

**MINUTES OF THE
SR-91/I-605/I-405
CORRIDOR CITIES COMMITTEE (CCC) MEETING
Webex Meeting
February 24, 2021**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Raymond Dunton at 6:05 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Roll Call was taken and presented below.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

	Name	City / Agency	Present	Absent
1	Tony Lima	Artesia	X	
2	Raymond Dunton	Bellflower	X	
3	Naresh Solanki	Cerritos		X
4	Michelle Chambers	Compton		X
5	Claudia M. Frometa	Downey	X	
6	Luis Roa	Hawaiian Gardens	X	
7	Bing Hyun	Industry		X
8	Ariel Pe	Lakewood	X	
9	Stacy Mungo	Long Beach		X
10	Jennifer Perez	Norwalk	X	
11	Laurie Guillen	Paramount	X	
12	Raul Elias	Pico Rivera	X	
13	Joe Angel Zamora	Santa Fe Springs	X	
14	Fernando Dutra	Whittier	X	
15	Luke H. Klipp	LA County Supervisor, District 4	X	
		Totals =	11	4

OTHER ATTENDEES:

Webex attendance record. (See attached)

III. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Nominations for Chair was Councilman Raymond Dunton and for Vice-Chair was Mayor Claudia M. Frometa, The Chair and Vice-Chair were approved unanimously.

IV. AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

There were no amendments to the agenda.

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

All written comments timely submitted were distributed to the 91/605/405 Corridor Cities Committee members as part of the agenda packet and are included as part of the official record. Additional Public comments were received orally, limited to 3-minutes.

Written comments included in the agenda packet have been provided to Metro's I-605 Corridor Improvement Project team and will be evaluated as part of the preparation of the Environmental Document Process. Once the draft Environmental Document is circulated written comments will be received and responses included in the Final Environmental Document.

VI. MATTERS FROM STAFF

There were no matters from staff.

VII. CONSENT CALENDAR

Approval of Minutes for the Meeting of June 26, 2019, of the SR-91/I-605/405 Corridor Cities Committee.

It was moved by Mayor Frometa, seconded by Councilman Dutra, to approve the minutes of the meeting of June 26, 2019. The motion was approved unanimously.

VIII. REPORTS

A. Metro Highway Program Update on Measure R/M Funding – Oral Report by Ernesto Chaves (Metro)

Ernesto Chaves provided an update on Measure R/M Funding programs. He addressed funding prioritization efforts and impacts due to lost revenue, fares, and tolls, as well as increased costs in response of the pandemic. Altogether, an estimated \$1.8 billion reduction in revenue affecting Metro's programs.

Metro was concerned that both the Freeway and Non-Freeway programs may be impacted by these loses. Earlier in 2020, Metro had divided all projects and programs into two buckets. Bucket 1 projects were defined as "work to continue" and Bucket 2 projects were being evaluated to be deferred three to six months.

The good news is that the financial outlook is much better now and, generally, Bucket 2 projects that were slowed down are recovering and the GCCOG's projects are back on track.

Councilman Dutra questioned if the losses of revenue over the past year would have a long term affect and set back the timing of the construction phases of the Gateway Cities projects. Ernesto stated that their long-term effects are definitely anticipated. Most of the Gateway Cities projects are currently in the environmental or design phase and are not anticipated to be impacted in the short term. However, as these projects complete pre-construction phases, there may be challenges in securing enough funds to advance to construction for some.

It was moved by Councilman Dutra, seconded by Mayor Frometa to receive and file the report. The motion was approved unanimously.

B. I-605 Corridor Improvement Project – Presentation by Isidro Panuco (Metro)

Isidro Panuco provided a presentation and overview of the I-605 Corridor Improvement Project. He reported that the I-605 Corridor Improvement Project (CIP) was currently evaluating four alternative (including the no-build Alternative) which includes 28 total miles of freeway improvements, as well as improvements to I-105, I-5, SR-60 and I-10 freeway interchanges. The project's purpose and need are to ease congestion, improve mobility and operations, enhance regional connectivity and system efficiency, improve safety and enhance travel experience.

He reviewed the project's schedule, past scoping and community meetings held, as well as COG, city and regulatory meetings undertaken to date. He also briefly touched on future activities which included the incorporation of a locally collaborated and supported design alternative (pending support from the CCC) and an update to technical studies needed to finalize the draft environmental document. Upon the completion of these tasks, a draft EIR/EIS can be share for public review (i.e. circulation) and to receive public comment.

