



santa barbara county association of governments

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## MEETING SUMMARY

### SOUTH COAST SUBREGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

August 3, 2005

1:00 PM

**SBMTD Conference Room  
550 Olive Street  
Santa Barbara, CA**

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

**Members Present:** Salud Carbajal, Supervisor, First District; Brooks Firestone, Supervisor, Third District; Dan Secord, Councilmember, City of Santa Barbara; Donna Jordan, Councilmember, City of Carpinteria; Marty Mariscal, Councilmember, City of Santa Maria; Russ Hicks, Mayor, City of Buellton; Susan Rose, Supervisor, Second District; Jonny Wallis, Councilmember, City Of Goleta

**Ex-Officio Members Present:** Gregg Albright, Director, Caltrans District 5

**Members Absent:** None

**Staff Members Present:** Jim Kemp, Executive Director; Steve Vandenberg, Deputy Director of Programming, Gregg Hart, Government Affairs Coordinator, Bill Yim, Transportation Planner, Brian Bresolin, Regional Analyst

**Consulting Team Present:** Bob Bramen, PBQD, Mary Rose

#### 2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Vice-Chair Secord asked for public comment.

Kalon Kelly, a member of the public identified himself as the person who provided a letter describing incentivised ridesharing.

#### 3. MEETING SUMMARY

There were no board comments on the Meeting Summary of April 6, 2005.

#### 4. 101 IN MOTION

##### A. Receive report on evaluation of four alternative packages.

Mr. Kemp provided an introduction to the agenda item. Vice-Chair Secord requested an update to the meeting schedule. Mr. Kemp responded that the current meeting is

informational and no decisions are to be made. He reviewed the schedule that will include public meetings, workshops, and presentations to city councils. The Stakeholder Advisory Committee and Technical Advisory Group will meet in September to develop recommendations for the Steering Committee consideration. It is expected that the Steering Committee will approve the recommendations in October in anticipation of the October 20 SBCAG Board meeting in Santa Barbara at which time the final package of improvements will be recommended for approval.

The consultant, Mr. Bramen, proceeded to provide an overview of the final four evaluation findings as discussed in the staff report and shown in his presentation.

Councilwomen Jordan was interested in phasing of a potential widening project south of Milpas St. and how that would play out. Mr. Bramen referred to the Caltrans representative Mr. Albright who responded that there is no simple answer. He suggested that phasing will be difficult due to funding flows and requirements to keep the traffic moving during construction.

Vice-Chair Secord was interested in the number of bridges along the corridor and Mr. Bramen estimated approximately 30 of which 50 percent would need to be replaced to allow for widening.

Councilman Mariscal suggested that since freeway congestion deters traffic why not put more money towards rolling stock allowing the excess drivers to use alternative transportation. Mr. Bramen suggested that there is a limit to the number of those willing to ride the train since it does not fit everyone's commute pattern. The commuter train ridership projections used the same methodology as that used for Metrolink's strategic planning.

Councilman Mariscal was interested in the attendance at public meetings and outreach efforts. Mr. Bramen recalled that public workshops at the beginning of the project did not have high attendance. Mr. Hart indicated that nearly 50 presentations have been made to various community groups and local government policy boards and that approximately 1,000 people have attended these meetings.

Vice-Chair Secord asked for public comment.

Mr. Barry Siegal commented on the methodology used in the alternatives analysis and provided a table comparing peak period traffic per lane per hour using a methodology he felt was more accurate. He attempted to determine the option with the lowest traffic per hour per lane on the 101 in both directions and his calculations showed Alternative C was the best candidate. For arterial streets he felt alternative B and D had the lowest traffic per lane per hour. His calculations also showed that the peak hour congestion in 2030 was higher than it is currently suggesting that either the capacity needs to be improved or the traffic needs to be reduced through alternative land use options. He provided a copy of his calculations to the committee.

Ms. Sherrie Fisher asked if the rail costs included local transit operating costs associated with getting to and from the station. Mr. Bramen said that the rail costs do not include local transit. These costs can be more closely examined when the rail alternative is closer to being selected and it is determined whether it would require new service or a realignment of existing transit services or innovative strategies such as car sharing could be utilized.

Mr. Greg Gandrud calculated the capitol costs for the rail option at \$7.95 per ride and the operating costs \$12.24 per ride costs to be 81 cents/passenger mile total cost for commuter rail with a 69 cent/passenger mile public subsidy. Car use is approximately 40.5 cents/passenger mile and with car pooling costs could be as low as 14 cents/mile all paid for by the vehicle operator and includes various gas taxes that subsidize the transportation system so the drivers are subsidizing the rest of the commuters rather than the other way around. Mr. Grandrud provided the methodology for his calculations. He suggested rail is too expensive and not practical and that the HOT lanes should be kept in the alternatives and include more cost analysis. Supervisor Carbajal suggested reviewing and validating Mr. Gandrud's calculations further. Supervisor Firestone suggested that the cost analysis just provided was very clear and that he was interested in additional cost per passenger mile comparisons. Mr. Bramen pointed out the cost analysis in his report and wanted to further review Mr. Gandrud's calculations. Mr. Kemp suggested that cost was not the only consideration and we must look at alternatives since freeway expansion will not be the sole congestion solution. Councilmember Jordan felt that widening is not enough and a menu of options must be considered including commuter rail. Supervisor Carbajal suggested the cost benefit be considered for the entire menu of options.

