

**NORTH COUNTY CORRIDOR
TRANSPORTATION EXPRESSWAY AUTHORITY**

ITEM: 4e

SUBJECT:

Public Information Meeting Summary

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Information Only

FISCAL IMPACT:

None related to the summary

DISCUSSION:

A Public Information Meeting for the SR 108 East Route Adoption Project was held on June 15, 2009, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m., in the Riverbank Community Center, 3600 Santa Fe Street, Riverbank, CA.

Judith Buethe Communications has provided the attached summary. Two hundred seventy five people signed in at the door. It is estimated that another 15-20 people attended, but did not sign in. Sixteen NCC Team members attended.

Caltrans utilized an open house format for the meeting. Caltrans is the lead agency for the SR 108 East Route Adoption Project for the purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). There was a public stenographer present to take comments. Comments were also obtained through comment cards handed out at the door and orally through the team members.

Sixty-nine comment cards and eleven dictated comments to the stenographer were received. The attached summary provides more detail regarding the specific comments.

Jumbo postcards were mailed to 2,223 property owners and 278 stakeholders, such as local officials, emergency responders; civic and community groups; pertinent local, state, and federal agencies; and other potentially interested individuals and organizations. The meeting was advertised in The Modesto Bee, The Riverbank News, The Oakdale Leader, Bilingual Weekly and Latino Times. Information about the meeting appeared on the Caltrans District 10 Website.



Summary of June 15, 2009, Public Information Meeting

A Public Information Meeting for the State Route 108 East Route Adoption Project was held on June 15, 2009, 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m., in the Riverbank Community Center, 3600 Santa Fe Street, Riverbank, Calif. Following is a summary of the activities leading up to the meeting, at the meeting, and follow-up.

Publicity/Advertising

Direct Mail

Jumbo postcard invitations in English and Spanish inviting recipients to the Public Information Meeting were sent on June 1 and 2, 2009, to a mailing list that included 2,223 property owners and 278 stakeholders, such as local officials; emergency responders; civic and community groups; pertinent local, state, and federal agencies; and other potentially interested individuals and organizations. (The number of entries on the list is fewer than the number to which the Public Scoping Meetings invitation was sent, because a large number of duplicates were deleted.)

Tony Tavares, Interim District Director, Caltrans District 10, was provided a letter and list to send a personal invitation to local, state, and federal elected officials in Stanislaus County and in southern San Joaquin County. Mr. Tavares' letter and a copy of the newsprint ad were sent on June 4, 2009.

Advertisements

An advertisement/public notice was placed in *The Modesto Bee* on May 22, 2009; in *The Oakdale Leader* on May 27, 2009; in *The Riverbank News* on May 27, 2009; in *Bilingual Weekly* on June 1, 2009; and in *Latino Times* in June 2009.

News Releases

On June 4, 2009, and June 13, 2009, a news release invited members of the public to the Public Information Meeting and provided background information on the project and a project description. The news releases were sent to the following mainstream and alternative media outlets: Ceres Chamber of Commerce, Citadel Broadcasting, Clear Channel, Hispanic Chamber of South San Joaquin County, Hispanic Chamber of Stanislaus County, Hughson Chronicle, KANM/KBUL, KAT Country 103, KCBC-770 AM, KCIV-99.9 FM; KCSO Telemundo 33, KCSS-FM, KHKK 104.1 The Hawk, KHOP, KJAX 1280, KJSN, KVFX, KKME, KQOD, KMRQ, KOSO, KRVR, KUYL, KVIN, Mattos Newspapers, *Modesto Bee*, Modesto Chamber of Commerce, Newman Chamber of Commerce, *Oakdale Leader*,

Patterson-Westley Chamber of Commerce, Riverbank Chamber of Commerce, *Escalon Times*, *Riverbank News*, *Rock 96.7*, *Stanislaus Farm News*, *Stanislaus Magazine*, *The Ceres Courier*, *The Signal*, Turlock Chamber of Commerce, *Turlock Journal*, Valley Builders Exchange, and *Waterford News*.

