

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE I-710 OVERSIGHT POLICY COMMITTEE**

**A Meeting Held at Progress Park
15500 Downey Avenue
Paramount, CA**

June 25, 2003

I. Call to Order

Co-Chair Colonna called the meeting to order at 6:55 p.m.

II. Roll Call

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Co-Chair Frank Colonna, Long Beach; Co-Chair Samuel Peña, Maywood; Daniel Crespo, Bell Gardens; Jim Dear, Carson; Hugo Argumedo, Commerce; Keith McCarthy, Downey; Hector De La Torre, South Gate; Louis Byrd, Lynwood; Gene Daniels, Paramount; John Calhoun, Port of Long Beach; Sharas Bangalore, Caltrans; Ray Maekawa, MTA.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: George Cole, Bell; Eric Perrodin, Compton; Frank Gurule, Cudahy; Juan Noguez, Huntington Park; William Davis, Vernon; Gloria Molina, County of Los Angeles; Thomas Warren, Port of Los Angeles; Zahi Faranesh, SCAG.

ALSO PRESENT: Richard Powers, Gateway Cities COG; Jack Joseph, Gateway Cities COG; Robert Messinger, Gateway Cities COG.

III. Pledge of Allegiance

Co-Chair Pena led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Co-Chair Colonna thanked the public for attending and for their interest. He stated that, as everyone knows, I-710 has many problems and we will need to take a long-term view. He said that many residents and commuters have abandoned the use of the freeway and that it will take everyone working together to tackle this transportation challenge.

IV. Amendments to the Agenda

There were no amendments to the agenda.

V. Public Comments

Co-Chair Colonna asked if any members of the public wished to comment. He requested that speakers fill out a 3" x 5" card and to restrict their comments to three minutes in the

interest of time as the agenda is full. He explained that the meeting might run between two and half and three hours, but that the committee members can be approached individually after the meeting as they tend to stay around to talk to people.

Marta Segura, Communities for a Better Environment, said that she was glad to hear that the OPC will be addressing the question of the Citizen Advisory Committee. She said she wants to be involved and wants to make sure that the communities are represented on this committee. She said that before there is an increase in capacity on I-710, a baseline air monitoring study should be conducted first. She said she wants to know the existing pollution levels. Ms. Segura said that it was inappropriate for the OPC to take the vote to pursue a hybrid alternative. She asked that the OPC freeze the process and stated that she is not sure that any of the alternatives address the air quality issue. She said that we do not know enough about the science and it is premature to make this decision.

Mr. Bob Eula, resident, City of Commerce, said that the plans show the takings of homes. He said that he believes that there are alternatives that should be explored. Why not use the riverbed? Why not use electric trains to move freight? Why is it necessary to disturb the cities? He said he has heard about the constraints with the river such as needing wetlands for the river. But, Commerce is already at the hub of the railroad lines and yard operations. Rather than use Atlantic Boulevard, he said that the project should use an alignment along Bandini Boulevard to connect I-710 to I-5 as there are no homes there. He said too many trucks are using Washington Boulevard and that we need to get the trucks off of Washington. He asked why the OPC is thinking of bringing more trucks down the freeway when the Alameda Corridor is not being used enough. He recommended subsidizing the Alameda Corridor.

Silvia Betancourt, resident, City of Commerce, noted that she has been a 40-year resident of the City of Commerce and said that the expansion of the I-710 freeway took them by surprise. She has been organizing meetings in her neighborhood to get people informed. People in her community have been experiencing health problems and people are starting to tie all the illnesses to what is going on around them. She said she thinks that the OPC needs to do more research and education on the health effects of a freeway.

Anna Arriola, resident, City of Commerce, said she wants to know why changes are being made to I-710 when the I-110 freeway is the main freeway for the ports. She also recommended greater use of the Alameda Corridor to move freight to a major distribution center out in the desert.

Angelo Logan said that the communities are in a health crisis because of the existing freeway. He stated that the I-710 study is all about moving freight and that's all. Lives should be more important than moving freight. He said that the preliminary environmental assessment for the study hasn't even been completed yet, which indicates how important that is relative to moving freight. Mr. Logan also stated that the CAC structure as proposed by staff is unacceptable and that community based organizations should take the lead in determining the makeup of the Citizens Advisory Committee.

