

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

I-710 TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
A Meeting Held at the Long Beach Energy Department
2400 East Spring Street
Long Beach, CA
April 2, 2003

- I. Chair Pagett called the meeting to order at 1:40 p.m.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair William Pagett, Bell Gardens, Maywood, Paramount; Anthony La, Downey; Carlos Alvarado, Bell, Cudahy; Ray Ramirez, Commerce; Joseph Lim, Compton; Patrick Fu, Huntington Park; Lon Maddox, Long Beach; Yadi Farhadi, Lynwood; Mohammad Mostahkami, South Gate; Kevin Wilson, Vernon; Sharas Bangalore, Caltrans; Lt. William Murphy, CHP; Victor Rollinger, Carson; Maged El-Rabaa, County of Los Angeles; Sandra Balmir, FHWA/FTA; Ernest Morales, MTA; Kerry Cartwright, Port of Long Beach; Sue Lai, Port of Los Angeles.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Carol Gomez, SCAQMD.

OTHERS PRESENT: Deborah Chankin, Gateway Cities COG; Jack Joseph, Gateway Cities COG; Maura Dwyer, Long Beach Alliance for Children with Asthma; Raymond Maekawa, MTA; Sumi Gant, City of Long Beach; Andrea Rodriguez, Consensus Planning Group; Jinny Park, MTA; Vin Kumar, Caltrans Goods Movement; Ken Hatai, Caltrans Traffic Investigations; Maged Soliman, Los Angeles County Department of Public Works; Art Krugler, private citizen, Whittier; Harley Martin, CH2M Hill; John Doherty, ACTA; Duane Kenagy, ACET; John Zeigler, Automobile Club of Southern California; Barbara Martenoff, Los Angeles World Airports, LAWA; Patrick Tomcheck, Los Angeles World Airports; Helene Ansel, Assemblyman Alan Lowenthal's office; Bridget Sramek, Assemblyman Alan Lowenthal's office; Mike Sanders, Long Beach Mayor Beverly O'Neill's office; Lee Ward, Meyer, Mohaddes Associates; Jolene Hayes, Port of Long Beach; Anthony R. Ybarra, City of Bell Gardens; Julie Rush, PBQD; Dave Levinsohn, PBQD; Doris Chan, PBQD; Steven Yoshizumi, PBQD; Susan Robbins, PBQD.

- II. Roll was taken through self-introductions and a sign-in sheet was circulated.
- III. Ernest Morales, MTA, led the pledge of allegiance.
- IV. There were no amendments to the agenda.
- V. There were no public comments at this time.

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VI. Consent Calendar:

The TAC minutes for March 26, 2003 had not been distributed prior to the meeting. Approval of the minutes was continued to the next TAC meeting.

VII. Reports:

A. Study Overview

Dave Levinsohn, PBQD, began by reviewing the schedule for presenting data to the TAC. On March 26th, estimates of right-of-way impacts by acre and capital costs were presented. Today, the project team intends to cover environmental issues. Next week, traffic and air quality will be discussed. April 15th and 23rd are set aside for deliberation meetings to obtain consensus on the locally preferred strategy. Note that the meeting that had previously been scheduled for April 16 has been changed to April 15, 2003, at 1:30 p.m. at the Long Beach Energy Department.

Dave also discussed the project development timeline. The question of the likely implementation schedule for the project has been raised on several occasions, so we developed a sample project development timeline. The timeline shows a possible schedule based on a 15-18 mile project and 3 phases. The I-710 Major Corridor Study occurs early in the overall process. Under this timeline the overall project would be finished in about 2021. But there are ways to speed this up – design-build, change phasing.

The TAC Chair commented that the project schedule is ultimately dependant upon funding. Art Krugler, private citizen from Whittier, asked if a cash flow curve had been prepared. Dave replied that a cash flow curve would not be prepared at this level of study.

