

**Subject:** High Desert Community Advisory Group (HD CAG) Meeting #2  
 I-10 and I-15 Corridor Projects, San Bernardino County

**Date:** May 15, 2013 at 5:30 PM

**Location:** Victorville City Hall, Victorville, CA

**Participants:** A total of 9 CAG Members participated at HD CAG Meeting #2.

<b>HD CAG Members in Attendance</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Muhammad A. Bari	US Army, Fort Irwin
Debbie A. Cannon	Academy for Grassroots Organizations / High Desert Resource Center
Rick Danzey	Apple Valley Chamber of Commerce, Board of Directors
Thomas J. Kerman	Hesperia Unified School District
Holly Noel	Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District
Michele Spears	Victor Valley Chamber of Commerce
Carol Whitton	Hesperia Unified School District
Ann Vanino	Moving Forward Coaching and Consulting
<b>HD CAG Members not in Attendance</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Kevin Kane	Victor Valley Transit Authority
Raghada Khoury	Commercial Building
Jim Oravets	County of San Bernardino, Special Districts Department
Bob R. Tinsley	BR Tinsley Inc. R.E. & Construction
Sophie Steeno <i>Attended EV CAG Meeting</i>	Steen Design Studio, Inc. / Citizens Advisory Committee, City of Hesperia
<b>San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG) and Consultants</b>	
Garry Cohoe	Director of Project Delivery, SANBAG
John Meier	Parsons
Edgar Gutierrez	Lee Andrews Group, Inc.
Tito Corona	Lee Andrews Group, Inc.
Robbin Oshita	Lee Andrews Group, Inc.

## MEETING NOTES

### *I. Welcome*

CAG Members were greeted by Mr. Garry Cohoe, SANBAG's Director of Project Delivery. As part of his welcoming remarks, Mr. Cohoe notified the group of the untimely passing of Donna Andrews, President of Lee Andrews Group, the outreach consultant that had helped facilitate the CAG Kick-Off meetings.

Mr. Cohoe then briefly went over the meeting agenda which outlined the presentation topics that would be discussed with the CAG Members. It was noted that questions and comments from CAG Members were welcome throughout the presentation as a key objective of the meetings is to generate input from CAG Members.

## **II. CAG Member Reports**

Each CAG Member was asked to provide an update regarding the CAG Membership responsibilities they have carried out since the CAG Kick-Off meeting in February 2013. In general, CAG Members highlighted their efforts to inform and generate feedback from their affiliated groups and other members in the community on the I-10 and I-15 Corridor Projects. Some CAG Members also identified the briefing opportunities they helped generate for SANBAG as well as other groups that should be considered. Below is a brief overview of some of the updates that were shared by the CAG Members:

- Mr. Rick Danzey reported that he helped identify two briefing opportunities, including presentations for the Apple Valley Chamber of Commerce and Spring Valley Lake Association Board. Although he was not able to attend either one of the meetings due to conflicts on his calendar, he received positive feedback from both groups. He also informed the group that some stakeholders are skeptical of the proposed projects due to the funding challenges and the lengthy environmental process which is still 4-5 years away from completion. People are going to need to see proof that the projects will indeed be built before they take this project seriously.
- Ms. Holly Noel helped identify two briefing opportunities, including presentations for the Victor Valley British Car Club and Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District. She noted that both presentations were well received.
- Ms. Ann Vanino has not had the opportunity to arrange briefing opportunities for SANBAG as she was accepted as a CAG Member a few weeks before Meeting #2. However, Ms. Vanino has already started identifying possible opportunities for SANBAG and is in the process of assembling contact information for each of the suggested groups. She will send the list of groups and contact information to SANBAG's Outreach consultants. Ms. Vanino also suggested that SANBAG needs to have more dialogue on equity with those that can't afford it.
- Ms. Carol Whitton indicated that she had suggested a briefing for the Victor Valley Federated Women's Club; however, the speaker needs to be a Republican. She recognized that this may be a challenge as SANBAG staff may not be able to identify their political affiliation as they are government employees. Ms. Whitton will be contacted by SANBAG's Outreach consultant to follow up on this tentative opportunity. Ms. Whitton also noted that she is currently working on identifying outreach opportunities with groups at the Hesperia Unified School District.
- Ms. Debbie Cannon reported that she and HD CAG Member Sophie Steeno arranged a briefing with the Hesperia Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Cannon also facilitated the briefing with the Academy for Grassroots Organizations. She said that this group was very engaged as the presentation touched on how the proposed alternatives addressed access for first response vehicles, a subject that concerned the group as there is a great disparity in access to hospitals. Ms. Cannon also noted that she resides in the Oak Hills area and that the Oak Hills Property Owners Association did not inform her neighborhood about the briefing. She asked to be informed about future briefings with this group as she would like to inform her neighborhood of these opportunities.
- Ms. Michelle Spears said that she is still working on scheduling a briefing with the Victor Valley Chamber of Commerce. She said that the Chamber's calendar has been full, but she anticipates having SANBAG on a Fall program.

