MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
I-710 CORRIDOR EIR/EIS PROJECT COMMITTEE
A Meeting Held at Progress Park
15500 Downey Ave.
Paramount, CA
May 30, 2013

I. Call to Order

Co-Chairman Hurtado called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Roll Call was taken by self-introductions:

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:  Gil Hurtado, City of South Gate, Co-Chair; Ana Maria Quintana, City of Bell; Sergio Infanzon, City of Bell Gardens; Jim Dear, City of Carson; Lillie Dobson, City of Compton; Juan Romo, City of Cudahy; Luis Marquez, City of Downey; Rosa E. Perez, City of Huntington Park; Steve Neal, City of Long Beach; Sal Alatorre, City of Lynwood; Gene Daniels, City of Paramount; Larry Forester, City of Signal Hill; William Davis, City of Vernon; Patrick V. DeChellis, County of Los Angeles; Doug Drummond, Port of Long Beach; Ron Kosinski, Caltrans; Diane DuBois, MTA; Alison Linder, SCAG.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:  Denise Robles, City of Commerce; Felipe Aguirre, City of Maywood; Douglas Krause, Port of Los Angeles; Lilia Leon, I-5 JPA; Barbara Messina, SGVCOG; Susan Seamans, SBCCOG (ex officio); Mark Sedlacek, LADWP (ex officio); Garry Garrigue, Southern California Edison (ex officio).

ALSO PRESENT:  South Gate Councilman William DeWitt; Derek Wieske, Assistant City Engineer, City of Long Beach; Ross Cruz, Civil Engineer Assistant, City of Long Beach; Tom Modica, Government Affairs Manager, City of Long Beach; Alex Hamilton, Assistant Director of Community Development, City of Commerce; Ernesto Chaves, Transportation Planning Manager, MTA; Lucy Olmos, Transportation Planner, MTA; Ivy Tsai, Deputy General Counsel, GCCOG; Richard Powers, Executive Director, GCCOG; Jack Joseph, Deputy Executive Director, GCCOG; Karen Heit, Transportation Deputy, GCCOG; Jerry Wood, Engineer, GCCOG; Roger Pardo, Chair, Downey Bike Coalition; Dave Levinsohn, Project Manager, URS; Shannon Willits, URS; Rob McCann, President, LSA; Gill Hicks, Cambridge Systematics; Melissa de la Pena, CH2MHill; Esmeralda Garcia, Project Manager, MIG.
III. Pledge of Allegiance

Member DuBois led the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Amendments to the Agenda

There were no amendments to the agenda.

V. Public Comments

Hugo Lujan, East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice, acknowledged the Project Committee for voting to include Community Alternative 7 as an official alternative.

VI. Matters from Staff

There were no matters from staff.

VII. Consent Calendar

Member DuBois pointed out that the minutes for the meeting of January 31, 2013, should be amended to read that the consent calendar for that meeting contained the minutes of the meeting of September 12, 2012. It was moved by Member DuBois, seconded by Member Forester, to approve the minutes of the meeting of January 31, 2013 as amended. The motion was approved unanimously.

VIII. Reports

A. I-710 Corridor Project EIR/EIS Engineering Update

Shannon Willits, URS, gave a PowerPoint presentation reviewing the status of the engineering work on the project. He reviewed the various design changes that had been made to the various segments of the proposed improved freeway due to comments and new information that had been received during the review period for the Draft EIR/EIS. Design changes included those to conform to the Gerald Desmond Bridge design changes; modifications to avoid major oil facilities; updated designs for bicycle and pedestrian facilities; avoidance of the new senior housing complex in Compton and the Bell homeless shelter; and to avoid LADWP and Los Angeles River impacts. He reviewed the next steps in the engineering work and a revised timeline which anticipated public circulation of a revised EIR/EIS in fall 2014.
It was moved by Member Forester, seconded by Member Davis, to receive and file the report. The motion was approved unanimously.

B. I-710 Corridor Project DEIR/EIS Environmental Update

Rob McCann, LSA, gave a PowerPoint presentation updating the Project Committee on the status of the environmental work. He said draft responses to comments received during the public review of the Draft EIR/EIS had been submitted to funding partner agencies for review. He said there had been continued coordination with the engineering team on identifying areas outside of the original project footprint. He said the commitment had been made to re-circulate the Draft EIR/EIS and to include analysis of Community Alternative 7. He said the revised EIR/EIS would use updated growth forecasts, which were currently in process.

Mr. McCann said other revisions that would be included in the revised EIR/EIS would be inclusion of the SCIG, ICTF, and north I-710 forecast assumptions; allowance of only zero emission trucks in the freight corridor; consideration of active transportation modes and complete streets concepts; and withdrawal of non-zero emission alternatives.

Member Neal asked when staff could report back on the public participation during the Draft EIR/EIS review period. Gateway Cities COG Engineer Jerry Wood responded that it would take place in August or September.

C. I-710 Corridor Project EIR/EIS Community Participation Update

Esmeralda Garcia, MIG, gave a PowerPoint presentation providing an update on the community participation efforts. She said meetings with the Corridor Advisory Committee and the local advisory committees had continued to take place during this review period.