B. Preliminary Environmental Analysis Report (PEAR) Explanation

Susan Robbins, PBQD, explained the purpose of the PEAR. The PEAR is required by Caltrans. It provides an initial environmental evaluation of alternatives; presents results of the preliminary analysis; identifies environmental constraints that may affect future design efforts; and becomes part of the Project Study Report. In essence, the PEAR is a screening-level of analysis. More thorough environmental review takes place during the environmental phase of project development.

The purposes of the PEAR include to: develop an inventory of environmental resources; identify potentially significant project impacts that could delay or affect the viability of any project alternative; determine additional studies needed to complete environmental clearance; and determine the next type of environmental document needed (e.g., EIR/EIS). It was noted that Section 4(f) of the 1966 U.S. Transportation

Act can impact the project development process. It is important to identify these potential Section 4(f) site impacts, as these have time implications, or could require modifications of alternatives in order to avoid these impacts.

C. Environmental Screening Results

In order to provide comparative information on the proposed alternatives with regard to environmental concerns, an environmental checklist and supporting discussion was prepared. This discussion represents a key section of the PEAR document that is currently under development for submittal to Caltrans for their review. The environmental screening analysis focuses mostly on the build alternatives (e.g., Alternatives C, D, and E).

The following environmental topic areas are summarized and covered in today's presentation:

- Acquisitions/ROW
- Aesthetics/Visual Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology, Water Quality, Floodplains
- Land Use/Planning
- Noise
- Parks/Recreation
- Socioeconomics
- Utilities

Two categories, (1) agriculture, and (2) geology, seismicity, and soils, are not expected to be greatly impacted by the proposed project, therefore these two categories did not warrant a separate discussion. As an overview, any impacts to geology, seismicity, or soils are typically addressed as part of the engineering design phase and through the use of "best management practices." Agricultural uses are analyzed using a Prime, Unique, State, or Local Importance designation. These designations are made according to the soil type and topography. Prime farmland provides the most beneficial combination of both soil type and topography for agriculture. The Local Designation provides the least ideal combination for agricultural uses. Within the I-710 corridor, although there are pockets of existing agricultural uses underneath towers in utility right-of-way, none of the soil types meet the Prime, Unique, State, or Local Importance criteria.

Summary information on the traffic and air quality categories will be presented to members at the next TAC meeting.

Acquisitions and ROW: Properties located within the proposed footprint for each alternative were counted to provide an additional measure for ROW impact, in addition to the ROW analysis by acre that was presented last week. Potential acquisitions were counted off of aerials and any partial take was counted as a full take. At this early stage of study, there was no differentiation between full and partial impacts. Any building that looked like a structure was counted. The data was not field verified. Of the Build Alternatives, Alternative D had the highest number of residential structures and vacant lots acquired. Alternative E acquired the most commercial properties. Alternative D acquired the most railroad properties, Alternative E acquired the most sensitive uses, and Alternative C acquired the most utility structures. Utility towers were not counted for this part of the environmental screening analysis, but are accounted for elsewhere in the cost estimate.

Aesthetics/visual quality: This study examined changes to the existing visual environment. These changes may be tangible or intangible, as well as positive or negative changes. The study team looked at impacts upon visually sensitive land uses (e.g., residential neighborhoods, parks, cultural and public facilities), along the mainline (miles affected), the interchanges (acres affected), and the arterial improvements (miles affected). Alternative C affected the least mainline miles (Alternative D affected the most); Alternative B affected the least interchange acres (Alternative D affected the most). High mast illumination accounts for high impact associated with interchanges in Alternative B. Alternative E affected the least arterial miles (Alternative C affected the most).

Biological resources: Research was conducted to analyze the “potential for conflict” with recorded rare/endangered animals, plants, habitat areas; affected federally protected wetlands; interference with movement of fish or wildlife; and conflicts with policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. Three endangered species potentially affected were identified: California orcutt grass, Salt marsh bird’s beak habitat, and the Pacific pocket mouse habitat. Alternative C potentially affects the CA orcutt grass; Alternative D potentially affects salt marsh bird’s beak habitat and the Pacific pocket mouse habitat; and Alternative E potentially affects salt marsh bird’s beak habitat.

