

Gateway Cities Connections



Working Together to Improve the Quality of Life for More Than 2 Million People in Southeast Los Angeles County

LOS ANGELES/ORANGE COUNTY CROSS COUNTY TRANSPORTATION PLANNING SUMMIT

Put OCTA with MTA with Gateway Cities COG: alphabet soup or a long overdue exchange of ideas and cross-county transportation issues? County Transportation Commission directors from Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) and MTA met with Gateway Cities COG leadership to discuss LA County and Orange County Transportation issues on September 15, 2006.

The meeting was facilitated by MTA CEO Roger Snoble and OCTA CEO Art Leahy. In attendance were Gateway Cities COG President Larry R. Nelson, MTA Directors, Los Angeles County Supervisor Don Knabe and Long Beach Vice Mayor Bonnie Lowenthal. Representing the I-5 Joint Powers Authority was Santa Fe Springs Mayor Joseph Serrano. From Orange County were OCTA Chairman Art Brown, Mayor, City of Buena Park and Orange County Board of Supervisors President Bill Campbell. Caltrans Districts 7 & 12 were represented by their respective district directors; Doug Failing (LA) and Cindy Quon (Orange); also from the I-5 Joint Powers Authority were Norwalk City Manager Ernie Garcia and I-5 Executive Directors Jerry Wood; and Gateway Cities COG Executive Director Richard Powers.

The meeting had an ambitious agenda with a comprehensive range of topics. Highway projects discussed were those that are active in both counties, either in the planning stages or under construction. These included the I-5, SR-91/I-605 and the I-405/I-605/SR-22 interfaces.

Goods movement issues were discussed including both rail and truck traffic coming from the San Pedro Bay ports. Another area of interest was transloading and the impacts of goods leaving the ports area and returning on arterials and freeways throughout both counties.

Transit issues included the status of inter-county bus lines and Metrolink service from Orange County to Los Angeles, as well as the potential for a high speed rail line along the former Pacific Electric right-of-way. There was a discussion of trying to get better coordination of Amtrak and Metrolink stops, and service. Airport access (John Wayne, Ontario, Long Beach and LAX) was an area of concern to both counties. The transportation directors instructed their staffs to continue the dialog and coordinate any forthcoming studies.

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LA/Orange County (continued)

The meeting ended with an agreement to meet quarterly on single topics. Staffs from both counties are currently working on ideas and information sharing between MTA and OCTA. The next meeting will focus on transit and passenger rail issues. The next meeting is scheduled for January 2007.



Santa Fe Springs Mayor Joseph Serrano, Gateway Cities COG President Larry R. Nelson, OCTA Chairman Art Brown, City of Buena Park and Orange County Board of Supervisors President Bill Campbell, Long Beach Vice Mayor and MTA Director Bonnie Lowenthal, LA County Supervisor Don Knabe

Gateway Cities COG Goes in Search of Alternative Goods Movement Technologies

Already known for being a model of effective community participation, the I-710 Improvement Project is on its way to achieving similar recognition for exploring new technologies for goods movement. Setting the tone for a wide ranging and open minded environmental process, the I-710 EIR/EIS Project Committee is meeting the challenge of freight movement head-on, and exploring innovative technologies that may be adaptable in the transport of cargo containers to and from the Ports. Alternative technologies will be addressed in both the I-710 Corridor and the SR-91/I-605 Corridor Studies.

Dr. Kenneth James, a researcher from the Center for Commercial Deployment of Transportation Technologies (CCDoTT) at Cal State Long Beach, presented a proposed mag-lev-based technology to the Project Committee called ECCO Systems, in conjunction with General

Atomics a California Corporation. The technology—an American-based modification of the passenger mag-lev in use in China and Germany—is an outgrowth of military technology research. This technology is “zero diesel emissions” and would be quieter than any cargo technology currently in use.