Tanya Bernard, Bus Riders Union, said that air pollution and air toxins are already a problem in our area. She listed examples of air pollutants and summarized some of their

Minutes – June 25, 2003

negative health effects, such as: butadiene, benzene (formaldehyde), carbon monoxide, and ozone. She said that the committee should research other viable solutions than just expanding the freeway. For example they could consider bus-only lanes.

Martha Arguelo, Director of Health & Environmental Programs for Physicians of Social Responsibility, said that the OPC should seek new and creative solutions to address the health concerns in the corridor. She said it is known that these air toxins contribute to cancer risk and that the OPC has an absolute responsibility to reduce existing cancer risk. She said that the OPC should use the EPA's new guidelines on environmental justice methods and procedures.

Betty Avila, resident, City of Bell Gardens, said that she has lost family members because of the air toxics from cars and other sources. She said the OPC should listen to the residents. She said she realizes that you need to do something about the traffic, but take the good ideas that are presented here.

Cirilo Juarez, Bus Riders Union, spoke in opposition to the project because of its effects on the environment. He said that it is contractors who are behind the I-710 project and that the OPC needs stop benefiting and serving the corporate interests. He said that we need to consider CNG, electric trains, and solar power.

Alan Hose, President of the Windward Village Mobile Home Park, Long Beach, said that one of the components of Plan C involves the expansion of the 103 (Terminal Island Freeway), which brings it next to their mobile home park. Essentially, this would divide this neighborhood in Long Beach in two. Also, if there is an accident it could happen right on top of them.

Robert Cabrales, Communities for a Better Environment, said that he was disappointed that the absent OPC members would miss hearing the presentations regarding the environment. He said he is concerned with the level of participation of the OPC members. He requested translation equipment for those who do not speak English. He said that there should be more community participation in cities outside of Long Beach, Commerce, and Bell Gardens.

Joaquin Madrigal, resident, City of Bell Gardens, spoke in opposition to the proposed expansion of the freeway.

Pepper Russell, resident of west Long Beach, spoke in opposition to the expansion of the I-710 freeway and commented that there had been a lack of public information on the project. Also, she asked, why does Long Beach need to be the biggest port? Why not spread the cargo out to other ports in the U.S.?

VI. Consent Calendar

- A. Minutes of the Meeting of May 28, 2003.

It was moved by Member Dear, seconded by Co-Chair Pena, to approve the consent calendar. The motion was approved unanimously.

VII. Reports

- A. Gateway Cities Council of Governments Suggested Outline for a Citizen Advisory Committee

Richard Powers, Gateway Cities Council of Governments Executive Director, presented a report on the suggested outline for the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC). The formation of a CAC was discussed at the May 28, 2003 OPC meeting as a means of addressing the fifth guiding principle: improve public participation. He said that staff has developed an outline for the proposed structure of the CAC, which is basically a position paper. The goal is to proactively engage the communities and to help establish community priorities. A 40-member CAC committee is proposed that would report to the I-710 OPC. 18 members would be appointed by the participating cities and county, with the City of Long Beach having 3 or 4 positions of the 18, since over a third of the I-710 corridor is located in the City of Long Beach. Another 10 members would be represented by businesses, institutions, or key stakeholders in the corridor. Another 10 members would be selected by the CAC members themselves. The last two positions would be filled by the Chair of the I-710 TAC and the Chair of the I-710 Enhancements Committee. The I-710 CAC would advise on design solutions on a community level and would also review programs and solutions on issues such as safety and human health. The CAC would also be involved in developing consensus and the on-going engagement of the various communities and interests in the corridor. Once the structure of the I-710 CAC has been identified, then the next step is to take it back to the four funding partners (Caltrans, MTA, Gateway Cities COG, and SCAG) for their concurrence as part of the I-710 agreement.

Member McCarthy asked about the number of CAC members. Why 40? Where did that number come from?

Richard Powers responded that Gateway Cities COG staff spoke to other agencies to obtain information on their experience with citizen committees. He said staff is certainly flexible as to what might be the best structure. The goal is to address the community interests and those of the cities.

