Comments on 101 Gap Closure DEIS

Gentlemen:

Thank you for the opportunity to make a presentation before this group.

I have reviewed the DEIS/DEIR and wish to address what is lacking in the report. Under Section 5.3 it lists "the Alternatives Retained for More Detailed Study" and they are I (b) the Ultimate Gap Closure, 2(a) Southbound only HOV Lane, Segment I through 3 and on West Side and (3) No Build.

There is however no discussion on a reversible HOV lane. This has been bandied about for several months and I think most of us that have an interest had the impression that it would be included in the DEIS. It has a lot of local support and I'm sure that Caltrans must have gotten the message, but here we have a DEIS without that being considered an option. I have heard that a Caltrans will study this as an option but why wasn't the DEIS held up until it was done? Unless I see it in writing I don't believe it..

What we do have, however, under Section 5.2 Alternatives Considered but Withdrawn, #5 Southbound HOV Lane as a Designated Reversible Lane, withdrawn because of cost considerations (widening) and because cars could not exit in central San Rafael because of the barrier.

With regard to the costs: Read Section 2.5 (Attached) of the DEIS "Description of the Fundable Project" and then 5.2 "Alternative Considered but Withdrawn." In essence it says *in Section 2.5 the SB HOV funding will include the widening for the final ultimate solution but in 5.2 (the reversible alternate) it says it would cost to much because of the need for the widening. If we are widening anyway where is the additional cost?

You may have to skimp on standards, which is done in other parts of the state when necessary, (but not by much) over the SB Viaduct but there is 20 extra feet up there now and the extra lane is doable.

With regard to no exit in San Rafael: I would think that the few car pools that wants to get off in SR can exit the carpool lane before it enters the barrier area. That doesn't seem hard to do. I don't see that as a valid justification for an objection to the reversible lane. I stress, and I think it is very important

that we maintain free flow of the majority of the traffic that is going beyond SR, and if we do that the bottleneck will be eliminated.

If we don't seriously consider a reversible HOV lane now we can probably expect a NB peak hour mess until full construction of the Ultimate Solution and that is at least through the year 2010, or 13 years from now and is not fair to the people coming home in the evening that live in San Rafael or north of SR, if a solution can be found sooner. At the present time there is no funding for a NB HOV lane and not even enough (so they say) to fully fund the SB HOV lane, so the 2010 date for completion of the so-called Ultimate Project is reasonable and maybe optimistic. If I were living in SR or north I would be mad as hell if we didn't come up with a sooner solution, if it is possible to do so.

A gentleman, and I didn't record his name, at last weeks meeting mentioned that the evening NB commute on 10 1 (and probably because of the bottleneck) has now moved 'in to the top 10 of traffic messes in the Bay Area. When the discussion on improving the bottleneck got serious, I don't believe that was the case and the reason for all the concentration on the SB commute. I live 'in Mill Valley and frequently see the traffic on 10 1 during the rush hour backed up to the Richardson Bay Bridge, and as time goes on it seem more frequent. As I said if I were a commuter going to San Rafael or further north I'd be mad if the problem can be resolved sooner rather then later (even if it isn't perfect) and it can be done.

In summation: We have a serious traffic problem on 10 1 that is getting worse every year, and not in just one direction. With the $50 million needed Caltrans says to correct only the SB direction, I belie ve that by sensible planning and the use of a reversible HOV lane for about the same cost, we can correct the problem in both directions. California doesn't have any reversible lanes but other places do (Seattle and Houston to name two) and I don't believe Caltrans, as a matter of principle, wants to deal with them, so it will be necessary for the powers that be (the Supervisors and the Congestion Management Agency) see that it is given serious consideration.

Thank you.

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