

TESTIMONY OF

Anne M. Bayer

President, Gateway Cities Council of Governments

BEFORE THE

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure's

Subcommittee on Highways and Transit

and

Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials

FIELD HEARING

on

“Confronting Freight Challenges in Southern California”

February 20, 2009

Board Room

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
One Gateway Plaza, Los Angeles California

Thank you for holding this hearing on this important topic for Southern California. My name is Anne Bayer and I am President of the Gateway Cities Council of Governments which represents the 27 cities of Southeast Los Angeles County, California. Gateway Cities has a population of 2.2 million people who live and work at the “epicenter” of goods movement for the nation.

The Nation’s largest port complex; the Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles are located at the southerly portion of our subregion, and all freight leaving these facilities travels through our communities by rail or highway. The freight challenges for our communities are probably the most significant of any other place in the country. Approximately 45% of the goods entering this country go through these two ports and about 75 to 80% of those goods leave Southern California bound for the remainder of the nation.

Historically, the Gateway Cities communities have taken an active role in goods movement from the initiation of the Alameda Corridor rail cargo expressway in the 1980’s to addressing the highway freight challenges through corridor improvement projects on the I-710 and the I-5 freeways and studies to commence work on the SR-91/I-605/I-405.

Our issues and challenges for moving freight through Gateway Cities can best be summarized as follows:

We are currently in the environmental process to improve the I-710 corridor, the I-710 freeway handles over half of the trucks leaving the San Pedro Bay Ports. In this process we have refined and identified the following significant issues.

- Air Quality and Health Risks – The residents along I-710 have some of the highest asthma and cancer rates in the State. This can be traced to diesel particulate pollution from freight movement. Cleaning the air is the communities’ highest priority.
- The I-710 freeway has the highest truck related accident rates in the country – current truck volumes exceed 21,000 daily truck trips which translates to too many large trucks traveling in close proximity to area residents and employees on an antiquated freeway designed over 50 years ago. There is a “unanimous” position of our communities to improve our air quality and safety through the construction of a modern freeway and freight corridor that separates truck and autos to the greatest extent possible and ultimately utilize alternative technology for the freight movement.
- The I-710 is not the only freeway in Gateway Cities that experiences extraordinary truck volumes, the I-5, SR-91, I-605, SR-60 freeways in Gateway Cities are all nearing or at capacity and need attention.

- the I-5 freeway project is the Gateway Cities highest priority. The Orange County segment is nearly complete, the southern portion (I-605 – County Line) is fully funded, with construction to commence within the next 2 years, the EIR is underway for the portion from the I-605 to the I-710, and we are actively seeking funds to complete this Environmental phase. The I-5/I-710 Interchange is under study with the I-710 environmental process. These freeway to freeway interchanges when redesigned will greatly help with the challenges associated with freight/goods movement, as well as passenger congestion and pollution in the subregion. (see attached summary information)
- The I-710 Environmental Document clearly shows that the railroad system that serves the ports (with the exception of the Alameda Corridor) is at capacity. This applies to rail yards and mainline track through Southern California. We have a severe need to grade separate many, many at-grade crossings throughout Southern California.
- Gateway Cities and its regional partners have taken a leadership role in examining new ways to address the challenges and issues for freight movement by:
 - Exploring the use of Advanced Technology to move containers with zero emissions
 - Planning Intelligent Transportation Systems for Goods Movement in cooperation between the public and private sectors
 - Defining new approaches to truck inspections
 - Examining a regional freight movement corridor

The aforementioned challenges (and solutions) are the highest priorities for our Board of Directors. We have little choice as the San Pedro Bay Ports' container volumes are expected to increase three-fold in the next 20 to 25 years. In speaking here today, I would like you understand that this is a national problem and needs nationwide solutions and input, including funding. We believe Gateway Cities and our other agency partners (both private and public) are developing workable and innovative solutions that will utilize advanced technology and create jobs. We can't meet these challenges alone. We need your help, support and funding.

