

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GATEWAY CITIES COUNCIL OF
GOVERNMENTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**
Gateway Cities Council of Governments 16401 Paramount Blvd.
Paramount, California
March 2, 2022
Zoom Conference

A recording of the Council of Governments Board of Directors meeting can be found at: [CLICK HERE](#)

Presentations shared with the Board of Directors can be found at: [CLICK HERE](#)

GCCOG Chair Cinde Cassidy called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm.

GCCOG Administrative Assistant Sandra Mora took roll call. A quorum was established.

#	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.	Liseth Flores	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.	Claudia Frometa (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.	Todd Rogers	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.	Angie Jimenez	Montebello		X
21.	Rick Ramirez	Norwalk	X	
22.	Vilma Cuellar Stallings	Paramount	X	
23.	Erik Lutz	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.	Herlinda Chico (E)	LA County BOS Office of Sup. Hahn		X

30.	Kimberly Ortega	LA County BOS Office of Sup. Solis		X
31.	Robert Jackson	LA County BOS Office of Sup. Mitchell		X
32.	Sharon Weissman	Port of Long Beach	X	
		(E) Executive Committee	Total =	26
				6

ALSO PRESENT: Nancy Pfeffer, Genny Cisneros, Joel Arevalos, Sandra Mora, Marisa Perez, Aileen Qin, Melani Smith – COG Staff; Ivy Tsai, COG Attorney; Norman Emerson, Emerson & Associates; Mark Watts, Smith Watts; Mario Dagonel, Tree People; Michele Romolini, LMU; Karen Lee, City of Artesia; Tyler Bonanno-Curley, City of Long Beach; Christina Skacan, Shana Espinoza – POLB; Brian Ulaszewski, City Fabrick; David Maistros, City of Avalon; Patrick Atwater, CA FWD; Julie Cooper, EPS; Franci Levine-Grater, LANI; Mark Dierking, Metro; Sara Patterson, SCAG; Wilma Franco, SELA.

Chair Cassidy asked if there were any amendments; Chair Cassidy asked if reports A and B could be swapped in order.

There were no public comments at this meeting.

Under Matters from the President, Chair Cassidy shared that she has been working with Executive Director Nancy Pfeffer on contract controls and looking at the COG's legacy contracts in more detail. They are looking for any recommendations that could be implemented, as well as completion of the required audits. In regards to Consent Calendar Item V (COG Opposition to the Indian Lands Initiative Related to Sports Betting), Chair Cassidy stated that there was an overwhelming show of support from member cities for this item at the last meeting. She stated that this was a pinpoint reason why the COG should exist, and how cities can work more closely together in times of need.

Under Matters from Staff, Executive Director Nancy Pfeffer provided a staffing update. Joel Arevalos will be leaving the COG as of April 15th after three years of absolutely stellar service to the COG. The COG will have a Coro fellow for the first time. Jessica Hale will be joining the COG for 8 weeks starting in mid March. She'll be focusing on boosting our communications capabilities, focusing on Homelessness and the West Santa Ana Branch Transit project. Ms. Pfeffer reported that the state recently announced awards to cities under its new Clean California Grant program. The Gateway Cities collectively received over \$24 million in grants or about one-tenth the available statewide funding. The I-710 Ad-Hoc Committee met on February 7th and received a refresher presentation by Metro consultants on the early action projects that had been under consideration up until 2021.

Chair Cassidy moved to the Consent Calendar, Items A-BB. Member Dunton moved the item; Member Ramirez seconded it. COG Staff Mora performed a roll call and the item was approved. Member Rogers abstained from Item B.

Mark Watts, COG lobbyist, presented Report B, Sacramento Update. Mr. Watts reported that Toks Omishakin was sworn in last week, and is now the CALSTA Secretary. The Administration is now working on the Caltrans Director replacement. Mr. Watts congratulated the COG Board on West Santa Ana Branch advocacy and collaboration at the Metro Board. He recapped the Governor's transportation budget proposal, and the Assembly and Senate budget and legislative committee discussions. There was significant legislative discussion on High-Speed Rail, gas tax holiday, and infrastructure package. He also mentioned the state and local sales tax initiative, which will have implications to cities and joint powers authorities. He closed by stating that he will continue to look for opportunities for the COG to meet with our State Legislature. Member Rogers moved the item; Member Dutra seconded it. Item was received and filed with no objections.

