

# Draft MINUTES

## MON 156 West Corridor Project: Community Advisory Group

April 18, 2007, 5:30-7:30 PM  
Castroville Library, Castroville CA

### Attending

#### Community Advisory Group:

Carolyn Anderson  
Sherwood Darington  
Brad Houston  
Pete Lonero  
Arthur McLoughlin  
Leonard Rabe  
Mark Reasons  
Mike Scattini  
Jacqueline Simon  
Margie Kay for Bill Theyskens  
Vee Thomas  
Mark Verbonich

Dave Silberberger (Caltrans Project Management)  
Gilberto Baca (Caltrans Design)  
Roberto Banda (Caltrans Design)  
Jeff Morgan (Transportation Agency for Monterey County)  
Debbie Hale (Transportation Agency for Monterey County, Executive Director)  
Lou Hexter (Facilitator, Moore Iacofano Goltsman, Inc)  
Dan Drazen (Moore Iacofano Goltsman, Inc)

#### Other interested parties:

Jack Bentle (Monte del Lago)  
Gene Bentle (Monte del Lago)  
Colleen Bentle (Monte del Lago)  
Richard Gomes

#### Agencies and consultants:

Bobi Lyon-Ritter (Caltrans Environmental)  
Kay Goshgarian (Caltrans Environmental)

Community Advisory Group members, representatives from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC), Moore Iacofano Goltsman, Inc (consulting firm) and members of the general public attended the meeting and Lou Hexter of Moore Iacofano Goltsman, Inc facilitated the meeting. The project team provided a packet containing the proposed agenda, member roster and project overview materials to the Community Advisory Group members. The complete contents of the packet, as well as David Silberberger's Power Point will be posted at the Transportation Agency for Monterey County, [www.tamcmonterey.org](http://www.tamcmonterey.org) website. The following topics were addressed during the meeting.

1. Comments to the February 28, 2007 meeting minutes
  - Spelling correction-Arthur McLaughlin to Arthur McLoughlin
  - Some members were unable to open meeting minutes attached to the email. Jeff Morgan stated that all minutes will be on TAMC's website  
[http://www.tamcmonterey.org/programs/hwyproj/hwy156\\_CAG.html](http://www.tamcmonterey.org/programs/hwyproj/hwy156_CAG.html)
2. Self introductions by the Community Advisory Group members and other attendees.
3. Public comment period. No comments were received. Comments can also be submitted to the TAMC project website at [http://www.tamcmonterey.org/programs/hwyproj/hwy156\\_CAG.html](http://www.tamcmonterey.org/programs/hwyproj/hwy156_CAG.html) or by sending an email to [sr156comments@migcom.com](mailto:sr156comments@migcom.com).
4. David Silberberger, Caltrans project manager, made a Power Point presentation on the Project Development Process to answer the question "Why does it take so long?" In brief:
  - Begin with suggestions for project from local/regional government/transportation agencies (i.e.TAMC), Caltrans and/or the public.

- Need for and purpose of the proposed project are identified; conceptual designs prepared; and scope, schedule and estimated costs defined for purposes of securing funding (Project Initiation Document phase).
- The proposed project then competes for funding with others of similar type/cost level. Though smaller projects may be awarded funds all the way through construction, it is rare for the larger projects unless all the stakeholders are in agreement. These generally are funded for one or two of the next phases of environmental document preparation and final design.
- With funding, preliminary design of project alternatives and environmental studies to analyze the impacts of those alternatives take place simultaneously and interactively, culminating in an approved environmental document and project engineering report (Project Approval and Environmental Document phase).
- Federal and state laws determine what, how and when environmental studies are conducted during this phase. Some studies are seasonally controlled (ie plant surveys conducted only during flowering) and others must follow a particular sequence (i.e. Phase II after Phase I archeological surveys). These constraints, in addition to a total one to two years for Caltrans, regulatory agency and public review time, can make this phase take four or more years to complete.
- Complicating matters, the results of environmental studies have a shelf-life, maybe valid for only two to four years.
- The ultimate goal is to find least environmentally damaging alternative that fulfills project purpose and need
- During the third phase (Project Specification and Estimates), detailed design (structures and alignment, wall color and landscaping) and contract documents preparation takes place simultaneously with and needed right-of-way acquisition and approvals, agreements and permits-with public utilities, railroads, federal agencies (Army Corps of Engineers, US Fish and Wildlife Service) and state agencies (Fish and Game, Coastal Commission)/
- The project is then put out to bid, the contract awarded, and construction can begin (Construction phase). Generally these large projects are bid on by very large, national companies who may include local and minority firms as subcontractors. The contract is awarded to the lowest bidder.
- Caltrans oversees construction and generally remains responsible for handling traffic during construction with information about detours and road closures available on the internet, newspapers, radio and television announcements

