the river will be finalized.

A value engineering team is being developed to assess the cost of the current proposed project alternative designs, with the intention of suggesting design changes to make the alternatives more cost effective. This assessment is scheduled for the first week in November, 2009.

As the engineering team completes the geometric refinement work, sub-groups of the TAC are reviewing the revised plans. Once completed, the LACs will have a final round of review in the month of November 2009. The resulting design will be passed to the environmental team for the environmental assessment portion.

The engineering team continues coordinating with Caltrans on the I-5/710 interchange project.

Environmental

Jayna Goodman of LSA gave a brief update on the environmental team's progress, noting again that the technical studies are currently in progress. The environmental team is focusing on the baseline and affected environment portions of the environmental assessment. As the design packages come in, the team is starting the impact analysis of these packages. Traffic operations analysis, including the Port's Clean Truck Program, informs the Air Quality/Health Risk Assessment.

The team has been in discussion with AQMD on the topics of CEQA significance thresholds and construction impacts. Other environmental studies include biological resources, jurisdictional delineation, cultural resources, and the hazardous waste study. Caltrans is continuing to collect noise level data for the Noise Impact Study. Draft Community Profiles have been completed and will be distributed to the LACs. The environmental team is also continuing to collect data on the cumulative projects list.

Questions and comments regarding progress by the environmental team included:

- CAC member Harold Tseklenis asked if the environmental team came across unexpected findings in the baseline studies.
 - Ms. Goodman responded that the team had not, to her knowledge, discovered surprising findings. The team is still waiting for the cultural resources team's preliminary analysis and the estuary analysis reveals little surprising data.
- Ms. Ethington asked what baseline year the team is using for the studies. She asked if the goal is to decrease emissions to below baseline levels. The Port's emissions inventory includes 2001 or 2002 as the baseline year.
 - Ms. Goodman responded that 2008 is the baseline year for air emissions and traffic. Mr. Wood added that the air quality of each alternative will be part of the comparative analysis and will inform the process and development of mitigations. He explained that one of the objectives is to improve air quality.
- Ms. Faustinos noted that over 20 projects on the Los Angeles River are not included in the cumulative projects. She expressed concern that the baseline does not include these river projects and that the biological resources analysis does not include impacts to habitat upriver.
 - Ms. Goodman assured the Committee that the environmental team is conducting an entire Los Angeles River impact study that includes wildlife and plant life. CAC members were encouraged to provide a list of other projects to the environmental team to update the cumulative list of projects.

Community Outreach

Ms. McLaughlin stressed to the committee that one of the primary goals of project team is to ensure meaningful participation of the community. In recent months the Environmental Subject Working Group (ESWG) has been very active and is continuing to prepare input and advice on areas such as the Health Impact Assessment and formulating recommendations on the significance thresholds, construction impacts, and near-source modeling. The ESWG will also be reviewing issues related to water.

The Transportation Subject Working group reviewed alternative technologies as considered in the project alternatives. The group has asked for a specific tutorial on traffic studies and geometrics preparation, port cargo forecasts, and an update from Edison on power supply as it relates to alternative goods movement.

The Community Enhancement Subject Working Group will be assessing potential enhancements along the corridor, and historic, structural, and community design impacts in the next few months.

The team completed the quarterly update to the newsletter, is completing Spanish translations, and developing an extensive brochure describing the corridor as a whole.

Questions and comments regarding progress by the community participation team included:

- CAC member John Cross asked if the Ports had provided information pertaining to cargo growth.
 - Mr. Wood answered that the Ports will make a presentation to the CAC, TAC and the Project Committee in October 2009. The revised projections demonstrate a slower growth projected for the future.

TAC

Charlie Honeycutt, representing the TAC for CAC member Bill Pagett, provided a brief update on recent TAC activities. The TAC sub-committees have been reviewing respective sections of the revised geometric plans. **URS is responding to sub-TAC comments.** The TAC sub-committees plan to complete this review at the end of October 2009. The TAC's only recommendation to the Project Committee includes the revised edits to the language in Alternative 6B.

