

# **Caltrans External Advisory Liaison (CEAL) Committee**

## **January 30, 2008**

### **Meeting Summary**

Pedro Opening:

In January, submitted the Trade Corridor Infrastructure Fund (TCIF) application. We are competing for \$2 billion. Asking for approximately \$200-400 million in San Diego, based on CTC guidelines,. SANDAG, Port of San Diego, and Caltrans worked on the package to meet the deadline. Types of projects that were included are: completion of the 905 (Phase 1B) for \$75 million, new Otay Mesa East (OME)/SR-11 Port of Entry (POE) for \$75 million, \$100-200 million for the Port of San Diego, and Rail and multimodal improvements. All projects totaled approximately \$500 million.

In January, submitted in Washington D.C. the Otay Mesa East POE Presidential Permit application. The application was published in the Federal register, and an approval is expected by mid – late April.

Proposed Governor's budget of 10% cuts across the board does not affect Transportation.

Economic Stimulus Package – federal level infrastructure projects could be going by beginning of next calendar year. State is looking to push infrastructure projects as well.

SANDAG board recently adopted an updated Transnet Plan. They contemplated delaying some projects, but the Transportation Committee wanted to move forward with all Early Action Projects, and the Board was in full agreement. The Plan will be periodically updated.

San Diego Minutemen issue: Group requested to Adopt-a-Highway, and was unintentionally given a highly sensitive segment of highway. The repercussions of assigning the segment to the group caused some negative publicity which, in one instance, resulted in a peaceful demonstration outside of our district office. Judgment call was made to move the group's sign to a less sensitive segment of highway. Caltrans cannot take sides in an issue like this and will remain neutral, but we are very concerned with road safety. The decision to move the sign was taken up the ladder for approval. The group must reply back to Caltrans within two weeks regarding the new segment they were assigned or they forfeit their permit.

(Gary Knight) Question asked: Has there ever been a precedent where a bonafide group has been denied approval for Adopt-a-Highway? Pedro: Not that he's aware of, but in this instance, road safety was a big concern. The decision to move the group's permit went, at the very least, to the Agency Secretary.

(Kathy Keehan) Question asked: What about switching routes with another group? Pedro: No, then you'd be displacing another group.

(Kathy Keehan) Question asked: Who cleans up the segments? How does a group request to Adopt-a-Highway? Pedro: Groups have a choice to clean the area themselves,

# **Caltrans External Advisory Liaison (CEAL) Committee**

## **January 30, 2008**

### **Meeting Summary**

but most contract out to clean up the segment. The permit is in the group's name. Criteria: They must be a bonafide organization or business, and in some cases, it can be an individual. They must not be a group that is known for discrimination or promote violence of any kind. For this new segment, we are going to rely on the Sheriff's office and CHP to determine if the group is discriminating or promoting violence.

**ACTION:** Pedro offered to provide a copy of the news release that was sent out regarding the issue, and provide a copy of the letter he sent to Jeff Schwilk, "head" of San Diego Minutemen. (Later in the meeting Pedro provided these copies to the committee.)

(Carmen Sandoval) Question asked: Are you going to be building in safe guards so that this doesn't happen again? Pedro: Yes, prior to this issue, we were on "autopilot" in this area because we have never had any issues. We have 875 adoptable highways at two miles per segment which equates to over 1000 miles. Now, upon receiving a request, we will be doing better research on the organizations, and before the permit is assigned, Pedro and the deputy of Maintenance will have a final review of the application. If it is deemed that the organization may have some issues, then do a more in depth investigation.

(Jim Peugh) Question asked: How are you trying to decrease the carbon footprint at border crossings? Ped/Bike is heavily underserved. Why wasn't something done? Pedro: We are working on reducing the carbon footprint with the crossings. [Otay Mesa East] Going to be a multimodal crossing, but with the approach that it will a "paid for crossing" facility. What sells is the time it takes to cross the border. A financial feasibility study was conducted and found that a 20-30 minute guaranteed wait would have people agree to pay to cross. POE officials are nervous about guaranteeing a wait time when considering the potential of search times. So, the idea of guaranteeing 30 minutes to be at the front of the line was more agreeable to POE officials. Want to use part of the fee to pay for the infrastructure and to pay for additional staff to guarantee a premium service so that more booths are open. Congestion pricing like we use on I-15 – people will be notified via signage of their choices of the 3 POEs as to what the wait times are and letting them know they can pay for a shorter time at Otay Mesa East. Looking at including a BRT element. Currently, a private company is running a mass transit operation. MTS cannot go into Mexico at this time, and there are issues with Border and Customs agents with regards to searching bus loads of people.

Jim Peugh (Comment): Still feels like promoting global warming by promoting sprall. Pedro: Not promoting sprall, it already exists in Mexico. On the U.S. side, Otay Mesa is owned by 6 land developers who had submitted plans for development with or without the POE being built. On the positive side, caught the attention of Washington and went

**Caltrans External Advisory Liaison (CEAL) Committee**  
**January 30, 2008**  
**Meeting Summary**

to Binational mitigation because some areas were sensitive habitats and want to protect them on both sides of the border. Jim expressed concern for preserving the habitats.

(Kathy Keehan) Question asked: Has anyone looked at how diverting traffic to Otay Mesa could produce more greenhouse gases? Pedro: We are going to look at this. Constant speed vs. stop and go and how this affects the carbon footprint.

(Craig Scott) Question asked: What's happening between now and the May Revision – Prop 91 could affect the budget? Pedro: No, Assembly member Nunez not happy with what Port of LA and Long Beach was getting. LA & Long Beach Ports are getting 75 – 80%. Looking to use that as leverage to the budget. Special fund HUDA Account which goes to local cities and municipals...looking to suspend this for about 6 months to maintain cash flow.

(Mario Igrasci) Question asked: Are they going to build easier roads to Otay Mesa in Mexico? Pedro: Bi-pass Road was built. It lands about 2 miles from proposed POE. Connects TJ to Rosarito and also hooks up outside of Otay Mesa to main port of town of Tecate. Would be a straight shot to POE.

Transnet Presentation given.

Dr. Supernak requested a copy of the entire presentation.

Gary Knight requested Gustavo to come and give the I-5 portion of the presentation to his group.

Didn't get to the Wildfires presentation – rescheduling it to April 23 CEAL meeting.

Post “keepsandiegomoving.com” link on CEAL website.

Pat Landrum showed ArcGIS animation presentation.