Articles announcing the meeting, reporting on, or commenting on the meeting appeared in print on the following dates and in the following publications:

Modesto Bee: June 14, 2009; June 16, 2009; June 18, 2009

Riverbank News: June 10, 2009

Oakdale Leader: June 9, 2009; June 24, 2009

Web site

Information about the Public Information Meeting appeared on the Caltrans District 10 Web site.

A complete report of the Public Information Meeting is being prepared for the project development team and will be published on the Web site.

Maps and Other Exhibits and Signs

Sixteen exhibit boards were prepared of the area being studied, the involved agencies, funding sources, project objectives and description, the process of a route adoption, environmental considerations, information on how attendees can be involved and continue to be involved in the project, and other information. Following is a list of the exhibits:

- **Welcome:** Welcome to the Public Scoping Meeting
- **Project Objectives/Description:** Route Adoption Objectives and Description. State Route Adoption Process Schedule, Potential Funding, Agency Involvement, NCCTAC, NCCTEA, What's Next, and Conceptual Corridor (2)
- **Environmental Studies:** Potential Environmental Topics
- **Right-of-Way:** Right-of-Way
- **Comment Station:** Comment Station, How Caltrans Builds Projects
- **Maps Station:** Two sets of 12-foot maps were shown on tables, along with other map boards.

Three discussion areas were set up for the following topics and boards: What Is a Route Adoption? (with discussion times), Project Chronology and Project History (with discussion times), and What Is the Mission of NCCTEA?

Public Scoping Meetings Format

Attendance

Two hundred seventy-five people signed in at the door. About 15-20 members of the public did not sign in. Also, 16 team members attended the meeting. Bueth Communications estimates 306 to as many as 311 people attended.

Format

The Public Information Meeting was held in an open house format. Three discussion areas were set up for the following topics: What Is a Route Adoption? Project History and Project Chronology, and What Is the Mission of NCCTEA? Staff members were stationed at the three discussion areas to talk about the assigned topic.

Throughout the meeting, project staff members were available to explain the maps and other exhibits (listed below) and answer questions. A Spanish-language interpreter was available at the Public Information Meeting. At the door, members of the Public Outreach staff welcomed attendees, explained the evening's format, asked attendees to sign in, and handed a comment sheet and program handout to each person. Attendees were invited to fill out and submit a comment sheet. They were informed of the public stenographer and invited to dictate comments to her. The Public Outreach staff also frequently introduced attendees to members of the project team and answered questions of a general nature, e.g., "Will other meetings be held?" "Where can I see a map of the project?" etc. Several attendees expressed disappointment that no formal presentation would be made.

Amenities

Refreshments were provided. Two tables were provided where attendees could sit down to fill out their comment sheets.

Comments

Statistics

Sixty-nine comment sheets were received.

Eleven people dictated comments to the public stenographer.

Written Concerns/Comments

- Acknowledgement of need for project
- Impact on business operations
- Impact on agricultural operations
- Assault on/loss of prime farmland
- Traffic congestion
- Fiscal impacts
- Project need given the existing highways in the region
- Interest in a six-lane roadway
- Avoidance of Ladd Road
- Expansion/extension of Ladd Road/Patterson
- Noise and air quality
- Avoidance of properties on Plainview Road
- Incompatibility with farming practices
- Avoidance of historical sites
- Impact to the area's economy
- Impacts on natural resources, including threatened and endangered species, vernal pools, and water courses
- Loss of revenue from property taxes
- Growth-inducing impacts
- Potential decrease in property values
- Effect on Con Agra's wastewater capacity and likelihood of needing to close the plant
- Use Pelandale
- Use Claribel/Kiernan
- Avoid south side of Claribel
- Avoid Chenault
- Impact on agricultural trucking operations
- Uncertainty and lack of more specific time frames for design and construction

