

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: 101 In Motion

MEETING DATE: October 12, 2005

AGENDA ITEM: 4

STAFF CONTACT: Jim Kemp, Michael Powers, Bob Bramen, Parsons Brinckerhoff

RECOMMENDATION:

Consider approval of consensus recommendations from the Stakeholder Advisory Committee and Technical Advisory Group to be presented to SBCAG board for adoption.

Joint SAC/TAG Recommendation:

In a joint meeting on September 26, the SAC and TAG reached a consensus on the following recommended package of improvements:

Add a Lane and a Train

- Add a Carpool/HOV lane both directions south of Milpas to County Line
- Add commuter rail, Camarillo/Oxnard to Goleta

Facilitate Transit and Carpool Use

- Designate new lanes south of Milpas as HOV (Carpool)
- Increase express bus services to North County
- Connect local bus and shuttles with rail and regional services
- Bus priority on selected streets through signal priority, queue jumps, bulb-outs at bus stops, etc.

Manage Demand

- Provide vanpool/carpool/trip reduction incentives

Member Agencies

Buellton ■ Carpinteria ■ Goleta ■ Guadalupe ■ Lompoc ■ Santa Barbara ■ Santa Maria ■ Solvang ■ Santa Barbara County

- Encourage telecommuting and flexwork/flextime
- Vary parking rates as feasible by jurisdiction
- Individualize marketing

Improve Operations and Communications

- Add capacity and install meters at selected ramps
- Use Intelligent Transportation System technology to inform the traveling public and smooth operations including:
 - Freeway service patrol
 - 511 phone and internet traffic and transit reports
 - Variable message signs
 - GPS real-time of arrival information at bus stops

Phase improvements north of Milpas

- Implement operational improvements required to address current congestion hot spots
- Proactively work to reduce peak period traffic through aggressive demand management and rideshare programs
- Monitor need for additional 101 improvements following implementation of operational improvements, commuter rail, TDM and rideshare, ITS and General Plan updates
- Add auxiliary lanes and/or additional lanes if needed, funds are available, and there is community support

Project Implementation and Monitoring

- Due to the time required to implement many of the projects in this consensus package, SBCAG shall conduct an annual evaluation to insure that all of the projects are being implemented in a timely and cost-effective manner.

DISCUSSION:

SBCAG Board Policy Direction

On October 16, 2003, the SBCAG Board adopted policy direction for the Highway 101 Implementation Plan, which was later renamed "101 in Motion".

The policy directed that:

- 1) The Implementation Plan shall result in a project or set of projects that will increase the capacity by adding lanes and reduce congestion on Highway 101.
- 2) Highway 101 widening options shall include a minimum additional mixed flow lanes, High Occupancy Vehicle lanes, High Occupancy Toll lanes, reversible lanes and/or use of the highway shoulders and restriping for additional lanes within the present right-of-way.
- 3) In addition to widening Highway 101, the Implementation Plan shall include other projects providing congestion relief including those that increase corridor capacity (e.g. rail and bus transit), reduce regional travel demand, expand alternative transportation modes and improve operation and management of the transportation system.
- 4) The Implementation Plan shall include an analysis of alternative congestion relief projects which may be used in support of the NEPA and/or CEQA environmental review process during the next phases of project development.

Process to Develop Recommended Package

Based on the board policy directive, the 101 in Motion team worked with SBCAG staff to develop a representative Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) to work alongside the existing Technical Advisory Committee (TAG). These groups assisted in developing alternative solution packages and reviewing the results of technical evaluations of the packages.

Phase 1 of the process was "Community Ideas", members of the public were invited to propose possible solutions, and provide information on what was most important to them regarding possible solution packages. Over 60 ideas were generated, and reviewed by the SAC & the TAG.

Phase 2 consisted of the SAC and the TAG reviewing the initial data, and creating eight possible solution packages. On November 3, 2004, the 101 in Motion Steering Committee (SBCAG South Coast Subregional Planning Committee), adopted the TAG and SAC joint recommendations regarding the 8 Alternative Improvement Packages which were to receive further technical analysis.

The SAC and the TAG separately and jointly met and reviewed the technical data, and made a joint recommendation to the Steering Committee regarding the four Alternative Solution Packages to advance for further evaluation and those elements not recommended for further evaluation. On April 6, 2005 the 101 In Motion Steering Committee adopted the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) joint recommendations regarding the Final 4 Alternative Improvement Packages which were to receive further technical analysis. The full SBCAG Board approved proceeding with the evaluation of these alternatives at their April 21, 2005 meeting. Since that time the project team has met 8 times with the TAG and three times with the SAC to go over evaluation results of the final 4 alternative packages

with the aim of reaching agreement on the evaluation findings. The results of the evaluation were presented at the committee's August 3 meeting.

