



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

**Minutes of Meeting  
Tuesday, October 18, 2011 at 9:00 a.m.**

**Orange County Transportation Authority  
600 S. Main Street, Orange CA 92868  
Conference Room 103/104**

**Policy Working Group Participants**

**Members**

Jim Adams  
John Antillon  
Marie Antos  
Hamid Bahadori  
Ralph Bauer  
Diana Carey  
Kevin Gilhooley  
Eloy Gomez  
Colin McCarthy  
Justin McCusker  
Charles Mitchell  
Chad Morgan  
Pamela Newcomb  
Phillip Norton  
Dave Olinger  
Adolfo Ozaeta  
Ryan Schackleford  
Greg Smith  
Schelly Sustarsic  
Sean Taylor  
Lea Umnas Choum  
Jay Van Warmer

**Organization**

LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council  
California Highway Patrol, City of Westminster  
Seal Beach Historical & Cultural Society  
Automobile Club of Southern California  
City of Huntington Beach Council on Aging  
I-405 Improvement Ad Hoc Committee  
Office of Senator Harman  
Golden Rain Foundation-Leisure World  
City of Costa Mesa Planning Commission  
C.J. Segerstrom  
Garden Grove Sanitary District Advisory Commission  
Office of Assemblymember Mansoor  
Office of Orange County Supervisor, John Moorlach 2<sup>nd</sup> District  
Office of Orange County Supervisor, Janet Nguyen 1<sup>st</sup> District  
California Cultural Resources Preservation Alliance  
City of Westminster  
California Highway Patrol, Westminster  
Seal Beach Naval Weapons Center  
College Park East Neighborhood Association  
Orange County Automobile Dealers Association  
John Wayne Airport

## **Agencies and Consultants**

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Agency</u></b>
Niall Barrett	OCTA
Christina Byrne	OCTA
Rose Casey	OCTA
Macie Cleary	Parsons
Neal Denno	Parsons
Kevin Haboian	Parsons
Jason Majzoub	Parsons
Matt Cugini	Caltrans
Smita Deshpande	Caltrans
Adnan Maiah	Caltrans
Lisa Ramsey	Caltrans
Lilian De Loza	Consensus Inc.
Abraham Mercado	Consensus Inc.
Veronica Yniguez	Consensus Inc.

### **I. Welcome and Opening Remarks**

Niall Barrett, OCTA Project Manager, opened the meeting, welcomed those in attendance. He explained their input during the environmental process is much appreciated and will help the Authority select the preferred alternative. Niall explained that the purpose of the meeting was to provide a project overview and to update everyone on the status of the environmental process. He also mentioned the Draft Environmental Document will be released in early 2012 and OCTA staff and consultants are working very hard to move the project forward as quickly as possible.

### **II. Project Review**

Mr. Barrett reviewed the purpose of the project and current status. He stated that the I-405 is one of the most heavily congested freeways in Orange County and that numerous traffic delays occur due to its congestion. He identified the study area and explained project objectives and that the congestion along the corridor is only expected to get worse. Since the last SWG meeting in November 2010, engineering cost estimates have been developed for each alternative. Alternative 1 includes adding one general purpose lane in each direction for an estimated cost of \$1.3 billion, Alternative 2 adds two general purpose lanes in each direction for \$1.4 billion, and Alternative 3 provides one general purpose lane and one express lane in each direction for an estimated \$1.7 billion.

Currently, the Draft EIR/EIS has been submitted to Caltrans for review. The document incorporates information from the Technical Studies and identifies impacts including right-of-way, noise, sound walls, and the traffic management plan. Additionally, the document identifies the potential visual, air quality, and construction impacts and presents ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate the impacts.

Mr. Barrett outlined the ongoing public outreach activities including Policy Working Group meetings, Stakeholder Working Group meetings, City Council presentations, E-Newsletters, Facebook posts, website updates, and Speakers Bureau presentations.

