

CAG Meeting Minutes

Subject: East Valley Community Advisory Group (EV CAG) Meeting #3
 I-10 and I-15 Corridor Projects, San Bernardino County

Date: September 10, 2013

Location: Gonzalez Community Center, Colton, CA

Participants: A total of 13 CAG Members participated at EV CAG Meeting #3, including 12 EV CAG Members and 1 High Desert CAG Member.

EV CAG Members in Attendance	Organization
John Abma	On Target Auto and RV Service
Hamid H. Azhand	California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB)
Carl Dameron	Dameron Communications
Gary Grossich	Nickelodeon Pizza
Richard Haller	Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority
John MacMillan	Fontana Police Department
Concepcion Powell	US-Hispanic Women Grocers Association
Richard Prieto	City of Colton – Planning Commission
Cynthia L. Ramirez	City of Colton – Planning Commission
Christine Roque	Redlands Good Neighbor Coalition
Espartigo (Randy) Sosa	Inland Empire Scholarship Fund
Mask Stanson	Redlands Public Commission
Other CAG Members in Attendance (non-EV CAG)	Affiliation
Ann Vanino – HD CAG	Moving Forward Coaching and Consulting
EV CAG Members not in Attendance	Affiliation
John Baker	Hill International Contracts
Carole Beswick	Inland Action, Inc.
Randall Ceniceros	Colton Joint Unified School District
Nick DePasquale	Fairview Ford Sales, Inc.
Pamela Emenger	Yucaipa Valley Chamber of Commerce
Eloise Gomez Reyes	Law Office of Eloise Gomez Reyes
Dr. Dan Harris	AARP
Valerie Henry (attended EV CAG)	Devore Rural Protection Association
John Longville	Former roles: SANBAG & SCAG
Gloria Macias Harrison	San Bernardino Community College District
Edward Martinez	Martinez Marketing & Management
Gail M. McCarthy	Arts Council of Big Bear Valley
Jeffrey McConnell	Lions Club, Grand Terrace
Shawn Oriaz	CALTRANS
Judi Penman	San Bernardino Area Chamber of Commerce
Lynn Reeces	Claremont United Methodist Church
Frank Reyes	Arrowhead Regional Medical Center Foundation

Larry R. Sharp	Retired-California State University, San Bernardino
William Siegl	California Highway Patrol
Maureen A. Snelgrove	San Bernardino County, Parks Department
Colin Strange	San Bernardino Area Chamber of Commerce-Economic Development and Business Resources
Jeffrey Veik	CAL Fire, Mountain Division
Other (non-CAG Members)	Organization
Arnold San Miguel	SCAG
Dana Lane	NMC
Mark Adelson	Regional Water Quality Control Board , Santa Ana Region
Cassie MacDuff	The Press Enterprise
San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG) and Consultants	
Garry Cohoe	Director of Project Delivery, SANBAG
Chad Costello	Public Information Officer, SANBAG
Jane Dreir	Public Information Officer, SANBAG
Dave Speirs	Parsons
John Meier	Parsons
Jason Lombard	Lee Andrews Group, Inc.
Annette Gutierrez	Lee Andrews Group, Inc.
Tito Corona	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 staff changes and new team members of Lee Andrews Group, the outreach consultant. Mr. Cohoe introduced Jason Lombard as the new transportation outreach consultant on behalf of the Lee Andrews Group as well as Annette Cortez to be the key contact with the group.