It was moved by Member Forester, seconded by Member DuBois, to receive and file reports B and C. The motion was approved unanimously.

D. I-710/I-5 Corridor Projects Environmental Update

Gateway Cities COG Engineer Jerry Wood reported that the interchange of northbound I-5 to northbound I-710 continued to be an issue. He said MTA and the COG had agreed to proceed with separate project study reports at this location. He said there would be coordination with the City of Commerce and the County of Los Angeles.
It was moved by Member Forester, seconded by Member Davis, to receive and file the report. The motion was approved unanimously.

E. I-710 Traffic Model Assumptions

Dave Levinsohn, Project Manager for URS, gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding the update of the key assumptions regarding the traffic forecast for the revised Draft EIR/EIS. He said 2035 remains the planning horizon year, and that changes had been made due to socio-economic inputs, multi-modal person travel assumption changes, and goods movement assumption changes. Additionally, he said there had been an update of the No Build definition. Mr. Levinsohn explained that there had been reductions in the population and employment estimates in the region from the 2008 to the 2012 Regional Transportation Plan by SCAG. The No Build Alternative had been updated to add several projects, including the addition of HOV lanes on I-10, addition of a tunnel with tolled general purpose lanes at the north end of the 710, addition of the Crenshaw light rail project; and extension of the west side Purple Line.

Gill Hicks, Cambridge Systematics, gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding the goods movement assumptions. He said the SCIG and ICTF rail yards are now included in the No Build and various build alternatives. He said reductions had been made in the container volume at intermodal yards and the daily trips of automobiles to the ports. Mr. Hicks explained the projections for annual lifts at the intermodal rail yards and gave a detailed description of how and where transloading of marine containers takes place. Because of the advance in information systems, the revised EIR/EIS will assume a greater level of truck double-cycling and empty chassis re-use at intermodal yards. He said the next steps will include forecast modeling and a report on the initial model runs.

Patricia Ochoa, Coalition for Clean Air, read a letter from the Coalition for Environmental Health and Justice. She said the recommendation is that more time be taken to analyze the traffic assumptions before presenting them to the Project Committee.

Angelo Logan, East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice, said this is very important and complicated. He said their recommendation is to take pause and allow this information to be well-vetted by all stakeholders.

Azenneth Torres, East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice, said expansion of the freeway would be disadvantageous for our health.

Wynton Johnson, East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice, urged the Project Committee to take its time to vet all of the information. He said the use of zero emission or low emission tools during construction would be very important.
Javier Garay, East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice, said he is concerned about the removal of homes and businesses by the project and the pollution it will cause. He said he supports Community Alternative 7.

Noel Pimentel, Commerce resident, said he is a sixth grader and that bike routes and clear air are needed around his school.

Veronica Guerrero, West Long Beach resident, thanked the Project Committee for the way the project had changed and how common ground had been found. She said she would like to see information about the plans for green areas.

Mark Lopez said he had ridden a bike to the meeting and feels the community benefits of Community Alternative 7.

Carmen Rivera, Paramount resident, thanked the Project Committee for including Community Alternative 7 in the EIR/EIS. She referred to the asthma attacks in her family. She said public transportation is also needed and that she can’t ride a bicycle now because of her asthma. She said that is why she wanted the Project Committee to keep pursuing Community Alternative 7 as a vehicle.

Robert Cabrales, Communities for a Better Environment, thanked the Project Committee for moving forward on Community Alternative 7. He said he would like to see more analysis of the traffic assumptions.

Eric Cotto, East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice, said he supported Community Alternative 7 because of the comprehensive transit, bicycle, and pedestrian elements.

Rebecca Bacon, East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice, thanked the Project Committee and urged inclusion of Community Alternative 7 in its entirety in the project. She urged support of SB 811.

Mayra Chavarria, Wilmington resident, said this project will bring more pollution to the area. She said Community Alternative 7 is needed in its entirety.

Suzanne Browne, Legal Aid Foundation, said the Community Advisory Committee had not received the traffic assumptions until the day of its meeting. She urged that no action be taken on the traffic assumptions.

John Molina, East Los Angeles resident, said he wants to see bike lanes on Whittier Blvd. because it is very scary to ride in the streets.
Member Forester said the figures being used as a starting point are from the SCAG 2012 Regional Transportation Plan. He recommended that the Project Committee move forward with the Technical Advisory Committee’s recommendation to proceed with the key traffic assumptions and then come back with refinements. He said we need to run the traffic model to see what changes need to be made.

It was moved by Member Forester, seconded by Member Daniels, to concur with the TAC recommendation to proceed with the key traffic assumptions as outlined and that this revised set of assumptions be used in the updated traffic model for the initial traffic modeling runs; and for the project team to return and present the initial traffic modeling runs with this set of key traffic assumptions, review the results, and present any differences or new sets of assumptions.

Member Quintana said that some information is missing so she doesn’t feel fully informed. She asked what harm could come from waiting more time.

