I. Call to Order

Co-Chairman Hurtado called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Roll Call was taken by self-introductions:

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Gil Hurtado, City of South Gate, Co-Chair; Sergio Infanzon, City of Bell Gardens; Jim Dear, City of Carson; Denise Robles, City of Commerce; Frank Gurule, City of Cudahy; Elba Guerrero, City of Huntington Park; Felipe Aguirre, City of Maywood; Gene Daniels, City of Paramount; Larry Forester, City of Signal Hill; Patrick V. De Chellis, County of Los Angeles; Thomas Fields, Port of Long Beach; Joe Aguilar, I-5 JPA; Ron Kosinski, Caltrans; Diane DuBois, MTA; Mike Jones, SCAG; Susan Seamans, SBCCOG (ex officio).

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Bob Foster, City of Long Beach, Co-Chair; Ana Maria Quintana, City of Bell; Lillie Dobson, City of Compton; Luis Marquez, City of Downey; Sal Alatorre, City of Lynwood; William Davis, City of Vernon; Douglas Krause, Port of Los Angeles; Barbara Messina, SGVCOG; Mark Sedlacek, LADWP (ex officio); Garry Garrigue, Southern California Edison (ex officio).

ALSO PRESENT: Long Beach Director of Government/Strategic Affairs Tom Modica; Signal Hill Public Works Director Steve Myrter; James Yang, Department of Public Works, County of Los Angeles; Ivan Carrillo, Field Representative, Assemblyman Ricardo Lara; Frank Quon, Executive Officer, Highway Programs, MTA; Ernesto Chaves, Transportation Planning Manager, MTA; Adrian Alvarez, Transportation Planning Manager, MTA; Lucy Olmos, Transportation Planner, MTA; Danielle Valentino, MTA; Ivy Tsai, Deputy General Counsel, GCCOG; Richard Powers, Executive Director, GCCOG; Jack Joseph, Deputy Executive Director, Karen Heit, GCCOG Transportation Deputy; GCCOG; Jerry Wood, GCCOG Engineer; Jack Waldron, Project Manager, URS; Dave Levinsohn, URS; Rob McCann, President, LSA; Julia Lester, Environ; Esmeralda Garcia, Project Manager, MIG; J. D. Douglas, InfraConsult; Juan Carlos Velasquez, CH2M Hill; Melissa de la Pena, CH2M Hill.

III. Pledge of Allegiance
Member Gurule led the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Amendments to the Agenda

There were no amendments to the agenda.

V. Public Comments

Co-Chairman Hurtado said that public comments would be taken up at the time of the report regarding the public review period for the Draft EIR/EIS.

VI. Matters from Staff

There were no matters from staff.

VII. Consent Calendar

It was moved by Member Forester, seconded by Member Guerrero, to approve the minutes of the meeting of March 29, 2012. The motion was approved unanimously.

VIII. Reports

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

Jack Waldron, URS, gave a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the status of the engineering work on the project. He said the final draft engineering project report had been submitted to Caltrans after coordination with key resource agencies and stakeholders, including the Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, and Southern California Edison. He said over the next three months the project team would be coordinating with Caltrans’ new geometrician and would be supporting the public hearings on the Draft EIR/EIS.

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

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

Rob McCann, LSA, gave a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the activities completed in the last month and the activities in progress. He said the Draft EIR/EIS was being revised to address Caltrans’ comments. He said notices of availability would be published and the Draft EIR/EIS would have a 60 day review period, during which three public hearings would be conducted. He said the Draft EIR/EIS would be released by the end of June.
It was moved by Member DuBois, seconded by Member Forester, to receive and file the report. The motion was approved unanimously.

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

Esmeralda Garcia, MIG, gave a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the recent community participation activity. She discussed the schedule of upcoming meetings and ongoing public information efforts.