II. CAG Member Reports

As a review of information presented during previous CAG Meetings, Mr. Lombard asked CAG members about the pros and cons of High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes and Express Lanes to better understand the differences between the two Alternatives. This exercise was followed by CAG member reports in which CAG members provided feedback from their efforts in disseminating project information and receiving feedback from their groups and community. Below is a brief overview of some of the updates that were shared by the CAG Members:

- Richard Prieto – Stated that Express Lanes are a good idea to have but a bad idea during peak hours. He noted that people would cross back and forth during peak or busy hours so as to maneuver through traffic. Mr. Prieto stated that enforcement would be an issue and that something has to be done about enforcement. (*Note: Mr. Prieto was referring to his experience with HOV lanes rather than Express Lanes*)
- John Mac – Asked if enforcement in the LA County ExpressLanes included photo enforcement. *Response: Yes.*
- Carl Dameron – Stated that one of the issues would be equity for those that cannot afford to have a transponder or pay for the use of the lanes. He also added that success would depend on the conditions of an equity plan and the requirements for such a plan. He noted that half of the population is lower income and may not be able to afford to use the Express Lanes.
- Richard Prieto – Asked if carpool passenger requirements would change in the state so they are all the same such as 3 or more on the 10 in LA and 2 or more elsewhere.

Mr. Lombard then concluded the exercise and opened up the floor to CAG member reports:

- Cynthia Ramirez – Stated that based on input she’s received, monetary value of tolls and congestion are a concern.
- Richard Prieto – Noted that some in the trucking industry in Fontana asked him what would be the benefits of the Express Lanes for the trucking industry and would like an update about the trucking corridor. They want to know what’s in it for them and more information about the trucking corridor. He said that their concern is if they overpopulate the freeways with different lanes serving different purposes, how that will be beneficial for them. He said that those in the trucking industry also inquired about keeping traffic flowing during peak hours and how to prevent truck traffic limits from occurring. *Response: Trucks are a big concern for many. The profit margin is low for truckers so they go out of their way to go around express lanes.*
- John MacMillan – Stated that one of the issues he has heard from his outreach is the extended time taken to identify environmental impacts, when it seems that most of this information is already known. It would seem that this time could be cut in half.
- Mark Stanson – Asked that if change occurred in CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) requirements, would it shorten the project timeline? *Response: The NEPA process would still be required because federal funds are also involved.*
- Richard Haller – Stated that he has distributed the project business cards with website info and that has been helpful when sharing project information. He asked if there was information on the website about reducing the lane widths. It’s hard to communicate the lane width information without visual aids from the website.
- Carl Dameron – Stated that the perceived fear is of high tolls and out of not being able to afford the Express Lanes. He said he directs people to the project website and said everyone wants more lanes.
- Hamid Azhand – Said he talked to CSUSB faculty and students and said their concern has mostly been about equity and how to have the project be fair to everyone. He also stated that their interest for the I-15 is to have Express Lanes and not toll lanes. In all he said they’re very excited about the project. He said that those who would use the lanes as carpoolers wouldn’t use the lanes as toll users because they wouldn’t be able to afford the use of the lanes.
- Randy Sosa – Recommended basing the toll fee according to income level to deal with equity issues. He also made the recommendation to create some type of express truck lane because he views the trucks as taking up lane space of 8 or 9 vehicles.
- John MacMillan – Asked if it was considered offering an increase in gas tax or add a tax and pay for extra lanes that way? *Response: Raising taxes to pay for “free” general purpose lanes does not provide a solution to manage traffic, which is why Express Lanes are being considered.* Mr. MacMillan followed up by asking if it couldn’t just be looked at as just an HOV option.
- Carl Dameron – Asked if it could be demonstrated that using the Express Lanes would double the amount of vehicles per lane, and thereby improve the average speeds in the General Purpose lanes, then that would be a great selling point. *Response: Many Express Lanes projects, including the Metro ExpressLanes, have demonstrated improvement in the General Purpose lanes. The speed improvement in the General Purpose lanes for the I-10 and I-15 Corridor Projects will be evaluated as part of the Traffic Operational Analysis.*

PowerPoint Presentation –The remaining agenda items were discussed with the use of two PowerPoint presentations which included the following guest speaker presentation and discussion topics outlined in the sections below.