PowerPoint Presentation – Following the aforementioned items, the remaining agenda items were discussed with the use of a PowerPoint presentation (a hard copy of the presentation was given to each of the CAG Members), which included the following discussion topics outlined in the sections below.

## **III. Meeting Minutes**

A hard copy of each of the CAG Kick-Off meeting minutes (East Valley, High Desert, and West Valley) were provided to CAG Members in attendance as part of their informational packet for CAG Meeting #2. Mr. Edgar Gutierrez, Lee Andrews Group – SANBAG's Outreach Consultants, briefly discussed the contents of the meeting minutes and asked CAG Members if they had any questions or comments. No comments were provided.

## **IV. Update on Outreach Activities**

- *Briefings* –SANBAG has conducted a total of 57 briefings (as of May 14, 2013) and has several other briefings scheduled in the coming months. CAG Members were asked to assist with the identification of additional briefing opportunities that can be conducted prior to September 2013.
- *Grassroots Canvassing* – Mr. Gutierrez provided a brief update on the grassroots canvassing efforts which will be conducted starting in June 2013 to enhance outreach efforts for the I-10 and I-15 corridor projects. The purpose of these visits is to reach members in the communities that may not otherwise be reached via conventional and electronic outreach methods. Locations could include city halls, libraries, police stations, community centers,

businesses (e.g. business parks, large employers, small businesses, coffee shops, markets, etc.), cultural institutions, and other sites that attract visitors.

- *Project Website* – A new website has been developed for the I-10 Corridor Project ([www.i10CorridorProject.org](http://www.i10CorridorProject.org)) to provide a better way for the public to access the latest I-10 Corridor Project information and stay connected. The new website provides a dynamic platform which serves as a two-way communication tool to receive 'real-time' Project information while also allowing the public to provide input/comments. The website will also provide other means to stay connected with SANBAG, including Facebook and Twitter. Embedded within the website is a webpage dedicated for the I-15 Corridor Project. A separate I-15 website will be developed if the SANBAG Board decides to advance with the environmental study for that corridor.
  - *Action Item*: CAG Members were asked to visit [www.i10CorridorProject.org](http://www.i10CorridorProject.org) and review all of the contents, particularly the Questions & Answers webpage as well as the helpful links and videos. CAG Members will also share the website link with affiliated contacts and encourage them to access the website.
- *CAG Meetings Schedule* – As shown below, an updated schedule for the next two sets of CAG meetings was presented. The principal objective for CAG Meeting #3 is to share the preliminary Traffic and Revenue (T&R) results with the CAG Members. CAG Members will then have 6 weeks to share the T&R information with their affiliated groups and seek their input which will be shared at CAG Meeting #4. CAG Members will be informed immediately via email if there are any changes to the schedule.
  - CAG Meeting #3: Preliminary T&R Results
    - EV CAG – Tuesday, Sept. 10<sup>th</sup>
    - HD CAG – Wednesday, Sept. 11<sup>th</sup>
    - WV CAG – Thursday, Sept. 12<sup>th</sup>
  - CAG Meeting #4: T&R Feedback
    - EV CAG – Tuesday, Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup>
    - HD CAG – Wednesday, Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup>
    - WV CAG – Thursday, Oct. 24<sup>th</sup>

#### ***V. SANBAG Board Updates***

Mr. Cohoe provided a brief overview of the I-10/I-15 corridor project updates that have been shared with the SANBAG Board, including: Public Outreach update; Express Lane policy assumptions; Traffic & Revenue scenarios; and Equity Study scope. Mr. Cohoe also outlined the upcoming discussion items that SANBAG Board would be covering in upcoming Board Meetings, including: preliminary Equity Study results; Alternatives Considered but Withdrawn; preliminary Traffic and Revenue results; final Equity Study results; and, final Traffic and Revenue results.

#### ***VI. Demystifying Express Lanes***

The objective for this segment of the meeting was to further clarify the differences between the HOV and Express Lanes alternatives as well as further explain how the Express Lanes function. Information on the benefits and concerns for the managed lanes concepts being considered – HOV and Express Lanes – were shared as a reminder of the details that were covered at the CAG Kick-Off Meeting.

