

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GATEWAY CITIES COUNCIL OF
GOVERNMENTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS**
Gateway Cities Council of Governments 16401 Paramount Blvd.
Paramount, California
December 1, 2021
Zoom Conference

GCCOG Chair Cinde Cassidy called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm. GCCOG Office Assistant Joel Arevalos took roll call.

#	Name	City/Agency	Present	Absent
1.	Tony Lima	Artesia	X	
2.	Cinde MacGugan-Cassidy (E)	Avalon (President)	X	
3.	Ali Saleh (E)	Bell (1 st Vice President)	X	
4.	Raymond Dunton (E)	Bellflower		X
5.	Maria Pulido	Bell Gardens	X	
6.	Naresh Solanki	Cerritos		X
7.	Oralia Rebollo (E)	Commerce		X
8.	Emma Sharif	Compton		X
9.	Elizabeth Alcantar	Cudahy	X	
10.	Sean Ashton (E)	Downey	X	
11.	Luis Roa	Hawaiian Gardens		X
12.	Marilyn Sanabria (E)	Huntington Park	X	
13.	Cory Moss	Industry		X
14.	Ed Eng (E)	La Mirada	X	
15.	Ariel Pe	Lakewood	X	
16.	Suely Saro (E)	Long Beach	X	
17.	Roberto Uranga	Long Beach	X	
18.	Marisela Santana	Lynwood (2 nd Vice President)		X
19.	Heber Marquez	Maywood	X	
20.	Kimberly Cobos-Cawthorne	Montebello		X
21.	Margarita Rios	Norwalk	X	
22.	Vilma Cuellar Stallings	Paramount	X	
23.	Raul Elias	Pico Rivera	X	
24.	Joe Angel Zamora (E)	Santa Fe Springs		X
25.	Edward Wilson (E)	Signal Hill		X
26.	Maria Davila (E)	South Gate (Immediate Past President)	X	
27.	William Davis	Vernon		X
28.	Fernando Dutra (E)	Whittier	X	
29.	Luke Klipp (E)	LA County BOS Office of Sup. Hahn	X	
30.	Martin Reyes	LA County BOS Office of Sup. Solis	X	
31.	Lilly O'Brien	LA County BOS Office of Sup. Mitchell	X	
32.	Sharon Weissman	Port of Long Beach	X	
(E) Executive Committee			Total =	
			21	11

ALSO PRESENT: Nancy Pfeffer, Genny Cisneros, Marisa Perez, Karen Heit, Joel Arevalos, Sandra Mora, Gilbert Saldade, Sumire Gant – COG Staff; Ivy Tsai, COG Attorney; Norman Emerson, Emerson & Associates; Gregory Farr, Caltrans; Karen

Lee, City of Artesia; John Moreno, City of Paramount; Michael Kodama, Eco Rapid; Andres Molina, Flatiron; Thomas Haberkorn, Judith Ruiz – HUB Cities; Jason King, IBI Group; Guadalupe Camberos, Luke Klipp – LA County; Kristine Guerrero, League of California Cities; Grant Henninger, Mobius Planning; Patricia Camacho, Office of Nanette Diaz Barragan; Christina Skacan, Nina Turner – Port of Long Beach; Sarah Patterson, SCAG; Benigno Sandoval, SELACO; Julia Emerson, SoCalGas; Nancy Michali, GCCOG Consultant.

Chair Cassidy asked if there were any amendments; there were no amendments to the agenda.

There were no public comments at this meeting.

Under Matters from the President, Chair Cassidy shared that the City Managers Steering Committee recommended the appointment of Ernie Hernandez, Lynwood City Manager, to the COG Transportation Committee. Member Ashton moved the item; Member Pe seconded it. Chair Cassidy expressed wishes that the holidays be filled filled with great public events, quality family time, and remembrance for those who can not be with us this year. She wished everyone a happy holiday and expressed gratitude to her colleagues and COG staff.

Under Matters from Staff, Executive Director Nancy Pfeffer gave an update on COG activities.

She began with an update on broadband. She reported that six Gateway Cities were included in the CA Department of Technology's Middle Mile Broadband Initiative initial project list. This includes South Gate, Lynwood, Paramount, Bellflower, Compton, and Lakewood. This is an outcome of the partnership with the Los Angeles Digital Equity Action League (LA DEAL), which is under the LAEDC.

