



US 101 FREEWAY CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT STUDY PUBLIC OUTREACH

**ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS ON FEASIBLE STRATEGIES
MEETING REPORTS**

**West Region
(Route 23, Thousand Oaks to Route 27/Topanga Canyon,
Woodland Hills)**

**Wednesday, March 20, 2002
Agoura Hills/Calabasas Community Center**

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US 101 Freeway Corridor Improvement Study

Meeting Notes

Meeting With:	Major Property Owners – West Region	Meeting Date:	March 20, 2002
Attendance:	Cheri Honig, Westcord Commercial Real Estate Leonard Greenlee, Baxter Healthcare Corporation Bob Scott, Scott & Associates Cheryl Scott, Civic Center Group	Location:	Agoura Hills/Calabasas Community Center
		Notes By:	Suzanne Ngo-Tran

Team Members Attendance:
Linda Taira, Caltrans
John Kulpa, HNTB
Tom Jenkins, Parsons Brinckerhoff
Lorenzo Garrido, Parsons Brinckerhoff
Laurie Newman, Office of Senator Sheila Kuehl
Josh Gertler, Consensus Planning Group
Andrea Rodriguez, Consensus Planning Group
Suzanne Ngo-Tran, Consensus Planning Group

Introduction

Major Property Owners in the West region of the Corridor were invited to attend a roundtable meeting to discuss factors and suggestions pertaining to the improvement of the 101 Freeway in their region. The participants provided specific input on the Strategies presented to them by the Study team. The Major Property Owners addressed various issues regarding current traffic conditions in the West region. A consensus among the property owners was the problematic spot at and around State Route 23, due to the growth in population.

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 is the approximate time frame for the development?
- Will an HOV lane be added to the freeway?
- Will the State provide incentives to encourage rideshare for employees commuting to work?
- Where will the bus/rail stations be located?

Summary of Comments

Build Strategies

This group was opposed to double-decking the freeway. Widening was believed to be more feasible than elevating the freeway and a need for a HOV lane was also discussed. A suggestion was made to create an HOV lane for peak and off-peak hours, and on the weekends. A comment was also made regarding the narrow lanes on the 101 Freeway that requires one to drive very close to the wall.

Public Transportation

The majority of the group believed that public transit is an excellent form of transportation that may relieve congestion on the freeway. They also felt that an extension of the East-West busway is a great alternative. Some of the participants encouraged the development of additional train stations so that they are accessible to transit users. One individual however, was concerned about the frequency of train stops. The participants would like to know where the stations will be located along the 101 Freeway.

State Route 23

The majority of the group favored the widening of State Route 23 to alleviate the congestion and bottleneck in this area. Concerns regarding how to quicken the flow of traffic off the freeway and the need for incorporating this issue into the Study were mentioned. Multiple lanes merging create a bottleneck effect and commuting through this region is extremely difficult in rush hour. A few of the participants suggested that traffic may continue to worsen due to the increase of biotech companies and commuters in this region. One of the participants suggested the development of alternate routes to troubleshoot the State Route 23 area.

Biotech Corridor and State Route 23

During the meeting, property owners and a representative from Baxter Healthcare Corporation expressed concern regarding the growth of the biotech corridor and the effects on State Route 23. Specific comments include:

- Eventual relocation of 700 employees from Baxter Healthcare in Glendale to Thousand Oaks (130 employees have already moved and are commuting to work; Baxter cannot afford to relocate their employees due to the high cost of living).
- Traffic congestion will increase due to the increase in commuters.
- Suggestion for the state government to provide incentives for employees in order to encourage rideshare for employees traveling to the Valley.
- High housing costs discourage many employees from moving to this region.

Suggestions and Concerns

- Signal synchronization may reduce arterial traffic.
- Focus on the eastbound 101 Freeway connection to State Route 23, and add HOV lanes.
- Add flyaway lots to ease traffic to LAX.
- The Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC) is also studying State Route 23 to State Route 33 in Ojai.
- There is no HOV lane in this section of the Corridor which prevents employers from offering incentives to employees who rideshare/carpool.