Elements of Final Four Alternative Packages Recommended by SAC and TAG and Approved by the Steering Committee:

The four alternative solution packages that were evaluated included the following elements:

- Package A--A Commuter Rail Alternative with no highway capacity enhancements;
- Package B--An alternative that adds a High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) or High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lane between the County line and Milpas and between Carrillo and Patterson, as well as commuter rail between Ventura County and Goleta, and expanded express buses to/from North County;
- Package C--An alternative that adds an HOV lane from Milpas south and auxiliary lanes in the existing 6-lane segment, plus commuter rail between Ventura County and Goleta, and expanded express buses to/from North County; and
- Package D--An alternative that adds general purpose lanes between the County line and Milpas and between Carrillo and Patterson. Express buses to/from Ventura County and to/from North County would be the transit element.

The following Demand Management Elements were included as a part of all packages for the more detailed analysis of the 4 Alternative Solution Packages:

- Individualized Marketing
- Reduce Vanpool Fees by 20%
- Adjust Work Schedules (Flex Work)
- Variable Parking Rates
- "Rapid Bus"

The following Operational Management Elements were included as a part of all packages for more detailed analysis of the 4 Alternative Solution Packages:

- Ramp Metering
- Intelligent Transportation System

Evaluation Conclusions:

This staff report contains a very brief summary of the major evaluation conclusions. Please see the entire report provided previously for the full analysis.

101 South of Milpas:

- Widening is needed now and will be needed even more in the future.
- Without widening, stop-and-go congestion would be from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- Even with constrained growth, sensitivity analysis shows widening is needed.

Commuter Rail Service:

- A Metrolink type service between Camarillo/Oxnard and Goleta, that consisted of three trains traveling north in the morning, and three trains traveling south in the afternoon/evening, in addition to the existing Amtrak schedule, would attract many motorists out of cars and serve as an alternative to Highway 101, particularly during 101 widening. However, a commuter train program alone would not solve the existing or projected congestion problem.
- Availability of connection bus or shuttle service is essential for effective utilization of rail services.
- Obtaining approvals, entering into agreements, securing funding, constructing improvements and purchasing rolling stock would take 4 to 5 years.

Transportation Demand Management and Operational Improvements:

- Most TDM and Operational Improvements can be implemented at low cost and help relieve congestion early on.
- Many TDM and Operational Improvements can be Early Results projects.

Carpool/High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes

- Carpool/HOV instead of HOT (toll lanes) are recommended for new lanes. Projections show that carpool lanes will be well used.
- Two person carpools will use up most of existing capacity, so there is little room for single occupant toll payers
- Projections of HOT lane usage are that with HOV = 2+, revenue would not even pay for the annual operating and maintenance cost of the new lanes let alone amortize the capital cost of adding HOT lanes
- At HOV = 3+ tolls would cover O&M costs but virtually none of the capital costs

Environmental Impacts:

Steps would have to be taken to minimize the impacts of widening Highway 101, including:

- Adjusting centerline
- Consideration of a reduced cross-section in the most constrained locations.
- Maintain and/or provide replacement landscaping
- Give community the option of sound walls
- Follow the adopted *101 Design Guidelines for South Coast*.

Existing 6-lane section of 101 (North of Milpas)

- A hybrid option of selective widening, operational improvements and auxiliary lanes could reduce impacts, particularly if growth in the western part of the corridor is significantly scaled back during land use plan updates.
- Under current general plan build-out auxiliary lanes help, but full lanes would be needed to eliminate future congestion.
- Impacts and costs of additional widening north of Milpas would be significant.

Other Conclusions:

- Besides widening the mainline, many 101 ramps will need improving. Many streets that intersect with 101 ramps will need improvements as well

SAC/TAG Recommended Consensus Package

The final consensus package recommended by the SAC/TAG is a hybrid of elements from the four packages. The package includes a major highway capacity improvement south of Milpas, widening to six lanes between Milpas and Carpinteria, to accommodate a new High Occupancy Vehicle lane in each direction, and commuter rail between Ventura County and Goleta. These flagship projects are complemented with enhancements to the bus system, including express bus service to North County, better connecting services to the rail stations, and improved regional bus services from Ventura County and within the south coast. Expanded demand management programs promote flexible work hours and telecommuting and include other marketing measures directed at individuals in order to encourage single occupant vehicle drivers into carpools and onto the bus. Telecommunications technologies are also added to improve the flow of information about traffic conditions to allow drivers to make better informed choices about traveling in the 101 corridor. Progress on all these projects will be evaluated on an annual basis to insure the projects are being implemented in an expeditious manner.