Additionally, Bruce Dahnke, representing Sky Tech Transportation Inc., of Chicago, delivered a presentation of the Sky Tech system which proposes an overhead grid made up of metal “I-beams” (the type of steel beam seen in high rise construction sites). Containers would generally travel along the underside of the beams and could be turned in any direction on the grid. This system uses a clean power source, provides security advantages and may be able to reduce loading and unloading time for container ships. Neither the ECCO Systems or the Sky Tech System has yet



Board Members at the Maglev Freight Test Track in San Diego

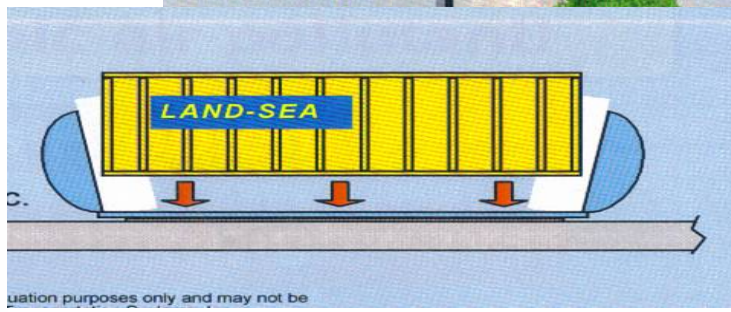
Gateway Cities COG Goes in Search of Alternative Goods Movement Technologies (continued)

been implemented for freight transport.

Another alternative technology being considered as part of both the I-710 and SR-91/I-605 Studies is Cargo Rail. Developed by MegaRail Transportation Systems of Fort Worth Texas, CargoRail provides automated transport of heavy sea-land cargo containers on a low-cost, elevated guideway over existing highway or railroad rights-of-way. Presentations are pending from the Texas Transportation Institute on their cargo movement technology known as The Freight Shuttle.

The Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles are exploring similar technologies and recently issued an RFP for consultants to bring forward new goods movements technologies.

The Gateway Cities COG facilitated a demonstration of the Maglev Technology Freight, a 400-foot test track concept known as ECCO and produced by an American firm, General Atomics, along with Cal State Long Beach and CCDoTT. The demonstration was in San Diego on Thursday, September 8, 2006.



MTA Call for Projects

The MTA has not had a Call for Projects (CFP) in 6 years largely due to the state general fund deficit. This Call for Projects will program funds for FY 2009 and beyond. The CFP process will consider providing one-time additional funding for projects to be programmed in FY 08 and 09 from prior CFP processes that are experiencing cost increases.

The range of project funding is

\$250-\$650 million. The lower amount represents funds that will be repaid through the release of transportation funding diverted to the state general fund. The upper end is an estimate that includes SAFETEA-LU fund estimates.

The anticipated schedule for the 2007 Call for Projects is: October 2006—draft application package released to local agencies; November 2006—applicant work-

shop for project sponsors; January 2007—application due from project sponsors; June 2007—staff completes preliminary project and funding recommendations; July 2007—Board considers CFP recommendations and makes funding decisions.

MTA's Gateway Cities/Southeast Area Planning Team will present a 2007 Call for Projects Workshop at the COG office on Tuesday, November 14, at 9:30-11:00.

Gateway Cities COG Makes Regional Homeless Solutions a Priority, Calls for Increased Funding from Los Angeles County

Gateway Cities Council of Governments is spearheading a revitalized effort to address homelessness within the Gateway Cities, beginning with a call for a fair share of funding for regional programs and a commitment to provide cooperative leadership to deliver homeless services in the region.

“Homelessness is a widespread and complicated problem with social, moral and economic consequences. In the Gateway Cities, we are seeing the homeless population grow, yet as a region, we lack the necessary funding and facilities to address this problem in a way that is both compassionate and productive,” said Gateway Cities COG President Larry R. Nelson.



Elba Guerrero, 1st Vice President, Gateway Cities Council of Governments, Board of Directors, Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Homelessness and Vice Mayor of the City of Huntington Park

Acting on a recommendation of the Gateway Cities City Managers Steering Committee to work regionally to help homeless persons and families find their way to a safe and stable life, the Gateway Cities COG Board of Directors adopted the rec-

ommendation and created an Ad Hoc Committee on Homelessness to address this important issue. 1st Vice President, Elba Guerrero was appointed Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Homelessness

In a letter to Los Angeles County Supervisors Yvonne Braithwaite Burke, Don Knabe and Gloria Molina, COG Board President Nelson advocated that the Gateway Cit-

ies receive a “fair share” of funding first to develop a Comprehensive Regional Plan on homelessness in the Gateway Cities. “By combining the collective resources of our 27 member cities, along with skills sets and proven solutions from the community and non-profit sectors, we can develop a regional plan that will yield real results,” said Mr. Nelson.

