



**OCTA  
I-405 Improvement Project  
Stakeholder Working Group**

**Minutes of Meeting  
Tuesday, October 19, 2010**

**9:00 a.m.  
Orange County Transportation Authority  
600 S. Main Street, Orange CA  
Conference Room 103/104**

Attendance

**Stakeholder Working Group Members**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Jim Adams	LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council
Jill Cagle	Building Industry Association/Orange County
Diana Carey	I-405 Citizen's Ad Hoc Committee
Lea Umnas Choum	John Wayne Airport
Tom Fitzgerald	Rossmoor Community Services District
Russ Lightcap	Rossmoor Community Services District
Barbara Mason	Boeing Co.
Charles Mitchell	Garden Grove Sanitary District Advisory Commission
Adolfo Ozaeta	City of Westminster
Craig Scott	Automobile Club of Southern California
Raja Setharaman	City of Costa Mesa
Ryan Shackelford	California Highway Patrol, Westminster
Gregg Smith	Seal Beach Naval Weapons Center
Shelly Sustarsic	College Park East Neighborhood Association
Henry Taboada	Rossmoor Community Services District
Paul Wilkinson	Costa Mesa Chamber of Commerce

**Non-members**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Agency</u>
Niall Barrett	OCTA

Christina Byrne	OCTA
Rose Casey	OCTA
Macie Cleary	Parsons
Neal Denno	Parsons
Kevin Haboian	Parsons
Henry Nguyen	Caltrans
Jennifer Labrado	Consensus Inc.
Michelle Sinning	Consensus Inc.

## **I. Welcome and Self Introductions**

Christina Byrne opened the meeting, welcomed those in attendance and asked for self introductions. Ms. Byrne then provided an overview of the agenda and stated that the meeting would cover a review of the project, an overview of the project’s right-of-way (ROW) status, speed and throughput metrics, lane dispersal at the LA County Line, as well as a discussion about the schedule for the release of the environmental document.

## **II. Project Review**

Niall Barrett informed the SWG that he will be taking over as project manager for OCTA. Mr. Barrett stated that in February the OCTA board approved the addition of the Alternative 3 which includes a general purpose lane in each direction and Express Lanes from SR-73 to I-405. In addition, he said that Alternative 4 will not be studied further as it does not meet the commitment of the Measure M Extension (M2). Estimated funding from M2 is estimated to be approximately \$600 million, which is not enough to fully fund improvements being evaluated for the I-405.

## **III. Right-of-way Status**

Kevin Haboian stated that the Major Investment Study (MIS) identified 11 full single family residential property acquisitions. Based on additional studies, the ROW impact is expected to be reduced significantly, and might even be close to zero for full single-family residential property acquisitions. Partial property acquisitions are also expected to be reduced, where the engineering team was able to shift the alignment and make other adjustments to reduce impacts. As far as full business property acquisitions, they look to be about the same as what was presented in the MIS, and business partial acquisitions are expected to be reduced slightly. Mr. Haboian stated that the project team is continuing to work to reduce the impacts; currently, they are looking at the potential ROW impacts and reviewing them with Caltrans.

A visualization of the existing condition and build alternatives at the Springdale Street overcrossing was then presented as an example of how the design team is working to add capacity while minimizing impacts to the existing ROW. The existing condition consists of three sets of columns supporting the overpass and landscaped area on the outside of the freeway. Alternative 1 involves replacing the overpass and eliminates the

bridge's outside columns. This Alternative adds a single general purpose lane in each direction and a full left shoulder by widening into the landscaped area but staying within the ROW fence.

Alternative 2 adds a second general purpose lane but is shown generally within the existing ROW footprint. Alternative 3 has the same width as Alternative 2 but provides one additional general purpose lane and a second lane to be managed with the existing High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane as a two-lane express facility within the same footprint as Alternative 2.

#### **IV. Speed and Throughput Metrics**

The next topic discussed was expected travel speeds and vehicular throughput. Kevin Haboian presented graphics showing a comparison of the existing and year 2040 speeds under each of the Alternatives during the PM peak commute hour. He noted that with the additional traffic expected between now and year 2040, speeds will be reduced if no improvements are made to the freeway in both the HOV and general purpose lanes.