The main purpose of Express Lanes is to: 1) manage traffic to maximize the number of vehicles carried per lane; and, 2) generate revenue to fund a portion of needed transportation improvements.

There are numerous examples of Express Lanes in operation throughout the United States, with even more currently in construction or close to construction. A map of Express Lanes in the United States was shown to illustrate the 18 freeways that currently feature Express Lanes as well as 12 others that are under construction. The metropolitan areas with Express Lanes face issues that are similar for our region including: high traffic demand, limited right-of-way, and declining funding resources.

We don't need to look too far for examples of existing Express Lanes or those under consideration. There are currently three Express Lane systems in Southern California, including: SR-91 Express Lanes, Orange County; Metro Express Lanes, Los Angeles County; and I-15 Express Lanes, San Diego County. Background information on these projects was shared with CAG Members, including videos, survey results, and other pertinent information.

Additionally, Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is considering additional managed lanes throughout Southern California. SCAG's 2012 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) concluded that even with the concentrated effort to reduce congestion through infrastructure investment, the demand on the system, including the I-10 and I-15 corridors in San

Bernardino County, continued to exceed capacity. As such, Express Lanes are considered a practical approach for our region to increase corridor throughput for some of our most congested freeways.

Most recently, the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) approved the expansion of the existing SR-91 Express Lanes from the County line to I-15. SR-91 in Riverside County ranks among the nation's worst commutes, with traffic congestion on eastbound 91 between Anaheim and Corona ranked among the worst 15 areas in the nation. As such, RCTC approved the 91 Project to provide traffic relief through the addition two express lanes on SR-91 in Riverside County. Improvements also will be made to interchanges, bridges, ramps and local streets. Construction is planned to start in early 2014, with new lanes expected to open in 2017.

### ***VII. Overview of I-10 and I-15 Corridor Geometrics***

John Meier, Parsons – SANBAG’s Engineering Consultant, presented an overview of the alternatives that are being considered for the I-10 and I-15 corridor projects.

The I-10 Corridor project is considering 3 alternatives: No-build; One HOV lane in each direction; and, Two Express Lanes in each direction. Due to limited funding, the only build alternative being studied for the I-15 Corridor is the addition of two Express Lanes. The Strategic Plan and 10-Year Delivery Plan financial analysis concluded that traditional funds will not be available to construct additional lanes on the I-15 without an additional source of funding such as toll revenue.

While other alternatives have been considered for the I-10 corridor, initial review has shown that these alternatives do not meet purpose and need as effectively as the build alternatives that are being considered. The right-of-way (ROW) constraints, both physical and fiscal, also show that we only have enough ROW to construct a maximum of two additional lanes in each direction. As such, we need to utilize our resources wisely including consideration of a system that can optimize traffic throughput.

SANBAG aims to provide standard lane widths and other roadway design features wherever possible. However, in some locations it is either not financially feasible (e.g. would impact an existing structure that would not otherwise have to be replaced) or it would result in an unacceptable ROW impact. In these locations, a reduced cross-section is applied which would reduce the width of the median (inside) shoulder, Express Lanes, and general purpose lanes 1 and 2. For example, a large portion of the corridor from the County Line to the I-15 system interchange utilizes the minimum reduced standard cross section due to ROW constraints.

### ***VIII. Traffic and Revenue (T&R) Study and Financial Analysis Overview***

The purpose of the T&R Study is to project with a high level of confidence the traffic volumes and revenue from the Express Lanes, and determine if the Express Lane improvements are financially feasible.

The T&R Study process is a complex, iterative process that incorporates existing traffic and socioeconomic data into a regional model that projects corridor growth and traffic patterns. This growth and traffic information is input into a computer simulation model, which is run multiple times to generated projected trip tables. The projected trip tables are then used to generate the final T&R Study output: traffic in Express Lanes, revenue and toll sensitivity.

As part of the T&R Study, sensitivity analyses are performed based on varying the assumptions in the overall model.

Preliminary Express Lane Policy assumptions that will be evaluated for the T&R Study include the following:

- *Maximize “Throughput” or “Revenue”* – The management strategy of the Express Lanes can be to maximize throughput, maximize revenue, or a blend of the two options. Various T&R scenarios will be run to provide data for both of these options including a blend of the two. Further study and analysis will be conducted after receiving the initial (T&R) results.
- *Eligibility for Free or Reduced Toll for HOV 2+, HOV 3+* - T&R scenarios are being run for various options of free and discounted tolls for HOV 2+ and 3+ to test operational and revenue sensitivity. Further study and analysis will be conducted based on the initial T&R results.
- *Minimum Toll Rate* – For the initial T&R analysis, a minimum toll rate of \$0.135, consistent with other operating Express Lanes, per mile will be assumed. One of the T&R scenarios is with no minimum toll rate. Further study and analysis will be conducted based on the initial T&R results.
- *Toll System* – A cashless electronic toll collection system utilizing both transponders and plate detection system is assumed.

