



## ***The I-710 Corridor Improvement Program Newsletter \* Summer 2005***

*A regional study of interest to the residents of Bell, Bell Gardens, Carson, Commerce, Compton, Cudahy, Downey, East Los Angeles, Huntington Park, Long Beach, Lynwood, Paramount, Maywood, Rancho Dominguez, South Gate, and Vernon*

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### **Welcome!**

Welcome to this inaugural I-710 Corridor Improvement Program Newsletter! The newsletter is prepared by staff of the Gateway Cities Council of Governments and the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority. The survey of Tier 2 Community Advisory Committee members indicates that there is substantial interest in receiving quarterly project updates. This Newsletter is designed to meet that need. It will also include informational items which may not be directly related to the study, but which are likely to impact the Corridor communities' issues and concerns.

In this Summer 2005 issue you will find:

- ◆ Update on the Mini-Study
- ◆ Preparations for Next Study Phase
- ◆ The Goods on Regional Goods Movement
- ◆ New MTA Board Member Representing the Gateway Cities Council of Governments
- ◆ New funding for Gateway Cities Clean Air Program
- ◆ State Legislators Tackle Rail Emissions

### **Mini-Study Takes Off**

After months of anticipation, the I-710 "Mini-study" is here at last. The I-5 Consortium Cities Joint Powers Authority (JPA) is serving as the contracting agency and has awarded a contract to the engineering firm of CH2M Hill. Officially named the I-5/I-710 Alternatives Analysis Study, the study is expected to take four to six months to complete. Initial meetings with the two Tier One Community Advisory Committees at this interchange (East Los Angeles and City of Commerce) took place in June. As the study progresses, other impacted communities will be involved.

The Mini-Study will examine new options for the I-5 freeway where it approaches the I-710, in addition to configuration of car-pool lanes previously proposed by the I-5 Cities JPA. Various alternatives for improving the interchange itself will be explored. Also, the study will investigate the impacts of various combinations of previously proposed freeway improvement projects on the local communities that will assist the local communities in making decisions for those freeway improvements. This will involve extensive traffic modeling. For example, what might be the impact of closing one particular interchange (with or without adding a new interchange)?

## Preparations for Next Study Phase

Consistent with MTA Board directives, a multi-jurisdictional entity will coordinate the appropriate aspects of the project, including identification of a funding plan with funding sources from multiple partners. Additionally, the multi-jurisdictional partnership will be tasked with identifying strategies for achieving near-term improvements to the Corridor's air quality. Upon completion of this work, the next phase of the study will be the preparation of an I-710 Environmental Impact Report and Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS). Once the funding for the EIR/EIS is secured, the lead administrative agency will prepare a scope of work for the EIR/EIS and release a Request for Proposals.

Also on deck and in search of funding is the Corridor Air Quality effort. In the meantime, the study team is monitoring air quality planning initiatives in the region and beyond. These efforts will provide much information that can serve as a basis for the air quality strategies requested by the MTA Board of Directors and the I-710 Corridor Air Quality Plan requested by the Oversight Policy Committee.

Perhaps the most important development is the City of Los Angeles No Net Increase Task Force which is developing a strategy for the Port of Los Angeles (POLA). Since the issues faced by POLA are similar to those faced by the I-710, solutions will likely have much in common. After months of work the Task Force has issued its report which can be found on the Port's website [www.portoflosangeles.org](http://www.portoflosangeles.org). The community can be confident that No Net Increase Task Force is familiar with the I-710 project, especially since Tier 2 members Noel Park and Dr. Ed Avol are active participants in this ground breaking report.

Also, the City of Long Beach Health Department recently completed a Health

Risk Assessment. Among its conclusions is that much attention must be paid to the location of monitoring stations and the computer modeling that is used for planning purposes. The South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) continues work on the MATES III (multiple air toxics) study which will produce new and updated information on this subject. The SCAQMD has recently adopted a model Air Quality Element for consideration by local cities. This document provides suggestions for how cities can better take air quality issues into account when making land use decisions.

As a final note, the Governor's Goods Movement Action Plan calls for CalEPA and Caltrans to work closely **together** in addressing goods movement in California. The Plan's mission statement states:

"It is the policy of this Administration to improve and expand California's goods movement industry and infrastructure, in a manner which will:

- Generate jobs
- Increase mobility and relieve traffic congestion
- **Improve air quality and protect public health (emphasis added)**
- Enhance public and port safety
- Improve California's quality of life"

### I-710 Pavement Improvement Update

Caltrans reports that the I-710 improvement project from Pacific Coast Highway to Long Beach Blvd. was completed in December. The project included a concrete median and minor ramp improvements in addition to pavement replacement.

Next up is a paving project from Firestone Blvd. to the I-10 freeway. Construction is scheduled to begin this summer with a completion date set for spring of 2007.

Other near-term improvement projects are in the planning and design stage.

## **Long Beach Councilmember Bonnie Lowenthal Joins MTA Board Representing Gateway Cities**

Long Beach City Councilmember Bonnie Lowenthal was sworn in as an MTA Board Member on May 26, 2005. She previously chaired Metro's Gateway Service Sector Governance Council, serves on the GCCOG and is the Long Beach representative on the Transportation and Communications Committee of SCAG.

A Long Beach resident for 34 years, Lowenthal has served on the Long Beach City Council since 2001,

representing the First District. She also chairs the city's Housing Authority. Previously, she served on the Long Beach Unified School District Board of Directors from 1994 to 2001.

