

**I-5/SR 78 Interchange Project  
Community Working Group**

**Meeting Agenda**

Date: 11/10/14

Time: 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Location: Heritage Hall Magee Park

Address: 258 Beech St, Carlsbad CA, 92008

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1. Introductions (20 minutes – Sara Costin, Facilitator)
2. Community Working Group Overview (15 minutes – Sara Costin, Facilitator)
  - a. Participation Guidelines
  - b. Roles and Responsibilities
3. Project Overview (50 minutes – Allan Kosup/Karen Jewel)
  - a. History/why are we here today?
  - b. Project Overview
  - c. Purpose and Need
  - d. Existing Interchange Problems
  - e. Areas of Potential Constraints
  - f. Solutions/Options
  - g. Project Timeline Overview
4. Next Steps (20 minutes – Sara Costin, Facilitator)
  - a. NOP/NOI Public Meeting – second week of January
  - b. CWG Meeting #2 – February 9

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# I-5/SR 78 Interchange Project

## MEETING NOTES

<b>Meeting Type:</b>	Community Working Group Meeting #1
<b>Project:</b>	I-5/SR 78 Interchange
<b>Meeting Date/Time:</b>	November 10, 2014 / 3-5 p.m.
<b>Meeting Location:</b>	Heritage Hall – Magee Park, 258 Beech Avenue, Carlsbad CA, 92008
<b>Notes by:</b>	Wes Jones (Southwest Strategies)
<b>Notes Prepared:</b>	November 13, 2014 (revised November 18, 2014)
<b>Attendees:</b>	See page 8

### 1. Welcome/Introductions/Observations of the 5/78 Interchange

- Self-introductions were made by project team members, consultants and working group participants.
  
- Working group participants were asked to provide initial observations about the project and/or the current status of the interchange.
  - Marshall Plantz, Senior Civil Engineer, City of Carlsbad – Maintaining access into the City of Carlsbad from I-5 southbound is important.
  
  - Gary Barberio, Assistant City Manager, City of Carlsbad – Important that adequate access to and from I-5 in the northwest quadrant of Carlsbad (and all of Carlsbad) is maintained. Coastal access and impacts to Carlsbad Village Drive and Las Flores Drive are key considerations.
  
  - Mary Lynn McCorkle, Coordinator, Alliance for Regional Solutions – Short -and long-term construction impacts.
  
  - Linda Strand, President, Independent Energy Solutions – Any expansion at the 5/78 interchange should take in consideration access to the City of Vista.
  
  - David DiPierro, City Traffic Engineer, City of Oceanside – Concerns about cut thru traffic in Oceanside and construction impacts.
  
  - Paul Pace, Resident of Oceanside (Fire Mountain community) – Access to the Fire Mountain community and overall impacts to the adjacent interchange arterials.
  
  - Jim Schroder, Oceanside Economic Development Commission – Traffic backup and tremendous congestion throughout the interchange.



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- Diane Nygaard, President, Preserve Calavera – Impact on our natural resources, Buena Vista Lagoon and global warming. Not sure if the 5/78 interchange project has been identified in the Public Works Plan for I-5. Robust public transportation should be considered.
- Deb Schmidt, Commuter Coordinator, Cal State San Marcos University – Flexibility, biking and public transportation and better alternative transportation choices – the campus is growing.

### 2. Working Group Purpose and Guidelines

- Sara Costin, Facilitator, established the working group parameters and guidelines. The purpose of the working group is not to be a decision-making body, but rather provide input, feedback and opinions about the project's process, and be a conduit between Caltrans and the community for project information dissemination. Some initial working group guidelines include (more to be added at a later date with the group's feedback):
  - Cell phones on the table in front of each participant – try to refrain from emails/texts during the meetings.
  - Regular attendance at quarterly (or as needed) meetings.
  - Respect each other and other's opinions.
  - Not a decision-making body
  - Listen actively
  - Relay project information back to your organization/community
  - Refrain from sidebar conversations

### 3. Project History/Overview

- Allan Kosup, I-5 and SR 78 Corridor Director, Caltrans – It can be a challenge to retrofit old freeways/interchanges. It is important to balance impacts and benefits when considering interchange projects like the one at 5/78, especially given the proximity to neighborhoods, businesses and natural resources.

Caltrans has its own perceptions about what project needs exist and how to solve traffic problems but it is helpful to understand the community's perspective. Historically, Caltrans does periodic public meetings to gain feedback on project needs, design and assessment. Taking it a step further, community working groups help Caltrans better understand community needs and identify aspects that Caltrans may have missed in their studies.