Cultural resources: In analyzing cultural resources it is important to be aware of the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. It is a federal mandate to examine how a federal-funded project could affect these resources, both “eligible” and “potentially eligible” sites for listing by the National Register of Historic Places (NHRP). Alternative C potentially affects 2 sites on the NRHP; Alternative D potentially affects 1 NHRP site; and Alternative E does not affect any NHRP sites. Alternative D potentially affects 6 local cultural resources; Alternative C potentially affects 5 local cultural resources; and Alternative E potentially affects 1 local cultural resource. Based on the sources examined, no archaeological or paleontological sites are known to be located in the proposed footprints of the alternatives.

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Maged El-Rabaa, County of Los Angeles, asked where the cultural resources were located. PBQD indicated that the addresses will be listed in the PEAR, but that the two sites were Casa de Parley Johnson (potentially affected by the Florence Ave. arterial improvements) and Lynwood Pacific Electric Highway Depot (potentially affected by improvements to Long Beach Blvd.).

Ray Ramirez, City of Commerce, asked if the Site of the Sleepy Lagoon Murder and Shelley Air Force Base were considered. PBQD replied that the site of the murder was included however the base would have to be verified.

Hazardous materials: Hazardous materials/waste sites were researched along the I-710 corridor. Impacts to hazardous materials/waste sites were counted only if the property would need to be acquired under the proposed alternative. Potential impacts to arterials are included in the results. Alternative C would potentially affect 2,378 hazardous waste sites; Alternative D would potentially affect 1,525 hazardous waste sites; and Alternative E would potentially affect 939 hazardous waste sites.

Hydrology, water quality and floodplains: Impacts to this resource would occur if the hydrology, water quality or floodplains were altered by the proposed alternatives. For example, where pier walls would be constructed or lengthened, the water levels would rise in those areas. Alternative D poses the highest impact to surface waters due to the Terminal Island Freeway component. Alternatives C and E do not directly impact surface waters. For all alternatives, wetlands areas affected include impacts to the Dominguez Gap Spreading Grounds Facility. Alternative C would have the highest potential impact to floodplains and wetlands, followed by Alternative E, then Alternative D.

John Zeigler, Auto Club of Southern California, asked what accounted for the estimated 100-acre impact on the floodplain in Alternative D. PBQD answered that it was the Terminal Island Freeway/Alameda Truckway Connector that crossed over the Dominguez Gap Spreading Grounds facility.

Land use/planning: Any conversion of existing land uses to a transportation use was considered an impact under this environmental indicator. These impacts were measured based on acres of right-of-way acquisition. Alternative C acquires the highest amount of acreage for residential and commercial uses. Alternative D acquires the highest amount of acreage for railroad and sensitive uses. Alternative E acquires the highest amount of acreage for utility uses.

Noise: Eight 24-hour noise measurements were taken to determine the peak one-hour traffic noise period. Then six 15-minute measurements were taken during those peak one-hour periods. Caltrans' noise abatement criteria (NAC) allows for 65 dBA for sensitive receptors and 71 dBA for commercial areas. It is higher in commercial areas

because they are typically not areas where people sleep. All sites where measurements were taken in the study area currently exceed the NAC. Therefore, a qualitative evaluation was undertaken to provide a basis of comparison for the alternatives. Alternative C has moderate to high impact because new areas of sensitive receptors are exposed to noise due to the Terminal Island Freeway component and the C-D system. Alternative D has a moderate impact and would increase the noise in areas already exposed to traffic noise. Alternative E has high impact because it exposes new areas and more residents to noise due to the new truckway element on the east side of the alignment.