- Ineffective meeting format/request for question-and-answer format/not all being told the same thing
- Need to fix other congested highways and roads first
- Request for contact information for the NCCTEA
- Use Warnerville to Willms Road
- Avoid Warnerville
- Connect Ellenwood and Wamble
- Right-of-way processes
- Need to move corridor south toward Waterford or north of Oakdale
- Starting at Manteca, design road to go north of Oakdale
- Need to plan for mass transit
- Need to consider no-build option
- Need to consider heavy metal runoff from prospective roadway
- Concern that this project may be coordinated with other large construction projects underway or being proposed
- The project will not shorten travel times
- Need to maintain existing highways
- There are other, better uses for the money, i.e., take care of drug problems
- Avoid impacting smaller ranchettes and homeowners; it's better to impact just one or two landowners

Oral Comments

Oral comments received reflected many of the concerns/comments noted above. Attendees from the west tended to resist alignments other than the Kiernan alignment. The TANC project was frequently mentioned as an area of concern. Attendees from the east tended to be more accepting of the project in general.

Follow-Up


On June 18, a flyer and a print program were sent to people at the meeting who did not arrive in time to be given one of the print agendas and comment sheets. The flyer thanked people for attending and assured them that they would be sent an invitation to the upcoming public hearing.

News Articles

See following pages for news articles from *The Modesto Bee*, *Oakdale Leader*, and *Riverbank News* announcing and following up on the Public Information Meeting.

The Modesto Bee

modbee.com

 [Print This Article](#)

Posted on Sun, Jun. 14, 2009

Public can voice corridor concern

last updated: June 14, 2009 02:10:53 AM

People interested in a future expressway north of Modesto are invited to an informational open house Monday in Riverbank. The 25-mile North County Corridor would connect Highway 99 at Salida to Highway 108-120 east of Oakdale and could cost \$1.2 billion. Many owners of homes and farms that might be in its way, depending on a final route decision, have protested at monthly meetings this year. Monday's session gives people a venue for submitting comments that would be addressed in the current phase of environmental studies. The current focus is on the 18-mile portion east of McHenry Avenue. Officials hope to transfer to that stretch the \$91 million in state money previously set aside for an Oakdale Bypass, which is being abandoned in favor of the North County Corridor. The freeway should ease congestion, smog and travel time for people in Riverbank, Oakdale and Tuolumne County, leaders say. Monday's meeting starts at 6:30 p.m. in the Riverbank Community Center, 3600 Santa Fe St. For more information: www.dot.ca.gov/dist10.

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<http://www.modbee.com/local/v-print/story/743622.html>

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The Riverbank News

Wednesday, June 10, 2009

North County Corridor Meet

June 15 Session

Staff Reports

Wednesday, June 10, 2009

Local residents are invited to attend a public information meeting to solicit public comment on planning for a Route Adoption for a New State Route 108 within Stanislaus County on Monday, June 15 from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

The meeting will be held at the Riverbank Community Center, 3600 Santa Fe St. in Riverbank.

Maps and other information about the North County Corridor Project (NCC) State Route 108 East Route Adoption Project will be available for viewing. Specialists in engineering, environmental studies, and right-of-way will be at the meeting to discuss concerns and answer questions. Comment cards will be available, and written comments will become part of the public record and considered in developing an environmental document.

The NCC State Route 108 East Route Adoption is a high-priority corridor for Stanislaus County and its incorporated cities. The primary intent of the project is to provide a high-capacity, west-east roadway to accommodate anticipated traffic growth in northern Stanislaus County, to alleviate traffic on parallel roadways, to accommodate multi-modal travel, to provide interregional connectivity, and to provide for economic growth. To plan for the new route, the North County Corridor Transportation Expressway Authority (NCCTEA) was formed. The NCCTEA consists of Caltrans, Stanislaus Council of Governments (StanCOG); the cities of Oakdale, Riverbank, Modesto; and the County of Stanislaus.

The ultimate facility type would be a freeway/expressway with interchanges, at-grade intersections, grade-separated major railroad crossings, irrigation district crossings, frontage roads and street alignments.