Mario Dagonel, Tree People, and Michele Romolini, Loyola Marymount University presented Report A, Urban Tree Canopy Project Update. Ms. Romolini reviewed the data-driven, tree prioritization process used in the Gateway Cities area, highlighting the work in Commerce, Lynwood, Paramount, and Vernon. Work will soon begin in Montebello. Mr. Dagonel reviewed Tree People's community engagement efforts in Southeast LA, including targeted community outreach, virtual tree summit, and residents' prioritization process. He reviewed the types of trees that can be planted and the process used for residents to identify where they want trees planted in their communities. Air quality was the number one concern identified in the example.

Member Frometa emphasized the importance of community engagement and cultural considerations, especially the focus on people of color. Member Alcantar acknowledged Tree People's work in Cudahy and also emphasized the cultural aspect of tree selection. Residents in her community requested fruit and citrus trees. Member Dutra asked about recommendations for tree types, as it relates to roots and impact to sidewalks. Mr. Dagonel highlighted the "Right Tree, Right Place" approach to selecting and locating trees. Member Rebollo acknowledged the tree planting in Commerce, and highlighted the excellent community engagement efforts. Member Santana thanked Tree People and recapped the tree canopy prioritization efforts in Lynwood. Item was received and filed with no objections.

Metro Director Fernando Dutra presented Report C, Report from Transportation Committee. Director Dutra recapped the Metro Board's update on Eastside Phase 2, a 9-mile light rail extension from East Los Angeles to Whittier. Metro reported that they plan to further study two Initial Operating Segments and designs in the Draft EIR.

Metro will report back in April 2022 with recommendations on how to accelerate and fund each of the Initial Operating Segments and the entire project segment.

Director Dutra thanked the Washington Coalition Cities for their advocacy. Metro plans to release the draft EIR in late spring/early summer of this year and the Metro Board will select the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) in Fall. As we get closer to the selection of the LPA for this project, Director Dutra will work with COG staff to develop an Eastside Phase 2 advocacy plan, similar to what the COG has done with the West Santa Ana Branch.

The Metro Board received Metro's first detailed response to a series of Board motions related to a new public safety framework and a peer review of its Customer Codes of Conduct. CEO Stephanie Wiggins reviewed public safety survey results from customers and employees. One layer in Metro's public safety strategy involves refining Metro's homelessness outreach and engagement efforts. CEO Wiggins outlined several possible partnerships to address these challenges. She also highlighted key milestones including the release of an RFP for unarmed Transit Security Ambassadors and a new law enforcement RFP in March 2022.

Director Dutra concluded with an update on WSAB advocacy efforts. This included FTA notifying Metro that the WSAB has been approved into the Project Development (PD) phase of the Capital Investment Grant (CIG) program. He also recapped the COG's advocacy efforts related to the state budget and WSAB support letters. The COG is working with our WSAB cities to finalize their Master Cooperative Agreements with Metro, including Artesia, Bellflower, Cerritos, Cudahy, South Gate and Vernon. Item was received and filed with no objections.

Gateway Cities COG Housing Director Melani Smith presented Report D, Approval of Letter to members of the Assembly Housing and Community Development (HCD) Committee. She recapped the challenges related to the 6th cycle housing element update, including cities being non-compliant as of February 14, 2022 and ineligible for a number of state grant programs supporting housing. She also discussed AB 1398, which required cities and the County to complete rezoning for new housing elements by October 15, 2022.

She stated that Orange County COG had submitted a letter to HCD on this issue, and that SCAG had requested an Assembly Committee informational hearing on the status of housing element updates in the SCAG region and non-compliance impacts. Ms. Smith requested that the COG Board approve the letter, which includes a request for an informational hearing, ability for the the state to award state funding conditionally, and that state funding won't be revoked if rezoning isn't completed by October 15, 2022. The letter will also request an extension of the AB 1398 deadline.

Member Dutra asked about housing element submissions and how to make the scrutiny fairer and standard for cities. Ms. Smith responded that this has long been a problem, and that the multi-review process is concerning and is getting more complicated. Member Lima moved the item; Chair Cassidy seconded it. Item was approved.

Gateway Cities COG Homeless Director Gilbert Saldate presented Item E, Homelessness Initiative Update. Mr. Saldate showed a video titled "Results Based Accountability (RBA)" by the Results Leadership Group. He stated that each city will be able to send one person to RBA training. City managers have received the information. He also sent out the 2021 impact report and the 5-year plan.

Under Matters from Board of Directors, Member Weissman shared that the Port of Long Beach has opened up Community Sponsorship applications. They are due at the end of March.

Chair Cassidy acknowledged that the City of Avalon has hired David Maistros as the new City Manager and thanked him for attending meeting.

Adjournment: Chair Cassidy adjourned the meeting at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Pfeffer, Executive Director