SR-91/I-605 Freeway Corridors Gateway Cities COG and Cities Move Forward Toward a Major Corridor Study

Last year the cities that border the SR-91 and I-605 Freeways commissioned the Gateway Cities Council of Governments to prepare a Needs Assessment for these two freeways. The purpose of this Needs Assessment was to address the capacity and congestion issues of these two freeway corridors for both current and future conditions. The Needs Assessment was completed in 2005 and showed that these freeways will be significantly congested in the future by truck traffic, commuter traffic and car pools.

In response to the results of the Needs Assessment Study, the 91/605 Corridor Cities Committee of elected officials recommended proceeding with a Major Corridor Study for these corridors. The Gateway Cities Council of Govern-

ments Board of Directors agreed and approved moving forward with this study. The Major Corridor Study will address the anticipated congestion, analyze various alternatives to alleviate this congestion and work with the local communities in a participatory process to develop a locally preferred strategy for improvements in these freeway corridors.

The Gateway Cities Council of Governments, acting on behalf of the corridor cities, has requested a Regionally Significant Transportation Investment Study (RSTIS) of the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG).

This RSTIS process is the first step toward obtaining approval to proceed with a Major Corridor

SR-91/I-605 (continued)

Study (MCS) for these freeway corridors and inserting them in the Regional Transportation Plan. Funding is also being requested from SCAG for the

preparation of the MCS. Some funding has already been received from MTA and additional funding will be requested from MTA. A Major Corridor Study

could be underway by the end of 2006 or in 2007 with the concurrence of the local cities and the obtaining of the necessary funding.

It's Progress As Usual on the I-710 MTA Okay's Launch of Environmental Phase for the I-710 Gateway Cities COG Introduces Cutting-Edge Alternative Goods Movement Technologies to Project Committee

The MTA Board authorized initiation of the environmental phase of the I-710 Improvement Project, pursuant to the Major Corridor Study's (MCS) Locally Preferred Strategy (LPS).

"Kick-off of the environmental phase is another huge step forward for this model transportation improvement project," said Larry R. Nelson, President of the Gateway Cities COG Board of Directors.

Prior to issuing the green light for the EIR/EIS, the Board set forth four requirements that needed to be met including (1) completion of the mini-study in East Los Angeles and the City of Commerce and incorporation into the LPS, (2) formation of a multi-jurisdictional entity to coordinate the appropriate aspects of the project, (3) development of a funding plan for the EIR/EIS, and (4) identification of strategies for achieving near-term im-

provements to the corridor's air quality.

The mini-study was completed, comments were received from the City of Commerce and East Los Angeles and the results were incorporated into the MCS. A funding plan is in place with financial commitments from the Gateway Cities COG, Caltrans, MTA, SCAG, the I-5 Corridor Cities JPA, and the Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles. A compendium of near term air quality measures was produced and will be updated quarterly.

Finally the I-710 EIR/EIS will be guided by a multi-jurisdictional Project Committee, which includes representatives from the 14 cities along the I-710 as well as the County of Los Angeles, MTA, Caltrans, SCAG, Port of Long Beach, Port of Los Angeles, the San Gabriel Valley COG, and the I-5 JPA. There will also be an I-710 EIR/EIS Executive Committee, comprised of key regional leaders: MTA

(Director Don Knabe), Gateway Cities COG (Long Beach Vice Mayor Bonnie Lowenthal), Caltrans (District Director Doug Failing), Los Angeles County (Supervisor Gloria Molina), Port of Long Beach (Commissioner Mike Walter), Port of Los Angeles (Commissioner Jerilyn Lopez Mendoza) and the Co-Chairs of the I-710 Project Committee, Mayor Bob Foster, Long Beach and Mayor Nancy Ramos, Commerce.

