



MEETING NOTES

CETAP ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THE RIVERSIDE COUNTY INTEGRATED PROJECT (RCIP)

Assembly Community Room, Registrar of Voters

2724 Gateway Drive, Riverside, CA

Tuesday August 6, 2002

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon

CETAP Advisory Committee Attendees:

Bill Blankenship, BIA
Sharon Bolton, Farm Bureau
Joyce Deleo, Supervisors Appointee
Dick Doyle, Caltrans
Janet Gless, Supervisors Appointee
Frank Hall, RCTC
Janet Henderson, SCAG
Peter Kiriakos, Sierra Club
Cis LeRoy, RTA
Robin Reeser Lowe, RCTC
Ron Roberts, RCTC
Gene Rogers, WRCOG TAC
Joan Sparkman, Supervisors Appointee
Gail Wanczuk Barton, MSHCP Advisory
Chair
Helga Wolf, Supervisors Appointee

Other Attendees:

Marion Ashley
Judy Behrens, US Forest Service

Stephanie Crossey, O'Reilly Public
Relations
William Davis
Eric Haley, RCTC
Jim Henderson, Jacobs
Diane Huggett, City of Riverside
John Kain, Urban Crossroads
Rob McCann, LSA
Darcy McKenzie, Ashley for Supervisor
Bill Mosby, Caltrans
Russ Napier, City of Murrieta
Craig Neustaedter, Moreno Valley
Rob O'Dell, Californian
Trent Pulliam, City of Moreno Valley
Viren Shah, City of Corona
Ned Ibrahim, City of Corona
Steve Smith, TransCore
Ed Studor, Riverside County TLMA
Susan Streble, Lake Mathews
Ruth Ann Taylor Berger, WRCOG
Bill Warkentin, BIA

CALL TO ORDER

1. Public comment period

Susan Streble, Lake Mathews area – The Lake Mathews area was granted a community of interest status by LAFCO back in April of this year.

Menifee area resident – I live along Scott Road, and it is crazy to have alternatives cutting through the horse properties, especially Alternative 7b (Winchester to Temecula Corridor). Alternative 7a is also a problem. I was told when I moved there that Scott Road would be a six-lane road. We knew that. But we were not told that it could be a freeway. Leon Road seems like it would be a good alternative.

Steve Smith recognized that this meeting marks the third anniversary of the CETAP Advisory Committee and thanked everyone on the committee for their commitment and perseverance over the last three years.

William Davis, Menifee – I am concerned about alternatives west of Winchester Road. If 7a goes through, that will put me on the corner of two freeways. EMWD has made a considerable investment on Craig Avenue, several million dollars for pumping stations. I am hoping that the decision will be made soon on the alternatives. I believe Garbani is the logical alternative to get to I-215.

2. Approval of meeting notes from June and July, 2002

Meeting notes were approved.

3. Reports from MSHCP and General Plan Advisory Committees

MSHCP – Gail Wanczuk-Barton - At the last meeting we had a presentation and question/answer session on the idea of a wildlife refuge. We will be looking at this on Thursday along with the funding issue.

General Plan - Ed Studor – The General Plan is still in hearings. The next meeting of the Planning Commission where the General Plan will be discussed is on August 25th. It will be a status report. They were hoping to have a presentation on staff positions on the changes suggested by the public. However, they are not ready yet. They are planning on having further hearings in September – the 12th and 25th.

4. Report on development projects from Riverside County TLMA

Ed Studor – We have had five General Plan amendments before the Planning Commission since our last Advisory Committee meeting.

GPA 606 – Southwest area – 6.2 acres going from residential to commercial on Anza Road – item was continued to August 7

GPA 600 – Southwest area – proposal to go from 10 acre min to half acre minimum. This is in the area of Pauba and Los Caballos, in horse country area. This was continued off calendar without discussion – not being considered at this time.

GPA 612 – in lower Coachella Valley – continued off calendar – proposal for 73 affordable housing units in the Mecca area

GPA 609 – lower Coachella Valley, going from agricultural to residential, this was approved
GPA 172, amendment 2 – Walker Basin on the plateau above Temecula – Table 1 of the staff report is a listing of the revisions it has been through – The original plan involved 1600 units. The recent county-initiated amendment was to go down to 77 units. This was approved, and revokes the previous specific plan.