TESTIMONY OF

Michael Mendez

Chairman, I-5 Consortium Joint Powers Authority (I-5 JPA)

BEFORE THE

Subcommittee on Highways and Transit and Subcommittee on

Railroads, Pipelines and Hazardous Materials

House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

HEARING ON

“Confronting Freight Challenges in Southern California”

February 20, 2009

10:00 a.m.

Metro, Third Floor Board Room

One Gateway Plaza

Los Angeles, CA

Thank you, Chairman DeFazio, Chairwoman Brown, and members of the Subcommittee for the honor of allowing the I-5 JPA to provide written testimony regarding the challenges associated with freight movement in Southern California.

My name is Michael Mendez and I am Chairman of the I-5 Consortium Joint Powers Authority (or I-5 JPA). The I-5 JPA was created over 17 years ago and represents the residents and businesses along I-5 in six (6) cities including Commerce, Downey, Santa Fe Springs, Norwalk, La Mirada and Buena Park.

Our mission is to “Protect cities while increasing capacity and improving safety and efficiency of the I-5 by working with transportation authorities to design I-5 corridor improvements that will not cause economic and social disruption of communities.” Corridor capacity, traffic flow and air quality issues along I-5 are intricately linked to the freight challenges that are being experienced. This is why the I-5 JPA felt it so critically important to submit testimony to the Subcommittee.

We are in complete support of and work very closely with the Gateway Cities Council of Governments (Gateway COG), who will summarize various key points relative to the COG region, as part of the hearing. But we also want to emphasize the ongoing and necessary efforts to expand I-5 from I-605 north to I-710. The project will widen the highway from existing 6 and 8 lane portions to 10 lanes, or 5 lanes in each direction, including a High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane. This will relieve traffic congestion and help respond to the #1 public health issue raised at community meetings, the deleterious effect on air quality in the region that results from this congestion.

The I-5 JPA has been successful in helping secure full funding for the I-5 expansion south of I-605 into Orange County. This six (6) mile stretch of I-5 is anticipated to break ground and begin construction within the next 18 months. This is crucial to passenger and goods movement, as well as to our economy in terms of creating jobs necessary to construct this

more than \$1.4 billion widening initiative. Interstate 5 has already been expanded in Orange County, and this final segment, from I-605 north to I-710, is the final portion requiring expansion, necessary to help alleviate the congestion and improve air quality in southeast Los Angeles County.

We recommend that the Committee consider the I-5 Corridor expansion project when discussing the re-authorization of SAFETEA-LU. We hope that this #1 priority of the I-5 JPA and the Gateway Cities COG will rise to the top of the priority list. Based on the need from the passenger and goods movement perspectives, as well as the health and safety benefits associated with improving air quality resulting from improved traffic flow, we believe this warrants that top priority.

Continuing to fund the I-5 expansion, particularly from I-605 north to I-710, is in the nation's interest because of the continuity with I-5 to the south, where the highway has been widened or is fully funded to be widened. This segment will soon be complete, but serious congestion remains in the LA County portion represented by the cities of the I-5 JPA. I-5 is an interregional highway of national significance, included on the national defense highway system. Moreover, it is used for commercial goods movement, passenger/commuter traffic, connecting the U.S. with Mexico/Canada, and this segment also includes two major interchange to interchange connections (I-605/I-5 and I-710/I-5) which are also major goods movement corridors.