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) as the lead agency for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), in cooperation with the North County Corridor Transportation Expressway Authority, is preparing a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) program environmental impact report. Two previous public scoping meetings were held, on Nov. 13, 2008 and Nov. 20, 2008. The public information meeting on June 15, 2009, is another opportunity for members of the public to be involved in the project and to provide comments or concerns.

The current project phase will result in the selection of a preferred corridor, and broad environmental clearance for the California Transportation Commission to approve the Route Adoption. The alignment would extend from State Route 108/McHenry Avenue to a location on State Route 120 approximately six miles east of the City of Oakdale, and will be approximately 18 miles long.

This study area was defined by a previous Feasibility Study and also by a Preliminary Design Report. The alignment may be an entirely new roadway or may be incorporated into the existing local road network.

The NCCTEA is using regional transportation impact fees for this phase of the project and is also asking for state funding that was originally allocated to the Oakdale Bypass project.

Members of the public are welcome to provide comments, questions, or concerns to Gail Miller, Senior Environmental Planner, Caltrans, 2015 East Shields Avenue, Suite 100, Fresno, CA 93726 or by e-mail to Gail_Miller@dot.ca.gov or by calling (559) 243-8274. Also, the Project Manager, Christina Hibbard, can be contacted at Christina_Hibbard@dot.ca.gov or by calling (209) 948-7889.

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<http://www.theriverbanknews.com/print.asp?ArticleID=36171&SectionID=1&SubSectionI...> 6/24/2009

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<http://www.oakdaleleader.com/news/article/218/>

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jbranch@oakdaleleader.com
209-847-3021, ext. 8120

Concerns Linger Over Corridor

Plenty of people turned out at the neighboring Riverbank Community Center on June 15 for a meeting on the North County Corridor State Route 108 East Route Adoption. At an estimated several hundred, there were probably more than the California Department of Transportation expected and they were without microphones, so it was virtually impossible for the organizers to direct the confused gathering.

However, the chattering crowd made the best of it, milled around the maps and diagrams and explanatory boards for an hour or so, interrogated representatives of the California Department of Transportation about the various boards associated with the project and expressed their views loudly or in writing on the comment sheets provided.

Originally, proponents of the North County Corridor planned for a state route of freeway, or at least expressway, standards to run 25 miles from the Hammett Road intersection on Highway 99 in Salida in a southwards loop between Riverbank and Modesto and then tend northeastward again to join State Route 120 six miles east of Oakdale. Cost has been estimated at \$1.2 billion.

Monday's meeting, however, concerned only the 18 miles east of McHenry Avenue from which a new state route could follow long considered routes such as Kiernan and Claribel to the south or Patterson further to the north.

State authorities decided about three months ago they couldn't extend the proposed corridor westward all the way to join Highway 99 in Salida because there are already two or more highway intersections close together in that city. County standards would allow connection of a county road to the freeway in Salida but stricter state standards would not permit that, said one expert at the meeting. So many of the protests to date by farmers and other landowners about the original corridor infringing on their property may be moot since the route has dramatically changed.

For general information about the project, contact Christina Hibbard at 209-948-7889. Her e-mail is Christina_hibbard@dot.ca.gov and her address Christina Hibbard, Project Manager, California Department of Transportation, PO Box 2048, Stockton, CA 95201.

Ongoing agency coordination and stakeholder meetings are expected next followed by a public hearing on a draft program environmental impact report sometime this summer.

For funding this phase of the project, The North County Corridor Transportation Expressway Authority (NCCTEA) is using regional transportation fees and also seeking the state funding of \$91 million that was originally allocated to the Oakdale Bypass project.

The NCCTEA is made up of directors Modesto Mayor James Ridenour, Oakdale Mayor Farrell Jackson, the Riverbank Mayor and Stanislaus County Supervisors

<http://www.oakdaleleader.com/news/article/280/>

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William O'Brien and Jeff Grover; ex-officio members, Tony Tavares, interim director of Caltrans District 10; Vince Harris, executive director of Stanislaus Council of Governments; and authority manager Matt Machado.

<http://www.oakdaleleader.com/news/article/280/>

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