5. Report from the RCIP Steering Committee

Gail Wanczuk-Barton – At the last steering committee meeting we discussed concerns related to agriculture, particularly in the Coachella Valley. We discussed possible solutions to those concerns. We discussed the certainty system of the General Plan and wording that might leave loopholes. We also discussed community centers and methods of implementing them.

6. Report of progress on the intra-county corridors and the NEPA/404 process with Federal agencies

This item will be addressed in the presentation under item 8.

7. Report on status of the Moreno Valley to San Bernardino County Corridor and Riverside County to Orange County Corridor

Status of the Riverside County to Orange County Corridor

Eric Haley discussed the status of the Orange County corridor. One of the issues on the potential new corridor to Orange County is whether and how the corridor will be covered under the MSHCP. Supervisor Tavaglione initiated a process to try to develop language covering the specific corridors, and was given 90 days by the Board to work this out. We convened a series of three meetings of staff, beginning in mid-June. Originally, the concern was that Riverside and Orange County were using different models. This was resolved quickly by OCTA, RCTC and other representatives by agreeing to use the Orange County model for purposes of this analysis. The alternatives discussed included six major proposals, ranging from new facilities in the vicinity of SR-91 to four possible tunnel options through the Santa Ana Mountains between various generalized end points. Very preliminary data was prepared on each of the alternatives. This analysis needs to be polished, but it covers the general range of possibilities. We had a meeting last Wednesday with Congressman Calvert, other Riverside County representatives and Orange County representatives. It was decided to take all of the broad corridors to develop language for inclusion in the Riverside County MSHCP. These will then be covered activities if the whole plan is accepted. This should save a very complicated major amendment to MSHCP later on. There are no priorities within these alternatives. No alternative is being singled out. There is a lot of work yet to come. It will get more difficult before it gets easier. But the original goal of the supervisor was accomplished.

Bill Warkentin – Did the time consequence relative to the MSHCP get deliberated?

Eric Haley – The inclusion of the language for the corridor options will not delay the MSHCP.

Gene Rogers – Hats off to Eric and the others involved. Do you think that there is any advantage that this group take a position on the inclusion of the language in the MSHCP?

Robin Lowe– We may have the specific language at our next meeting and could do that at that time.

Pete Kiriakos – Will the alternative south of Corona be discussed as a surface option? I would like to have it discussed

Steve Smith – It has only been discussed as a tunnel option, not as a surface option.

Pete Kiriakos – For completeness, I would ask that a surface option also be considered.

Russ Napier - The alternatives seem like they may be conflicting with the internal corridors – what is the interaction between the corridors?

Eric Haley – The internal corridors can stand by themselves – If you assume different scenarios internally, there may be some influences on what happens between the counties.

Joyce Deleo – I understood that the bill for the 91 toll lane buyout would occur in the next couple of weeks.

Eric Haley – The bill may be introduced by the end of this week. Todd Spitzer, Orange County supervisor, acknowledged a dual track approach now by OCTA, working on the 91 as well as a new corridor. Now we have both commissions supporting both aspects.

Status of the Moreno Valley to San Bernardino County Corridor

Steve Smith – Further study is on hold until a concern of the San Bernardino County cities is resolved. Cooperation has been very good on both sides of the border, but the cities in San Bernardino County would like to see an ancillary connection to the core facility included in the EIR. The connection involves a linkage from Pigeon Pass Road to Main Street in Highgrove, across I-215 to either Pepper Avenue or Riverside Avenue to I-10. The process is hung up on that point right now. Each county is having its own internal meetings to see how this issue might be resolved. There is a meeting on August 15 to focus on this issue.

Eric Haley – There are strongly held views on both sides. There are environmental issues in San Bernardino County along that alignment as well.

Ed Studor – We are also pursuing MSHCP coverage for the San Bernardino County corridor, similar to what we are seeking for the Orange County Corridor.

Robin Lowe acknowledged Marion Ashley, candidate for supervisor, in attendance. Robin indicated that he made a commitment when he left LAFCO to attend these RCIP meetings.

8. Presentation on the findings from the Draft EIR/EISs for the Winchester to Temecula Corridor and the Hemet to Corona/Lake Elsinore Corridor

Rob McCann and Steve Smith made a presentation on the EIS/EIRs, which had recently been released to the public. Copies of the Executive Summary for each corridor and CDs of the entire EIS/EIR for each corridor were provided to Advisory Committee members.