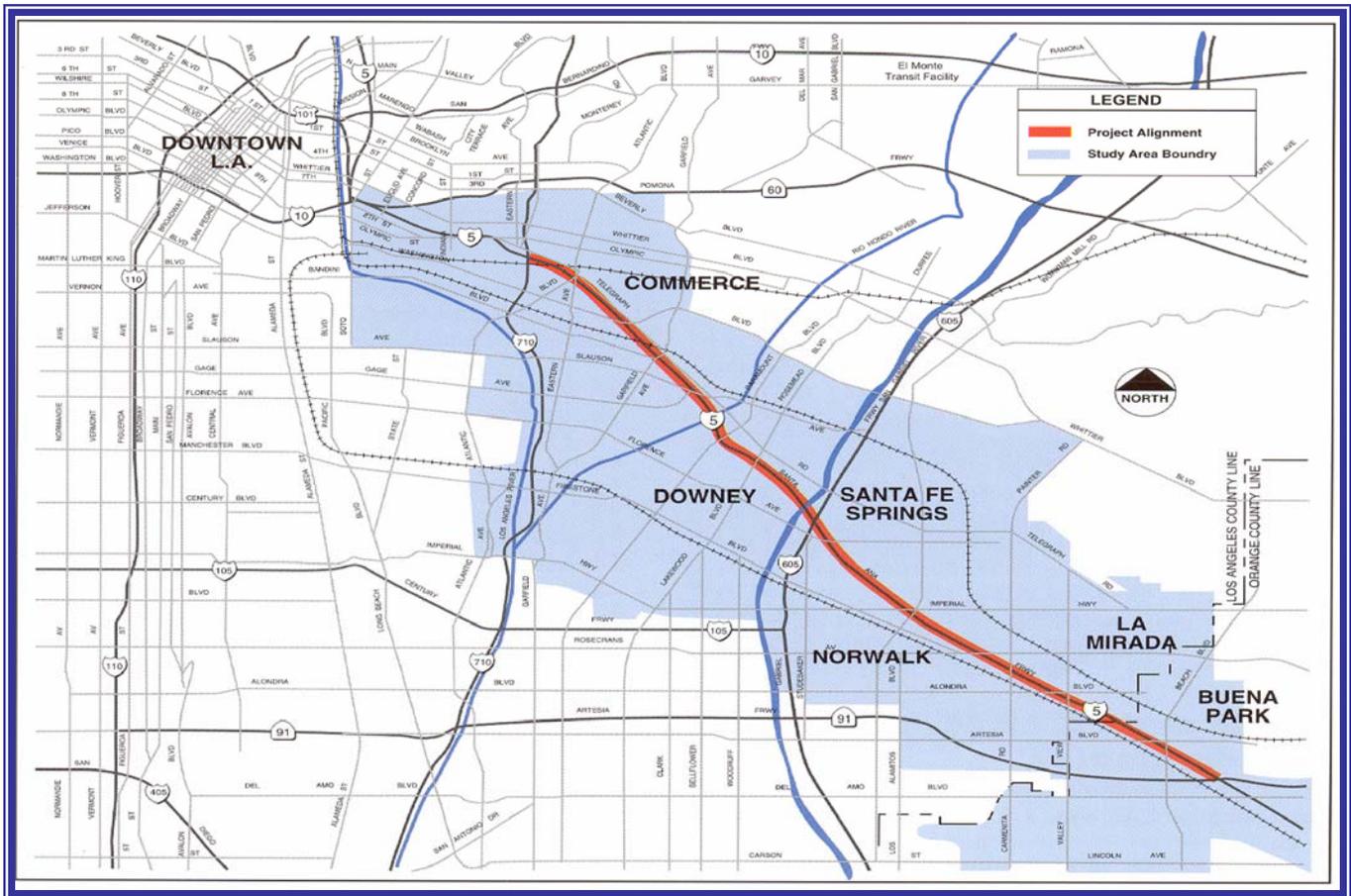
From the freight perspective, there are more than 25,000 trucks a day that use the I-5 freeway. Additionally, there are many warehouses and other businesses that service the freight movements and distribution from the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach along the Corridor.

Additionally, Interstate 5 is nearly complete through Orange County just south of the Los Angeles County border, and the improvement in traffic flow is dramatic. Caltrans is completing the final design and is in the process of acquiring the necessary property to construct the improvements south of I-605. The environmental document for the

freeway between I-605 and the county line to the south was complete in 2007, and we have pushed for timely delivery of the design and property acquisition so that the Project can be built as soon as possible. Finally, with the new freeway design developed with the input of the I-5 JPA and the cities, there is no opposition to proceeding with these freeway improvements. We believe this consensus makes the I-5 a great candidate project for this new transportation initiative.