ALTERNATIVE 6B

Ms. McLaughlin turned the conversation to Alternative 6B. She summarized that the Committee had asked the project team to provide an explanation of the original recommendation on Alternative 6B, and the process by which the TAC had revised the language prior to presenting to the Project Committee. There was concern over the manner in which the fixed guideway alternative technology was reflected in Alternative 6B. She introduced Jack Waldron of URS to provide a brief presentation on Alternative 6B and the consideration of alternative technology.

Mr. Waldron walked the group through the process that was used during alternatives development and screening for evaluating the alternative technologies for moving cargo containers to and from the ports. URS studied different families of technologies and assessed feasibility of the suggested technologies. An all-day workshop of various members of the technical team was held to review the findings of this analysis and to gather input from various technical staff of agencies. Alternative technology has been recognized throughout the development of the project for its ability to improve air quality.

URS completed an alternative technology screening process, and presented these results to the TAC who made a recommendation to the Project Committee that was approved on April 30, 2009. The intention is to include alternative goods movement technology as part of one of the project alternatives, but that the alternative remain technology neutral at this point in the project. The team determined the need to reach out to alternative technology industries and advise them of the opportunity to provide input to the project and be aware of future potential the project might present.

The initial study was focused on fixed guideway technology where vehicles travel on a fixed track similar to a conventional rail. There is much interest in this technology; yet, this technology has advanced to a very limited degree at this point, maintains a fixed pathway, and poses loading and unloading challenges.

The zero emission trucks or vehicles family was developed as a result of the limitations determined in the analysis of the fixed guideway family of technologies. Zero emission trucks could operate on the roadway system, thus not introducing a third mode of transportation.

The power system of zero emission vehicles includes linear induction systems, a viable system that could propel trucks on a freight corridor. Linear induction uses a system of electrical coils embedded in the pavement with an opposing electrical coil on the vehicle—the propulsion system that’s used by maglev and a fairly new propulsion system, but it has proven itself in some applications. Rail transit illustrates potential solutions as does the electric vehicle. Power could be channeled through an overhead line or underground conductors.

Alternative technology families were evaluated using screening measures, which were based on determining the viability of each family of technology. Zero emissions trucks scored the highest when evaluated. The electrified rail uses existing technology; yet, a conventional freight railroad is not compatible with the locally preferred strategy freight corridor alignment and electrified rail would require heavy structural loading on the elevated freight corridor. This technology would also require on-dock railyards or near dock intermodal yards. The proposed I-710 build alternatives include maximizing the development of on-dock railyards to feed more cargo containers into the Alameda Corridor.

The team decided to develop the preliminary design of Alternative 6B based upon zero emission vehicles (trucks) and that the freight corridor will be developed to allow for future conversion to a fixed guideway system. In May 2009, the language was adjusted according to TAC member input, which further clarified the option of having the design open to conversion to a fixed guideway system. The revised proposal will be presented to the project committee in October 2009.

Questions and comments regarding Alternative 6B included:

- CAC member Malcolm Carson asked if the goods movement by rail or by zero emission vehicles would be analyzed in the environmental document.
 - Mr. Waldron answered that the document will study zero emission vehicles operating on the freight corridor under Alternative 6B, and conventional trucks under Alternative 6A. Either way, the freight corridor will be designed so that it can be converted in the future.
- Mr. Cross expressed concern regarding fixed rail system implementation without the cooperation of BNSF or Union Pacific railroads.
 - Mr. Waldron clarified that zero emissions applied to the Alameda Corridor is being evaluated.
 - Mr. Wood commented that the Air Quality Action Plan will evaluate electrified rail design options.
- One committee member expressed concern that the Alameda Corridor at capacity would impact the project.

