

CAG Meeting Minutes

Subject: High Desert Community Advisory Group (HD CAG) Meeting #3
 I-10 and I-15 Corridor Projects, San Bernardino County

Date: September 11, 2013

Location: Victorville City Hall, Conference Room D, Victorville, CA

Participants: A total of 9 CAG Members participated at HD CAG Meeting #3, including 1 WV CAG Members.

HD CAG Members in Attendance	Organization
Rick Danzey	Self-Employed
Kevin Kane	Victor Valley Transit Authority
Thomas J. Kerman	Hesperia Unified School District
Robert Kilpatrick	Hall & Foreman Inc.
Michele Spears	Victor Valley Chamber of Commerce
Sophie Steeno	Steen Design Studio
Ann Vanino	Moving Forward Coaching and Consulting
Carol Whitton	Hesperia Unified School District
Other CAG Members in Attendance (non-HD CAG)	Organization
Ken Alpern (WV CAG)	The Transit Coalition
HD CAG Members not in Attendance	Organization
Muhammad A. Bari	US Army, Fort Irwin
Debbie A. Cannon	Academy for Grassroots Organizations/HD Resource Center
Oliver Chi	City of Barstow
Raghada Khoury	Commercial Building Owner
Holly Noel	Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District
Jim Oravets	County of San Bernardino, Special Districts Department
Bob R. Tinsley	BR Tinsley Inc., R.E. & Construction
Niru Vangala	Foremost Senior Campus
Other (non-CAG Members)	Organization
NA	
San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG) and Consultants	
Garry Cohoe	Director of Project Delivery, SANBAG
Dave Speirs	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:

- Michele Spears – Noted that she has the Orange County transponder and uses it for her husband's business.
- Question: Is there data to show that traffic would improve overall if another lane is added. *Response: The Traffic Operational Analysis will provide data illustrating the estimated future traffic speeds for the No-Build, HOV and Express Lanes Alternative.*
- Michele Spears – Stated that the harder selling point is that the express lanes on the I-15 end at the I-395 and do not extend further.
- Thomas Kerman – Asked to clarify that at this point the I-10 is critical and the I-15 is further down the line. *Response: The expected completion for the I-10 is 2024, I-15 Segments 1 through 3 (SR-60 to Devore) is 2026, and I-15 Segment 4 (Devore to US-395) is 2030.*
- Sophie Steeno – Noted that Friday traffic includes many weekend travelers to Las Vegas which occurs every weekend.

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

- Michele Spears – She presented an update to her task force of 10 people, who generally seemed disinterested because of how far out in the process the project is for the I-15. They feel there are more current issues out there to discuss rather than hear about the project not slated to begin until much later. *Response: The decision whether to continue studying I-15 Corridor Project is going to be made this year by the SANBAG Board, which is the reason to educate the public in the project now.*
- Michele Spears – Asked where do the high desert and valley SANBAG representatives stand with regards to the project? *Response: Many Board Members have expressed support for the project, while others have raised concerns regarding equity or tolling. Updated project financial information for both the I-10 and I-15 Projects will be presented at the October Board Workshop, and Board Members will be asked to vote in December 2013 whether to continue the study of Express Lanes on the two corridors.*
- Carol Whitton – Said that the issue locally in regards to highway improvements is that they have been hearing about improvements for 30 years and have not seen anything.
- Sophie Steeno – Noted that it appears that these projects take long to build and that they have already heard of many projects in the works. She stated that she always post links to the SANBAG Facebook and website but hadn't received many comments.
- Michele Spears – Asked what the purpose was to speak on the project if they didn't have a vote. *Response: It is important for citizens to voice their opinions about the project.*
- Sophie Steeno – Asked why the I-15 express lanes stopped at the 395. She stated that local people felt neglected when the federal government added to the I-15 at Barstow but didn't provide improvement locally. *Response: The preliminary T&R and Financial Analysis studied extending the Express Lanes through Victorville to the proposed High Desert Corridor. The preliminary analysis showed that there was no financial benefit construction ELs vs. HOV lanes. Since revenue is only one of the two major purposes of ELs, the other being traffic management, this section of the I-15 is being reanalyzed with updated inputs.*
- Thomas Kerman – Told the group that in order to receive Express Lanes on the I-15, they must first be selected on the I-10 first.