In conclusion, we hope that our testimony will complement that submitted by the Gateway Cities COG, as well as provide additional justification when considering the Transportation Reauthorization bill, which we hope will include funds for I-5.

We are thankful for the Committee's interest in this matter, and the time taken to come to Los Angeles, not only to hear testimony, but to possibly visualize and experience our highways and critical freight corridors. I know this will help you to better understand the issues at hand and challenges we face on a daily basis. Thank you.



Interstate 5 Consortium Cities Joint Powers Authority

Cities of Commerce, Downey, Santa Fe Springs, Norwalk, La Mirada and Buena Park, California

I-5 Freeway Corridor Status Report February, 2009

Project Description –

1. Expand the I-5 freeway between the County line and I-605 freeway by adding 4 or 6 lanes to the existing 6 lanes and modernizing the freeway
2. Expand the I-5 freeway between the I-605 freeway to the I-710 freeway by adding 2 to 4 lanes to the existing 8 lanes and modernizing the freeway, including 1 car-pool lane in each direction
3. Improve local arterial highways and improve commuter rail service in the JPA area

I-5 Freeway Status Report Summary

February, 2009

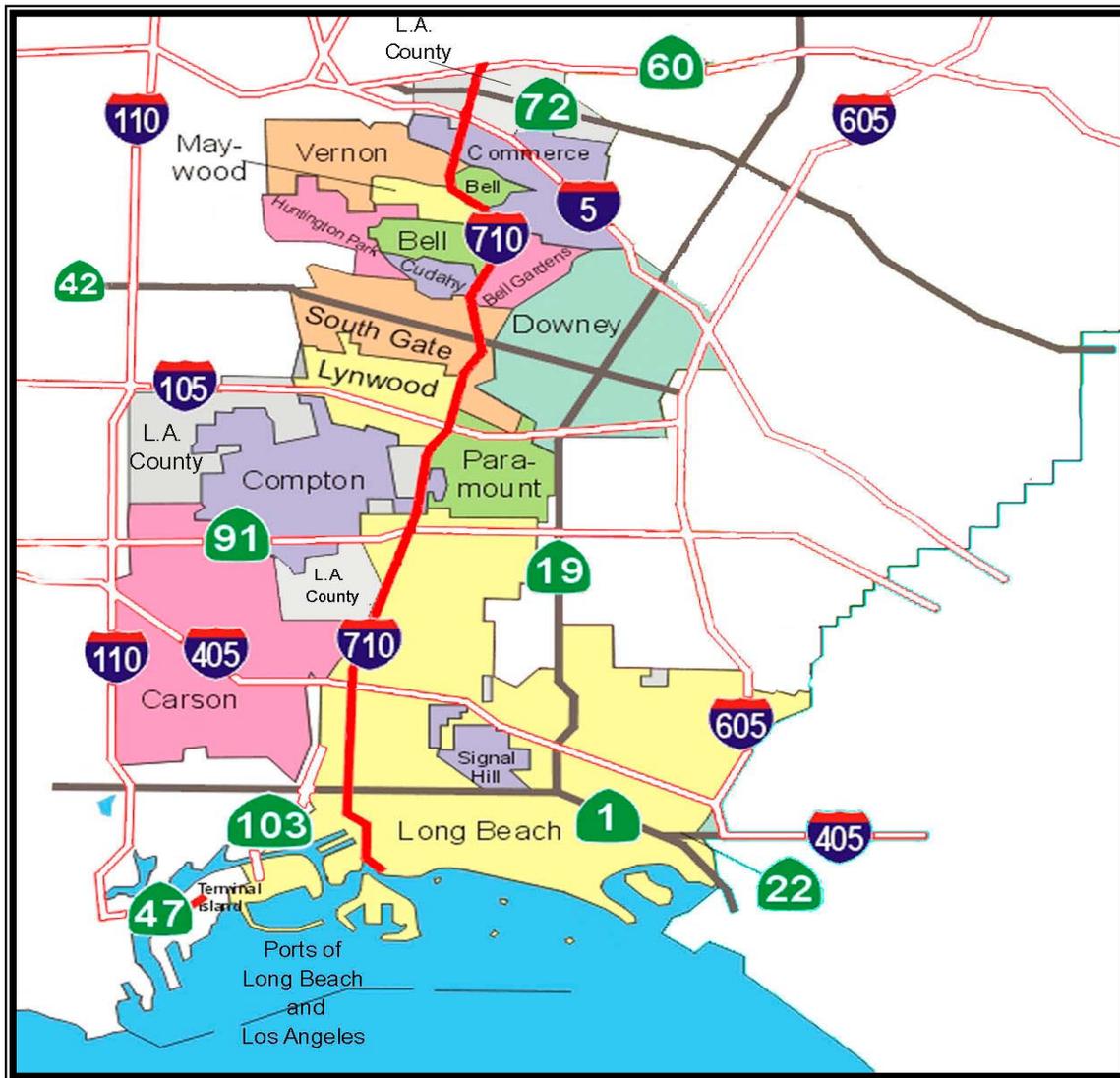
Projects:

Status:

I-5 North Orange County (Buena Park) (SR-91 to Artesia Blvd.)	Construction complete in '09
I-5/Carmenita Rd. Interchange	R/W Acquisition underway Construction starts '10
I-5 South (I-605 to County Line)	Funding Completed '07 R/W Acquisition starts '09 Construction starts (entire stretch) '10/'11
I-5 South EIR/EIS (I-605 to SR-91)	Certified Spring, '07
I-5 North EIR/EIS (I-605 to SR-60)	Began EIR '07
I-5/I-710 Alternatives Analysis Study	Completed
I-5/I-605 Interchange Study	Completed '08 (ongoing analysis continuing)

Other Major Accomplishments-I-5 Freeway

Value Engineering Workshop (I-605 to Artesia Blvd.)	Completed
Cooperative Agreements (All) (I-605 to Artesia Blvd.)	Completed
Established I-5 Steering Committee and Subcommittees and began meetings.....	Completed/Ongoing
Expanding Transit Services (Metrolink)	Ongoing



Cities of Long Beach, Signal Hill, Carson, Bell, Bell Gardens, Commerce, County of Los Angeles, Compton, Cudahy, Downey, Huntington Park, Lynwood, Paramount, Maywood, South Gate, Vernon

I-710 Freeway Corridor Status Report February, 2009

Project Description (see attached map) – I-710

- **Expand the I-710 freeway between the Ports (Ocean Blvd.) and SR-60 freeway to 10 general purpose lanes and modernize freeway.**
- **Add adjacent freight movement corridor next to freeway from ports (Ocean Blvd.) to rail yards in Commerce and Vernon.**
- **Improve local arterial highways.**

2008

I-710 Major Corridor Study Hybrid Design Concept

- 10 General Purpose Lanes
- Freight Movement Corridor
- Interchange Improvements

LEGEND	
	Add One Mixed Flow Lane (Each Direction)
	Add Two Mixed Flow Lanes (Each Direction)
	Freight Movement Corridor
	Interchange Improvement
	New Interchange
	Eliminate Interchange
	Interchange to be studied to remain open
	Direct rail yard access
	Truck Ingress/Egress

Preliminary Concepts, Subject to Change



Source: Jerry Wood, Consultant, in association with MMA, Inc. and Nolan Consulting, Inc., April 2004, Updated April, 2006