III. Guest Speaker: Stephanie Wiggins, Executive Officer and Project Director of the LA County Congestion Reduction Program for LA Metro – Presentation on Metro ExpressLanes

Ms. Wiggins presented an overview of the planning, outreach, implementation, early results and lessons learned by the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) with the ExpressLanes demonstration project on the I-110 and I-10 corridors. Her presentation included a quick overview of ExpressLanes projects across the region and country, and explained how all agencies have utilized different methods for running each ExpressLanes project. Metro’s purpose for the ExpressLanes project is to move more people, not more vehicles.

Ms. Wiggins discussed the \$290 million program budget, of which \$210 million is derived from UPA/CRD federal grant money. The allocation of funds is as follows:

- \$142 Million: Transit adding additional busses to existing lines
- \$129 Million: Toll/Roadway (ExpressLanes)
- \$ 19 Million: LA ExpressPark

Ms. Wiggins discussed how ExpressLanes improve overall traffic flow by increasing the number of people in the Express Lanes by both encouraging carpooling and by expanding transit options. The toll prices for the two ExpressLanes in Los Angeles County range from \$0.25 to \$1.40 per mile, depending on the amount of vehicles in the Express Lanes (i.e., congestion pricing). She stated that the toll rates vary within this price range based on traffic levels in the ExpressLanes to ensure minimum average speeds of 45mph.

Ms. Wiggins explained enforcement within the ExpressLanes, and how it's being achieved through a combination of photo enforcement and added CHP patrol. Additionally, she explained how the transponders used on the ExpressLanes were unique in that they come with a switch to set as a solo driver, 2 person carpool or 3+ person carpool. 3+ passenger carpools are required on the I-10 during the hours of 5-9 am and 4-7pm Monday through Friday. Ms. Wiggins noted that the Fastrak transponder is compatible with all Fastrak toll systems in the state of California. Other agencies now carry the switchable transponders, which will enable users to distinguish between solo driver, HOV2, and HOV 3+.

Ms. Wiggins express the important role CAGs played in defining the project, and how they were instrumental in creating a loyalty program which rewards transit riders with monthly prizes from toll credits to waving the monthly account maintenance fee. Additionally the CAGs also helped identify a need to create an equity program, which includes a one-time credit for low income commuters and waives the monthly account maintenance fee.

Next Ms. Wiggins presented the outreach program and how important it was to have multilingual materials. Informational videos, brochures, print, billboard and online ads were all produced in English, Spanish and Chinese to accommodate the multilingual communities along the two corridors.

The preliminary results to date for the Express Lanes reveal the following:

- Total Trips - 12,169,006
- Transponders Issued - 180,901
- Equity Plan accounts opened for low income commuters - 3,468
- Preliminary toll revenue - \$11,663,132

Additionally, the average toll during peak driving periods on the 11-mile stretch on the I-110 was \$5.93 while the average toll during peak driving periods on the 14-mile I-10 stretch was \$4.68. The average travel speeds from 5-9am on I-110 northbound were 65.3 mph while the average speeds along the same stretch on the general purpose lanes were 49.7 mph. The speeds on the I-10 westbound during the same times were 64.7 mph. The speeds on the general purpose lanes were not available for I-10.

Ms. Wiggins concluded her presentation by highlighting the following lessons learned on the program:

- *Political champions are critical for the program*
- *Address equity issues early in the planning process*
- *Leverage congestion pricing with transit*
- *Extensive outreach and public education is required include after program launch*
- *Visible signage is important throughout the alignment*
- *Invest in superior customer service*
- *Continued marketing campaign*

Below are some questions and comments made during the presentation:

- Garry Grossich – Said that it seems that there's going to be more congestion in the general purposes lanes with the express lanes option. He asked how it could be made possible through technology for all to have the opportunity to use the express lanes. *Response: Ms. Wiggins stated that they are looking at other forms of cell phone technology to explore such options.*
- Carl Dameron – Asked if there was a limit on the number of transponders available? *Response: Ms. Wiggins said there was not a limit.* Mr. Dameron followed up by asking what the standard turnaround time to receive a transponder is and what was the monthly fee? *Ms. Wiggins responded by stating transponders are available at select retail locations (Costco, Albertsons and AAA offices). She told Mr. Dameron that the maintenance fee is \$3 per month which can be waived with 4 one-way trips.*
- Garry Grossich – Asked Ms. Wiggins if they were a government agency or a private agency. *Response: Metro is a government agency that has contracted with Xerox (private agency) to manage and operate the ExpressLanes.* Mr.