### **III. Draft EIR/EIS: Public Review Period**

Mr. Barrett presented a graphic of the project schedule. The schedule showed that the Draft Environmental Document is currently under review by Caltrans. Macie Cleary, Parsons, explained that the purpose of the public review of the Draft EIR/EIS is to hear feedback from the community and roadway users, as well as from local, state and federal agencies. She stated there will be a 45-day review period. The public comment opportunities will include three public hearings at the Costa Mesa Neighborhood Community Center, Rush Park Auditorium in Rossmoor, and the Westminster Community Center. Ms. Cleary also said written comments will be accepted by letter, email, and through the website.

Ms. Cleary stated the public hearings would be open house format and include areas with graphics staffed by technical experts where attendees can ask questions about the project. The proposed sound wall and sign locations would also be disclosed. Right-of-way impact information would be available at computer stations.

Following the public review and hearings, each comment on the Draft EIR/EIS will be responded to which could result in changes to the project.

### **IV. Following the Public Review Period**

Niall Barrett explained that OCTA Board of Directors, Caltrans, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will select the preferred alternative after the 45 day public comment period. After the preferred alternative is selected a financial plan will be prepared with the Final EIR/EIS. In early 2013, the Record of Decision and Notice of Decision will be prepared.

### **IV. Stakeholder Feedback and Questions**

Ralph Bauer: Given the Measure M2 revenue and the shortage of funds, are Express Lanes being proposed to generate revenue?

*Niall Barrett: The financial advisor is looking into a way to fund the project in addition to the funds allocated by Measure M2.*

*Rose Carey: The financial advisor will also be looking for creative ways to fund Alternatives 1, 2, and 3.*

Ralph Bauer: So Express Lanes are being proposed to generate funding?

*Niall Barrett: Yes, that is one option.*

Colin McCarthy: Along the I-5 freeway there has been a disproportionate amount of work done because cities like Anaheim and Santa Ana are successful in their lobbying efforts unlike cities along the 405 freeway.

Diana Carey: I would like to first commend the West County Connector project on the amount of outreach they have done. Secondly, the financial figures in August of 2009 have changed in terms of cost for alternatives. Is that because of the design-build option?

*Niall Barrett: No. We are always updating costs. Niall referred to the recession and its effect on lowering construction bid prices. A design-build project could be delivered sooner which may result in lower bid costs.*

Diana Carey: The community feels as though Alternative 3 is a waste of money. Currently, Alternative 2 is receiving great feedback. However, toll roads are not and to me it seems like a panic option.

*Niall Barrett: Currently, we are just going through the DEIR/EIS process and a locally preferred alternative has not been selected. However, Alternative 3, like the 91 freeway, will provide commuters with the opportunity to use toll facilities. It is not required they do, so they are just presented with the option.*

Diana Carey: That's not the issue, it's the cost and the perceived unfairness to drivers.

*Rose Casey: We understand this concern, and as Niall said, Alternative 3 provides a choice for commuters and maximizes throughput. They are not required to use the toll road.*

Kevin Gilhooley: Supervisor Moorlach has discussed the 19<sup>th</sup> St. bridge recently and the Gisler St. bridge. Is there any update on that?

*Kevin Haboian: Yes, there has been a longstanding discussion with the City of Fountain Valley and Costa Mesa. The proposed new ramp coming from Euclid is planned to address additional access.*

Kevin Gilhooley: Will the Gisler St. bridge be eliminated on the County map?

*Kevin Haboian: I can't comment on that, the map is adopted by the OCTA Board.*

*Rose Casey: There is an agreement among the two cities and OCTA regarding the Gisler St bridge and the proposed new ramp implements a portion of that agreement.*

Hamid Bahadori: Alternative 3 is misleading because OCTA doesn't have the funds for Alternatives 1 and 2 and they are not currently financially feasible. I believe Alternative 2 is superior in terms of the increased capacity two general purpose lanes can provide. Comparing Alternative 2 to Alternative 3 is not a fair comparison because of the lack of funds. The fact is,

there is a lack of funding and the most important information is the financial analysis. When will that information be available?

*Niall Barrett: When we take it to the Board of Directors after the 45-day public review period, that information will be available.*

Hamid Bahadori: I don't think the Draft EIR/EIS will be as valuable without the financial analysis information. Releasing the Draft EIR / EIS without the financial information is not in the best interest of this project.

