

11.0 Executive Summary

This Milestone Report for the Public Involvement Plan for the LAX-Palmdale (LAX-PMD) High Speed Ground Access Study is the final in a series of eleven. This report, prepared by The Robert Group and IBI Group for the Southern California Association of Governments, maps out a strategic, comprehensive and systematic approach to interfacing with key stakeholders, to provide a steady flow of up-to-date information and, more importantly, to receive feedback about specific elements of the LAX-PMD High Speed Ground Access Study as it moved forward through significant milestones. A secondary objective of the outreach plan was to build understanding of the Study so that key elected officials, impacted municipalities, regional opinion leaders and other influential stakeholders would ultimately support the Study into its next phase.

This report provides a summary and accounting of the high-level outreach completed for the LAX-PMD Study. It should be noted that the value and primary goal of the Outreach Task is to establish a dialogue and ultimately support for the SCAG high-speed intraregional system. As can be seen in the report, the comprehensiveness and quality of the Milestone 11 effort illustrates the success of the effort.

The Milestone 11 Report of the LAX-PMD High Speed Ground Access Study consists of seven components:

- 11.1 Overview of the Public Involvement Plan
- 11.2 Stakeholder Identification
- 11.3 Agency Coordination
- 11.4 Stakeholder Briefings
- 11.5 Collateral Materials
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Overview of the Public Involvement Plan

The Public Involvement Plan is the final milestone to be presented as part of the LAX-PMD High Speed Ground Access Study. It represents the culmination of a strategic and proactive effort to identify and engage key stakeholders throughout the 18-month Study period. Recognizing that in recent years there have been a plethora of transportation studies and, at times competing technologies, routes and interest, the consultant team understood from the outset the need to differentiate the LAX-PMD Study effort from other previous studies. Hence, this proactive Public Involvement program was developed. Stakeholders were identified in the initial phase of the Study, and briefings and updates at key milestone intervals were held throughout to ensure an appropriate level of public understanding and recognition.

The Public Involvement Plan utilized the following approach:

- Initial outreach was directed to key policy-makers and influential stakeholders;
- Efforts were focused on feasible routes and alternatives within the Study area;
- Simple, clear thematic public information materials were developed and distributed to appropriate individuals and organizations;

- A Website was developed to augment outreach efforts; and,
- Briefings with key stakeholders were conducted in a timely, ongoing and carefully planned manner.

Stakeholder Identification

The outreach and public involvement effort for a Study of this magnitude and geographic diversity demanded that a thorough inventory of appropriate project stakeholders be made. It is our experience that initial stakeholder identification is an early key to the ultimate success of our outreach. As a result, the consultant team developed a comprehensive database of key civic stakeholders, organizations and California elected officials at the all levels of government.

Civic stakeholders and their organizations were identified as those with established track records of substantive participation in the regional dialogue regarding transportation solutions – especially as it relates to efficient land use patterns and economic development issues. Elected stakeholders who were identified were those with either portions of proposed routes in their districts or key committee or leadership assignments germane to the Study. For the purpose of this Study, Federal elected officials are members of the United States Senate and House of Representatives; State elected officials are members of the California State Senate and Assembly; and local elected officials include the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, the Mayors of Los Angeles, Lancaster, Palmdale and Santa Clarita; and City of Los Angeles Councilmembers.

Organizational and elected stakeholders were contacted at the outset of the Study to schedule briefings. These briefings were generally structured in the form of PowerPoint presentations, which provided background, differentiated this Study from other similar efforts taking place in the region, and provided current information on the status of the Study. These briefings, averaging about an hour in length, provided stakeholders with an opportunity to ask technical and general questions, and more importantly, allowed the consultant team to hear concerns, comments and suggestions first hand.

A Briefing Book was also developed that included key information about each elected official, a map of their district as well as information on germane routes being studied within their districts. In some instances, elected officials were identified as key stakeholders, only to have their electoral status or committee assignment change, or to have routes impacting their districts drop from priority consideration. This approach ensured that all potentially impacted elected officials were kept informed and updated.

Agency Coordination

Briefings were held with the Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA), City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT), Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), and the Cities of Santa Clarita, Palmdale and Lancaster. Additionally, presentations were made to three of the Councils of Government (COGs), which, combined represent all of the municipalities impacted by initially proposed routes. Those COGs were the North County Transportation Coalition (the de facto COG for North Los Angeles County), as well as the Arroyo

Verdugo and Westside COGs. The COGs are recognized subregional quasi-governmental entities, many with policy-making authority in the areas of transportation, water and land use. Briefings with the LAWA, LADOT, and MTA were especially insightful, as each entity might become significant partners in future high speed rail studies.

Stakeholder Briefings

Key stakeholders were reached through a carefully calibrated strategy that included a combination of individual briefings, public presentations to existing, active organizations, dissemination of fact sheets, a website and other mechanisms. Key to any successful outreach effort is for opinion leaders to know that they are included in the decision-making process. For this reason, the Project Team made sure communication with the public was continuous and two-way.

The Project Team developed a multi-tiered approach whereby those with a keen interest in transportation issues were briefed during the Study. Key elected officials, governmental agencies and the COG's were determined to be "first tier" stakeholders. Existing civic and business organizations were identified as "second tier" stakeholders.

Collateral Materials

Collateral materials were developed and distributed throughout the Study. Collateral materials consist of one-page fact sheets on the project, PowerPoint briefings, executive summaries of the milestone reports and PowerPoint presentation to the SCAG Maglev Task Force. Given the complexity and technical nature of the subject matter and plethora of transportation projects taking place across the region, it was vital that concise yet descriptive and easily understood information about the Study be made available to stakeholders in an easy to understand format.

The Website

A Study Website, created to establish a user-friendly interface, was developed and updated regularly during the course of the Study. Approved Milestone reports, maps, graphic representations of routes being studied, project management plan; system goals and benefits; guiding principles; alternatives and financial analysis; evaluation criteria; system concepts; and technology comparisons represent a sample of the information available for review and/or downloading from the Website. The Website was also a useful tool in ensuring that stakeholders (i.e. policy makers and their staffs) could access current, approved information when needed and provided the opportunity for members of the general public to learn about the project as well. The internet address for the website is the following: www.lax-pmd.org

Briefing Summary

The Public Involvement Plan yielded a wide range of comments from strong support for a high speed rail system connecting regional transportation hubs to genuine concern that low income communities would not be beneficiaries of such a system. Many participants, especially those from the business community and economic development organizations, were especially interested in the cost of the system and its

potential land use implications. Representatives from the various governmental agencies were most interested in how funding might be obtained and who potential funding partners might be. There was also widespread consensus that, as regional traffic congestion continues to worsen, something feasible and practical must be done to move people and goods through the region more efficiently.

In addition to these general comments, six recurring themes did emerge throughout the course of the Study. These themes were: Corridor of Greatest Demand; Environmental/Safety Issues; Interconnectivity with Existing Systems; Routes, Costs and Technology.