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

D. Gateway Cities Technology Plan for I-710

Jerry Wood, Gateway Cities COG Engineer, introduced a PowerPoint presentation prepared by Cambridge Systematics which summarized work to date on developing alternative concepts for the use of technology on I-710. The PowerPoint presentation included a discussion of zero emissions catenary systems, which may be a viable alternative for the freight corridor. Siemens has deployed analogous systems internationally that can be scaled for the I-710 concept. The study project schedule was discussed, which has an estimated completion date of December 2012.

Member Forester asked if the PowerPoint presentation would be made available to the Committee. Jerry Wood responded that it would be added to the I-710 project website.

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

E. Status of Current Early Action Projects

Frank Quon, Executive Officer for Highway Programs, MTA, discussed the status of the current early action projects. He said that $590 million in Measure R funding for early action projects had been apportioned as $30 million for environmental studies; $400 million for freeway projects; and $160 million for non-freeway projects such as sound wall, intersection improvements, and arterial improvements. He said the three utility studies are proceeding as early action projects, as well as the sound wall feasibility study.

Mr. Quon introduced Juan Carlos Velasquez of CH2M Hill, who gave a PowerPoint presentation on the sound walls feasibility study. Mr. Velasquez said the objective of the study is to deliver meaningful early improvements, build on existing work through coordination with the I-710 EIR/EIS to streamline approval, review existing and proposed sound wall locations for compatibility with current and proposed projects, and to select walls that are feasible and consistent with community values. He displayed a map showing
potential wall locations along the I-710 corridor. He said the next steps are to complete a comprehensive list of feasible sound walls, conduct additional technical studies, incorporate stakeholder comments, and then present a final list of feasible sound walls. He said a list would be presented to the Project Committee in August.

Member Forester asked if part of the $590 million can be used to coordinate with Caltrans on a project to mitigate TMDL impacts on stormwater. Mr. Quon responded that it could.

Member Dear asked for an example of a sound wall project that can’t be done as an early action project. Mr. Quon responded that the focus would be on projects outside of the existing right-of-way where acquisition would not be required.

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

F. Recommendation Regarding Review Period for Draft EIR/EIS

Ron Kosinski, Caltrans, said that 45 days is the legally mandated time period for environmental review for a project of this size. Caltrans added an additional 15 days and, the review period was set at 60 days. He shared that Caltrans staff completed their internal review in 30 days, and noted that the technical reports only need to be read if you want more detailed information. He said we have already gone through a lot of the information that is in the document through the various stages of this project, so a few of the chapters in the Draft EIR/EIS will present familiar information. Mr. Kosinski said one of the negative risks with extending a comment period is the longer the information sits, it runs the risk of becoming stale. However, he said, Caltrans is open to providing formal extensions beyond the 60 days, if a reviewer feels he needs extra time.

Co-Chairman Hurtado opened the meeting to public comments.

Angelo Logan, East Yards Communities for Environmental Justice, encouraged the Project Committee to press Caltrans to extend the review period for the Draft EIR/EIS to 120 days. He said more time and resources are required to dig through the technical studies.

Mark Lopez, East Los Angeles, said he is troubled that the Health Impact Assessment is in the Air Quality Action Plan rather than the EIR. He said he is troubled that Caltrans has the final say.

Robert Cabrales, Communities for a Better Environment, asked for an extension of the review period for the Draft EIR/EIS.
Ivan Carrillo, Field Representative for Assemblyman Ricardo Lara, said that the Assemblyman had concluded that the community needs more than 60 days to review the Draft EIR/EIS document.

Patty Ochoa, Physicians for Social Responsibility, said that her organization had sent a letter to Caltrans asking for a 120 day review period and to include the HIA in the EIR. She asked the Project Committee to concur with their request.

Eva Ramirez, Long Beach Alliance for Children with Asthma, said she leaves near I-710 and needs help to review the EIR since she doesn’t speak English. She said she was demanding her rights as a member of the community.