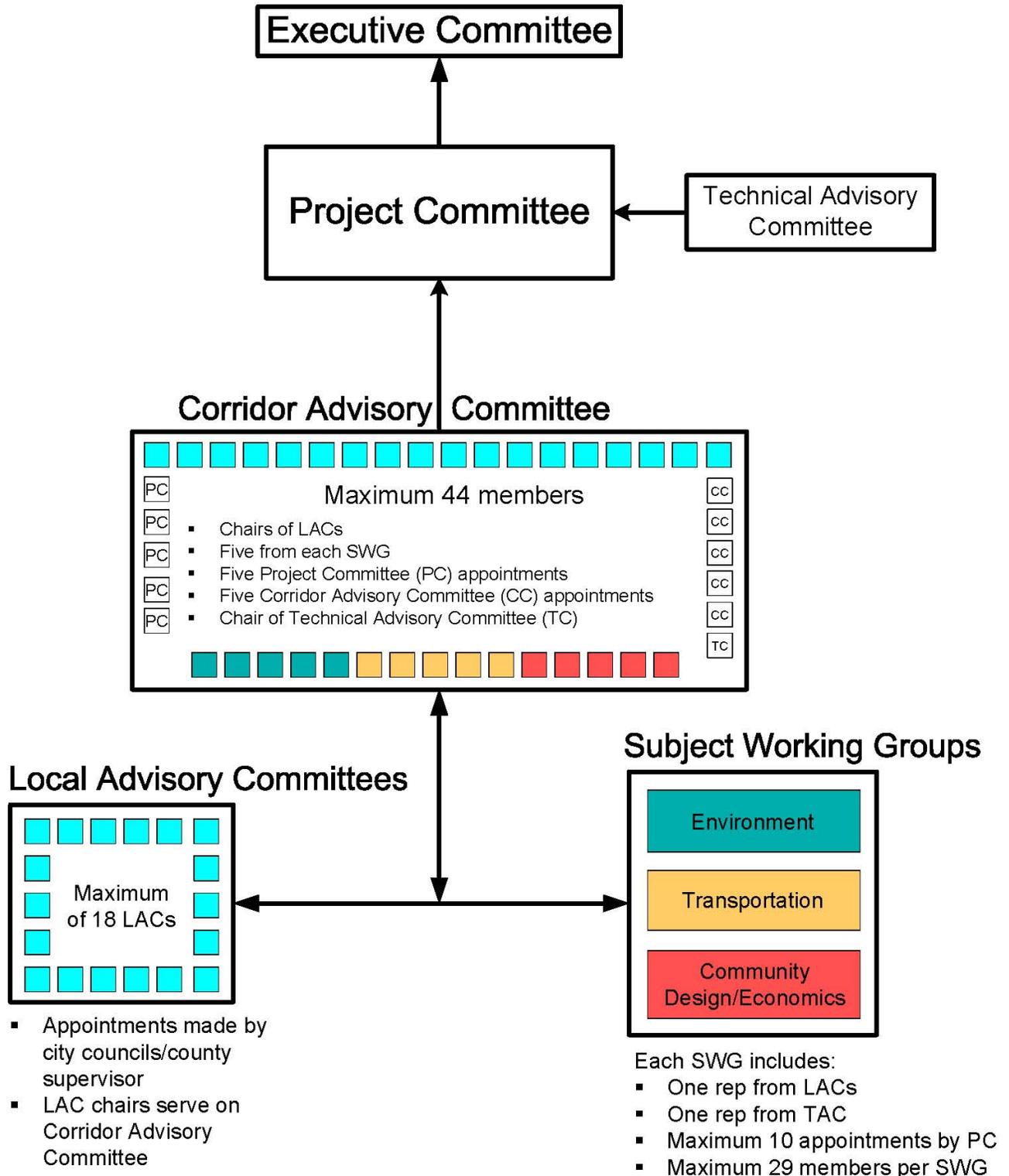
I-710 CORRIDOR STATUS REPORT

PREPARED BY
GATEWAY CITIES COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
South East Los Angeles County, California