Member Dear commented that 40 members for the CAC may not be enough. He said that the CAC should have every affected neighborhood represented, as well as every city along the corridor, along with organized labor, environmental interests, and others so that different perspectives are heard.

Co-Chair Colonna explained that the City of Long Beach has taken some recent actions with regard to the I-710 Study. The Long Beach City Council has formed an I-710 oversight policy committee of its own made up of council members from affected districts. He said that if there is a 40 member I-710 CAC, then it will need a subcommittee made up of

representatives who will roll up their sleeves and get out into the neighborhoods to cast as large a net as they can so that they can speak for the communities. He said that perhaps several subcommittees are needed. It is clear that there is dissatisfaction in communities with how the freeway functions today. It is also important that the CAC be structured in such a way that it does not upstage the efforts of city councils like Long Beach that are putting methods in place to interface with their residents.

Member De La Torre reviewed the physical layout of the I-710, the Los Angeles River, and the bordering local jurisdictions. He counted nine jurisdictions that are physically impacted, mostly because of their proximity to I-710 or the 103 freeway. He suggested that the 10 open slots could be filled with representatives from these cities; thereby giving the localities that are most impacted at least two positions on the CAC.

Member Argumedo followed up on Member De La Torre's comment. Member Argumedo stated that he wanted to look at equitable representation. The process should take into account those cities that are most affected and also take into account equal representation on the board.

Member Maekawa said he wanted to echo the sentiments of several of the other speakers. The committee is off to an excellent start. MTA wants to strengthen the public outreach. For example, the MTA board asked staff to look at forming a residential advisory committee (RAC) for mostly the unincorporated areas affected by the I-710 freeway, which is a large population. He would like to see the support requirements as well as the potential costs be defined as part of the formation process for the CAC. This issue should be deliberated by the OPC as a stand alone item. Member Maekawa commented that this is just a first step and that we still need to go into the environmental process. He recommends that the CAC give input on these health and community issues and help define the scope of work for the next phase of the project.

Member Pena commented on the active role that some of the cities have had in the process to reach out to their communities. He agrees that the 10 at-large slots should emphasize the affected areas. For example, the City of Maywood is not directly affected and their issues would be adequately represented with their single member.

Member Daniels commented that we have some real problems to deal with on I-710 and that he hopes that the CAC will come in with some good solutions and to join in on the dialogue.

Member McCarthy said that it was his assumption that the CAC would be made up almost entirely of residents. There are those, as in his city, who are affected as users of the freeway and also because they fall within the travel shed of the corridor. He thinks that

structure of the CAC should take into account three tiers: (1) those affected by a potential taking of properties; (2) those next to the I-710 freeway; and (3) those in a city in the I-710 influence area.

Member Dear asked for clarification on who selects the "at-large" members in the current proposal. Is it the other 30 TAC members? Richard Powers affirmed that this is what is currently proposed. Member Dear said that there should be some members on the

committee with special expertise, for example organized labor or environmental groups that can provide data and research.

It was then moved by Co-Chair Colonna, seconded by Member Dear, that the four partner agencies and the two co-chairs meet to develop a structure for the Citizen Advisory Committee and bring it back to the next meeting of the OPC. Co-Chair Colonna said that this would allow each of the OPC members to take comments from the public and from their respective city councils. After some discussion on the importance of having an environmental specialist participate in this process, Co-Chair amended the motion to include a staff person from the South Coast Air Quality Management District. Member Dear accepted the amendment to the motion. The motion was approved unanimously as amended.

B. Workshop on The Environment and Public Health in the I-710 Corridor

Panel No. 1 – The Los Angeles River Environment:

Mr. Arthur Golding, President, Los Angeles and San Gabriel River Watershed Council;

Ms. Belinda Faustinos, Executive Officer, San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy.

Mr. Golding described the environment of the Los Angeles River watershed and the approach that the Council is pursuing to revitalize the river system. Major themes included: landscape, vision, political will, land, and funding. Mr. Golding stressed multiple-objective planning; where the land will come from to revitalize the river (linear parcels such as major utilities, freeway rights of way, railroads; big industrial sites, and major public sites); and the importance of leveraging funds. Mr. Golding said that he sees the I-710 project as an opportunity for achieving multiple objectives – addressing the transportation problem and improving the Los Angeles River – by working cooperatively and combining funds.