He provided an overview of activities for the past 6 months on the I-605 CIP. In September 2020 Metro received a letter from the GCCOG requesting delay circulation of I-605 EIR/EIS, which was supported by the Metro Board. The letter asked for Metro staff to develop a less impactful alternative for the I-605 CIP to reduce property impacts, especially in Downey and Santa Fe Springs. Metro's design team conducted more than six meetings with the local jurisdictions including the GCCOG, the I-5 JPA, and Caltrans to develop locally supported design alternatives to reduce property impacts. This locally supported alternative developed with the COG, JPA, and cities, balances design standards and improves operations, safety and minimizes right of way and environmental impacts.

Isidro reviewed the overall project schedule and highlighted that the project is currently only funded through the environmental phase. The project schedule assumed that funds are available, but at this time funding for any phase past environmental has not been secured. The design and right-of-way phases are currently not funded and will not start, even if the environmental document is

completed, thus properties will not be impacted as part of the environmental process. If funding for future phases does become available, it will take at least 5 years to complete the design and right of way phases and another 5-10 to construct the project. Local sales tax revenues which are expected to be available for this Project over the next 30 years (approx. \$1 billion) are insufficient to cover the cost of constructing the project. A substantial amount of outside funding/revenue (over \$4 billion), beyond Metro's capacity, is needed to start and complete design/construction of the project.

A question was raised by Mayor Frometa regarding the meetings held with various Cities in the past. Where were the community meetings held and what was the number of people who attended? Since Downey has a large number of the projects, property impact was their outreach in this community?

Isidro responded that meetings were held in 2018 in the cities of Norwalk, Whittier and Pico Rivera, which together had 240 people attended. 14,000 residents were contacted via mail and 2,300 project informational materials were placed on cars at park and ride lots to inform them of the project. Once the draft document is ready and when approvals are secured, Metro will be reaching out to the City of Downey as well as the other affected cities to be involve them in the public review and comment process.

Luke Klipp, with LA County Supervisor, District 4, stated that numerous comments were received on this agenda item, more than 70, which is unique compared to other similar projects. This shows the significance of holding appropriate community outreach. Luke asked what is Metro's plan to determine the number of future meetings held? He also pointed out the 45-day comment period would appear to be too short for a project of this magnitude. Is there an opportunity to expand the review period and if so, how much? Additionally, he questioned how many of the technical meetings were open to the public? Given that these property impacts are significant to individuals, what is the impact on their homes' value and what if their homes are in the path of demolition? How are homes with a lower tax base made whole and what is the process for their relocation to an area of greater tax base? Lastly what type of increased transit services are referenced in the environmental document and will be part of this evaluation and how much of the total project costs are for augmented transit services? The small amount of community engagement seen in the past for this project has not addressed these questions and needs to clearly be expanded in the future steps of the process.

Isidro responded that they will be providing a robust community outreach plan for the project during the circulation of the EIR. He also noted that until the draft project environmental documents and design are reviewed by the required agencies like Caltrans and cities, detailed information regarding property impacts will not be released to the public. Instead, this information will be provided as part of the public circulation process. If properties are purchased for the project, the owner is compensated at or above market price and all efforts are made to accommodate

their relocation within their city and special or elderly needs are compensated as well. Property taxes are also transferable. Homeowners do not need to disclose the plans for this project as part of any real estate transaction. After the environmental document is approved, it would be the responsibility of the realtor to disclose and research the project as part of their due diligence.

Councilman Dutra expressed similar concerns of the lack of community outreach and asked if there are opportunities to separate the project into segments with significant operational improvement without the residential impacts. Ernesto responded that for the purpose of the environmental review, the project is evaluated as one, but based on comments from the EIR/EIS, smaller project segments (without property impacts) could be identified for implementation.

Councilwoman Guillen raised the concern that beyond residential impacts, there are other environmental impacts that are important to the community and should not be ignored by Metro. She requested that Metro address other environmental concerns and explain why improvements such as auxiliary lanes are needed and why these impacts are necessary. A lot of the residents do not know what an auxiliary lane is and why it is needed at the expense of their home, as well as adding capacity for added congestion and the impacts that come from more traffic.

Councilman Zamora pointed out that the release of the EIR is the start of formal public comment process necessary to formally capture the public's concerns. This is the start of public engagement process to move the project forward. There is clearly a traffic bottle neck in Santa Fe Springs and there are other impacts to our communities which are not being discussed; these include people sitting in traffic, traffic that travels through our communities to avoid the congested freeway and impacts safety and creates wear and tear on our local roads. There needs to be a balance of the direct impacts to the people who live adjacent to the project, and the indirect impacts to our residences that daily deal with the poor existing conditions of the freeway. Additionally, if there is a toll lane planned at the expense of our residences, then they need to benefit from those toll revenues. We need to move forward and be proactive with a decision that balances the impacts. We need the local input from our Cities and we need you to come to these communities to keep this project moving forward. We want the traffic reduced, we want less travel time and more time with our families. If we allow this project to stop the funds will be used elsewhere; we have the need and need the funds to stay in the area to improve the negative existing conditions.