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Regarding Diane Nygaard's earlier comment about the 5/78 interchange project being in the I-5 Public Works Plan, Allan stated that both the California Coastal Commission and Caltrans agree that a project is needed at the interchange. There are more projects needed than available funds. One idea is to fix the ends of SR 78 (interchanges at I-5 and I-15).

Caltrans has begun preliminary engineering studies on how to improve the 5/78 interchange. Caltrans has studied some initial alternatives and concepts as a basis for the project to move forward. In January of next year, Caltrans will host a Notice of Preparation/Notice of Initiation (NOP/NOI) as a mechanism to start the conversation with the communities, resource agencies, and other stakeholders about their ideas and concerns about the interchange. After the NOP/NOI meeting, Caltrans will continue to evaluate options for the interchange to identify the family of alternatives carried into the environmental review stage and begin in-depth studies in late 2015 (biological, traffic, noise, etc). Those studies could take up to 18-24 months to complete, especially given the biological diversity and species in the area.

Allan then stated how the community working group fits into the process. He stated it is helpful to have the working group be part of the process so when it comes time to identify a preferred alternative, there are no surprises in the community about the decision Caltrans will make. It also shows the elected officials in the area that there is consensus in the community that a project needs to be built. He stated similar groups have been formed for the I-5/SR 56 Interchange Project.

#### 4. Project Purpose and Need/Objectives/Areas of Potential Constraints

- Karen Jewel, Project Manager, Caltrans covered slides 4-15 in the PowerPoint presentation (see attachment).
- Regarding the areas of potential constraints, Karen Jewel explained that depending on the project configurations, there are constraints including shopping centers to the north of SR 78; residences to the west of I-5 adjacent to the interchange; the Buena Vista Lagoon to the south of the interchange; and the potential impacts on access to nearby interchanges and/or on/off ramps at Las Flores Drive, Jefferson St., Cassidy St, Carlsbad Village Dr., California St., and Vista Way.

#### 5. Project Scenarios

- Karen Jewel explained that given the project's objectives, current purpose and need, and constraints, Caltrans is currently looking at a variety of options that have been



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pared down to four scenarios.

- Scenario A: Direct Connectors + HOV Direct Connectors
  - Karen Jewel explained that this scenario would add both general purpose lane and HOV lane connectors for I-5/SR 78. (refer to the attached scenario exhibits)
  
  - Paul Pace asked how tall the facility would be if this scenario was built. Karen replied that it would be three levels – freeway level + two connectors.
  
  - Allan Kosup explained that this scenario provides the highest level of traffic service throughout the interchange. This was referred to as the “gold standard” for traffic engineering. It would also have the biggest footprint and potential impacts to the Buena Vista Lagoon.
  
  - Allan Kosup also explained that this scenario would also have the highest cost and would probably result in the closing of the on/off ramps at Las Flores Drive.
  
  - Gary Barberio asked if there are specific project boundaries that impacts are studied under – if impacts occur beyond Las Flores Dr., Carlsbad Village Dr. and Jefferson St. for example, are they studied. Karen Jewel explained that the project would take into account and study potential traffic related impacts.
  
  - Allan Kosup stated that in 2011, Caltrans worked with the cities to identify sections that would need further study in terms of impacts. He numbered approximately 40 sections in the area that would need further evaluation and the intent is that the working group would be part of the process to identify additional impacts as needed.
  
  - David DiPierro asked about HOV lanes on SR 78 and when they were planned. Karen Jewel and Allan Kosup responded and stated that the RTP has HOV lanes planned for the 2035 timeframe but it is possible that they could be moved up in the next RTP.
  
- Pros and Cons of Scenario A
  - The group identified some general pros and cons of scenario A including:
    1. Pros – “gold standard” for traffic movement, reduction of traffic backup on local surface streets (fewer accidents), overall traffic mitigation, and



HOV/public transit benefits.

2. Cons – Visual impacts, closing Cassidy St. on ramp, potential lagoon impacts, construction impacts, cost, Las Flores Dr. on/off ramp impacts, Vista Way northbound I-5 access or lack thereof.
- Scenario B – Direct and Loop Connectors
    - Karen Jewel stated that this impact has probably least amount of impacts but there are tradeoffs because it does not provide the same level of traffic service.
    - This scenario was referred to as the “minimalist”.
    - Jim Schroder asked about how the southbound off ramp to Vista Way and northbound loop ramp would remain. Karen Jewel stated they would need to be removed in this scenario.
    - Dianne Nygaard asked that the new westbound SR 78 to southbound I-5 loop ramp be made orange in the scenario exhibit to help distinguish the facilities.
    - Regg Antle asked how much cheaper this scenario was than the others. Allan Kosup stated the team would come back at a later date with that answer along with other criteria for alternatives.
    - Linda Strand asked how much traffic increase is expected in the future. Allan Kosup stated the region expects about 30% growth in daily traffic by 2040.
    - Marylynn McCorkle stated that the money saved on the freeway could go towards more transit.
    - Marshall Plantz stated that this is somewhat of a zero sum game with respect to funding going toward the rail line or the highway system. Buses may not be a reliable transportation option.
    - Dianne Nygaard stated that the project from the beginning would need to have objectives that encourage public transit and we can't assume money saved in one place would be applied elsewhere.



