



RIVERSIDE COUNTY INTEGRATED PROJECT (RCIP)

CETAP ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Assembly Community Room, Registrar of Voters

2724 Gateway Drive, Riverside, CA

Tuesday, September 4th, 2001

9 AM – Noon

MEETING NOTES

CETAP Advisory Committee Attendees:

Sharon Bolton, Farm Bureau
Bruce Colbert, Riverside Co. Property Owners
Dick Doyle, Caltrans
Janet Gless, Supervisor's Appointee
Frank Hall, Supervisors Appointee
John Hunt, RCTC
Peter Kiriakos, Sierra Club
Cis Leroy, RTA
Robin Reeser Lowe, RCTC
Ameal Moore, RCTC
Ron Roberts, RCTC
Joan Sparkman, Supervisor's Appointee
Gail Wanczuk Barton, MSHCP Advisory Chair
Helga Wolf, Supervisors Appointee
Debra Varnardo, SCAG

Other Attendees:

Michelle Anderson, Temecula
Don Archer, Jacobs
Marion Ashley, MWD
Cathy Bechtel, RCTC
Rick Bishop, WRCOG
Tom Boyd, City of Riverside

Edward Cowan, Temecula
Jean Cowan, Temecula
Dan Dixon, Temecula
Diana Hammons, Temecula
Bill Landon, Morongo/Cabazon Project
Sandra Massa-Lavitt, City of Temecula
Rob McCann, LSA
Pamela Miod, Temecula
Craig Neustaedter, Moreno Valley
Anne Palatino, City of Corona
Dale Potts, Temecula
Bill Richardson, Temecula
Connie Richardson, Temecula
Erik Ruehr, VRPA Technologies
Steve Smith, TransCore
Karen Stigler, Temecula
Susan Streble, Lake Mathews
Ed Studor, TLMA
Merideth Wichman, Jacobs
Jim Wang, Menifee
Russell Williams, CALTRANS

Robin Reeser Lowe, Chair, began the meeting at 9:10 AM. Robin indicated that the public comments would be held for the moment and asked Cathy Bechtel to provide a report on the scoping meetings for the major corridors, included in agenda item 5. Several of the agenda items were taken out of order, as indicated below.

5. Report on progress on NEPA/404 process with Federal agencies

(Cathy Bechtel, RCTC)

Cathy Bechtel gave an overview of agenda item 5. She indicated that agencies are working on the NEPA/404 process – moving ahead on the two internal corridors. We have received preliminary agreement from the federal agencies on purpose and need and alternatives. The next

step was to have scoping meetings to initiate the EIS in each corridor. One scoping meeting was held in Temecula on August 27 and one in Perris on August 29. The purpose of the meetings was to share with the public what we are doing and alternatives that are being studied. Written comments will be included in the environmental documents. Approximately 80 people attended in Temecula and 60 in Perris. We will be receiving public comments through the middle of September. Those comments should be sent to Cathy Bechtel at RCTC.

Rob McCann described the materials passed out at the scoping meetings. These materials were also passed out to the Advisory Committee. He indicated that we are early in the EIS process. The CETAP transportation corridors are one part of a three-part program. The scoping meetings also provided general information on the General Plan and MSHCP. The fact sheet provided an overview of all three elements. Two packages, one for each corridor, were also handed out, describing alternatives to be studied for each of two corridors. Rob also described a letter prepared by RCTC highlighting the differences in the alternatives as identified in the preliminary agreement from the federal agencies compared to what the CETAP Advisory Committee had originally recommended. Robin read the letter, which was requested by the Plans and Programs Committee to be handed out to citizens that attended the scoping meetings.

Cathy indicated that the next steps will be to receive all the public comments and consider additions, deletions, and modifications of the alternatives.

Ron Roberts indicated that the City of Temecula City Council had unhappy citizens show up at the subsequent council meeting following the scoping meetings. Ron indicated that the CETAP scoping meeting information on page 3 was misleading, saying the Butterfield Stage Road alignment could include as much as a freeway. Ron indicated there is no way that Butterfield Stage Road could become a freeway.

Robin Lowe commented that sometimes we have to study something to show that an alternative is impossible to implement.

