



US 101 FREEWAY CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT STUDY PUBLIC OUTREACH

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS ON FEASIBLE STRATEGIES
MEETING REPORTS

Central Region
(Route 27, Topanga Canyon, Woodland Hills to Universal City)

Tuesday, March 19, 2002
Los Angeles Valley College

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US 101 Freeway Corridor Improvement Study Meeting Notes

Meeting With:	Major Property Owners – Central Region	Meeting Date:	March 19, 2002
Attendance:	Ben Dolin, Career Redirection Sharon Keyser, Latham & Watkins (Universal Studios) Clare Look-Jaeger, LLG Engineers (Universal Studios) Irwin Rosenberg, Laidlaw Transit	Location:	Los Angeles Valley College
		Notes By:	Andrea Rodriguez

Team Members In Attendance:

Linda Taira, Caltrans
Sam Almeddine, Caltrans
Karin Hodin, MTA
Lorenzo Garrido, Parsons Brinckerhoff
John Kulpa, HNTB
Laurie Newman, Office of Senator Sheila Kuehl
Lisa Levy Buch, Office of Councilmember Cindy Miscikowski
Julie Gertler, Consensus Planning Group
Josh Gertler, Consensus Planning Group
Andrea Rodriguez, Consensus Planning Group
Alisa Kwun, Consensus Planning Group

Introduction:

Major Property Owners in the Central region were invited to attend a roundtable meeting to discuss the US 101 Freeway Corridor Improvement Study. Four major property owners in attendance provided specific input on the alternatives presented to them in a presentation by the Study team.

Format

The roundtable discussion began with introductions of the project team and attendees. Following the introductions, the project team provided an overview of the Study, which included details of current and projected conditions of the 101 Freeway, to allow the participants to better understand the purpose and need of the Study. Various informational boards were displayed, depicting the Study goals and objectives, the Study schedule and public participation opportunities, and the current improvements planned up to year 2025. With the overview of the Study serving as a backdrop, the project team presented and explained the 12 Feasible Strategies that are under consideration. Following the presentation, a discussion was initiated by the project team to gain feedback on the Strategies.

Questions Asked

- Has the Study team looked at the cost impacts of each alternative?
- Is the Study a result of Senator Kuehl's recent legislation?
- What is the process of the Study?
- How long will construction take if a Build is selected?
- What is the difference in impacts between Builds 2&3 in terms of elevating vs. at-grade?
- How long do right-of-way negotiations take?

Summary of Comments

Build Strategies

The participants believed that improving the arterials is essential to the reduction of congestion on the 101 Freeway. Much of the traffic on the 101 Freeway is believed to be caused by travelers using the Freeway for local travel. If arterials were improved, many of these people would stay off of the Freeway and use surface streets. One suggestion was made to improve the signal timing along Ventura Blvd to improve traffic flow. A single solution will not be found for the problems on the 101 Freeway. A multi-modal approach, improving the freeway, streets, and public transit will need to be taken.

HOV Lanes and On-ramps

The property owners felt that adding HOV, or carpool lanes, would benefit commuters. In addition, major improvements need to be made to on-ramps that overflow onto surface streets. Increasing the capacity of on-ramps will allow street traffic to flow better. Reverse commuter lanes and one-way streets were mentioned as part of building "smart" streets.

Public Transportation

Although there is no one solution to the congestion, many favored the promotion of public transportation. However, the participants agreed that transit must provide quicker transportation than cars in order to encourage use. A mixed-flow lane will not achieve a faster alternative since it only responds to population growth. An HOV lane or a dedicated busway extending to the Thousand Oaks and Calabasas areas is a better option than a mixed-flow lane. Participants added that the inconvenience of having to use two transportation sources for commuting will deter people from using public transportation. Specific to the Central region, the East/West busway will provide good service but it does not link to other areas outside of the Valley past Warner Center. Nonetheless, the participants felt that the East/West busway will test whether or not express busways work.