One EIS/EIR covers the Winchester to Temecula Corridor and the other covers the Hemet to Corona/Lake Elsinore Corridor. The EIS/EIRs have been provided to a variety public agencies, and are available for review at area libraries and through the rcip.org web site. The public review period will extend to September 20. It is important to understand that each of the EIS/EIRs stand on their own. Public hearings are being held on August 20 in Lake Elsinore and August 29 in Murrieta. Following September 20, we will prepare responses to public comments. RCTC staff will be working to identify a locally preferred alternative in each corridor. RCTC will then work with the federal and state agencies to come to consensus on the alternative to be selected in each corridor. The following is a list of next steps as they relate to the CETAP Advisory Committee

- Aug. 6 – Presentation to Advisory Committee on EIS/EIRs
- Other presentations to RCTC TAC and WRCOG
- Sept. 3 – Presentation to Advisory Committee on public hearings
- Sept. 23 – Staff presentation to RCTC Plans and Programs Committee initiating discussion on locally preferred alternative
- Sept. 24 – Initial staff recommendation mailed to Advisory Committee
- Oct. 1 – Advisory Committee meeting – make recommendation of whether to support or modify the staff recommendation
- Oct. 9 – RCTC meeting – discuss staff report and Advisory Committee recommendation
- Nov. 13 – RCTC decision on LPA (depends on the volume of comments and progression of discussions with Federal agencies)

Craig Neustaedter – have you considered the possibility of having more than one preferred alternative?

Rob McCann – The goal of RCTC is to get to one alternative in each corridor.

Craig Neustaedter – What will be the status of the alternatives rejected?

Steve Smith – Where we have a CETAP alternative that follows the alignment of a General Plan roadway, if that alternative is not selected, it will revert back to the General Plan designation.

Ed Studor – If there is no underlying circulation element designation, the roadway would go away.

Rob McCann provided an overview of what is in the Draft EIS/EIRs. He explained that the Federal Highway Administration is the lead agency for the NEPA action. RCTC is the lead agency for the CEQA action. He explained that these are Tier 1 documents for the purpose of right-of-way preservation. The future Tier 2 action will evaluate a variety of more precise alignments within the bandwidths identified for Tier 1. These EIS/EIRs only evaluate what is in the bandwidth. The impacts of the eventual alignment will likely be less than what is identified in the bandwidth. Interchange locations are not included in the Tier 1 decision but will be considered in Tier 2. The proposed General Plan Circulation Element does identify potential future interchange locations.

Steve Smith discussed the transportation benefits of the alternatives. Rob McCann walked the committee through the Executive Summary for each corridor, the Winchester to Temecula Corridor first, followed by the Hemet to Corona/Lake Elsinore Corridor. He pointed out the evaluation matrix at the end of each report, which summarizes the impacts.

Gene Rogers – Is there any way to take a look at the combined effect of alternatives together?

Steve Smith – Although it would not be possible to look at every combination, we did look at a sample of combinations. Basically, the closer the alternatives are together, the less the combined effect is. We looked at, for example, Alternative 1B in the Hemet to Corona/Lake Elsinore corridor in combination with one of the alternatives in the Winchester to Temecula Corridor. The results are documented in the EIS/EIR.

Rob McCann – There is also a fairly extensive discussion of cumulative effects of the alternatives.

9. Public comment period

Susan Streble – I assume there will be opportunities for public comments at other agency meetings in the Fall.

Steve Smith - Yes. There will be opportunities at the Plans and Programs Committee and all the RCTC Commission meetings.

Susan Streble - Once you choose a preferred alternative, will you be purchasing the rights of way, or will we be sitting on our properties?

Steve Smith – The actual acquisition will be up to a combination of local jurisdictions, RCTC, and potentially Caltrans, depending on the route. The intent is always for all the property owners along the route to be treated fairly. Construction of any of these alternatives will be a number of years away. There may need to be some decisions made on acquisition prior to the end of Tier 2, but none of the agencies would be able to promise that they can acquire properties by a specific time.

Ed Studor – At the end of Tier 1, the County and cities will adopt these routes into their General Plans. Each agency will work with property owners along the route if and when they come up with their development applications.

10. Adjournment