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- Regg Antle asked if HOV lanes save any time over general purpose. Karen Jewel explained that they do save time if HOV direct connectors are built because carpoolers do not need to weave in and out of traffic to enter HOV lanes on I-5 and SR 78. Allan Kosup reiterated that there are also benefits for general purpose lanes because it removes the “turbulence” that might be present when carpoolers are weaving through traffic to access lanes in the median.
- Pros and Cons of Scenario B
  - The group identified some general pros and cons of scenario B including:
    1. Pros – cost, least invasive on the lagoon, less money on freeway structures could mean more money for transit and rail, potentially maintains access for Las Flores Dr.
    2. Cons – no HOV connectivity, it was stated that this is sort of like a “band aid” for the interchange, relocates the park & ride, Vista Way northbound I-5 access impacts.
  - Karen Jewel stated one more item related to scenario A – the reason why braided ramps are included is because the proximity of Jefferson St. to I-5. These types of ramps may be needed to maintain access to Jefferson St. from I-5 if direct connectors are put in.
- Scenario C – Direct Connectors + Full DAR
  - Allan Kosup said this scenario tries to balance scenario A in terms of HOV connectivity but is not as tall or does not have quite the horizontal footprint as scenario A does.
  - It was stated that this is sort of the “hybrid” scenario between A and C
- Pros and Cons of Scenario C
  - The group identified some general pros and cons of scenario C including:
    1. Pros – access to Vista Way
    2. Cons – still have traffic backup because DAR uses signal, Vista Way northbound I-5 access impacts, and possible loss of Las Flores Drive on/off ramps.
- Scenario D – Direct Connectors + HOV Direct Connectors and Half DAR



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- David DiPerro asked about the northbound DAR be switched to a southbound DAR.
- Karen Chapman said that if the northbound DAR was switched to a southbound DAR it would alter the footprint.
- Pros and Cons of Scenario D
  - The group identified some general pros and cons of scenario C including:
    1. Pros – better traffic flow than scenario C for carpoolers
    2. Cons – wider project footprint
- Allan Kosup stated that the project team would bring more specifics in terms of cost, impacts, etc. the next time the working group meets.

### 6. Timeline

- Karen Jewel covered slide 17 in the PowerPoint Presentation (see attachment).
- 5/78 Interchange Project scoping meeting in January 2015.
- Allan Kosup stated that over the next 8-10 months it would be helpful for the group to meet a few times to cover alternative selection criteria and so forth.
- Diane Nygaard asked that we provide an overview regarding other projects such as rail projects in proximity to the interchange. The project team to provide an RTP/Rail/NCC project overview.

### 7. Next Meeting

- Sara Costin explained the process moving forward for the working group meetings and asked about a potential February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015 meeting.
- February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015 from 10 a.m. to noon was agreed upon by the majority of working group members.
- Any information or questions can be directed towards Karen Jewel.



## MEETING NOTES

### Working Group Participants

(In attendance)

1. Linda Strand – Independent Energy Solutions
2. Diane Nygaard – Preserve Calavera
3. Deb Schmidt – Cal State San Marcos University
4. Jim Schroder – Oceanside Economic Development Commission
5. Paul Pace – Oceanside resident
6. David DiPierro – City of Oceanside
7. Marylynn McCorkle– Alliance for Regional Solutions
8. Gary Barberio – City of Carlsbad
9. Marshall Plantz – City of Carlsbad
10. Regg Antle – Buena Vista Lagoon Foundation

(Not in attendance)

11. Belinda Garcia – Cal State San Marcos University
12. Bret Bernard – Camino Town and Country Shopping Center
13. Eric Larson – Carlsbad resident
14. Stephen Fluhr – Westfield Shopping Center
15. Richard Fox – Oceanside resident
16. Toni Padron – Carlsbad Chamber of Commerce

### Project Team/Consultants

1. Allan Kosup – Caltrans
2. Karen Jewel – Caltrans
3. Mohamad Khatib – Caltrans
4. Levy Le – Caltrans
5. Joe Britton – SANDAG
6. Chris Wahl – Southwest Strategies
7. Wes Jones – Southwest Strategies
8. Karen Chapman – TY Lin International
9. Ryan Lau – TY Lin International
10. Sara Costin – Costin Public Outreach Group