Mr. Haboian then reviewed speed changes associated with each alternative in 2040. With the addition of a single lane in each direction In Alternative 1, speeds are expected to be about 15 mph, a little bit better than under the No Build alternative. Under Alternative 2, which adds two general purpose lanes in each direction, speeds are expected to improve to about 30 mph. Under Alternative 3, which adds one general purpose lane and a second lane to be managed with the existing HOV lane as a two-lane express facility, speeds are expected to be 65 mph in the express lanes and about 18 mph in the general purpose lanes.

Mr. Haboian then presented a graphic demonstrating a comparison of vehicle throughput in year 2040 expected during the PM peak hour under each of Alternatives. He explained that if no action is taken, there will be a lot more traffic and a lower volume of flow. By adding one or two general purpose lanes, vehicle throughput increases by 1,200 vehicles per hour for Alternative 1 and 2,400 vehicles per hour for Alternative 2. Alternative 3 is expected to provide the most throughput of the proposed alternatives because the Express Lanes are managed to maintain a high throughput volume.

#### **V. Lane Dispersal at LA County Line**

Neal Denno discussed the alternatives in terms of lane additions at the Orange/Los Angeles county line. He stated that at the last meeting, there were questions about what happens to the northbound lanes on the I-405 as they approach LA County and whether they are expected to create a traffic jam at the county line if the additional lanes in Orange County are dropped to match the lower number of lanes in LA County. Mr. Denno explained that today, there are four general purpose lanes on the I-405 at the County line, and that situation does not change under any of the proposed alternatives.

The West County Connectors (WCC) project just started construction and will add a carpool lane on I-405 as it approaches the county line. That lane will be directly connected to the I-605 carpool lane and will therefore not be dropped at the county line on I-405. That will be the existing condition when the I-405 project begins construction.

Alternative 1 adds two northbound lanes— one general purpose lane that comes north from Euclid Street and terminates into the I-605 and an auxiliary lane that starts at the Seal Beach Boulevard on-ramp and terminates into SR-22/7<sup>th</sup> Street. Neither of the new lanes is carried to the county line so would not create a lane drop there.

Alternative 2 adds two northbound general purpose lanes from Fountain Valley, one of which terminates into SR-22/7<sup>th</sup> Street and the other of which terminates into I-605. Neither of the new lanes is carried to the county line, so again, would not create a lane drop there.

Alternative 3 is similar to Alternative 1 with one exception — the carpool lanes become part of express lane system but would match the carpool lanes on I-605 and I-405 as they enter LA County. All of the proposed new lanes serve I-605 or SR-22/7<sup>th</sup> Street and have been designed so that a bottleneck does not occur at the LA County line.

## **VI. Schedule for Environmental Document and Questions**

Macie Cleary presented a graphic of the project schedule. Ms. Cleary said that the project team is currently preparing the draft environmental document. The project team is making sure designs for each of the alternatives have been developed to minimize permanent ROW impacts. She then discussed putting together the technical reports that feed into the environmental document, including noise impact, air quality, and assessment of community impacts. All of those technical reports are currently being prepared and will be used to prepare the environmental document for submittal to Caltrans. Caltrans will review, approve, and circulate the draft environmental document, currently scheduled for November 2011. At that point, public comments will be collected and responded to. The final environmental document will be completed approximately one year after the draft is released.

## **VII. Stakeholder Feedback and Questions**

Henry Taboada asked about a potential traffic signal at the intersection of College Park Drive and the westbound SR-22 ramps intended to allow people to get in and out of the tract. He questioned whether that signal would create a backup.

*Neal Denno replied that he is familiar with that intersection. He stated that his assumption is that it is a Caltrans facility and they'll look at whether a red light will back*

up onto the SR-22 and create a problem.

*Niall Barrett stated that Seal Beach, Long Beach and Caltrans Districts 7 and 12 are currently studying traffic circles, signals, and other ways to get people out of College Park West. He noted that there is no relationship between that location and how we're balancing the lanes in this project. Signalization is something that will be worked out between Caltrans and the cities (Long Beach, Seal Beach). We'll watch it but it shouldn't impact how we construct the I-405 Improvement Project.*

Barbara Mason asked when construction will start.