A New York Times reporter, Conor Dougherty, contacted the COG in connection with an article he is writing about unpermitted residential units in our region. The COG staff referred him to individual cities, who of course are free to decide whether to speak with him or not.

Ms. Pfeffer noted that she sent out all the Board members, a commemorative pin and pen for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Gateway Cities COG, which was founded in 1996. She also sent a document summarizing the history of the COG, and a brief statement observing the anniversary, which she read to the Board.

Ms. Pfeffer stated that the COG will hire an Associate Planner, who will work on our energy and climate programs and support housing and transportation planning.

Lastly, she provided an update on the I-710 Ad Hoc Committee. The Ad-Hoc Committee has met once since the last Board meeting, November 15th. At that meeting, the Ad-Hoc Committee began discussing a first draft of potential guiding

principles for the future of the I-710 freeway and corridor. Following a presentation of the principles draft, the Ad-Hoc Committee heard public comment, then conducted a discussion. Staff took input and created a second draft, which the Ad-Hoc Committee will be discussing on December 6 at 5 p.m.

The Ad-Hoc Committee will again hear public comment before discussing the second draft. The COG is providing all documents in English and Spanish, showing the changes to the first draft. In addition, the COG is providing simultaneous Spanish translation and interpretation at these meetings where principles are being discussed. The COG prepared a meeting announcement in English and Spanish and is using its own communication channels to get the word out (including asking the Ad-Hoc Committee members to share information).

Last, Ms. Pfeffer expressed gratitude to Metro for allowing the COG to work with their consultants, AECOM and LSA, to support the Ad-Hoc Committee. She is particularly grateful this month to MBI Media, which has provided the translated documents. She thanked Ad-Hoc Committee members Heber Marquez of Maywood and Gabriela Cid of Supervisor Mitchell's office for working with us on the Spanish translations. Their thoughtful input helped ensure the documents will be understandable to the communities affected by this project.

Member O'Brien commented on the COG's digital divide grant. She stated that the lack of connectivity in the Gateway Cities lines up to the research completed by Supervisor Holly Mitchell's office. The County is aggressively pursuing federal and state funding to eliminate the digital divide in our communities. She hopes to work with the COG on this effort.

Chair Cassidy moved to the Consent Calendar. Item B was pulled for discussion. Chair Cassidy asked to approve the remaining Consent Calendar Items A-Y (with the exception of B). Member Ashton moved the item; Member Uranga seconded it. COG Staff Arevalos performed a roll call and the item was approved.

Chair Cassidy began discussion on Item B, Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting of November 3, 2021. Member Weissman asked for a small amendment to the minutes. The minutes stated that "Member Weissman inquired if Metro develops some sort of program to provide technical expertise for cities that don't have the staff or have the information needed to submit grant applications". Member Weissman asked that this be changed to state "Member Weissman asked that Metro develop some sort of program to provide technical expertise for cities that don't have the staff or have the information needed to submit grant applications". Member Davila moved the item; Member Dutra seconded it. COG Staff Arevalos performed a roll call and the item was approved.

Chair Cassidy moved to Report A by SHARE!, who gave a presentation on the Home to Employment Project. The SHARE! team of presenters included Ben Sandoval from the SELACO (Southeast Los Angeles County) Workforce

Development Board (SELACO WDB), Judith Ruiz from Hub Cities Career Center, and Tom Haberkorn from SHARE! Collaborative Housing.

Mr. Sandoval gave a brief overview of the services provided as it relates to housing and employment. The Gateway Cities Council of Governments funds the services; SHARE! Collaborative Housing provides housing and peer supportive services; and SELACO WDB and Hub Cities provide employment services. Together, they have enrolled over 120 participants to date.

Mr. Haberkorn described how participants are found through a variety of outreach strategies, including direct outreach to shelters, encampments, motels, riverbeds, and the streets. There is daily interaction with all Coordinated Entry System (CES) agency case managers and outreach staff and potential participants come from the SELACO WDB or Hub Cities. Mr. Haberkorn stated that they are looking for individuals who are experiencing homelessness in any of the Gateway Cities, and who are willing and eager to find employment. Preferably individuals who have a CES acuity score of average to low, as resources for these individuals are not as great as higher risk ones.