5. Roberto Banda, Design Manager, and Gilberto Baca, project engineer, described the proposed project alternatives and the guidelines for design. In brief:

- Purpose and Need—identify the need/problem and define the purpose/goals of the proposed project before exploring solutions
- Alternatives—explore solutions/alternatives that meet the purpose of the proposed project.
- Cost and schedule—how to provide the best quality project for the least cost
- Geometric standards—lanes, shoulder widths, curve radii, slopes, etc. must be similar to others in California. Standards are created to ensure safe and efficient design.
- Constructability—can it be built without unacceptable disruption to existing traffic.
- Future—does it address future traffic volume demand and traffic movement? State Route 156 has two major traffic movements—regional traffic to the Monterey Peninsula and local traffic to Prunedale and Castroville

6. The following questions were asked at various times throughout the meeting. Answers are also given if provided at the time. More detailed answers will be researched and discussed at future meetings.

- **Q.** What are the total project costs and how much is environmental? **A.** Total project costs are \$350 million with environmental costs, including all activities during the Project Approval and Environmental Document phase, at \$11 million.
- **Q.** Can environmental surveys occur simultaneously? Does one thing have to happen first before another begins (were discussing California tiger salamander surveys at the time)? **A.** Sometimes.
- **Q.** Do local companies receive preference in the construction bidding process? **A.** Project is awarded to the lowest bidder.

- **Q.** Can only union contractors bid on Caltrans projects? **A.** We believe so, but will follow up on that question. Certainly workers must be paid union wages.
- **Q.** Is alternative 11 favored over alternative 12? **A.** No one alternative has been selected at this time.
- **Q.** Where will the construction start? **A.** Preliminary location will be at Route 101.
- **Q.** Didn't you mention previously that work would begin at Castroville Boulevard? **A.** Yes, if the project is phased in construction. At this point, however, we must consider the project fully funded to be constructed completely. In that case we would start at the proposed 156/101 interchange
- **Q.** Will farmland impacts and mitigation measures be identified? Want information about your farmland mitigation program. **A.** Farmland impacts will be identified in the environmental document. This will also be a topic of discussion for the Community Advisory Group.
- **Q.** What is the distance between the old and new Route 156 alignment? **A.** The distance between the old and new Route 156 alignment for Alternative 11 varies between 200 feet to 400 feet because of terrain.
- **Q.** What will be done about the drainage at Moro Coho Slough? **A.** Caltrans will replace the existing culvert with two structures over the slough.
- **Q.** Where is the overcrossing for Messick Road?
- **Q.** Will there be existing frontage road construction at Castroville Boulevard?
- **Q.** If Alternative 11 is chosen will existing Route 156 become a county road? **A.** Yes.
- **Q.** Will Cathedral Oaks Road be an overpass or tunnel? **A.** Cathedral Oaks Road will be an overpass over Route 156.
- **Q.** Will both alternatives modify San Miguel Road? **A.** San Miguel Road will be a four-lane street for new interchange.
- **Q.** How will you get to on Route 101 south for shopping?
- **Q.** For Alternative 12, what happens to the frontage road? **A.** The existing Route 156 will become the westbound lanes.
- **Q.** What accounts for the preliminary cost differences between Alternative 11 and Alternative 12?
- **Q.** Where will traffic on San Miguel go to access northbound Route 101 and southbound Route 101 and how many signals will it take?
- **Q.** Have you made allocations for soundwalls that are lower than the roadway?
- **Q.** Is there a chance of crossover on freeway to new Route 156 for the old Route 156 with regard to Monte del Lago?
- **Q.** Do the designs on the website include the new changes with regards to Monte del Lago and access for Simon Park?
- **Q.** Why does Arizona complete projects sooner? **A.** It may be that Arizona does not have state environmental laws. We will look into what other reasons may exist.
- **Q.** Why do you need to move the interchange further south?
- **Q.** Who do we contact for weed abatement? **A.** Contact District 5 Maintenance Station in Salinas.
- **Q.** Does this project account for the Castroville Boulevard extension to Blackie Road? **A.** Yes.

7. The following was requested by the Community Advisory Group members:

- An indication of the access points along the corridor for each project alternative
- Handouts displaying traffic movements at specific locations within the project limits
- Traffic analysis for local traffic movements
- Include Berta Canyon when you look at traffic movements
- Copies of Community Advisory Group meeting minutes

8. Facility and meeting dates

- MIG will research a meeting date for May
- There will be a June Community Advisory Group meeting

Meeting adjourned.