Councilwoman Perez agreed we need to get to the next phase by initiating the circulation and allowing the process to continue. Based on past history, like along the I-5 corridor, this process never seems to move forward. Planning has been on-going for 25 years and we are still not there.

Mark Dierking, with Metro community, relations stated that they are happy to conduct the amount of community engagement this committee feels necessary. They will work with the CCC to develop an engagement plan that meets their needs

and will come back to this committee with a written plan for approval prior to the circulation of the draft EIR/EIS.

Kekoa Anderson commented that the community and CCC have only seen limited technical information in the form of a presentation and a few past public outreach meetings which took place almost 2-years ago. The data presented has focused primarily on four build alternatives, it is important to understand that there are two additional alternatives, the no-build and the locally collaborated alternative that will be part of the EIR/EIS evaluation. Those that opposed the project, would support the no-build alternative which maintains the existing conditions with no improvements, no impacts and no benefits. The locally collaborated alternative provides an additional build alternative developed to reduce the negative impacts while maintaining and enhancing the positive benefits. The circulation of the draft environmental document would provide detailed technical information and supporting documents, with this information the committee and community could review and make an informed decision with the range of alternatives that would lead to the development of a locally preferred alternative. Once a preferred alternative is identified, then the committee could develop phased improvements, based on funding available, that provide local benefits to the corridor that are compatible with this preferred alternative.

The CCC members are not supporting the construction of the local collaborated alternative, rather only the inclusion of it into the environmental document that will go through a public review process to determine the impacts and benefits.

Mayor Frometa reiterated her support to move forward and the possibility of breaking this project into phases, but we need to eliminate the most impactful parts of the project. With this new design variation, we still have impacts to around 170 residences which are significant impacts along the corridor. We want to move forward and provide alternatives, but we do not want to decimate neighborhoods, and eliminating the generational wealth, so we must be thoughtful. We want to support releasing the environmental so we can receive public comment, but we need an alternative that will eliminate the most significant parts of the project.

Luke Klipp, with LA County Supervisor, District 4, stated there has been a lot of discussion about the bottle neck of the I-5 segment within the Cities of Norwalk and Santa Fe Springs, would the completion of this project move the bottle neck north to the Rio Hondo. Are there any plans to widen the I-5 north of the I-710 and would this widening have similar right of way impacts to the Communities of Montebello, Commerce and East Los Angeles. We need to keep this in mind, as community impacts along the corridor are not just limited to the segment of the freeway we are currently discussing, but likely the case moving north.

Ernesto Chaves stated there is a line item in the Measure M Expenditure Plan to continue the I-5 HOV lane north to the I-710 interchange. However, this funding is not available until 2034.

A motion by Councilman Dutra, seconded by Mayor Frometa to approve the locally collaborated alternative, and to include it into the EIR, and to circulate the document, as well as, to bring a comprehensive Public Outreach Strategy Plan back to the CCC, for approval, prior to the circulation of the EIR. Roll call was taken and the motion was approved unanimously.

C. SR-91 Corridor Aesthetic Master Plan - Presentation by Kekoa Anderson (GCCOG – Consulting Engineer)

Kekoa Anderson, GCCOG, provided an overview of the SR-91 Corridor Aesthetic Master Plan. The corridor master plan unifies and compliments the existing corridor. Project Aesthetics Goals and Objectives are kept at the forefront to create a visually pleasing corridor, ensure visual unity within the corridor, enhance community identity, promote design for safety, functionality, and maintainability.

Due to the size of the document, the complete SR-91 Corridor Aesthetic Master Plan could not be included in the meeting agenda packet, however the full document can be viewed/downloaded from the link provided in the agenda packet or contact the GCCOG to obtain a copy.

He reported that the Technical Advisory Committee received the same presentation and had approved the SR-91 Corridor Aesthetic Master Plan unanimously at their last TAC meeting on January 26, 2021.

Councilman Dutra commented that specifications should be included to minimize the potential of future utility additions and modifications which created unsightly conditions to the freeway aesthetics.

It was moved to approve the SR-91 Corridor Aesthetic Master Plan by Councilman Dutra, seconded by Councilman Zamora to approve the SR-91 Corridor Aesthetic Master Plan. Roll call was taken and the motion was approved unanimously.

IX. COMMENTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

There were no comments from the committee members.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:18 p.m.