- Mr. Wood answered that analysis of all of the alternatives includes moving the maximum amount of cargo by railroad. The team can evaluate issues and impacts related to goods movement by rail if the Committee requests it.
- Ms. Faustinos stated that it is important to identify the threshold indicating the viability of technology. She wondered what would trigger an investigation and who would decide what technology is viable for the project.
- Harold Tseklenis asked how the team defines “zero emissions” for electric trucks since the electricity is powered by a variety of power types including coal, gas, and renewables.
 - Ernest Morales of Metro noted that the State is continuously requiring more renewable power of utility companies. When projecting out to 2035, the trend is towards a generation mix that will include thermal, wind, solar, water, and renewable sources.
- Mr. Carson explained that he sees shifting the immediate source of emissions away from adjacent to people’s schools and homes is a trade-off in the short term for the corridor.
- Isella Ramirez asked who would regulate whether the four-lane corridor is specifically for zero emissions vehicles.
 - Mr. Waldron answered that the details need to be worked out, but the team is assuming that there would be some legislation or enforcement system.
- Mario Sotelo asked for a definition of linear induction/diesel vehicles.
 - Mr. Waldron explained that these vehicles or trucks would be diesel-powered and outfitted with a magnetic coil, which would allow the truck to turn off its diesel engine and be propelled by a linear induction system while traveling on the freight corridor. General Atomics is developing concepts along these lines.

SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS UPDATE

Project Team

Ms. McLaughlin turned the meeting over to Garrett Damrath of Caltrans to provide an update on the significance thresholds. Mr. Damrath explained that the use of AQMD’s significance threshold in the I-710 EIR is currently being discussed between AQMD, the Gateway Cities COG, and Caltrans. The group is working out how the AQMD significance thresholds could be used in Caltrans’ determination of significance for air quality impacts.

ESWG

Devon Cichoski of Metro reported the activities of the Environment Subject Working group on behalf of Angelo Logan. The ESWG is working on three topics including: significance thresholds, construction-related impacts, and near-source air quality modeling and impacts. As discussed by the ESWG, near-source air quality modeling is modeling designed to address

impacts directly next to (e.g., within 25 to 125m of) the freeway. The group's recommendations will be presented to the CAC in October.

Questions and comments regarding the significance thresholds, construction impacts, and near-source impacts included:

- Mr. Carson asked what the timeframe is for the significance thresholds.
 - Mr. Wood explained that Caltrans and AQMD are in the process of discussing and plan to have a response by the next meeting.

SUMMARY

Ms. McLaughlin directed Committee members' attention to the recommendations recap handout. The document summarizes the actions that have been taken by the CAC to-date that are going to the Project Committee.

- Mr. Eula asked for clarification regarding the request for other expert legal opinion on Caltrans' position on using thresholds used by other agencies.
 - After the group discussed this topic, Ms. McLaughlin pointed out that the group's recommendation will depend on the outcome of the Caltrans/AQMD discussions, and furthermore that the CAC had requested that the ESWG advise on this issue. The project team will report on the outcomes of the Caltrans/AQMD discussions.
- Mr. Tseklenis clarified that the point of the locating monitoring stations near schools was to locate air monitoring stations in strategic areas, such as schools.
 - Mr. Cross shared that the Long Beach School District avoids placing monitoring stations on school sites.
 - Ms. Faustinos suggested adjusting the language to place air monitoring stations as close to schools as possible. Montebello Unified School District may be open to placing stations on school sites.
- Ms. Faustinos requested that the project team provide a look ahead that includes issues to be addressed by the CAC and associated decision making milestones.
 - The team plans to compile the feedback from the Committee and create a matrix identifying topics for the next meetings, what the objectives are, and what potentially will be going to the other groups. This living document will provide a framework and map out topics leading up to quarterly Project Committee meetings.
- Ms. McLaughlin asked the Committee if there was still interest to implement the tools and methodologies presented for the HIA, specifically the pathways to health outcomes and fund this effort.
 - The group agreed to carry this forward to the Project Committee.

Ms. McLaughlin recapped the list of recommendations on the handout and the technical studies listed on the wallgraphic.

Next Steps

The group decided to have the next meeting on the third Thursday of October (October 15 2009).

Ms. McLaughlin adjourned the meeting at 9:15 p.m.