- *I-10 Toll Strategy* – For the initial T&R analysis four project segments are defined (LA County Line to I-15; I-15 to I-215; I-215 to SR-210; SR-210 to Ford St.) in which consistent toll rates will be charged and guaranteed. A similar strategy for the I-15 is assumed. Further study and analysis will be conducted based on the initial T&R results.
- *Hours of Operation* – Express Lanes will be operated 24 hours.
- *Tolling of Trucks* – Only light two axle trucks are permitted. Heavy trucks will not be permitted.

Results of the T&R Study will be used with the project cost estimate to develop an overall project financial plan. Details of the project financial plan are currently being developed, and will be presented at the next CAG Meeting #3.

### ***IX. Overview of Environmental Activities***

CAG Members were informed of the environmental technical studies that have been initiated since the CAG Kick-Off Meeting, including: aesthetics, biological studies, community impact assessment, cultural/historical studies, noise, and parks/recreation.

*Equity Study* – Equity of Express Lanes for low-income travelers is an issue that needs to be considered. In order for SANBAG to implement tolling policies successfully, those who are affected by the policies must believe that they have been treated fairly. To gain an understanding of this topic an equity study has commenced. The scope of the study will be focused on low-income and transit-dependent populations. The scope of the study includes reviewing literature on the subject; developing maps of key stakeholder populations; conducting local policy maker and stakeholder interviews; conducting focus groups along each corridor; conducting expert interviews and peer review of report; and providing an equity study report.

### ***X. ACTION ITEMS for CAG Members (to be conducted prior to CAG Meeting #3)***

- Assist with the identification of *briefing opportunities* for SANBAG.
- Provide updates to affiliated groups – share general updates presented at CAG Meeting #2 and seek input.
- Visit [www.i10CorridorProject.org](http://www.i10CorridorProject.org)
  - Review all website contents
  - Share website link with affiliated contacts
- If you have a *Facebook* account, please:
  - Visit and “*Like*” the [I-10 and I-15 Corridor Projects page](#)
  - Encourage your Facebook contacts to “*Like*” the page to keep updated on the projects via Facebook.

### ***XI. Additional Questions and Comments***

See below for an overview of the questions and comments that were raised by CAG Members at HD CAG Meeting #2.

Q: When is the SANBAG Board anticipated to decide on the Express Lanes alternative for the I-10 and I-15 corridor projects?

*Response:* The SANBAG Board is anticipated to vote regarding whether to continue studying the Express Lanes alternative at the Board meeting on November 6, 2013. The actual selection of a Preferred Alternative for the I-10 Corridor is expected in the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter of 2015.

Q: Has SANBAG considered overhead lanes or double-deck freeways?

*Response:* Yes, overhead lanes have been considered at select locations where there is minimal Right of Way; however they do not appear feasible due to the excessive cost.

Q: Is eminent domain an option to address right-of-way limits?

*Response:* Yes, however it is an option that SANBAG is trying to avoid to the greatest extent possible through detailed design and engineering analysis.

Q: Could Measure I funds be used for roadway maintenance?

*Response:* Yes, but not for long term on-going maintenance. The main purpose of Measure I is to construct transportation improvements to address the projected growth in population.

C: The video showing traffic flow is a great tool that SANBAG should consider for briefings.

Q: When people say that they have already paid for the freeways, is it their perception that they've also already paid for the ongoing road maintenance?

*Response:* Yes. A large portion of the traditional transportation Federal and State funding goes to the maintenance and operation of the highway system. There are little funds remaining for lane addition projects. C: The gas tax was set a long time ago when vehicles used more gas; however, the vehicles are now much more efficient and the gas tax has not increased. As such, the tax revenue generated by gas is not able to keep up with the growing transportation demand. To have reliable transportation funding, the gas tax needs to be increased and/or changed from a fixed amount to a percentage of cost per gallon.

C: The Millennial Generation is also not driving as much as prior generations which is going to contribute to declining transportation funds.

Q: Will there be a toll road extension on the SR-91 to the 15?

*Response:* Yes, the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) recently approved the expansion of the existing SR-91 Express Lanes from the County line to I-15. Construction is planned to start in early 2014, with new lanes expected to open in 2017.