The Committee elected as Co-Chair from the southern area, Long Beach Mayor Bob Foster and from the northern area, City of Commerce Mayor Nancy Ramos. The Committee also took action approving a community participation framework for the EIR/EIS. The framework will include local advisory committees, a Corridor Advisory Committee and subject working groups.

Board Of Directors

Thank you to all those Board Members who were available for the group photo on Wednesday, October 4, 2006. Your contribution to the effort to create a historic record of the Gateway Cities COG leadership was a success.

Photo front row to back: Diane DuBois, City of Lakewood; Elba Guerrero, City of Huntington Park; Bonnie Lowenthal, City of Long Beach, Betty Putnam, City of Santa Fe Springs; Mario Beltran, City of Bell Gardens; Connie Sziebl, for the County of Los Angeles Supervisor Don Knabe; Anne Bayer, City of Downey; Frank Gurule, City of Cudahy; Felipe Aguirre, City of Maywood; Stan Carroll, City of La Habra Heights; Lillie Dobson, City of Compton; Greg Nordbak, City of Whittier; Edward H. J. Wilson, City of Signal Hill;



Gordon Stefenhagen, City of Norwalk; John Pratt, City of Bellflower; Fernando Pedroza, City of Lynwood; Larry R. Nelson, City of Artesia; Paul Bowlen, City of Cerritos; Patrick O'Donnell, City of Long Beach; Ron Beilke, City of Pico Rivera and Jeff Siccama, City of Montebello

Presentation to Board Member Greg Nordbak in Recognition of his Year of Service as President



Truck Inspection and Safety Initiative



Comments from COG Legal Counsel—AB 1234

AB-1234 includes requirements for ethics training for public officials, rules affecting the reimbursement of expenses, and mandates that disclosures be made following the attendance by a public official at certain meetings at public expense, among other things. AB-1234 applies to local agencies only. The bill states that a local agency means a city, county, city and county, charter city, charter county, charter city and county, or special district. The Gateway Cities Council of Governments (COG) is a Joint Powers Authority created pursuant to Governments Code section 6500 et seq. The COG does not fall within the meaning of a local agency as defined in AB-1234. Thus, AB-1234 does not apply to the COG. However, AB-1234 applies to a city council member who represents his or her city on a joint powers agency board, and where that council member's city pays for the expenses in serving on that joint powers agency board. In that situation, the council member would provide a report concerning the joint powers agency meeting at the next city council meeting.

Truck Inspection and Safety are a major initiative for the COG. On a recent field trip to Florida local officials observed state of the art truck inspection facilities. Only Florida and Indiana have truck volumes similar to California's.

Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA)

Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) will be conducting a RHNA workshop at the Gateway Cities COG offices on **Monday, November 6, 2006, from 1:00 to 5:00 PM.** The workshop will include a presentation on SCAG's planning process including Growth Forecast, the RHNA and the RTP. The workshop will also include a small group exercise which will allow cities to work with forecast scenarios on computers to assist in determining RHNA numbers for cities.

Planning Directors and knowledgeable staff are strongly encouraged to attend this important workshop.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



During my tenure as President of the Board of Directors, our major emphasis will be on outreach and communication to our member agencies, which includes all 27 cities, the County of Los Angeles and the Port of Long Beach. We will also strengthen our outreach and communication to the various funding and policy development partners which have helped make the Gateway Cities Council of Governments a success. Those various partners and stakeholders include our neighboring councils of governments; regional transportation partners; environ-

mental, air quality and health sciences advocates; economic development and housing stakeholders.

The Gateway Cities are proud of our long history of working together through a consensus building approach to problem solving. Only through sustained and dedicated outreach and communication to our member agencies and partners, with a healthy respect for all points of view, can the broader public interest be served. We are committed to collaboration and partnership.

Larry R. Nelson

CALENDAR 2006

All meetings are open to the public

November

- 1 Board of Directors Meeting 6:00 PM
- 1 Transportation Committee 4:30 PM
- 6 RHNA Workshop 1:00 PM
- 13 91/605 Corridor Cities Committee 6:30 PM
- 14 MTA Call for Projects Workshop 9:30 AM

December

- 6 Board of Directors Meeting 6:00 PM
- 6 Transportation Committee 4:30 PM

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