Lowenthal will continue to take an active role in the I-710 planning. Commenting on the work of the Tier 1 and Tier 2 Community Advisory Committees, Lowenthal stated, "the active participation of the community in identifying both problems and solutions has been critical to the success of the I-710 Major Corridor Study and will remain critical in the environmental phase."

## **The Goods on Regional Goods Movement**

The momentum that the goods movement issue has gained in the last year is phenomenal, and a testament to all the excellent research and policy analyses that has been taking place by regional transportation and planning agencies. A number of these are described below.

West Coast National Freight Gateway: A Trade Congestion Reduction Program, (April 2005, 60 pages, including appendices) was prepared by LAEDC under joint management by the Southern California Rail Authority, California Transportation Commissions, and SCAG. The West Coast National Freight Gateway (WCNFG) report defines the region's transportation freight infrastructure challenges and suggested solutions, identifies consensus projects, suggests funding strategies, and provides a basis for advocacy at state and federal levels. WCNFG proposes the creation of a \$10.5 billion economic development district that encompasses the rail and highway trade infrastructure and the land surrounding it. Funds would flow into the district from a combination of user-based fees, and government and private sector financing.

Southern California Regional Strategy for Goods Movement: A Plan for Action (February 2005, 24 pages, amended in March 2005) was prepared by SCAG at the request of Secretary McPeak, and in consultation with the region's transportation agencies and goods movement system operators. The SCAG report identified an estimated \$26 billion in highway and rail projects that are needed to facilitate the movement of goods on Southern California's freeways, major arterials, and rail corridors. Environmental and community issues related to freight movement are also outlined.

The Multi-County Goods Movement Action Plan for Southern California, commenced in June 2005, and is scheduled for completion in December 2006. The Action Plan will become the overall regional master plan for goods movement and associated environmental/community impact mitigation initiatives, superseding other interim documents such as those described above.

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority is the administrative lead and manages the work of the consultant, Wilbur Smith & Associates, in partnership with

other regional county transportation commissions, Caltrans, and SCAG. The consultant's scope of work includes the identification of the following:

- 1) Existing systems of truck and rail freight movement in Southern California, the flow of goods on the systems, and current constraints.
- 2) Projected growth in freight demand and trends in the logistics industry
- 3) Optimal infrastructure and operational strategies and private/public sector implementation roles and funding options
- 4) Strategies to lessen impact of industrial development and freight operations on local communities and the environment
- 5) Institutional arrangements needed for advocacy, financing, implementation of the public share of the regional freight strategy, public sector role in facilitating private investment.
- 6) In addition, the Scope of Work includes an extensive outreach effort that has commenced with agency/institutional outreach and will be followed by public outreach following completion of the consultant's work.

The Final Report will document the above for the region as a whole and also on an individual county basis so that the work can be easily integrated into county-level transportation plans.

### **Cleaning the Air One Truck at a Time**

The Gateway Cities Clean Air Program takes advantage of federal regulations that have dramatically reduced the amount of emissions allowed from newer diesel engines. These regulations will be even more strict starting with the 2007 model year.

The problem, of course, is that the old trucks stay on the road for many years. Many of the oldest trucks are used in short haul service to and from the Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles impacting the I-710 Corridor

Communities. The Gateway Cities Council of Government Clean Air Program provides grants to individual truck owners to assist them in replacing a 1986 or older truck with a 1999 or newer model truck. The old truck engine is physically destroyed so that it cannot be put back in service, resold or exported.

To date over 300 polluting old trucks have been replaced!

The good news this summer is that the Los Angeles Board of Harbor Commissioners has approved an additional \$11.7 million for the Program over the next three years. This brings the total commitment from the Port of Los Angeles to the program up to \$21.7 million. The first installment in the amount of \$4,740,000 was provided in June 2005. The Port of Los Angeles funding is specifically designated to assist port haulers. Over 200 Port of Los Angeles truckers have received grants to purchase new trucks.

Approval is also expected for a new \$1.7 million grant from the Mobile Source Reduction Committee (MSRC) of the South Coast Air Quality Management District. This grant will not be limited to port haulers, but will target other truckers in the four county area of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino.

## **State Legislators Tackle Rail Emissions**

Note: Legislation described below is for information only.

The South Coast Air Quality Management District is focusing its legislative efforts this year on emissions from freight locomotives. The District has teamed up with legislators to introduce three bills, and their status as of June 30 is noted:

### Assembly Bill 888 (Hector De La Torre)

This bill authorizes the South Coast Air Quality Management District to implement a mandatory rail yard equipment emission reduction program requiring retrofit or replacement. It would also require the State to request the necessary authorizations from the US Environmental Protection Agency. The bill is pending consideration in the Senate Environmental Quality Committee.

Assembly Bill 1222 (Dave Jones) This bill would require the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to establish a Remote Sensing Pilot Program for locomotive emissions. The program would test technology that is promising for future emissions enforcement. The technology would be used to identify locomotives whose emissions exceed legal standards while the trains are in motion. CARB would be required to report to the legislature on the success of the pilot program by the end of 2006. The bill is pending on the Senate floor.

Senate Bill 459 (Gloria Romero) This bill authorizes the South Coast Air Quality Management District to impose a locomotive emission impact mitigation fee on railroad companies that operate in its area which includes Los Angeles County. The District would be authorized to spend the fee revenues on related emissions reduction projects. Passenger trains would be exempt from the fee. The bill is held in the Assembly Transportation Committee.