1. Public Comment Period

(Robin Reeser Lowe, Chair)

Janie Lee Baker – Temecula Resident

I am here on behalf of Paseo del Sol residents. I wanted to raise my son in a safe, clean, and healthy environment. Proposed alternatives will devalue our neighborhood. An expressway in our back yard will completely change the environment around Temecula. Look at other areas rather than highly condensed neighborhoods with lots of children. I have great concerns and hope you will consider them when making decisions.

Michelle Anderson – Temecula Resident

I would like to raise some CANE this morning. We have formed a group called Citizens Against Neighborhood Expressways. We are formalizing our opposition to Alternatives 5 and 6 as they run along Butterfield Stage road and through our tranquil and pristine family oriented neighborhoods. Over 3000 homes will be affected by these two routes as well as a private school and senior housing. We know we are talking about an arterial expressway verses the ultimate freeway, but until we have a guarantee in writing, we are going to continue to oppose them. I would like to list some of the negative impacts.

This will create an air pollution pocket and health problems. It also increases the potential for pedestrian and bike accidents. The quality of life will be drastically diminished. Noise and premium views will be replaced by expressway views. It will increase the isolation of communities. An expressway will cut off these community interactions. It will hurt wine country. It will also hurt builders who promised view lots.

I urge county supervisors and RCTC to vote against these alternatives.

Edward Cowan – Temecula Resident

I also want to oppose the expressway. The representatives of the county did a very good job in answering questions. I would have liked there to have been more of an opportunity to hear the discussions of others. I want to focus on two things. An expressway does not belong on Butterfield Stage Road. There are many nice homes that are being developed. Any thought of an expressway there should have been identified long ago. I also have concern over trucks using routes that are most efficient. A home is a family's most valuable asset. The scoping meeting advertising minimally noted the specific alternatives. Please make sure that the residents most likely to be impacted are notified of these meetings.

Pamela Miod – Citizens for Temecula valley

The issue we would like to address is the lack of information to residents prior to the scoping meeting. RCTC staff did a fine job in presenting the information. When an agency puts out information, it is up to the residents to look at it. But if the information is so generalized that people do not know the actual corridors, that is a problem. The map showed the study area, not the alternatives. Citizens would have no clue as to the actual alternatives. We feel that the scoping meeting notices should be done over again. If they don't know what to be there for, why should they show up? We are opposed to 5a, 5b, 6a, and 6b. The public notice never mentioned the corridors.

Susan Streble – Lake Mathews Area

There are no exact routes on the map of public notices. We are not toy houses on a monopoly board. You are affecting real people; please respect that fact.

Karen Stigler

Countless other people were not able to make it this morning but are equally concerned. When you write up the study, make sure that 5a and 5b are not recommended. As a homeowner, parent, resident, and constituent of Temecula and Riverside County there are countless homes, schools, retirement center that are along Butterfield Stage. Everyone has touched on similar issues. For the record we recommend removing these alternatives.

Dan Dixon

My easement goes right down to Butterfield Stage Road. I moved to Temecula about four years ago. We love Temecula. This would ruin our property value. If a freeway goes through there, it will kill us.

Are there going to be gifts from Pechanga, Wal-Mart, and developers promoting this alternative?

Robin Lowe – No, none of us are taking any contributions. This has nothing to do with campaign contributions. There are no special interest groups out there who have lobbied me or this committee on any specific alternatives. It is very impressive that you are all here speaking to the issue. You will be represented by a new supervisor, Jim Venable. His phone is 791-3600.

Dan Dixon

I strongly oppose the 5a and 5b alternatives. Widening of I-215 would be better, or the alternative along Anza road that would affect far fewer homes.

Connie Richardson – Temecula

I went out and canvassed our neighborhood. I talked with many families who have moved to Temecula for quality of life issues. This lifestyle will be severely affected. All the articles in the newspaper have shown that this is a family area. We have 244 residents who were not disclosed

that there was a possible freeway/expressway and are ready to sue the developer if they have to pull out onto an expressway.

Bill Richardson - Temecula

I second the lady that just got up. I have the same address. We are dual residents of Riverside Co. We bought in Temecula because we are building our dream home in Temecula.

