



Stakeholder Interview

Key Findings Summary Report

Prepared for:
Caltrans

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Background

The 46 East for the Future process is a public engagement effort designed to involve and educate the public about transportation improvements on State Route 46 East. A Study Team comprised of representatives from Caltrans, the City of Paso Robles, SLOCOG and San Luis Obispo County has been meeting in facilitated work sessions since May 2007 to develop agreement around core elements of the Comprehensive Corridor Study and the public engagement process.

As part of the public engagement design process, numerous stakeholder groups were identified for targeted outreach activities by the Study Team. From this general list, specific individuals were selected for interviews based on their ability to comment on the proposed public engagement process and provide additional ideas and resources.

During January 2008, Carolyn Verheyen of MIG conducted eight stakeholder interviews. Stakeholders represented citizen interests and other sectors such as local business, government and education. The interviewees are listed below in Table One.

Interviewees provided wide-ranging comments to the five prepared questions. The content and variety of opinions are described in the Key Findings section. Building rapport with the stakeholders and by extension, the groups they represent, was another key outcome of the stakeholder interview process. The survey instrument is included as an appendix to this report.

Stakeholder Name	Organization
Mary Chambers	Fix 46
Sandee McLaughlin	Cuesta College
Kelly Jenal-Stainbrook	Paso Robles School District
Stacie Jacob	Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance
Mike Gibson	City of Paso Robles Chamber of Commerce
Vivian Robertson	Mid-State Fair
Chris Iversen	SLOCOG Citizen Advisory Committee
Greg McMillan	Shandon Area Committee; also representing North County Watch

Table One: Stakeholder Interviewees

Key Findings

Participation

When asked who should be included in the 46 East for the Future process, interviewees identified many of the same stakeholders identified by the Study Team; confirming that the appropriate audience has been identified. Interviewees also emphasized the importance of transparency with the public about the potential physical impact of any project, as well as costs and timeframe. In addition, the long-range planning horizon for the effort was identified as a potential challenge for sustaining public interest and engagement.

Methods

When asked to identify successful public engagement methods that will work in the Paso Robles area, interviewees described methods that focus on personal contact, especially with public officials.

While some interviewees questioned the effectiveness of night meetings, others were supportive of them. Additional outreach activities such as the project website, newsletters and fact sheets were widely supported by the interviewees as effective tools. They also supported media outreach through local newspapers and radio.

Information

Interviewees supported the proposed information distribution methods such as email and newsletters, while also offering to provide project information directly to their groups.

Mike Gibson of the Paso Robles Chamber of Commerce identified breakfast meetings as another effective method for sharing information with the local business community. Stacie Jacob of the Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance offered to make a presentation to the Board of the Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance. MIG will coordinate these additional outreach activities with the Study Team as necessary.

Desired role

When asked about their desired role in the process, interviewees expressed interest in attending workshops and a sharing information. Interviewees agreed to share information about the process with their constituents and serve as liaisons between these groups and project staff.

Other considerations

Mary Chambers, of Fix 46, expressed a strong desire to keep a clear distinction between the 46 East for the Future process and the other widening activities in the corridor.

Sandee McLaughlin of Cuesta College identified existing survey work completed by Cuesta College about student driving patterns on 46 East. MIG will utilize these findings when preparing any Cuesta College specific outreach.

Identified Actions and Next Steps

Stakeholder interviews identified specific follow-up activities including distribution of project materials to the group and organizing speaking events. Additional stakeholders identified included the Cattlemans Association, ATV, Dune Buggy Users, Truckers and a number of local developers.

MIG will continue to coordinate outreach activities with identified stakeholder groups and through Study Team member agencies. In addition, MIG is working with the Economic Opportunity Commission of SLO County and Catholic Charities to ensure that outreach activities reach underrepresented groups such as low-income individuals and families, Seniors and Spanish speakers.

Appendix A

Stakeholder Interview Instrument

1. A public involvement process is being designed and we need your input. Whose participation is critical and how do you recommend we get them involved? What other groups or individuals should we reach out to for inclusion in this process?
2. Based on past experience, what public engagement methods work well and what methods did not deliver as expected? (How do people provide input or engage in the process?)
3. How do the interest groups you represent receive information? What methods have people come to rely on?
4. What is your desired role in this process?
5. What other considerations should we keep in mind as we implement the public engagement process during 2008?