Jerry Wood said the bullet points in the letter received from the Coalition for Environmental Health and Justice are already contained in the TAC recommendation.

Member Neal said he concurred with both Member Forester and Mr. Wood. He said he is a member of the SCAG Transportation Committee and understands the use of these numbers. He said he also speaks as someone with asthma.

Member DuBois said the SCAG RTP is fed by MTA’s Long Range Transportation Plan. She said she would be concerned if we used numbers other than those from SCAG. She said to do so would put the project in jeopardy.

Member DeChellis asked Mr. Wood if he could confirm that the numbers used in the traffic assumptions are those in the SCAG RTP. Mr. Wood responded that they are.

Member Quintana asked if there would be an opportunity for the Community Advisory Committee to provide input. Mr. Wood responded that, yes, it is part of the process.

There being no further discussion, the motion was approved unanimously.

F. Status of I-710 Aesthetics Committee
Karen Heit, Transportation Deputy, Gateway Cities Council of Governments, reported that Caltrans has a process called “Context Sensitive Design”, which takes recommendations from people from along the freeway to develop a common theme for the community. For example, she said, azaleas would figure prominently in design along the City of South Gate. She said this process is in its early stages and that the next meeting was scheduled for August.

It was moved by Member Dear, seconded by Member DeChellis, to receive and file the report. The motion was approved unanimously.

G. Strategic Transportation Plan

Gill Hicks, Cambridge Systematics, gave a PowerPoint presentation introducing the Strategic Transportation Plan being initiated for the Gateway Cities region. He said the Plan would consist of an analysis of all transportation modes, including arterial highways, freeways, local and regional transit, park and ride lots, active transportation, goods movement and logistics, intelligent transportation technologies, and truck enforcement. He said the Plan would integrate all existing transportation plans and studies, refine project ideas, define new projects, and develop tools to analyze systematic interactions. He said the project schedule calls for the Plan to be completed in spring 2014.

It was moved by Member Forester, seconded by Member Davis, to receive and file the report. The motion was approved unanimously.

H. Status of Current Early Action Projects and Measure R Funding Review

Ernesto Chaves, MTA, gave a PowerPoint presentation outlining the current programming of Measure R funds for Early Action projects. He reviewed the 30 year program allocation for both freeway and non-freeway projects and reviewed those that had been recommended for funding by the Project Committee and approved by the MTA Board.

It was moved by Member Forester, seconded by Member Dear, to receive and file the report. The motion was approved unanimously.

I. Presentation on Feasibility Study for Early Action Sound Walls

Melissa de la Pena, CH2MHill, gave a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed the updated list of feasible Early Action sound wall projects. She illustrated a comparison between the sound walls considered in the study
and the proposed Early Action sound walls. She walked the Project Committee through the proposed locations for sound walls in Commerce, East Los Angeles, Bell Gardens, South Gate, Compton, and Long Beach. She reviewed the project schedule and reported that the TAC had approved the list of sound walls on May 15, and had recommended that the Project Committee approve the initial final list.

It was moved by Member DuBois, seconded by Member Forester, to:

1. Approve the final reports and preliminary plans for early action sound walls and the estimated types, lengths, and locations as presented;
2. Proceed with the final design for these early action sound walls and forward that recommendation to MTA for implementation, with the design to be checked against the updated plans to modify the I-710 freeway and the aesthetics master plan before proceeding with the final design, and that this updated analysis be presented to the I-710 TAC and Project Committee before proceeding with final design for input and concurrence; and
3. Concur with the TAC recommendation to develop a phasing plan to implement the early action sound walls once the design is completed and the timing of funding from Measure R can be determined and return with that analysis to the TAC and Project Committee for input, review, and comment.

The motion was approved unanimously.

J. I-710 Additional Early Action Projects Recommendations

Jerry Wood, Gateway Cities COG Engineer, reported that the TAC had recommended two additional projects as Early Action projects under Measure R: $300,000 for environmental review, design, and right-of-way engineering for the Atlantic Blvd./Willow Street intersection in the City of Long Beach; and $3.5 million for the widening and reconstruction of Washington Blvd. from Indiana Street to the I-5 freeway in the City of Commerce.

It was moved by Member Forester, seconded by Member Neal, to approve the recommendation of the TAC to add the Atlantic Blvd./Willow Street intersection and Washington Blvd. improvement as projects to be funded as Early Action projects, and to forward that recommendation to the MTA Board of Directors. The motion was approved unanimously.

K. Report from COG Engineer
Jerry Wood reported that next month the Gateway Cities COG would be presenting the results of the Air Quality Action Plan.

It was moved by Member Forester, seconded by Co-Chairman Hurtado, to receive and file the report. The motion was approved unanimously.

IX. Matters from the I-710 EIR/EIS Project Committee

There were no matters from the Project Committee.

X. Matters from the Chair

Co-Chairman Hurtado said he endorsed the use of two-sided copies of the PowerPoint presentations in the agenda packets.

XI. Adjournment

Co-Chairman Hurtado announced that the next meeting of the Project Committee was scheduled for August 29th. The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 8:45 p.m.