



Metro

Meeting Notes

Subject: **Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project “FastLanes”**
 I-110 North Corridor Advisory Group (CAG)

Date: Wednesday, February 3, 2009

Time: 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Location: Community Build (Leimert Park Village), 4305 Degan Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90008

In Attendance:

CAG Members	Organization
Valaida Gory	Mid-City Neighborhood Council
Kevin Smith	Consolidated Board of Realtist
Michelle Banks-Ordone	CRA/LA
Fernando Ramirez	Supervisor Ridley-Thomas
Christine Lee	Korean Culture Center/NANDC
Michael Nauyoc	Museum of Contemporary Art
Bill Watanabe	Little Tokyo Service Center
Michael Jones	Crenshaw Chamber of Commerce
Gwendolyn Flynn	Community Health Council
Elliott Petty	Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy
Yolanda Jones	Empowerment Congress Neighborhood Development Council
Mike Mostowitz	USC University Relations
Monica Carlos	Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative
Presenters	Organization
Lynda Bybee	Metro
Stephanie Wiggins	Metro
Conan Cheung	Metro
Charles Fuhs	PB
Capt. Merritt Mielke	CHP
Other Attendees	Organization
Susan Gilmore	Metro
Annelle Albarran	Metro
Randy Lamm	Metro
Alice Wiggins	PB
Charles Fuhs	PB
Heidi Stamm	HSPA
Sgt. Bill McKenna	CHP
Capt. Merritt Mielke	CHP
Roxi Reeves	LA Group
Veronica De Silva	LA Group
Edgar Gutierrez	LA Group
Kwame Smith	LA Group

In addition to our CAG members a few curious community members attended the meeting as well.

I. Introductions

Lynda Bybee facilitated the meeting, welcomed and thanked the participants for their attendance at this second set of quarterly CAG meetings. CAG members were asked to introduce themselves. Hand-outs were sent prior to the meetings via e-mail so that participants would have the opportunity to review the materials which included: meeting notes from the November CAG meetings, the meeting agenda, the CAG Roster and a list of other HOT lane projects in the United States. These materials were also provided in hard copy at each of the three meetings.

II. Concept of Operations

- Stephanie Wiggins - Project Overview & Current Status
 - Project background/history was provided.
 - Traffic in LA County is at a crisis level on all freeways throughout Southern California.
 - The current crisis provides an opportunity for systematic and comprehensive change due to this demonstration project and the \$210 million grant.
 - Metro is partners with Caltrans and other operators for the implementation of this grant.
 - The CAG meetings are a key component of this project's outreach and communications plan.
 - One of our achievements is that we were able to secure the \$210 million by meeting our criteria for compliance.
 - In order for this project to be effective in reducing congestion and managing traffic a critical component and goal is to encourage people to utilize car/van pools and express transit.
 - Equity is an important issue. We want to make sure these choices are available to everyone including low income commuters.
 - Our commitment is for a one-year demonstration.
 - With regard to pricing we are looking at options that will benefit everyone.
 - Converting HOV lanes to toll lanes is more economical than building additional lanes or roads.
 - The federal government is very interested in doing studies on parking meters.
- Conan Cheung – Transit Operations & Transit Facilities
 - A large part of this study is focused on improving bus service in the project corridors and increasing bus service in Downtown LA.
 - We want to ensure that we have the necessary capacity of bus service and safe attractive parking.
 - Enhanced flexibility will allow people to use the bus service. We will have off-board fare payment our base will be \$1.25.
 - We are going to enhance security for the Harbor Expressway.
 - One of the project's priorities is working with LADOT for our routes through Downtown.
 - We will provide buses to Gardena Transit and Foothill Transit.
 - We are allocating money for additional van pools perhaps for smaller niche markets. Our plan calls for an additional 100 van pools.
 - We are proposing additional parking for the Pomona Station, with an additional investment in CCTV's and higher frequency service which will attract people.
 - The Union Division would be in Downtown LA. It includes four new Metro buses.
- Stephanie Wiggins - Intelligent Parking Management (IPM)
 - The federal government wants major cities to study parking.
 - A significant amount of parking traffic is from "cruisers" looking for a place to park.

- We are looking into the possibility of parking meters along bus routes. This would be based on demand.
- Charles Fuhs - Tolling
 - When carpool lanes first opened, they were travelled about 50 to 60 miles per hour.
 - This demonstration project is an effort to maximize flow and manage traffic.
 - We have more two-person carpools on the road now than previously.
 - Several operational changes are being implemented: 1) Motorcycles, hybrids and carpools would travel “free”; 2) We will try to fill in in the middle of the day when we have capacity; 3) Re-striping for transition to FastLanes.
 - The El Monte corridor will have an additional lane added for buses.
 - The I-110 Adams Blvd off-ramp will be re-striped to create another right hand turn lane and Adams Blvd will be widened between the off-ramp and Flower Street to add a left hand turn to improve traffic flow.
 - Pricing gives us a better management tool and enforcement techniques.
- Captain Mielke - Enforcement Strategy
 - The CHP will come up with an enforcement plan.
 - The CHP supports the “tolling” concept, to increase traffic flow. We are happy to alleviate some of the congestion.
 - We are hoping to have “visible enforcement” to monitor usage.
 - This won’t cost the taxpayers any more money. There will be dedicated officers at certain times of the day to monitor the lanes. MTA will be the administrator.
 - We are working with Caltrans to place strategic readers to determine if vehicles are equipped with a transponder.

