

South Gate LAC Meeting #4

April 8, 2009
6:30 PM – 8:30 PM
10001 W. Frontage Road, South Gate

MEETING SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

On Wednesday, April 8, 2009, the City of South Gate held their fourth Local Advisory Committee (LAC) meeting at the Thunderbird Villa Mobile Home Park. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an update on the Corridor Project EIR/EIS and to review the alternatives and screening methodologies and results.

Present at the meeting were LAC members Alvira Anderson, Donna “Cookie” Talmadge, Carol Berkeley, and Glenna Amos. In attendance from the Project Team were Devon Cichoski (Metro), Jack Waldron (URS), Rob McCann (LSA), and Pat McLaughlin (MIG).

SUBJECT WORKING GROUP REPORT

Pat McLaughlin called the meeting to order and thanked participants for coming. She then gave an update on the most recent Subject Working Group (SWG) activities, and encouraged the South Gate LAC to participate actively in the SWGs.

Environmental Subject Working Group (ESWG)

The ESWG has been discussing the Air Quality/Health Risk Assessment (AQ/HRA) Draft Protocols, which outline how to proceed with quantifying air pollutants and correlating them with health risks in the project corridor. The group has been advocating for qualitative assessments in cases where quantitative analysis is not possible, and for quantifying construction impacts. At their next meeting, the ESWG will be presented with a timeline for the AQ/HRA and other environmental studies, and discuss the relationship between the AQ/HRA, the EIR/EIS and the Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP).

Community Design and Local Economy Subject Working Group (CSWG)

The CSWG has been discussing design themes, including elements such as sound walls, landscaping, bridge design, and beautification and enhancement measures.



Metro



Transportation and Transit Subject Working Group (TSWG)

The TSWG has been discussing zero tailpipe emission alternative technologies that are incorporated in some of the project alternatives. These include Zero Emission Trucks and Automated Fixed Guideway technologies. The TSWG has also reviewed the alternatives screening criteria (mobility, air quality, traffic safety, right-of-way impacts, environmental impacts, and capital costs) and the initial results of the alternatives screening.

PROJECT UPDATE

Jack Waldron of URS, gave a brief overview of the project history and recent progress. Mr. Waldron explained that over the last year, the Project Team has been conducting screening-level studies of alternatives, and has been presenting the results of this screening to the LACs and Subject Working Groups (SWGs) over the last month. The TAC will be making a recommendation to the Project Committee on April 30 as to which alternatives should be further studied in the EIR/EIS.

In parallel to the screening of alternatives, traffic modeling is also underway. This traffic modeling, which is based on 2035 projections, will inform the geometrics and the air quality modeling in the Air Quality/Health Risk Assessment (AQ/HRA).

ALTERNATIVES SCREENING

Rob McCann of LSA referred the LAC to PowerPoint handouts outlining the six alternatives that had been screened. Mr. McCann emphasized that the current set of alternatives was developed to reassess the Locally Preferred Strategy (LPS), and that each alternative includes and builds on the elements of the preceding alternative. Mr. McCann also noted that the criteria used to screen the alternatives were designed to address the project Purpose and Need.

Mr. McCann then went on to review the alternatives and screening results with the group, engaging in discussion throughout the presentation. Points, questions and clarifications that arose during the group discussion on alternatives screening included:

- How do you put a cost on advanced technologies still under development?
 - The pieces for these technologies all exist – they just need to be combined and refined for the proposed application. Many of these technologies are used for mass transit. China's maglev bullet train is one example.
- How can we see these technologies in practical use?
 - Many are in the research and development stage. Local examples of electric-powered trucks should be available for view in the upcoming year. The consultant team sifted through various technology options in development and used this information for cost estimating.

- It appears to the committee that the cheapest option would be a “concrete ribbon with Electric Trucks”
- Can the consultant team start assessing this before the system is built (do it in phases)?
 - Yes. Also, if Electric Trucks can replace half the trucks in operation, pollution will decrease significantly.
- What do Alternatives 3 and 6 have that the others don't?
 - Alternative 3 does not include arterial improvements or highway widening.
- What is “No Build”?
 - The “No Build” Alternative assesses what conditions would be like in 2035 if the project didn't get built.
- What is the relationship of the Alternatives to the Tier 2 condition that construction (on the mainline) won't begin unless air quality improves?
 - The Alternatives are a first step in the environmental study process that will lead, eventually to design and construction. Mainline construction would not begin for many years.
- Could electric trucks be operated on a track?
 - This would limit use and be potentially dangerous. Also, this would preclude running CNG trucks. However, the electric trucks could use overhead catenary power similar to trolley buses or light rail.
 - Currently the freight corridor option includes four lanes for goods movement.
- How does Edison figure in? Where would the electricity for electric goods movement technologies come from?
 - Edison has expressed an interest in supplying electricity to the system.
 - Alternative 6B provides the flexibility for eventual conversion to a fixed guideway system.
- Why not continue to study TSM/TDM/Transit as a stand-alone alternative?
 - TSM/TDM/Transit improvements alone will not address the project objectives to improve air quality, safety, and mobility. They will continue to be studied as components of other alternatives, including 5A, 6A and 6B.

The LAC requested that the Project Team come back to the LAC when there is a more definitive design.

- Support for the sound wall.
- LAC also requests that Miller Way be 2-way, not one-way.
- Can we do “green”?
 - Yes, the advanced technologies provide a cleaner means for goods movement.
- Can we specify a caveat that goods movement must be all green by a certain time to address concerns raised by environmental groups that all want green?

Before adjourning the meeting, Ms. McLaughlin gave a quick review of the committee meeting calendar, including the Corridor Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting to be held on April 16; and the Project Committee meeting on April 30, where the TAC would be making a recommendation on alternatives to study in the EIR/EIS.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.