It was discussed in the meeting that buses were more cost-effective and offer greater flexibility than railway. However, the group was in support of the concept of railway if it connected at Universal City past Warner Center and into Ventura County. A multi-modal form of transportation was also supported by the majority of the group. There was a suggestion made to study Glendale's Beeline bus system.

Potential Impacts

- A concern was voiced regarding the impacts of an elevated structure and widening. These options are not accepted by the Valley residents.
- Elevated structures are of concern during earthquakes.

Suggestions For Improvement

- Burbank Blvd. needs to be elevated to eliminate the flood channel issues, which force cars onto the 101 Freeway.
- Reverse commute lanes should be considered.

- Creating a cut-through arterial on Oxnard may alleviate traffic on the 101 Freeway.

Other Comments and Concerns Addressed

- Many believed that the development of additional mixed flow lanes will only cause more congestion due to the increase of drivers using these lanes, thus increasing congestion on arterials.
- Focus on major trip generators and improving local transit systems.
- The traffic signals at the intersection of Burbank and Sepulveda are not coordinated.
- The intersections at the on/off ramps of Sepulveda and Van Nuys are always congested.
- The “Select-Link Analysis,” which shows lengths of trips during peak hours should be reviewed for this Study.
- The Sepulveda Basin must be considered in the Study.
- Consider the increase in congestion due to the technology corridor from Glendale to Santa Barbara.
- Vibration issues must be addressed.

US 101 Freeway Corridor Improvement Study Meeting Notes

Meeting With:	Business Organizations/Interests – Central Region	Meeting Date:	March 19, 2002
Attendance:	Mark Edwards, Warner Center Scott Schmidt, VICA Brad Rosenheim, Warner Center Association Sharon Keyser, Latham & Watkins (Universal Studios) Clare Look-Jaeger, LLG Engineers (Universal Studios) Lisa Levy Bush, Council member Miscikowki Laurie Newman, State Senator Kuehl	Location:	Los Angeles Valley College
		Notes By:	Andrea Rodriguez

Team Members Attendance:

Linda Taira, Caltrans
Karin Hodin, MTA
Lorenzo Garrido, Parsons Brinckerhoff
John Kulpa, HNTB
Laurie Newman, Office of Senator Sheila Kuehl
Lisa Levy Buch, Office of Councilmember Cindy Miscikowski
Julie Gertler, Consensus Planning Group
Josh Gertler, Consensus Planning Group
Andrea Rodriguez, Consensus Planning Group
Alisa Kwun, Consensus Planning Group

Introduction

Business Organizations/Interests in the Central region were invited to attend a roundtable meeting to discuss the US 101 Freeway Corridor Improvement Study. Five representatives from the Business Organizations/Interests groups attended and provided specific input on the Strategies presented by the project team.

Format

The roundtable discussion began with introductions of the project team and attendees. Following the introductions, the project team provided an overview of the Study, which included details of current and projected conditions of the 101 Freeway, to allow the participants to better understand the purpose and need of the Study. Various informational boards were displayed, depicting the Study goals and objectives, the Study schedule and public participation opportunities, and the current improvements planned up to year 2025. With the overview of the Study serving as a backdrop, the project team presented and explained the 12 Feasible Strategies that are under consideration. Following the presentation, a discussion was initiated by the project team to gain feedback on the Strategies.

Questions Asked

- What type of rail will be implemented (i.e., Monorail or Light Rail)?
- When will you determine right-of-way impacts for the proposed strategies? Will it be before your May deadline?
- Have you determined where the right-of-way impacts will be if the freeway is widened? How will you deal with right-of-way impacts for stations?

- In all elevated Strategies, what would happen at over-crossings?
- What types of improvements to Cahuenga Blvd. are included as part of the arterial improvements?
- On/Off ramp improvements should be considered at Cahuenga and Barham Boulevards to utilize their capacity.
- Is Fallbrook off-ramp included in the Strategies?
- Would closing gaps increase capacity?
- Does FHWA allow for exceptions when requiring that freeways to be brought up to standard when making new improvements?