Grossich followed up by asking where the profit goes from the tolls received. *Response: The initial toll revenue goes towards operation and maintenance of the project, as well as servicing any debt associated with the project. Any remaining revenue would be reinvested in the I-110 and I-10 corridors including into transit programs along the corridors.*

- Richard Prieto – Commented that he receive a ticket on the 91 toll roads for using the transponder on a non-registered vehicle. *Response: Ms. Wiggins stated that LA Metro transponders are portable and can be used from one car to another car and Metro doesn't require the vehicle to be registered but they do recommend that the users register their vehicles to their account.*
- Garry Grossich – Asked if the change to the ExpressLanes required a shutdown of the lanes. *Response: Ms. Wiggins responded that the freeway was not shut down for the transition.*
- Carl Dameron – Noted that speeds on the 10 westbound appear to be at a 20% improvement, and asked Ms. Wiggins to clarify about her saying it could be better. *Ms. Wiggins responded that it could be better and they expect better results to come.*
- Randy Soto – Asked if there was any information or data available on accidents in the ExpressLanes. *Ms. Wiggins responded that the data is being collected by dedicated CHP which Metro pays and the documentation is more precise now because that's their focus.*
- Carl Dameron – Asked how much did it cost for additional CHP patrol. *Ms. Wiggins responded that CHP is paid for 3 officers at overtime totaling \$500,000 per year which pays for itself through enforcement.*
- Carl Dameron asked for the CAG to be emailed project information from the CAG meeting individually to forward to their affiliations more easily and have the information.

IV. SANBAG Board Updates

Mr. Cohoe provided an update of the recent SANBAG Board meetings (7/10/13 and 9/4/13).

- The two key update from the July 7, 2013 SANBAG Board were: 1) that the project alternatives considered had been withdrawn. 2) This was the equity study preview.
- The September 4, 2013 SANBAG Board update was an overview of the Traffic and Revenue results and a revised Express Lanes alternative.

Mr. Cohoe provided the group with the future board dates along with upcoming CAG meetings and action items:

- 10/10/13 – Present preliminary T&R Results and Financial Plan information at Board Workshop
- 10/15/13 through 10/17/13 – Share T&R Results and Financial Plan with CAGs (CAG #4)
- 11/19/13 through 11/21/13 – Obtain feedback from CAG Members (CAG #5)
- 12/4/13 – Present CAG Feedback at Board Meeting and receive direction on I-10 and I-15 Express Lanes

V. Traffic & Revenue Study and Financial Analysis Update

Mr. Cohoe provided an update on the Traffic & Revenue Study and Financial Analysis on the I-10 and I-15 corridor projects.

The key figures provided in the study and analyses are as follows:

- I-10 and I-15 Corridors total estimated cost is \$3.1 Billion
- Traditional funding required is \$1.9 Billion
- \$1.9 Billion of traditional funds are not available

These preliminary figures led the team to engage in an interactive process to reduce scope or “right-size” the projects in order make the Alternatives financially viable. The findings from this iterative analysis led to of the development of the revised I-10 and I-15 corridor Express Lanes Alternatives, which were presented in the next section.

VI. Revised I-10 and I-15 Corridor Express Lanes Alternatives

Mr. David Speirs, Project Manager (Parsons), identified the project limits and provided the 3 alternatives currently being studied on the I-10 corridor:

- No-Build
- One High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lane
- Two Express Lanes

Mr. Speirs indicated that the revised I-10 Express Lanes Alternative would maintain two Express Lanes from the Los Angeles/San Bernardino county line Sierra Avenue, reduce from two to one Express Lane from Sierra to I-215, maintain two Express Lanes from I-215 to SR-210, and maintain one Express Lane from SR-210 to Redlands.