February, 2009

- Planning documents, preliminary engineering and environmental documents completed for Gerald Desmond Bridge – currently being revised and updated.
- The I-710 Major Corridor Study was completed and approved by the community groups, the city councils, the I-710 Oversight Policy Committee (OPC) and the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) by the beginning of 2005.
- New governance structure developed for the I-710 Environmental Document oversight and management, including continuing community participation program. (see attached structure)
- Funding (\$30M) secured for EIR/EIS – started Feb. '08.
- I-5/I-710 Interchange Alternatives Analysis Study completed and has been processed through and approved by two local community groups
- Development of Air Quality Action Plan Framework completed in '07
- I-710 Freeway Near-Term Project funding secured to begin detailed studies at Shoemaker Bridge with I-710 Interchange at Anaheim St. and Pacific Coast Highway in the City of Long Beach.
- ITS Integration Plan for Goods Movement completed May '08

Community Participation Framework for the I-710 EIR/EIS



**TRUCK INSPECTION FACILITIES
STATUS REPORT
PREPARED BY
GATEWAY CITIS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
South East Los Angeles County, California**

February, 2009

STATUS

- Completed Florida State Department of Transportation facility inspection of the Florida state of the art “Weigh-in-Motion Facility”
- Developed concept for Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Strategies and obtained input and preliminary approval of CHP and Caltrans
- Prepared Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Strategies report (June, 2008)

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

- Implement permanent truck inspection facilities on I-710 and I-405
- Implement automated truck inspection and enforcement system per the commercial vehicle enforcement strategy

NEXT STEPS

- Obtain local approval for sites for permanent truck inspection facilities
- Obtain changes to state law to allow for enforcement.
- Process Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Strategies report through Gateway Cities, Caltrans and CHP
- Secure funding for planning and design
- Secure funding for construction

GATEWAY CITIES COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN STATUS REPORT

February, 2009

HEALTH AND AIR QUALITY IN I-710 FREEWAY CORRIDOR

1. Number one I-710 Freeway Corridor issue is health and air quality
2. Environmental Justice priority
3. Many families are now 3rd and 4th generation asthmatic
4. Communities approved I-710 mainline improvements concepts contingent upon air quality was improvement prior to construction
5. Air Quality Improvement Programs have to be included as project implementation strategies

STATUS

- San Pedro Bay ports implementing Clean Air Action Plan for ports
- Beginning to replace 16,000 older trucks in 2009
- GCCOG prepared a Framework Development Plan for the Air Quality Action Plan for the I-710 Corridor (June, 2007)
- I-710 EIR/EIS that was initiated in February, 2008 includes an air quality *and* a health risk assessment for the project. This is the first health risk assessment for a California freeway.
- Railroads have completed studies (with CARB) for air quality improvements and strategies for railyards in Gateway Cities
- AQMD adopted numerous new regulations for air quality improvements
- GCCOG developed near-term air quality strategies lists

Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) For Goods Movement - Status Report February, 2009

**Gateway Cities Council of Government (GCCOG)
Southeast Los Angeles County, California**

ITS Mission Statement

To improve safety and mobility of people and goods on freeways and arterial highways; to enhance economic competitiveness; and to improve the quality of the environment of residents for today and in the future by using technology to address traffic congestion, roadway deficiencies, pavement degradation and traveler information by serving commuters, tourists and commercial vehicles.

NEEDS STATEMENT

In addition to 26 million people in the Southern California Basin, the congested freeways in South Los Angeles County will also have to deal with an estimated 100,000 trucks per day in the year 2030 to handle approximately 45% of the nation's cargo that enters the U.S. via the two ports.

STATUS

- Prepared ITS Strategic Plan
- Prepared ITS Research of other agencies ITS Programs
- Finished ITS Integration Plan for GCCOG area (August, 2008)
- Formed ITS Working Group
- Prepared approach for truck fleet modernization communication program Pilot demonstration project
- Prepared RFQ/RFP and scope of work to implement truck fleet modernization communication program pilot demonstration project
- Began development of ITS Implementation Plan

NEXT STEPS

- Begin preparation of ITS Implementation Plan
- Secure funding for ITS Implementation Plan
- Secure funding for initial ITS Projects
- Continue ITS Working Group
- Implement truck fleet modernization communication program pilot demonstration project