- Kevin Kane – Noted that they don't necessarily have all the support from the mountain desert group. He also asked how this would impact goods movement. *Response: Express Lanes would improve mobility in the general purpose lanes which will help with goods movement.*
- Ann Vanino – Told the group that she did some research for outreach and offered to do other types of work to help with outreach especially in the mountain community. She noted that having briefings to groups at Pinion Hills and at Wrightwood holiday events would help the project.
- Michele Spears – Noted that her group does e-blasts, and asked for a paragraph on the project to be emailed so she could send it to their approximate 500 member database.
- Kenneth Alpern – Asked if there was any opposition to this from the members of the board. *Response: Some opposition to the project is in regards to equity issues and perception of double taxation.* He followed up by stating that younger demographics would be more open to such project given their increase tendencies to use mass transit.
- Sophie Steeno – Told the group that there will be an event called Mud Jams in Hesperia in which SANBAG business cards could be added to the goodie bags distributed at the event.

PowerPoint Presentation – Following the aforementioned items, 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. Jason Lombard presented on behalf of Stephanie Wiggins, Executive Officer and Project Director of the LA County Congestion Reduction Program for LA Metro – Presentation on Metro ExpressLanes

Mr. Lombard 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. His 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.

Mr. Lombard 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

Mr. Lombard 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). He stated that the toll rates vary within this price range based on traffic levels in the ExpressLanes to ensure minimum average speeds of 45mph.

Mr. Lombard explained enforcement within the ExpressLanes, and how it's being achieved through a combination of photo enforcement and added CHP patrol. Additionally, he 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. Mr. Lombard 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+.

Mr. Lombard 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 waiving 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 Mr. Lombard 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.

Mr. Lombard concluded his 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:

- Michele Spears – Asked for an understanding of the equity plan for Metro ExpressLanes? *Response: The Metro Equity Program provides a one-time credit of \$25, which can be applied to the transponder deposit or the pre-paid toll account. Additionally, the Equity Program waives the monthly account maintenance fee.*
- Sophie Steeno – Stated that her first impression of the project was about the double taxation issue but she recently purchased her transponder through AAA after attending the West Valley CAG meeting on 9/9/13 and has had the opportunity to use it for the past couple days. She stated that the upside is the Fastrak compatibility throughout the state.

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 CAG 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.

- Michele Spears – Asked if household incomes in the areas where project lanes shift from two lanes to one have anything to do with the decision or need. *Response: No. The transition from two lanes to one lane was driven by traffic forecasts in the identified one lane areas.*
- Rick Danzey – Noted that December 4th appears to be the critical date for the project and asked if the Board would be considering one or both options? *Response: Board Members will be asked whether they agree to continue the study of Express Lanes alternatives on the I-10 and I-15 corridors.*
- Rick Danzey – Asked if the I-15 project would occur if the I-10 wasn't approved. He told the CAG that if they want to see improvements on the I-15, then they would have to support the I-10 project.
- Michele Spears – Told the group that she asked a couple representatives of the county supervisors what were some important issues with regards to the Supervisors and they told her Express Lanes were not a big issues to them. She followed up by asking if local High Desert media had been utilized for informing the local community about the project. *Response: There have been interviews about the project in the Press Enterprise.* Ms. Spears followed up by stating she would talk to local media.
- Rick Danzey – Informed the team that there's a meeting on the 19th at the chamber which would be a good opportunity to present there.
- Kenneth Alpern – Asked how many members sat on the SANBAG board and how many votes were needed to pass the projects. *Response: There are 29 members on the SANBAG Board, and an item requires a majority vote in order to pass.*
- Michele Spears – Asked the team why they didn't approach the high desert community to host a transportation forum on behalf of the projects. *Response: The team can make presentations in order to educate the community about the Alternatives being considered on the I-10 and I-15 projects, but the team cannot advocate for a particular Alternative.*

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

- ***HD CAG Meeting #4*** will be held on Wednesday, October 16, 2013 at 5:30 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.