Ms. Faustinos discussed the objectives of the Conservancy, which include: preserving open space, improving public access to parks and recreational facilities, and enhancement of water quality and water systems. They have a river parkway plan for the Los Angeles River and approximately 34 projects in the works. Ms. Faustinos reviewed each of the proposed build alternatives (C, D, and E) and discussed the potential impacts that these alternatives might have on the Conservancy's proposed projects such as land acquisition or loss of existing open space, barriers to the river and nearby facilities, and visual impacts. Ms. Faustinos also discussed opportunities for environmental mitigation

associated with the I-710 project as well as the need to integrate freeway design with existing and future river enhancement projects.

Panel No. 2 – Public Health and the I-710 Corridor:

Ms. Andrea Hricko, MPH, Associate Professor of Preventative Medicine, University of Southern California;

Ms. Evangelina Ramirez and Dr. Felix Aguilar, Members, Long Beach Alliance for Children with Asthma;

Mr. Jack Broadbent, Director, Air Division, Region 9, United States Environmental Protection Agency;

Minutes – June 25, 2003

Dr. Elaine Chang, Deputy Executive Officer, Planning, Rules, and Area Sources, South Coast Air Quality Management District;

Mr. Henry Hogo, Assistant Deputy Executive Officer, Science and Technology Advancement, South Coast Air Quality Management District.

Ms. Hricko reviewed some of the air pollutants associated with vehicle exhaust including: NO₂, CO, aldehydes, and diesel particulates. With regard to diesel particulates, the fine (PM 2.5) and ultra fine (PM 0.1) particles are of most concern and a major contributor to cancer risk. We know that increasing the number of trucks increases local and regional air pollution. Ms. Hricko showed a slide of measured diesel particulates and carbon monoxide near the I-710 freeway, with the highest levels directly downwind of and within 100 meters of the freeway. Ms. Hricko presented information on the inverse relationship of lung function and air pollutants such as NO₂ and diesel particulates. She also provided a count of the schools within ½ mile and ¼ mile of the I-710 freeway – 29 schools and 10 schools respectively. Mr. Hricko then discussed TEU growth and forecasts and the primary paths that trucks use (up I-710 to inland counties such as Riverside and San Bernardino). Ms. Hricko provided a summary of recommendations that should be taken into account for studies and future plans for the I-710 freeway.

Ms. Ramirez is the mother of an asthmatic child and is a 13-year resident of the city of Long Beach. She discussed the ill health effects of living close to a freeway as well as adjacent oil refineries. She stressed that there is an existing health issue with I-710 and would like to see the OPC committee take steps to solve the problem. Dr. Aguilar commented that the goal is to prevent harm. He said health must be first and more important than commerce.

Mr. Broadbent explained the role of the EPA as an oversight agency and summarized the programs and policies that the agency is pursuing to help address the air quality problem. EPA sets the national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS), provides information on the potency of diesel particulates, establishes rules and permit processes to monitor and improve air quality, and acts as a partner with state and local agencies to fund programs and adopt rules that are implemented on a national basis. Mr. Broadbent said that Southern California has the worst air quality in Region 9 and is in non-attainment for particulate matter and for ozone. EPA has recently promulgated a new standard for 8-hour ozone and for fine particulates (PM_{2.5}). Mobile sources contribute to diesel particulates and to NO_x (precursor to ozone). As a result, EPA has adopted new fuel standards, which are expected to reduce pollutants by 90% for new trucks and buses. To date their focus

has been on new engines (development cycle) and fuel that is sold. A problem for this area is the diesel engines that stay on the road for 20 or 30 years or more, which is why the EPA provides funds for diesel retrofits. The Gateway Cities COG is already a recipient of some of these funds.