Mr. Speirs presented the two alternatives being considered for the I-15 corridor:

- No-build
- Two Express Lanes

The revised Express Lanes Alternative for I-15 would maintain two Express Lanes from SR-60 to US-395, except between Duncan Canyon and the Devore interchange where it would be reduced from two Express Lanes to one.

VII. Public Outreach Update

Mr. Jason Lombard, Lee Andrews Group, SANBAG's Outreach Consultants, briefly discussed the briefings conducted to key community groups and organizations. To date 63 briefings have been conducted to local government and municipalities, governing boards, committees, community-based groups and educational institutions. In addition to the briefings, Mr. Lombard discussed the recent grassroots canvassing outreach efforts conducted along the I-10 and I-15 corridor to enhance knowledge of the project with stakeholders of limited access to information in addition to identifying key community places to disseminate project information. There were 641 sites visited through these efforts in which city halls, libraries, community centers, senior center, cultural institutions and local businesses and shopping centers were visited. In total 704 stakeholder groups have been briefed and provided project information.

Mr. Lombard emphasized the importance to continue disseminating information as well as to recommend briefing opportunities to SANBAG. The CAG was asked to continue to assist with outreach and continue to share the website to their affiliated groups by letting others know about the project website (www.i10CorridorProject.org) which would provide the public to access the latest I-10 Corridor Project information and stay connected. CAG members were also encouraged to visit and encourage others to like the project Facebook page and follow the SANBAG Twitter to stay involved with social media.

- *CAG Meetings Schedule* – An updated schedule for the next two sets of CAG meetings was presented. The principal objective for CAG Meeting #4 is to share the preliminary Traffic and Revenue (T&R), Financial Plan and Equity Study results. CAG Members will then have 5 weeks to share the T&R information with their affiliated groups and seek their input which will be shared at CAG Meeting #5. CAG Members will be informed immediately via email if there are any changes to the schedule.
 - CAG Meeting #4: Preliminary T&R Results
 - EV CAG – Tuesday, October 15th
 - HD CAG – Wednesday, October 16th
 - WV CAG – Thursday, October 17th
 - CAG Meeting #5: T&R Feedback
 - EV CAG – Tuesday, November 19th
 - HD CAG – Wednesday, November 20th
 - WV CAG – Thursday, November 21st

VIII. Action Items for CAG members (to be conducted prior to CAG Meeting #4)

- Assist with the identification of additional briefings opportunities for SANBAG.
- Provide updates to affiliated groups – share general updates presented at CAG Meeting #3 and seek input.
- Visit www.i10CorridorProject.org
 - Review all website contents
 - Share website link with affiliated contacts

IX. Additional Questions and Comments.

Below is an overview of the questions and comments that were raised by CAG Members.

- Richard Prieto – Asked if cost could be saved by minimizing the landscaping designs in certain areas. *Response: Landscape cost reduction is being considered for the project; however, any cost reduction must be balanced with providing a project that blends in well with the local communities.*
- John Abma – Followed up by asking where the influence and input comes from in the landscaping, walls and bridges along the freeways. *Response: General guidance is provided by Caltrans, with input during design from the local cities.*

Questions and Comments Included in Comment Forms Submitted by CAG Members

None

Project Material Distributed

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

- Meeting Agenda
- Comment Card
- CAG Meeting #3 PowerPoint presentation copy
- Stephanie Wiggins' Bio
- CAG Meeting Minutes (East Valley, High Desert, and West Valley)
- List of briefings conducted by SANBAG
- I-10 and I-15 Corridor Frequently Asked Questions

Next CAG Meeting

- ***EV CAG Meeting #4*** will be held on Tuesday, October 15, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. The meeting location will be confirmed by October 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.