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Meeting With:	Business Organizations/Interests – West Region	Meeting Date:	March 20, 2002
Attendance:	Aaron Lilly, Thousand Oaks/Westlake Village Chamber of Commerce Mark Olsen, Malibu Chamber of Commerce Merle White, Conejo Valley Association of Realtors	Location:	Agoura Hills/Calabasas Community Center
Team Members in Attendance:	Linda Taira, Caltrans Kristin Wilson, Caltrans Tom Jenkins, Parsons Brinckerhoff Lorenzo Garrido, Parsons Brinckerhoff John Kulpa, HNTB Laurie Newman, Office of Senator Sheila Kuehl Josh Gertler, Consensus Planning Group Andrea Rodriguez, Consensus Planning Group Suzanne Ngo-Tran, Consensus Planning Group	Notes By:	Suzanne Ngo-Tran

Introduction

Business Organizations/Interests in the West region of the Corridor were invited to a roundtable meeting to express their concerns and opinions on how to improve traffic conditions on the 101 Freeway in their region. Most of the representatives from the Business Organizations/Interests agreed that the Study should focus on smaller improvements that are feasible so that construction can begin in 5-10 years.

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

- Will the Study include State Route 23 through State Route 33?
- Will the recent passage of Proposition 42 allow for additional funding for the Study?

Summary of Comments

Build Strategies

After reviewing the diagrams of the Strategies, comments were made regarding the elevated proposals. The group felt that an elevated structure would receive much opposition from the community. Rather than the elevated structure option, the attendees believed that residents in the West region would be more comfortable with at-grade widening. There was discussion of “Save Open Space” (S.O.S.), a local organization opposed to any development in this region.

During the meeting, attendees discussed other issues and concerns, specifically :

- the possible difficulty of exiting the off-ramps with HOV lanes.
- highway 23 is “awful”; congestion is terrible.
- there are several major employers in this area, and more expected, that are major trip generators.
- the time frame for the construction of the HOV lanes.
- the politically difficult task of providing parallel arterials to the US 101 that would connect to the western cities.
- the need to focus on the “Z” traffic pattern from the 101 Freeway to Malibu Canyon to Santa Monica.

Public Transportation

The use and promotion of public transportation was favored among the group. The main concern regarding transit use was the accessibility of destination spots and its convenience for transit users. Participants also commented on the high gas prices that may encourage drivers to opt for transit use. Attendees indicated that public transit is unlikely to be used by those in this region of the Study area. A participant also mentioned that Thousand Oaks has a significant investment in a transit center located 2-3 miles west of State Route 23.

Suggestions for Improvements

- Participants felt that Agoura Hills needs to have access to a transit center.
- The attendees at this meeting were [supportive of a connector between Calabasas and Agoura Hills].
- Consider another freeway that parallels the 101 Freeway.
- Consider development of arterial streets to improve State Route 23.
- Add elevated rail and 2 HOV lanes at-grade on the 101 Freeway.

Other Comments and Concerns Addressed

Throughout the discussion of the Strategies, representatives mentioned:

- construction and its impact on the local communities
- the time frame of the development process
- the probability of improvement of State Route 23

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Meeting With:	Community Organizations/Institutions – West Region	Meeting Date:	March 20, 2002
Attendance:	Marian Weaver, Lupin Hill Elementary Jenny Toder, Office of Assemblymember Fran Pavley Ed Corridori, Councilmember, City of Agoura Hills	Location:	Agoura Hills/Calabasas Community Center
Team Members Attendance:	Linda Taira, Caltrans Tom Jenkins, Parsons Brinckerhoff Lorenzo Garrido, Parsons Brinckerhoff John Kulpa, HNTB Josh Gertler, Consensus Planning Group Andrea Rodriguez, Consensus Planning Group Suzanne Ngo-Tran, Consensus Planning Group	Notes By:	Suzanne Ngo-Tran

Introduction

Community Organizations/Institutions in the West region were invited to a roundtable meeting to share various perspectives on the Strategies presented by the 101 Study team. Representatives from Community Organizations/Institutions in the West region shared their perspectives on improvement of the 101 Freeway. One of the primary concerns was the need to focus on the improvements of local arterial streets.

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 is the time frame for improvements to occur?
- Does “feasible” mean Caltrans has the right-of-way?
- Will preservation of wildlife be incorporated into the Study?
- Will the undesirable alternatives from the Study be eliminated?

Summary of Comments

Build Strategies

As a whole, the attendees favored widening to elevated structures. The consensus was that an elevated structure would be less aesthetically attractive

than simply expanding the existing freeway. Noise was also a significant concern.