Summary of Comments

Build Strategies

Proposed transit stations at Topanga Canyon and De Soto would serve the Warner Center area. Participants were in favor of Strategies 2 and 3 because these Builds seemed the most practical, especially with connectors to the East/West busway. A suggestion was made to improve congestion regarding the area at Warner Center. The Warner Center representatives preferred taking a pragmatic and realistic approach to improving the US 101 Freeway and felt that the TSM/TDM Strategy enhances what is currently available and is likely to be the Strategy that the Study will recommend.

Public Transportation

Many believed that the MTA's construction of the East/West busway will attract transit users and alleviate some congestion. Warner Center has plans to develop a transit hub that will need to connect to the 101 Freeway and carpool lanes. The 60-acre Northrop property could be converted into transit center and provide parking.

Potential Impacts Raised

- The Ahmanson Ranch development will have significant traffic impacts on the 101 Freeway.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Participants explained that the Study needs to involve residents and homeowners in the Valley to select the best Strategy.
- Create a solution that combines transit use and improved arterial streets.
- Closing gaps on Saticoy may provide another alternative for east/west travel.
- Universal would prefer arterial improvements on Cahuenga Blvd.
- The Northrop property, a 60-acre property on the east side of Canoga, located in the Warner Center area, should be developed into a transit center since land is available for such use.
- The missing-movements (170/134/101) should be considered in all Strategies.
- The Study should consider an on/off ramp for Fallbrook; they are currently undergoing a specific plan for their city.

Other Concerns and Comments

- Participants from the business group would like to see a preliminary evaluation and analysis on the right-of-way impacts before narrowing down the Strategies to 2-3. The attorney for Universal stressed the need for early detailed evaluation of the Strategies because they have in the past struggled with city and county entities coming up with alternatives that just did not work for this area.
- The group would like the Study to explain the effects and impacts of choosing one Strategy over another.
- Adding to the congestion around Universal City is the use of Barham Blvd. to get to Burbank.
- Cahuenga is constantly congested since it parallels the 101 Freeway. Further, when an incident occurs on the Freeway, cars use this street as the alternative.
- Cahuenga Blvd., and the abandoned ramps at Barham are programmed into the Barham-Cahuenga project.
- Universal would like to review the Caltrans data in justification for missing movements on State Highways 170 and 134 and US Highway 101 interchanges.

US 101 Freeway Corridor Study Meeting Notes

Meeting With:	Community Organizations/Institutions – Central Region	Meeting Date:	March 19, 2002
Attendance:	Gerald Silver, Homeowners of Encino and Coalition of Freeway Residents John Kolacinski, DeVry	Location:	Los Angeles Valley College
		Notes By:	Andrea Rodriguez

Team Members Attendance:

Linda Taira, Caltrans
Sam Almeddine, Caltrans
Karin Hodin, MTA
Lorenzo Garrido, Parsons Brinckerhoff
John Kulpa, HNTB
Josh Gertler, Consensus Planning Group
Andrea Rodriguez, Consensus Planning Group
Alisa Kwun, Consensus Planning Group

Introduction:

Community Organizations/Institutions in the Central region were invited to attend a roundtable meeting to discuss the US 101 Freeway Corridor Improvement Study. Two representatives from community groups attended and provided their perspectives and specific input on the Strategies presented to them by the Study team. The Coalition of Freeway Residents consists of residents living within 8 miles to the north, south, east, and west of the Freeway.

Format

The roundtable discussion began with introductions of the project team and attendees. Following the introductions, the project team provided an overview of the Study, which included details of current and projected conditions of the 101 Freeway, to allow the participants to better understand the purpose and need of the Study. Various informational boards were displayed, depicting the Study goals and objectives, the Study schedule and public participation opportunities, and the current improvements planned up to year 2025. With the overview of the Study serving as a backdrop, the project team presented and explained the 12 Feasible Strategies that are under consideration. Following the presentation, a discussion was initiated by the project team to gain feedback on the Strategies.

Questions Asked

- Has the Study team contacted the US 101 High Tech Corridor?