Examination of the sensitivity of the travel forecasts to potential land use changes suggest that improvements to the highway north of Carrillo into Goleta should be targeted at current congestion hot spots since impending changes to General Plans could significantly impact future traffic growth.

Community Input:

Since the initiation of the 101 in Motion Project, SBCAG staff and the consulting team have been actively working with the community to provide education about the process, the results of the analysis, and the emerging consensus recommendations.

Community input includes:

- Five community workshops
- 14 activity centers provided input
- 54 community presentations
- Broad based Countywide Stakeholder Advisory Committee held 11 meetings open to the public
- Technical Advisory Committee, with representation from Cities, County, MTD, Caltrans, and VCTC, held 31 meetings to review data and make recommendations.
- This Steering Committee has met to receive information and give direction 11 times.

SBCAG staff and the consulting team are continuing to make presentations to local jurisdictions and community organizations regarding the recommended package of improvements. Members of the community have been encouraged to attend the South Coast Subregional Committee and the SBCAG Board meetings in October to express their views on the 101 in Motion recommendations.

Next Steps

The next steps in the process are:

- 1). Continue community education and input regarding the process, packages, evaluation results and recommended consensus package
- 2). Adoption of recommended package by Steering Committee and SBCAG Board
- 3). Development of 101 in Motion Action Plan including:
 - a. Phasing
 - b. Financing
 - c. Roles and Responsibilities for Implementation
 - d. Transit Oriented Land Use Policy Recommendations
 - e. Early Results Projects
- 4). TAG, SAC and SC review of Action Plan
- 5). SBCAG Board adoption of Action Plan
- 6). Complete Project Study Report This is required by the state for projects before they can be nominated for STIP funding. Note in attached letter, Caltrans has committed to complete a PSR on an expedited basis for the 101 widening project to allow SBCAG and Caltrans to consider programming funds for completion of environmental review/project approval in the 2006 STIP cycle. A Uniform Transit Application (a PSR equivalent for rail projects) must be completed for the commuter rail project. This will be done using information from the 101 in Motion study and the LOSSAN Strategic Plan that is currently under development.

COMMITTEE REVIEW:

The SAC and TAG process in reviewing the products of Highway 101 in Motion is described above. In a joint meeting on September 26 both groups reached agreement on the recommended consensus package.

Attachments

Letter from Gregg Albright, Caltrans District Director

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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September 22, 2005

Jim Kemp, Executive Director
Santa Barbara County Association of Governments
260 North San Antonio Road, Suite B
Santa Barbara, CA 93110

Dear Mr. Kemp:

HIGHWAY 101 WIDENING AND COMMUTER RAIL PROJECT STUDY REPORTS

This is in response of your request for the Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to prepare Project Study Reports (PSRs) for improvements to Highway 101 on the South Coast of Santa Barbara County, and for commuter rail service in the Ventura/Santa Barbara corridor.

In regard to the possible commuter rail between Oxnard/Camarillo and Goleta, we recommend that SBCAG prepare the scoping document, which in lieu of a PSR should be a Uniform Transit Application (UTA). The recently amended LOSSAN Study and the Wilbur Smith 101 In Motion Rail Study should be references as the UTA is completed. Once completed, the UTA should be submitted to the Caltrans Mass Transit Division. Please feel free to contact either Regional Planner Patricia Mickelson at (805) 683-1460 or Mr. Patrick Merrill at (916) 654-7543 for assistance in completing the UTA.

In response to your request for a PSR and Project Development Support (PDS) for the Highway 101 widening, we plan to begin work on the PSR and PDS at this time with the intention of delivering an approved document to be used for programming in the 2006 STIP.

Caltrans is committing to this aggressive schedule in order to deliver the PSR and PDS in time for SBCAG to include this project in your Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) and continue the positive momentum started by the 101 In Motion study.

We are dedicated to move forward in partnership with SBCAG to deliver the necessary documents and continue the process that will bring the needed improvements to this corridor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "R. Gregg Albright".
R. GREGG ALBRIGHT
District Director