Parks and recreation: Parks and recreation areas which are either historic or of local significance can be designated as a Section 4(f) facility, however, not all parks and recreational areas in the I-710 Study Area are designated Section 4(f) facilities. It is important to note that the acquisition process for a 4(f) site can be lengthy and costly as it must be demonstrated that the project has made every effort to avoid or minimize the impacts. The mainline elements for Alternatives C, D, and E all potentially acquire the same 3 parks: Bristow Park in Commerce, Bandini Park in Commerce, and Coolidge Park in Long Beach. Of these three parks, Coolidge Park is a designated 4(f) property, located in the southwest quadrant of the I-710/SR-91 Interchange. Alternative C arterials potentially affect five park and recreation sites (Scherer Park in Long Beach, Cherry Avenue Park in Long Beach, All Souls Cemetery in Long Beach, Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Long Beach, and Darwell Park in Bell Gardens). Alternative D arterials potentially affect four park and recreation sites (Scherer Park in Long Beach, Cherry Avenue Park in Long Beach, All Souls Cemetery in Long Beach, Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Long Beach). Alternative E arterials potentially affect one park and recreation site, Darwell Park in Bell Gardens.

Kerry Cartwright, Port of Long Beach, asked what three parks would be impacted. PBQD said that Bristow Park in Commerce, Bandini Park in Commerce, and Coolidge Park in Long Beach. Of the three, only Coolidge Park is considered a 4(f) resource. There are no 4(f) property takes in the arterial elements of the alternatives. The TAC Chair asked if the arterial analysis assumed property acquisitions to provide for construction of additional lanes along the entire length of the arterials. PBQD indicated that the analysis did assume acquisitions along the entire length of the affected arterials and that this assumption would presumably represent the worst case scenario for impacts on the arterials. The TAC Chair also noted that there is an additional park in Bell Gardens that would be affected by all three alternatives. Julie Rush, PBQD, also indicated that a more detailed discussion of the items on the checklist presented today could be provided to TAC members at the next TAC meeting. Kerry Cartwright asked if maps would be included in that description. PBQD replied that there would be enough description to determine the locations of the named resources, but that maps are not included.

Socioeconomics: PBQD indicated that the number of potentially affected minorities and persons with low income was determined by Census tracts. If a Census tract was directly impacted by or immediately adjacent to any of the proposed improvements, it was assumed to be affected, and the minority or low-income population was tabulated. Alternative C would impact the highest number of people in the study area, followed by Alternative D, then Alternative E. Although the total number of people affected varies by alternative, the percentage of minorities affected is almost identical between the alternatives. The percent ranges between 93 to 94 percent. The number of persons below poverty is identical between the alternatives at five percent.

Kerry Cartwright asked for clarification regarding whether tracts that were adjacent to, but not directly impacted by the proposed improvements were counted. PBQD confirmed that these adjacent tracts were included in the count.

Kevin Wilson, City of Vernon, asked if the data in the detailed discussion would be displayed for the freeway and the arterials separately. PBQD indicated that the data is broken down by components to allow the TAC and the OPC the flexibility to assess the components individually.

Utilities: Utilities would be impacted if any of the alternatives disturbed, crossed or require relocation of water, gas, cable, telephone, sewer, or petroleum lines, drainage channels or flood basins. Specific information regarding these utilities is included in the more detailed discussion of the items on the environmental checklist. Alternatives C, D, and E cross both the LADWP and SCE 220kV lines.

Ray Ramirez indicated that the Public Utilities Commission considers freight lines as utilities and asked if the impact analysis applied the same consideration. Specifically, he noted that there are considerable freight facilities near Slauson Avenue. PBQD clarified that the railroad facilities were not considered utilities, but were assessed in the right-of-way and land use impact sections of the analysis.

Kerry Cartwright asked for clarification with regard to how the impacted power utilities would be handled. PBQD responded that they had met with the power utilities (both Southern California Edison [SCE] and Los Angeles Department of Water and Power [LADWP]), to discuss the potential impacts and how they might be addressed. SCE said it was possible to consolidate their lines onto fewer towers within a narrower envelope on their property, thereby freeing an approximately 100-foot (30-meter) wide corridor for other development. On the other hand, LADWP felt that there were no opportunities to consolidate, however, there was potential to underground their facilities. Undergrounding their facilities would be expensive and difficult, but it is technically possible. Additionally, a freeway facility could not be constructed on top of the power lines even if they were placed underground, because LADWP would still need access to the lines for maintenance and repair. Similarly, Caltrans would not want utility facilities placed longitudinally within State right-of-way for the same reason.