Summary of Comments

Build Strategies

Gerald Silver began the discussion by stating what the groups he represents are not opposed to. They are not opposed to isolated improvements to ramps and

interchanges, arterials and the public transit system and are supportive of the TSM/TDM alternative. He mentioned that Caltrans is doing positive projects such as the I-405/US 101 interchange improvements, and it is these types of improvements that should be considered for the 101 Freeway. They are opposed to widening and/or double-decking the Freeway. His concern is that most of the Strategies involve right-of-way acquisitions, which will impact many homes and businesses. Further, he believes that Encino residents will not benefit from improvements such as express busways.

Elevated structures will require large segments of the Freeway to be closed at one time further increasing the impacts to the community. When considering or evaluating the elevated Strategies, the liquefaction issues of the Sepulveda basin must be considered.

Public Transportation

The DeVry representative commented that students would benefit from mass transit into West Hills. Use of public transportation would decrease the amount of car trips in and out of West Hills. A campus population at the West Hills site is currently at 3,500 students. Anything that appeases congestion for the students will be helpful. Only a small percentage of their students use public transit.

Other Comments and Concerns Addressed

- Vibration and noise will always be an issue to the local residents dating back to the eighties when Encino residents sought after soundwalls from Caltrans.
- Safety was also felt to be a concern and the increase of accidents on the Freeway.
- HOV lanes cause accidents from drivers darting in and out of lanes.
- Drainage or run off from the Freeway into neighborhoods was also an issue.
- Need to look at other freeways such as the 118 and those that Caltrans previously considered -- "Reseda to the Sea," Whitnall Freeway, Beverly Hills Freeway, etc. Other freeway alternatives will reduce the capacity on the 101 Freeway.
- Public outreach efforts need to be improved by Caltrans. To get support for these Strategies, look to the West Valley and Hollywood business groups who feel none of the impacts associated with these types of improvements. Caltrans however, should also consider and get input from those who reside along the Freeway.
- Consider an Oxnard cut through to provide another east/west alternative.
- Consider a north-south cut through (Havenhurst/ Louise) that doesn't currently exist because of the basin.
- There were concerns for long-time residents of the Valley and for their safety.

US 101 Freeway Corridor Improvement Study Meeting Notes

Meeting With:	Homeowners Groups/Residents – Central Region	Meeting Date:	March 19, 2002
Attendance:	<i>See attachment for meeting attendees</i>	Location:	Los Angeles Valley College
Team Members Attendance:		Notes By:	Suzanne Ngo- Tran

Linda Taira, Caltrans
Karin Hodin. MTA
Lorenzo Garrido, Parsons Brinckerhoff
Laurie Newman, Office of Senator Sheila Kuehl
Lisa Levy-Buch, Office of Councilmember Cindy Miscikowski
Julie Gertler, Consensus Planning Group
Josh Gertler, Consensus Planning Group
Andrea Rodriguez, Consensus Planning Group
Suzanne Ngo-Tran, Consensus Planning Group

Introduction

Homeowners Groups/Residents in the Central region were invited to the roundtable discussion to present feedback and comment on the Strategies proposed for improving the 101 Freeway. A newsletter stating possible widening of the freeway was created by the Encino Homeowners Association, which attracted a large attendance of 55 individuals. The newsletter discussed the possible widening and double-decking of the 101 Freeway, which alarmed the majority of the group. Participants were concerned about the proximity of their homes to the Freeway and the consequences of widening.

Format

The roundtable discussion began with introductions of the project team and attendees. Following the introductions, the project team provided an overview of the Study, which included details of current and projected conditions of the 101 Freeway, to allow the participants to better understand the purpose and need of the Study. Various informational boards were displayed, depicting the Study goals and objectives, the Study schedule and public participation opportunities, and the current improvements planned up to year 2025. With the overview of the Study serving as a backdrop, the project team presented and explained the 12 Feasible Strategies that are under consideration. Following the presentation, a discussion was initiated by the project team to gain feedback on the Strategies.