Ms. Ruiz recapped the enrollment process for individuals. Ms. Ruiz went over the career and employment services provided. Career services include mentoring, vocational training, gas cards, job search workshops, uniform and interview attire, GED classes, assistance with post secondary education, and bus tokens. Employment services include job prep, job leads, resume assistance, job recruitment, training, and paid work experience.

Mr. Haberkorn described the SHARE! Collaborative Housing model, which emphasizes that people need to be immersed in a living environment that helps them recover from the various traumas that made them homeless in the first place. S!CH partners with private homeowners with single family detached houses, and has strict requirements and support services.

Lastly, Mr. Haberkorn recapped several success stories that each of the partners has had with individuals from the Gateway Cities. This includes 126 individuals already housed.

Member Davila thanked everyone who is working on these programs and good to hear the success stories. She requested that the group give a presentation to the South Gate City Council, so that community members can hear success stories.

Member Pe stated that he has first-hand, positive experience working with the SELACO Workforce Development Board. SELACO works very hard, and gets the job done.

Ms. Pfeffer acknowledged that the County Board of Supervisors has been providing funding to the COG for these efforts, and acknowledged the County and Supervisors for their support.

Chair Cassidy moved to receive and file the item; Member Dutra seconded it. COG Staff Arevalos performed a roll call and the item was approved.

Chair Cassidy moved to Report B on the I-710 Ad Hoc Committee's activities by Member Alcantar, Chair of the 710 Ad-Hoc Committee. Member Alcantar was ill, so Ms. Pfeffer gave the report instead. She recapped the July 7, 2021 COG Board action to create an I-710 Ad-Hoc Committee. The Ad-Hoc Committee was tasked with making preliminary recommendations regarding the future of the I-710 highway corridor at 4 months, and final recommendations at 6 months. Ms. Pfeffer reported that the Ad-Hoc Committee is making good progress and has completed a second draft of guiding principles, but does not have final principles to report back to the Board.

Given the complex issues in the corridor, the Ad-Hoc Committee wishes to ask the COG Board for four additional months to aim for completing its work. The Ad-Hoc Committee would report back to the Board by (or before) February on guiding principles, and and by June on recommended early action programs/projects.

Member Dutra inquired about the need for additional time, and if there would be an interim report. Ms. Pfeffer responded that the principles will be completed very soon, and they will come back to the COG Board as an interim update.

Member Marquez added that the Ad-Hoc Committee first spent time focusing on what they wanted to accomplish and heard from a variety of community organizations, non-profits and other stakeholders. The committee then focused on creating a set of principles. The Ad-Hoc Committee is working on the second draft now. The next focus will be for the Ad-Hoc Committee to come up with possible actions for the COG Board to consider.

Member Ashton moved the item; Member Davila seconded it. COG Staff Arevalos performed a roll call and the item was approved.

Chair Cassidy moved to Report C by Metro Director Dutra, who gave an update on Metro activity and presented the Transportation Committee's recommendation on the West Santa Ana Branch light rail project.

Member Dutra reported that Metro did not have a board meeting in November, but one is scheduled for tomorrow. Some of the key agenda items that will be discussed include:

Open and Slow Street Grants – Member Dutra offered congratulations to the cities of Hawaiian Gardens, Commerce, and Long Beach for receiving a Metro grant to close their streets and open them up for bicyclists and pedestrians for the day.

Rosecrans/Marquardt Grade Separation – The Board will consider a \$156 million project budget for the Rosecrans/Marquardt Grade Separation Project in Santa Fe Springs. The project is a new bridge overpass at the intersection and will improve safety in the corridor; benefit both Metrolink and Amtrak passengers; and enhance the movement of goods for BNSF.

Transit Security – The Board will consider extending the current transit security contracts with the Sheriff, LAPD, and LBPD to provide security for the next 6 months, as well as another 6 months option if needed. During this time, the Board will await the recommendations from the Public Safety Advisory Committee, including what other public safety alternatives should be explored.

Member Dutra expressed his personal preference to maintain the current law enforcement deployment on our buses and rail system, and to supplement this with additional resources for mental health and outreach for our homeless neighbors. He stressed that Metro must do what they can to ensure the safety of all Metro customers.

LA River Bike Path – The Board will consider agreements for environmental clearance and design work related to the LA River bike path both in downtown LA and the Gateway Cities.