Eva Judith Sanchez, Long Beach Alliance for Children with Asthma, requested a 120 day review period for the EIR.

Yolanda Lopez, Long Beach Alliance for Children with Asthma, said she was disappointed that the community is not being heard. She said they are suffering from intolerable pollution. She asked that the review period be extended to 120 days and the HIA be included in the EIR.

Silvia Reyes, Long Beach Alliance for Children with Asthma, requested a 120 day review period.

Jonathan Farias, Communities for a Better Environment, requested a 120 day review period so the community could be heard.

Raymond Chavarria, Long Beach, requested a 120 day review period and the inclusion of the HIA in the EIR.

Iris Verduzco, Communities for a Better Environment, urged a 120 day review period. She said people have to devote time to other issues.

Andrea Hricko, Keck School of Medicine, University of Southern California, said she was concerned about how short the review time for the EIR is because she will need to fill out what is missing, particularly with regard to the health effects of near-roadway air pollution and the impact of an elevated truckway. She said the public has not been able to see the elevations.

Martha Herrera, Long Beach Alliance for Children with Asthma, requested a 120 day review period and inclusion of the HIA in the EIR.

Martha Cota, Long Beach Alliance for Children with Asthma, said a freeway with thousands of trucks would have more impact on the community than a stadium. She said this project affects thousands of families in 14 cities.
There being no other speakers, Co-Chairman Hurtado closed public comments.

Member Infanzon said that he supported all of the arguments presented by the audience. He said the community needs time to review the document and our role is to represent the community.

It was moved by Member Infanzon, seconded by Member Dear, to recommend to Caltrans that the review period for the Draft EIR/EIS be extended to 120 days.

Co-Chairman Hurtado said he had taken all weekend to go over a 400 page document regarding a development in South Gate. He said he objected to the reference that people would procrastinate if given a longer time to review the document.

Member Daniels said that all of the Committee members are representatives of our communities. He said that he took as a positive the fact that Caltrans took more time to review the draft document. He said that the Committee from the beginning had made air quality the top priority.

Member Gurule said that he has lived in Cudahy for over 45 years and has two daughters with asthma. He said he appreciates the comments from the community and supports the extension to 120 days.

Member Guerrero said she also appreciates all of the comments. She said she also has a daughter with asthma and supports the extension.

Member Aguirre said he supports the extension to 120 days, as well as the inclusion of the HIA into the EIR.

Member Kosinski said a lot of the information from the HIA has been incorporated into the EIR, but the HIA document itself will be released regardless.

Member Dear said that, as a public school teacher, he has seen incidents of asthma because of the prevalence of diesel pollution. He said when the public unanimously requests an extension, it carries a great deal of weight with him. He asked if staff had a recommendation.

Karen Heit, Gateway Cities COG Transportation Deputy, responded that any recommendation that the Committee makes is just that, a recommendation. She said the State makes the final decision. She said staff feels that 60 days is adequate.

Member Dear said that he thinks, at this point, the public review process is pivotal.

Member Forester said we can make any recommendation we want, but Caltrans has to follow legal rules. He said he thinks 60 days is probably
enough time. He said the Health Risk Assessment is more reliable than the Health Impact Assessment. He said we need to look at the risks; Caltrans’ hands are tied by the law.

Member DuBois said the language issue was decided by this Committee. She said if her child had asthma she would not want further delays but to deal with it as soon as possible.

Karen Heit said the Health Impact Assessment would be released at the same time as the Draft EIR/EIS and will be available for public inspection.

The motion was approved by a show of hands by a vote of 8 to 4 with 2 abstentions.

Member Daniels asked when the Committee will know of the decision regarding the review period. Member Kosinski said the decision will be made in mid to late June.

I. Gateway Cities COG Engineer Report

There was no report from the Gateway Cities COG Engineer.

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

There were no matters from the Project Committee.

X. Matters from the Chair

There were no matters from Co-Chairman Hurtado.

XI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 8:35 p.m.