Questions Asked

- How will noise and dust be mitigated?
- Pertaining to land usage, what is the policy for right-of-way acquisitions?
- Will the Study process guarantee future development or improvements?
- How will local businesses and communities be affected?
- When will the right-of-way takings be discussed as part of the Strategies?

Summary of Comments

Build Strategies

The main concern voiced from the residents was in opposition towards any construction on the Freeway. The Central region consists of many adjacent home and business owners, who feel that widening the freeway and any right-of-way acquisition would have significant impacts on their communities. Others believed that the Study would lead to further construction and only increase negative impacts.

A few participants believed that additional lanes would be a short-term improvement, but problems at the intersections will continue to exist. Some of the participants firmly believed that construction must end; adding capacity to the freeway will only attract more commuters onto the highway and create heavier congestion.

Public Transportation

During the meeting, residents discussed transit issues and concerns but some felt that improving the transit system is the most viable Strategy for alleviating the congestion on the 101 Freeway. Additionally, comments were made suggesting that funding for the Study should be invested towards adding railway and extending the Chandler busway. Construction of railway on the side of the Freeway is favored over the middle of the Freeway, which would raise the issues and concerns of cross-over traffic. There were those however, who felt that people would still refuse to use transit and use their cars instead.

Other Comments and Concerns Addressed

Throughout the discussion of the Strategies, the Homeowner Groups and Residents commented on the following issues:

- Participants believed that there was not a need for a Study since traffic congestion has been studied in the past, and there has not been much improvement as a result.
- A participant believed that the Study needs to re-educate the public on other factors that lead to traffic congestion.
- Surface streets need to be preserved for emergencies.
- Sound walls need to be built to protect adjacent residents.
- The Highland off-ramp is a trouble spot that needs to be fixed.
- The Santa Monica Mountains need additional roads.
- Insert one-way streets on local arterials to alleviate congestion and decrease the number of vehicles on the highway.
- Consider future generations and plan appropriately.

US 101 Corridor Improvement Study
Central Homeowner Groups/Residents
Meeting Notes

Attendance:

Larry Horner, Congressman Brad Sherman	Sheldon Water, L. A. Rail Transit
Frank & Nancy Randak, AVT Train	Harry Flynn, W.T.B.R.A
Tony Di Leo, AVT	Glen Roe, Resident
Charlotte Wosk, North Hollywood Terrace Homeowners Association	Lynda Rygh, Resident
Patrick Aubuckou, Lake Balboa Neighborhood Association	Dave Petterson, Resident
Richard-Vera Shaffran, Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association	Carla Kravet, Resident
Marcella Wells, Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association	Connie Montagna, Resident
David Rankell, Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association	John Coghlan, Resident
Mikie Maloney, Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association	David Doriom, Resident
Henry R. Young, Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association	Debra Parsons, Resident
Wayne Williams, Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association	Irvin Bennett, Resident
J.R. Newcom, Encino Homeowners Association	Mrs. M. Russo, Resident
Caitlin Liu, Los Angeles Time	Joyce Gans, Resident
Jason Kandel, Daily News	Norma Miropol, Resident
Susan B. Nelson, Sierra Club	William & Marian S. Coburn, Residents
Joan Luchs, Cahuenga Pass Neighborhood Association	Ray Seager, Resident
Gerald Silver, Encino Homeowners Association	John Kolacinski, Resident
Gordon Murley, Woodland Hills Homeowners Association	Gunther Katz, Resident
David Kegaries, Cahuenga Pass Property Owners Association	Robert Prucher, Resident
Faramare Nabavi, Encino Community Councils 101 Corridor Committee	Ronald Kulberg, Resident
John Jay Ulloth, Sierra Club	Kelly Bengford, Resident
Stuart Simen, V.V.H.A.	Don Sweeney, Resident
Bill Jasper, Encino Property Owners Association	Ryan Bengford, Resident
Dan Spector, City National Bank	Murray Wosk, Resident
	Brent Rygh, Resident
	Chris McParlane, Resident