Last, Member Dutra recapped the Transportation Committee’s action on the West Santa Ana Branch. Member Dutra thanked John Moreno and the City Managers for their technical expertise and the Eco Rapid JPA Board for their advocacy and support.

He reported that the Metro Board will be selecting a Locally Preferred Alternative at the January 27 board meeting. The item is first scheduled for Metro Planning and Programming committee’s consideration on January 19. The Metro Board will gather input from many stakeholders – and the Gateway Cities COG is an important one.

He presented the Transportation Committee’s recommended motion that emphasizes that the COG supports construction of the West Santa Ana Branch from Los Angeles Union Station to Pioneer Station as quickly as possible (below):

Motion
Gateway Cities COG Board of Directors
West Santa Ana Branch Project Recommendation

With input from the West Santa Ana Branch (WSAB) City Manager TAC and information from Metro's WSAB Funding Plan, the Gateway Cities COG Board of Directors supports construction of the West Santa Ana Branch from Los Angeles Union Station to Pioneer Station as quickly as possible. This includes –

1. A commitment that the West Santa Ana Branch is Metro's top priority for next-in-line eligible Federal, State, and Local funding;
2. Support for the Metro Staff Preferred Alternative that ensures the fastest timeline to construction and completion of an initial operating segment between Slauson/A Line (Blue) to Pioneer Station, and the full project between Los Angeles Union Station and Pioneer Station;
3. Expedited completion of studies needed to lower the costs and accelerate the construction for the segment from Los Angeles Union Station to Slauson/A Line (Blue);
4. Support for the Eco Rapid Transit Joint Powers Authority's Board of Directors' recommendation to include Design Option 2: Little Tokyo Station; and
5. Identification of all funding sources to help cities meet their Measure M 3% local contribution, including Subregional Equity Funds and in-kind contributions.

Member Marquez commented that Metro should consider using Instagram for meetings and activities related to the LA River bike path. There is a growing cycling community in Southeast LA and they use Instagram. In addition, the younger generation uses Instagram as compared to Facebook.

Member Lima asked where construction on the line would begin – Union Station, the middle, or Artesia. Member Dutra stated he would look into this question and report back to the Board.

David Ikegami, president of the Little Tokyo Business Association, thanked the COG Board Members for their support, and reiterated their support for a station in Little Tokyo.

Member Ashton moved the item; Member Lima seconded it. COG Staff Arevalos performed a roll call and the item was approved.

Chair Cassidy moved to Report D by Gilbert Saldate, COG Homelessness Program Manager, who gave a Homelessness Program update and presented a COG letter to the LA County Blue Ribbon Commission on Homelessness.

Mr. Saldate stated that the round 2 Innovation Projects are still with the County and the contracts will be returned and implemented by January 1, 2022. There is a subgroup of the COG Homelessness TAC that meets to build a better voice and relationship between the County and the cities. They have had 5-6 meetings and it is going very well.

Mr. Saldate recapped the recent “Roadmap Toward Ending Homelessness” event and presentation of the 5-year plan. He acknowledged the good work done by the cities, city councilmembers, and city managers. He will work to bring together the stakeholders to implement the plan and provide updates to the Board.

The COGs have developed a joint letter to the Blue Ribbon Commission on Homelessness (BRCH) to express their concerns with the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority’s (LAHSA) governance structure, and its lack of responsiveness in addressing the unique homeless issues in multiple sub-regions.

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors established the BRCH as part of an ongoing and focused effort to address homelessness. The main mission is to conduct a comprehensive study of the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority’s (LAHSA) governance structure. Two elected Councilmembers are representing the Los Angeles County COGs on the BRCH: Becky Shevlin, City of Monrovia (San Gabriel Valley COG) and Christian Horvath, City of Redondo Beach (South Bay Cities COG).

Mr. Saldate reviewed some of the key recommendations included in the letter to BRCH, and requested that the Board approve the Gateway Cities COG signing the joint letter. Mr. Saldate stated that the letter was reviewed by the City Managers Steering Committee.

Member Rios moved the item; Member Lima seconded it. COG Staff Arevalos performed a roll call and the item was approved.

There were no Matters from Board of Directors.

Adjournment: Chair Cassidy adjourned the meeting at 7:19 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Pfeffer, Executive Director