A representative from Cars Are Basic asked for an alternatives study 5 years ago. At that time they also suggested the use of commuter busses. Their estimate for the rail option is 500 million dollars. He also pointed out that the Santa Barbara County Sheriff, Fire and Police association voted 100 percent in support to widen the 101. He also suggested that Santa Barbara is a destination resort that attracts many vehicles from the south and that California population continues to grow 500,000 annually creating an even greater demand. He suggested that we are required by Measure D to widen the freeway. Widening will reduce the traffic on surface streets contrary to the City of Santa Barbara position stating that the widening will increase traffic on surface streets. The preferred option is option D.

A representative from Energy Independence Now commented that due to the uniqueness of the corridor there is significant rail ridership impact and we need to consider how people move and what type of community we want to live in. He questioned the rail ridership data considering the uniqueness of the corridor. Mr. Bramen suggested that the data used was taken from a similar context of congestion and transportation mode competition.

Supervisor Firestone suggested the overall study methodology assumes a static technology while there is future potential in alternative fuels and these technologies impact on transportation should be explored. Mr. Bramen suggested that is it not possible to forecast technological advances and their effect on vehicle use. Councilmember Jordan commented that advanced fuel types will not reduce traffic.

## **B. Receive report on travel model results of alternative land use scenario.**

Mr. Kemp provided an introduction to the land use impacts on traffic. Mr. Yim proceeded with a presentation of the land use sensitivity analysis and the modeling assumptions. He suggested that a land use approach to traffic reduction is helpful in the phasing of network improvements from Milpas south on the 101 and that even with radical land use changes the 101 corridor would still need expansion. This was an illustrative exercise only to show the effects of land use on traffic volume.

Vice-Chair Secord asked for public comment.

Councilman Mariscal questioned the availability of approximately 1 billion dollars to improve the entire 24 mile corridor. Mr. Bramen suggested that it remains to be seen how each phase plays out and what funds are available at the time including renewal of Measure D, state and federal funds.

Councilmember Wallis requested a copy of the land use sensitivity analysis assumptions in a summary format. Mr. Siegal suggested that the analysis was flawed because Ventura county commuter traffic was not reduced as was the employment and housing and had requested unsuccessfully for the analysis to be done again with his suggested modifications. In addition, land use changes assume a car oriented system. He also suggests that the alternatives were analyzed with the same jobs and housing growth even with no freeway widening and that it was unrealistic. He suggested different land use assumptions for the various transportation options. Mr. Yim pointed out that adding Ventura County traffic would confuse the land use issue by introducing additional variables and that it was not part of the study assumptions.

## **5. Economic Community Project Survey**

Mr. Kemp introduced Dr. Smith from UCSB, the Economic Community Project, Regional Impact of Growth Study, and the survey results to be presented. Dr. Smith proceeded with his presentation and suggested that a complete report was available on the ECP webpage. Supervisor Carbajal asked Dr. Smith if he could compare and make connections to the previously discussed land use scenarios with results from his research. Dr. Smith was not able to provide this information but a member of the audience referred to the Regional Impacts of Growth Study that contained analysis of various growth scenarios and their resulting impacts. Based on a graphic of bus ridership Vice-Chair Secord suggested that 90 percent of the population pay for 10 percent of the transit users. Supervisor Rose wanted additional clarification regarding the relationship between convenience and increased bus ridership.

Vice Chair Secord asked for public comment.

Councilmember Wallis questioned if support for extending a transportation tax was stratified by income in order to determine if there was support by low income persons for this tax. Dr. Smith suggested that the lower income support taxes because they pay less tax overall than wealthier residents. Dr. Smith felt that the Measure D reauthorization would be a close call because of the 2/3 majority requirement for approval and that 71% of the survey respondents indicated they would vote in support of this tax. North County might be a lower percentage, but was not included in the survey. Mr. Kemp indicated that the poll did not specify projects that would be funded with the tax extension and suggested that the voters would be more likely to support it if they knew which projects are included. He also pointed out that a public opinion poll on Measure D is being conducted. Supervisor Carbajal wanted to be sure the outreach consultant was aware of the ECP survey and Mr. Kemp informed him they did.

**6. Joint Meeting with Ventura County Transportation Commission**

Mr. Kemp surveyed the committee members for potential times and dates for a meeting with Ventura County Transportation Commission to discuss transportation strategies. Early September on the 7<sup>th</sup> was a potential date and it was suggested that the meeting be held in Santa Barbara or Carpinteria.

**ADJOURN**

There being no other business the meeting was adjourned.