Rob McCann of LSA provided a recap of the history of the CETAP process. He indicated that this study process has been underway since 1999. The alternative development process began with the evaluation of 13 different corridors. The advisory committee decided to focus on four major corridors. In each of the corridors, a variety of alternatives were identified to try to address the future transportation problems. RCTC approved alternatives to study last fall. As Cathy mentioned, this is not just a local decision. It also involves the federal agencies. There are a number of alternatives that were recommended for removal by the committee that the federal agencies have added back on. Cathy referred to this as being a route location decision. The key decision is which of the lines on the map to adopt for right-of-way preservation in the County General Plan. The purpose of the scoping meetings was not to vote on the alternatives. The scoping process was to identify whether other alternatives should be considered or whether the existing alternatives should be modified.

Cathy Bechtel– We are currently trying to reach agreement with the federal agencies on the criteria by which all the alternatives will be evaluated. There are several alternatives that RCTC did not favor carrying forward into the EIS, but the resource agencies are saying that we need to do all the technical studies first, provide a comparison of all the information and then make a decision on the preferred alternative.

John Hunt – I would like the citizens to know who their citizen representatives are on RCTC.

Cathy explained that there the RCTC commission has 29 members, including one from each city plus the County supervisors. The RCTC commission meets each month. These are elected officials.

Connie Richardson – Isn't Butterfield Stage road an historic road also?

Ron Roberts – It is not the original road. The original road goes over toward Anza.

Janet Gless – The builders and developers did not have advance notice of any of these alternatives.

Joan Sparkman – There are homes in the path of Alternatives 5a and 5b. We are not doing anyone any favors by keeping these alternatives on the maps. We should take these alternatives off. We need to show the latest aerial photos.

Robin Lowe - I would like this committee to entertain a recommendation to the RCTC board that we drop 5a and 5b. There was no opposition. We will bring this forward to the RCTC meeting on Monday.

2. Approval of meeting notes

(Robin Reeser Lowe, Chair)

Joan Sparkman's comments were not reflected in the August meeting notes. Ameal Moore was omitted from the list of attendees. The notes were approved with those changes.

7. Report on status of the General Plan circulation element and discussion of possible policy revisions

8. Discussion of right-of-way preservation for freeways and the freeway congestion standard

Items 7 and 8 were discussed together. Steve Smith provided a brief background on the development of policies for the circulation element. Recent activities included discussions at the August 7 advisory committee meeting and a special work session on August 20 of interested committee members on the subject of circulation element policies. Steve pointed out that one of the concerns of the committee was the proposed change in policy by the county from level of service (LOS) C to level of service D. A paper was distributed by Bruce Colbert on several recommended policy changes. A discussion ensued on the subject of level of service standards and other issues.

Ed Studor – Early on we talked about the current policy in the county, basically LOS C with provision for D. This was written back in 1984. That was the first time we had a LOS policy as part of the General Plan. At that time the County was still predominantly rural. In the ensuing time the County has become more and more urban. In the new General Plan we are planning several areas that will be mixed use higher intensity and even more urban than we see today. In reviewing traffic modeling forecasts, it would be very difficult to maintain level C in those urban areas or D in the higher intensity nodes. There is no intention of changing the LOS in the outlying rural areas. We still want to target LOS C there. This is the appropriate standard for those areas. But, because of urban areas and the high intensity in the nodes we felt it would be appropriate to move to a LOS D and to allow E in the higher intensity nodes and near interchanges. If we stay with the current policy, then we will run into a situation with a lot of projects where we will be unable to keep up with the infrastructure requirements.

Steve Smith – There were a number of issues raised in the August 20 work session. There was concern regarding the transition, with projects that were approved under LOS C. Our view is that in the urbanized areas in the County it would be appropriate and consistent with most cities to use a LOS D standard. Having said that, it was the strong recommendation of the August 20 group for the County to stay at LOS C. Photos were passed out at the meeting illustrating what LOS C, D, and E look like in terms of traffic congestion.

Cathy Bechtel – This means not simply staying with LOS C, but to keep the current County standards, which involve LOS C, with allowance for D under certain circumstances.

Ed Studor – LOS C is still a fairly high volume of traffic, fairly free flow, freedom to choose lanes and maneuver. LOS D moves more traffic, but you don't have the same opportunity to choose speed and lanes as you would have in a C condition. LOS E is the maximum flow condition. Beyond that you are in F and the speeds drop significantly.

Robin Lowe – Where can you do LOS C anywhere in our County right now?

Steve Smith – Currently the I-215 south of the 60 is generally in the C-D range in the peak hours.