*Niall Barrett: Your point is well taken and we will discuss including the financial information with the draft document with the financial consultant.*

Charles Mitchell: I have two things to say with the state raiding Redevelopment Agencies and taking millions of dollars away from this County: Are Measure M2 funds vulnerable to the same type of takeover? Are there any plans to remove freeway decoration to cut costs for this project? In terms of outreach, the Garden Grove Journal and the Orange County Review are great sources to reach a broad range of the community.

*Niall Barrett: People who drive the corridor tend not to care about the aesthetics, but people who live in the corridor do. It is also such a small portion of the project cost that eliminating it wouldn't bring a significant amount of money to the project. Also, the Measure M2 revenue is safe, the State government has no access to it.*

Schelly Sustarsic: You spoke at the Seal Beach City Council meeting and I thank you for that. Will there be any residential property takes? And will the Express Lanes have continuous access should Alternative 3 be selected?

*Niall Barrett: No full takes at this time, however we will be taking slivers of some backyards (between 5-10 ft.). If we have continuous access on the express lanes, there will be too much opportunity for people to drive in and out of them and avoid paying the toll.*

Colin McCarthy: In terms of the Express Lanes and Alternative 3, is the locally preferred alternative pre-determined because it is the only option that generates revenue? The LPA should not only be a matter of dollars and cents.

*Niall Barrett: We are still looking at the cost of Alternative 3. We are looking at all alternatives equally in the project report. There is no guarantee that Alternative 3 will make the funding gap go away.*

Colin McCarthy: It seems like the dollars and cents for all alternatives need to be known prior to the 45-day public review period.

*Niall Barrett: This is a very good point; we will look into releasing the preliminary figures during the public review.*

Hamid Bahadori: We need to paint a clearer picture of why Alternative 3 is needed. I believe Alternative 2 costs less and offers more throughput than Alternative 3. When you take it before the Board of Directors they are going to say you will get more capacity for \$100 million more, but it is not affordable. The Board will be faced with opposition regarding the Express Facility.

*Niall Barrett: According to our analysis, Alternative 3 offers more throughput than Alternative 2. We have discussed the funding gap potentially being solved through Alternative 3. The General Purpose lane will move traffic at 5-10 miles per hour and cars that choose to take the Express Lane will be moving at approximately 40 miles per hour similar to the 91 freeway.*

Chad Morgan: Where are ingress / egress locations? When you present Alternative 3 after the release of the Draft EIR/EIS, will you flush out the operational details?

*Niall Barrett: The ingress / egress locations are Magnolia / Warner and Goldenwest / Bolsa, north and south of the Beach Blvd. interchange. The operational details of the Express Facility will be determined later if Alternative 3 is selected as the locally preferred alternative.*

*Neal Denno: Niall, is correct. There will be intermediate access points to the Express Lanes at Magnolia/Warner and at Goldenwest / Bolsa in addition to the points of access at the 73 and the 605. There will be many connections to get in and out.*

Charles Mitchell: The rendering does not show truck traffic. Will truck traffic be included in the environmental analysis?

*Niall Barrett: Our studies include truck traffic.*

Diana Carey: We need more than a conceptual idea of this project. We need details on intersections as well.

*Adolfo Ozaeta: We need to provide clear illustrations of Alternative 3 during the public review period.*

*Niall Barrett: This is exactly the purpose of these meetings to hear what types of information you would like to receive and what information you find useful.*

*Jay Van Warner: Are the abutments wide enough for a future widening?*

*Niall Barrett: Yes, they may be wide enough, but right of way acquisitions would be necessary.*

*Diana Carey: Is the financial advisor looking at all alternatives equally?*

*Niall Barrett: The financial advisor is looking at all the alternatives, however, only Alternative 3 has the potential to resolve the funding gap.*

*Paul Wilkinson: I believe there is an incomplete perception regarding Alternative 3. We need to change the public's perception of the alternative now.*

*Jim Adams: I wanted to support the statement made earlier that state and federal funding is few and far between in this economy.*

## **V. Closing**

Mr. Barrett closed the meeting by stating the next Stakeholder Work Group meeting will be held in the summer of 2012, prior to the release of the Final EIR/EIS.

Ms. Byrne thanked everyone for coming and asked attendees to please let us know if they had any community groups to expand outreach efforts.