*Niall Barrett replied that will depend on the construction method chosen, because design-bid-build takes longer than design-build and we have not yet determined which process we will use. If we go with the design-build option then it will accelerate construction. A potential window is anytime after 2012, with design in 2013 and construction as soon as 2013 as well.*

*Kevin Haboian added that if we go with traditional construction, it would be likely 2018 before we saw construction start.*

Diana Carey asked, 'How long is the EIR good for before you have to do another one?'

*Macie Cleary replied that it depends on when we move into design and construction. We have to make sure that what is done in the design and construction is reflected in the environmental document. If the document is older, we have to take a look at it to see that its contents are still appropriate. We have to keep tracking and see what the information is looking like, so it is not necessarily a set time frame. In fact, there is no expiration date for an EIR. However changes in the law, setting, and existing conditions need to be reflected in the EIR even if no design or construction changes occur.*

Adolfo Ozaeta asked, "When is FHWA involved?"

*Macie Cleary responded that the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) has delegated the NEPA process to Caltrans, making Caltrans the NEPA lead. FHWA is involved with a small part related to air quality. Rose Casey added that, on the engineering side, anything to do with nonstandard design features (shoulder and lane widths) results in FHWA involvement. If Alternative 3 moves forward, then FHWA will also get involved and need to approve tolling.*

Charles Mitchell stated that he is involved with the American Legion. The issue he is concerned with is people getting access to the VA hospital in Long Beach, which is along a major route into Long Beach. He stated that he is anticipating there is going to be a lot more traffic in that direction. Will you take that into account in your studies?

*Kevin Haboian replied that, yes, that's what the 2040 forecast is about. We will take that*

*into consideration.*

Charles Mitchell asked, "Who will be collecting the toll if the lanes are installed?"

*Kevin Haboian replied that if Alternative 3 is selected, the toll system will probably be handled similarly to the existing 91 Express Lanes. OCTA manages the facility but has relationships with companies involved in day-to-day operations.*

Charles Mitchell asked, "Will this put additional burden on CHP for enforcement?"

*Kevin Haboian stated that enforcement is likely to be similar to the 91 Express Lanes and could create some additional enforcement.*

Charles Mitchell said that he is concerned that with population exploding in OC there will be an additional amount of traffic using the I-405. He said that he knows traffic studies are based on families and such and he thinks there will be a lot more single driver vehicles using the I-405.

*Kevin Haboian stated his agreement and that's what the forecast is showing.*

*Niall Barrett responded that the West County Connectors project (WCC) will alleviate some of the traffic congestion on the I-405 in the northern area. Rose Casey added, that's why we're looking at adding 2 lanes in each direction, and since we will be reconstructing all of the bridges, building them to accommodate two additional lanes is a good idea. Also, regarding CHP, if we take on the same model as the 91 Express Lanes, the project will also look at other enforcement technologies that become available to see if they would help.*

Gregg Smith asked, regarding additional lanes at Valley View and Seal Beach Blvd., will you be able to fit these into the ROW that will exist at the end of the WCC project? Or will you acquire additional ROW to accommodate them and from where?

*Niall Barrett stated that at this point we don't know because we don't know which alternative will be selected for implementation. The WCC will take some ROW from the Naval Weapons Center. With the I-405 project, we will know how many lanes will be added when the alternative is selected. We'll have further discussions with the Navy at that time.*

Paul Wilkinson said that the SR-91 is a great model for I-405 Express Lanes and asked what parallels can be drawn in terms of operational experience? The speed differential for conventional vs. toll lanes? The SR-91 is a pipe with few intermediate access points.

*Kevin Haboian responded that we are looking at intermediate entrance and exit points for the I-405 Express Lanes. Rose Casey added that our concept looks at two*

*intermediate access points. Modeling is being done to evaluate vehicles moving in and out. A couple of other states are doing continuous access express lanes. We haven't talked about that heavily here yet but it will be evaluated as we move forward.*

## **VII. Closing**

Christina Byrne thanked the Stakeholder Working Group members for their participation and stated that the SWG will convene again prior to releasing the draft environmental document, in late summer 2011.