Q: Are you using toll lanes and Express Lanes synonymously?

*Response:* Yes, Express Lanes were previously called toll lanes or high occupancy toll (HOT) lanes.

Q: How is CHP able to tell the difference between 1-3 occupants using ExpressLanes?

*Response:* Metro ExpressLanes users must have a switchable FasTrak transponder to indicate the number of occupants in the vehicle. Through the use of this transponder, the number of occupants reported by the transponder is displayed on an overhead gantry which is viewed by a CHP officer to ensure compliance.

Q: Can people with multiple occupants use the Metro ExpressLanes at no-cost?

*Response:* Yes, eligible carpools and vanpools that use the ExpressLanes with a switchable FasTrak transponder will not be charged a toll. Solo drivers may choose to pay a toll to use the lanes.

Q: Was the I-210 corridor included in the trip generation analysis that is being used for the T&R study?

*Response:* Yes. The I-210 and SR-60 corridors, which largely parallel the I-10 corridor, were included in the traffic models used in the T&R study.

Q: What's an auxiliary lane?

*Response:* Auxiliary lanes are additional lanes adjacent to the general purpose lanes which begin at on-ramps and terminate at the next off-ramp. Auxiliary lanes are used to facilitate maneuvering of entering and exiting traffic, safe vehicle speed change, truck climbing and other purposes supplementary to through-traffic movement.

Q: Would the auxiliary lane be removed from the design for the Express Lanes if continuous access is allowed?

*Response:* The Express Lanes would not have continuous access due to the need to have electronic tolling capabilities at egress and ingress points.

Q: Are drivers going to be charged a toll at every ingress/egress point?

*Response:* It is expected that drivers will be charged per mile, not by the number of ingress/egress points.

Q: How would a 4-foot shoulder serve emergency access?

*Response:* A 4-foot shoulder, which is used only at reduced cross-section locations on the inside shoulder, would not be used for emergency access. At locations with a 4-foot median shoulder, it is expected that emergency vehicles would utilize the outside 10-foot shoulder.

Q: Why do the proposed I-15 Express Lanes stop at US-395? Why not go further?

*Response:* The studies show that Express Lanes would not generate sufficient revenue beyond US-395 to fund the corresponding improvements.

C: Stopping the Express Lanes at US-395 impacts the image of Victor Valley.

Q: What's the optimum throughput for each Express lane?

*Response:* Each Express lane carries approximately 1,700 to 1,800 vehicles per hour.

Q: How will tolls be determined?

*Response:* Tolls would be based on the amount of traffic traveling on the Express Lanes using congestion pricing. During peak periods, when there is more traffic, the toll would be higher to manage the number of drivers choosing to enter the lanes such that free-flow conditions will be maintained at all times. During off-peak periods, the toll would be lower since there would be less overall traffic demand. By changing the toll in response to the level of demand, the Express Lanes are able to maintain optimal throughput and keep traffic flowing smoothly.

Q: Why aren't there funds for an I-15 HOV alternative?

*Response:* The Strategic Plan and 10-Year Delivery Plan financial analysis concluded that traditional funds will not be available to construct additional lanes on the I-15 without an additional source of funding such as toll revenue.

Q: Is SANBAG considering expansion of freeway interchanges to accommodate additional throughput of traffic coming off the freeways?

*Response:* The design team will evaluate the increase in traffic volume at each interchange along the corridor under the proposed Alternatives. If the volume increase is significant, the team will evaluate possible improvements to improve the flow which could include signal modifications, additional lanes, or reconfiguration of the interchange.

### **Collateral Material Distributed**

The following Project materials were provided to each CAG Member in attendance:

- Meeting Agenda
- Comment Card
- CAG Meeting #2 PowerPoint slides
- CAG Kick-Off Meeting Minutes (East Valley, High Desert, and West Valley)
- List of briefings conducted by SANBAG
- EV CAG Member article on managed lanes – featured on Grand Terrace Area Chamber of Commerce's Blue Mountain Outlook newsletter (April 2013)
- SANBAG's April 2013 Street Smart Newsletter – featuring the I-10 and I-15 CAGs
- (25) 'business cards' for the I-10/I-15 corridor projects

### **Next CAG Meeting**

- **HD CAG Meeting #3** will be held on Wednesday, September 11, 2013 at 5:30 p.m. The meeting location will be confirmed by August 2013. CAG Members will receive updates and additional meeting details via email.
  - CAG Members with scheduling conflicts are welcome to attend any of the other meetings as long as they provide advance notice of which other meeting they plan to attend in lieu of their assigned CAG meeting.