III. CAG Members - Questions & Comments

▪Community Outreach

- What are the demographics, who shops and works where?
- How much of the project’s budget is dedicated to outreach and transit?

▪Transit Operations (including van pool, bus, rideshare)

- What about feeder services and security?
- This concept is not to reduce traffic but to distribute it more evenly across all lanes, correct?
- Is there a model or a best guess for what the capacity is for the lanes?
- How do you determine the maximum capacity for demand for pricing?
- Given the current state of the economy has there been any adjustment to the grant?
- At what Ridership capacity is Metro currently operating?
- Are issues being addressed preemptively to avoid the shortcomings that the South Bay is experiencing?
- What mitigation measures are being taken to diminish accidents?
- Is it correct that on the I-110 two or more passengers ride free and SOV must pay?
- I agree that most of the money should be applied toward transit.

▪Toll Technology and Infrastructure

- Is there a projected price for toll rates?
- How and when will construction of sensors be done?

▪Intelligent Parking Management

- Has the parking capacity for Downtown been determined?

IV. Survey Questions for CAG Members

- Lynda Bybee presented the CAG members with a series of 5 questions to elicit focused discussion and ideas.

1. What aspects of this project interest you most?

▪Community Outreach

- We need to get past some of the perceptions that the public holds. People are going to say, “why now, with our current economic situation”?
- You need to establish good talking points.

▪Transit Operations:

- The environment – gas consumption and improving the flow of traffic and reducing congestion.
- Sustainability
- Anything we can do to relieve congestion is a positive thing. I am interested in what will happen west of El Monte.
- This is long overdue and appreciated.
- Congestion reduction, the environment and air quality.
- The impact on the transit-dependent who may not have the money for tolls.
- What is your long-term strategy to maintain this project?
- We need to broaden the base and encourage public transit usage. How do you get people Downtown?
- Seniors complain about public transit in the South Bay area.
- We need to get people to use different modes of transit.
- What is the schedule for Intelligent Parking Management? Will the deadlines be met?
- Effective/efficient transit is overdue.)
- Re-routing traffic doesn't cost a lot of money. I am interested to know what follow-up will occur after the demonstration project ends. (
- We need feasible solutions. With the economy in its current state I am concerned that the demonstration may not expand to other communities.
- There is an urgent need of this project. We need enhanced service for existing riders.

2. Which benefits offered by the demonstration project would impact your communities?

- Is it your goal to be self-sustaining? (Michael Nauyoc)

3. What are the most important messages the project team needs to provide to the public, to get a better understanding of the project?

▪Community Outreach

- It is essential that the education process start early. Billboards are an effective tool for sharing information.
- The meeting notes format is excellent. Shows that you've recorded questions and concerns that are important to the community.
- The public needs to know that this project is about enhancements as well, not just speed.
- There are people on the freeway that go too slow. Maybe there could be training or public service education effort on “how to drive on the freeway.”
- The ROW needs to be yielded to emergency vehicles. Usage of safe driving practices.
- There should be an ordinance for people hauling items in an unsafe manner.
- You need to emphasize the short wait times for public transit, the safety of buses and the minimal cost of public transit.

- o Promote the ease and convenience of travel and affordable pricing. Use “Twitter” and new media tools for the younger generation.
- o Develop messages on how to save money. Emphasize car/van pools. Messages should be drafted in multiple languages? This change is a good thing.
- o It is no longer an option to be a single-person driver during peak hours. There needs to be incentives for businesses. The public should know that there are limited resources to address this issue.
- o Identify employers that are already doing the right thing by the environment and offer a certificate or recognition of their efforts.

4. What are other sources where you might be learning about this project?

Community Outreach

- o I drive to San Diego every other weekend for work. I gladly pay the \$4.75 toll! Highlight the benefits of the project.

5. If there is anything we need to provide to you as advisory group members, let us know.

Community Outreach

- o Continue to work with affinity groups. Do not use only mailers.
- o Is it your intention to use this CAG as a focus group?
- o Word- of- mouth is very helpful.

V. Closing Remarks & Next Steps

Lynda thanked all participants for sharing their time and contributions. She reiterated that the CAG meetings would occur on a quarterly basis. Additionally, Metro would like to arrange a summit which would convene all three of the CAGs (I-10, I-110 North & I-110 South) later this year. Continued communication and participation was encouraged.