Dr. Chang presented information on the regional efforts that SCAQMD is undertaking through the Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) and other programs. The recent update for the AQMP establishes attainment dates for PM₁₀, 1-hour ozone, PM_{2.5}, and 8-hour ozone and describes methods that will be adopted as part of the AQMP and that are needed to reach attainment. Dr. Chang noted that the adopted plan makes significant reductions in future VOC and NO_x levels, but it still falls short. Thus, additional measures are needed. With regard to toxic air contaminants, SCAQMD is pursuing mobile source

control measures such as: mitigation fee program for federal sources; off-road mobile source equipment; and an emissions fee program for port-related mobile sources. In addition, SCAQMD has some environmental justice programs. These include: sub-regional analysis of the Alameda Corridor; establishment of CEQA localized significance thresholds; control of emissions from intermodal equipment; and regulatory options for reducing cumulative impacts. Dr. Chang pointed out that the I-710 Corridor overlaps with their Alameda Corridor sub-area. Their study has yet to start, but it will involve gathering ambient air quality data, emissions inventory enhancements, air quality modeling in both the existing and future years, and a health risk analysis.

Mr. Hogo discussed levels of measured elemental carbon in the Wilmington/Long Beach area at four sites that was obtained as part of the MATES II analysis. Elemental carbon was highest in the Wilmington area. SCAQMD's data shows that levels of elemental carbon are dropping and Mr. Hogo attributes this result to regulations that require enclosure of coke facilities and continued monitoring. He said that it is important to look at NOX levels as well as particulate matter. The modeling data indicates that by the Year 2010, about 31% of the region's NOX emissions can be attributed to on-road diesel. The real challenge will be how to reduce these levels. SCAQMD recommends a two part solution: (1) need to establish the new emissions standards; and (2) need to clean up the existing fleet. They will be looking at all levels (local, state, federal) and will target alternative fuels and standards for diesel engines.

Questions and Answers

Member De La Torre asked about the slide that shows the significant drop-off in diesel particulate levels after a distance of about 100 meters. He noted that one way to help resolve the existing air quality problem is to provide a buffer zone around the freeway, however, that is in direct conflict with other study goals such as preserving housing. People already live right next to the freeway. He doesn't see how that can be done without removing housing. How would you square that circle?

Ms. Hricko responded that she is aware that the California Legislature has already started to think about this issue in that they are considering legislation that would prohibit any new schools from being sited within 1000 feet of an existing freeway. In addition, 100 meters away doesn't mean that you are safe as the graph shows diesel particulates at distances

of 300 meters. Another consideration is a situation where no homes are taken, yet an additional lane would place the freeway closer to existing homes. Wherever you have significant numbers of trucks and vehicles on the freeway, you are upping the health risk significantly.

Member De La Torre commented that, in addition to the freeway, there is also the arterial system. Several major arterials either cross the freeway or parallel the freeway and these carry high volumes of trucks. He noted there are several conflicting pieces of information that need to be dealt with.

Mr. Hogo said that the background level of pollutants is higher than the standard, which means that the existing condition is unhealthy. Even without the freeway, there is a problem. Mr. Hogo said he believes that cleaner technology such as alternative fuels is the way to go. A buffer zone might help with local air quality impacts, but not at the regional

level. Ms. Hricko commented that NOX is also a pollutant that needs to be examined, not just the diesel particulates. The study should look at all the different types of pollution.

Co-Chair Colonna commented that the region needs to take into account the growth that is occurring. This affects the amount of freight traveling into and through the area. Ms. Hricko suggested that the committee hear from the ports about other options and new ideas on how they are trying to address this problem. Member Colonna concurred that the problem involves the entire transportation system and is not just limited to the I-710.

Member Crespo commented that they should focus on improving the existing air quality. He also has a concern about the other OPC members that are missing the meetings, yet who will make the decision. Co-Chair Colonna suggested that reminders be sent out before meetings. Mr. Powers explained that the COG calls the offices of those members who have not responded with an RSVP repeatedly for two days prior to each OPC meeting.

VIII. Adjournment

Member Byrd asked about the next meeting. Mr. Powers responded that the agenda for the next OPC meeting will focus on trucks and goods movement.

It was the consensus to keep the same meeting time for the next meeting – 6:30 p.m.

Co-Chair Colonna adjourned the meeting at 9:40 p.m.