Robin Lowe – Given what we know right now is occurring in our County, and what the complaints are in local cities, why do we want to lower the standard?

Ed Studor – Freeways are a different issue. Our policy only applies to County maintained roadways. The standard of the freeways is set by state law through the CMP, at a minimum of LOS E.

Robin Lowe – For the County roads, why are we considering changing?

Ed Studor – Because the characteristics of the County have changed over the last 20 years. It is partially financial, it is partially reality. It is bringing the standard more in line with the practices of urban areas.

Ron Roberts - If we allow the LOS change to happen, we allow all the land use changes and zone changes in the county to go through the court system and be approved.

Robin Lowe – I think the committee is reaffirming its position.

Craig Neustaedter – The City of Moreno Valley has a LOS C standard and we will have no problem meeting that. The way to insure that this happens is to make development density consistent with the city land use plan. We are reducing the intensity of development.

It was moved to recommend to the County that they retain LOS C/D rather than D/E. Passed unanimously.

Sharon Bolton – We would like Alternatives 6a and 6b reconsidered, but need to have a conversation on that subject. This should be agendaized for discussion at next meeting.

Frank Hall – Major improvements will be needed on the 15/215 if we don't have an alternate route around Temecula. Would like to see it studied anyway.

Robin Lowe – In a traffic pure world, Butterfield Stage is a good route. But the political structure shows that it is an impossibility. The reality is that it cannot happen.

Sharon Bolton – It will be important to have the tapes of the meeting available.

Dick Doyle – Caltrans looks at a 20-year horizon and plans for a LOS D in that time frame, if we can. As growth continues to occur, holding our own will be a challenge.

Debra Varnado – Need to look at it as a system. There also needs to be consideration of HOV lanes. LOS is only one element of the way we measure mobility. We need to keep other indicators on the table.

Craig Neustaedter – If I understand Bruce, we would have a standard for planning of the freeways. I think it is going to be a challenge to show that we can achieve LOS E. If we aspire to LOS C, the implications are that we could not afford them or endure the impacts.

Bruce Colbert – The county supervisors don't want us to be constrained by finances at this point. If we plan for a higher standard, C or D, this is just for planning and preserving land. At our last meeting, we decided to show an overlay zone for right-of-way protection for the freeways. The Caltrans route concept does not address buildout needs. When we plan for buildout right-of-way, we are saying that this is what we want it to ultimately look like. I would like for RCTC to consider LOS D for freeways in the CMP.

Peter Kiriakos – make sure we have a dedicated transit only lane either on freeway or off-freeway. The rights of way should be set aside for one transit only lane within the freeway right-of-way in addition to HOV lanes.

3. Report from MSHCP Advisory Committee and General Plan Advisory Committee

MSHCP Advisory Committee

Gail Wanczuk-Barton – September 20 will be the next meeting. There will be a distribution of draft Implementation Agreement. The San Jacinto River flood control project is still under discussion. The Funding and Implementation group continues to focus on funding sources.

Sharon Bolton – The Farm Bureau objects to the way the final document came out, and we will be circulating comments.

General Plan Advisory Committee

Peter Kiriakos – The committee wanted to look at options in the EIR for more of the community centers. The GP meeting this afternoon was cancelled.

4. Report on development projects from Riverside County TLMA

(Ed Studor, Riverside County TLMA)

Ed Studor indicated that there was only one new development proposal – I-15 at Temescal Canyon – Corona Hills SP No. 317 – 540 dwelling units, 1000 acres altogether. Over half of it is being devoted to open space. It is going to Planning Commission tomorrow – public study session. No staff report yet.

Walker Basin is back up for hearing. Downsized to 760 lots. On Santa Rosa Plateau. Davis Road was at the Planning Commission two weeks ago. Deletion of Davis Road was approved and is moving forward.

Domenigoni/Barton SP – 1735 acres – is being reviewed.

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

Cathy indicated that there was relatively little activity on each of these corridors. However, RCTC is meeting with OCTA to pursue additional transit opportunities.

9. Report on status of the Transit Oasis concept

There was no new information to report on the Transit Oasis concept. The committee is awaiting the development of the 30-year transit strategy from Alan Hoffman.

10. Public Comment Period

There were no additional public comments.

11. Adjournment

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately noon.