D. Question and Answer Period

The following is a summary of the discussion that occurred during the Consultant's reports:

Ray Ramirez asked if capped and/or abandoned oil wells were assessed. He knew of old wells along Washington Boulevard, Sheila Street, and at Chandler Oil Field. PBQD replied that oil well facilities were not specifically evaluated at this environmental screening level of study.

Deborah Chankin, Gateway Cities COG, asked if the noise analysis assumed the presence of noise abatement walls as part of the alternatives. PBQD explained that the evaluation of the degree of impact was based on development of the concepts without noise abatement walls to provide a worst-case assessment. The level of mitigation (e.g., number and location of proposed soundwalls) would be analyzed and determined in subsequent phases of project development (e.g., environmental and preliminary design phases). With noise abatement walls included as environmental mitigation, the noise impacts associated with the proposed alternatives could be reduced, although there would still be potential for noise impacts.

Kerry Cartwright asked if noise abatement walls were included in the cost estimate. PBQD confirmed that there was a line item in the cost estimate for "Environmental Mitigation," valued at five percent of the construction cost, and that, at this level of study, the cost for noise abatement walls was included in that line item.

Maged El-Rabaa asked if the impact on the housing stock in the corridor had been considered, and if the analysis had determined who would need to be relocated. PBQD replied that in the analysis, structures were counted, but that the project is still conceptual. Studies and reports like the Draft Relocation Impact report (DRIR), that account for this level of detailed impact analysis, are conducted in the environmental documentation phase.

Ray Ramirez indicated that in working on the I-5 improvement project development process, the question of disclosure has already come up. He questioned when in the process real estate brokers would have to disclose home and property impacts to future buyers. Again, PBQD replied that at this time the project is too conceptual to accurately describe specific right-of-way impacts (takes) that may not occur for ten years or more. Not until the environmental documentation phase would that level of detail be reliably determinable. The TAC Chair added that the impacts are dependent on which concept is selected and which additional components are ultimately included in the Locally Preferred Strategy.

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Victor Rollinger, City of Carson, asked why Alternative E resulted in the highest noise impact, and if that assessment had anything to do with the elevated portions of the truck facility. PBQD confirmed that the elevated portions of the truck facility did contribute to the high noise impact assessment, and reminded the TAC that with implementation of mitigation (noise abatement walls) the impact would be lessened, but not necessarily eliminated. In addition, the noise abatement walls would need to lower the noise levels by 5dBA in order to be considered acoustically feasible.

The TAC Chair asked if the TAC and OPC would be presented with a tabulation of the impacts and benefits of the Locally Preferred Strategy once one had been recommended. PBQD replied that because many of the benefits and impacts have been assessed per component, the data could be arrayed that way, unless the Locally Preferred Strategy changes substantially from what has already been evaluated.

IX. Adjournment

Following the Question and Answer period, the TAC Chair reminded the attendees that Traffic Impacts and Benefits as well as Air Quality Impacts would be discussed at the next TAC meeting on April 9, 2003 and that the meeting would be held at Progress Park in Paramount at 1:30 p.m. He also reminded the attendees that Assemblymember Alan Lowenthal was sponsoring a Coastal Community Town Hall Meeting on April 3, 2003 at 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. at the Aquarium of the Pacific and that all were invited to attend. Further, the TAC Chair also mentioned that there would be I-710 Open Houses on April 28, 29, and 30, 2003 at three locations in the corridor.

Victor Rollinger asked when the next OPC meeting would be held. The TAC Chair indicated that the next few meetings in April would all be TAC meetings and that the OPC would not meet until May 2003, after the TAC had decided upon a recommended Locally Preferred Strategy.

John Zeigler asked for confirmation of the time of the TAC meeting on April 15, 2003. The TAC Chair replied that the TAC meeting on April 15th would be held at 1:30 p.m. at the Long Beach Energy Department – the same time and place as today's TAC meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.