Arterials

Attendees suggested that the Study focus on improvements of arterial streets. The participants were concerned that traffic on the freeway will spread onto surface streets that can't currently handle high volumes of traffic, and thus create bottlenecks in local communities. The majority of the group opposed extending Thousand Oaks Boulevard because traffic would increase in Agoura Hills. The participants agreed that the Valley Circle on- and off-ramp should be analyzed in the Study. The Kanan Road and Reyes Adobe interchange is another problem area. There was also a concern for the animal crossing at Liberty Canyon Road and under the freeway bridge. Building a wildlife tunnel, specifically for animals was suggested by an attendee. A representative from the City of Agoura Hills explained that Agoura Hills residents "were not in a hurry to repair damage to Kanan Road due to mudslides because the connector road to Calabasas would continue to cause traffic havoc." He also mentioned that an arterial cut-through would be politically unpopular.

Public Transportation/Transit

Many felt that a bus transit system that is reliable, accessible and efficient will be highly favored by residents. The representative from the school district added that Calabasas does not have access to school buses that are free of cost. Instead, the City of Calabasas sponsors a shuttle to transport children to and from school.

Local Schools

The safety of children was a concern for participants. A representative from Lupin Elementary School stated that there is massive congestion near the school during morning peak hours when children are present. She also added that enrollment at local schools is growing, causing increased traffic congestion which results in lost instructional time. Teachers and students commuting to school are often tardy due to congestion on the freeway.

Other Comments and Concerns Addressed

Throughout the discussion of the Strategies, residents asked and commented about:

- the animal crossing under the freeway bridge and incorporating it into the study
- extending public outreach to local schools.
- the approximately 40,000 cars in the summer, traveling through the Kanan Road connector from the San Fernando Valley to the beach.
- the Calabasas grade is heavily congested.

US 101 Freeway Corridor Improvement Study Meeting Notes

Meeting With:	Homeowners Group/Residents – West Region	Meeting Date:	March 20, 2002
Attendance:	Barb Levvintre, Resident Frank & Nancy Randak, AVT Train Steve Hess, Las Virgenes Homeowners Federation Tony Di Leo, TDL Infotystems Mario Di Leo, TDL Infosystems Nancee Baldino, Fountainwood Homeowners Association Sandy Thomas, Resident Rich Berman, Chatea Creek Homeowners Association Marianne Escaron, Resident Robert & Arianne Walker, Residents Debra Herschman, Resident Chris Mainzer, Cal State Northridge Louise Rishoff, Resident Juli Kirkpatrick, SOKA Lynn Conrad, Resident	Location:	Agoura Hills/Calabasas Community Center
		Notes By:	Suzanne Ngo-Tran

Team Members In Attendance:
Linda Taira, Caltrans
John Kulpa, HNTB
Tom Jenkins, Parsons Brinckerhoff
Lorenzo Garrido, Parsons Brinckerhoff
Laurie Newman, Senior Field Deputy Engineer
Josh Gertler, Consensus Planning Group
Andrea Rodriguez, Consensus Planning Group
Suzanne Ngo-Tran, Consensus Planning Group

Introduction:

Homeowners Groups/Residents in the West region participated in the roundtable meeting to present their input on the various alternatives to improve traffic conditions on the 101 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

- What is the amount of local traffic versus long distance travelers on the 101 Freeway?
- Regarding the Advanced Vehicle Transportation (AVT), will the system be funded by the individual drivers or state funded?

- Will the public have a say in the selection of alternatives and overall design of the 101 Freeway?

Summary of Comments

Build Strategies

During the meeting, residents discussed development issues and concerns. Specifically, the issues were:

- Which Build Strategy would best meet the demand for 2025?
- The elevated option would not be safe in an earthquake.
- An elevated structure was not favorable to the attendees.

Public Transportation

The majority of the group was in favor of the promotion of public transportation. The residents/homeowners agreed that providing public transportation from Thousand Oaks to Warner Center is an excellent addition to the existing transportation systems. A concern was voiced about the availability of parking at the train station in Thousand Oaks. Many believed that developing an accessible and reliable transit route will be very convenient for residents.

Other Comments and Concerns Addressed

- The excessive amount of time, funding and energy wasted on the Studies.
- Innovations in solutions need to take place rather than completing a Study.
- Many believed that funding for any further development should be established prior to conducting the Study.