

6.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND AGENCY COORDINATION

Public and agency outreach input has been integral in shaping the PEROW/WSAB Corridor AA study process and guiding the direction of the project. Stakeholder comments were received and documented over the course of the 24-month study at meetings and work sessions with a wide range of elected officials, stakeholders, advisory committee members, and the community. This section summarizes the involvement approaches, activities, and outcomes of the AA outreach effort.

6.1 Public Involvement and Agency Coordination Efforts

Prior to project initiation, a Public Participation Plan was developed describing the community outreach and public engagement activities to be conducted to support the PEROW/WSAB Corridor AA study. The goals of this Public Participation Plan were to:

1. Invite communities and stakeholders to shape and share responsibility for their future;
2. Present a well-designed approach that clearly explained both the opportunities and constraints of the decisions – from financial, social, technical, and political perspectives;
3. Hold inclusive public forums/workshops for communities to develop and critique the “multiple ways” to reach their desired future.

Development of the Public Participation Plan was guided by the following strategies:

- Incorporate a range of outreach tools that encouraged people to contribute in establishing a vision to guide transportation planning and project(s) in the Corridor.
- Provide opportunities for two-way dialogues, during which study team members engaged in thoughtful conversations with community members and stakeholders.
- Develop public and media information that inspired project understanding, support, and enthusiasm both for participating in the study and the resulting project.

The Public Participation Plan was divided into three phases to correlate with the key milestones of the AA study process. In order to enhance public understanding of the process, the milestones were renamed with distinct phases as indicated below:

- **Project Initiation and Conceptual Alternatives Screening** – Phase 1: Envisioning Our Future;
- **Initial Alternatives Screening** – Phase 2: Exploring the Possibilities; and
- **Final Alternatives Screening and Selection of the Recommended Mobility Improvements** – Phase 3: Realizing Our Vision.

Numerous participation strategies were utilized in throughout the study to maximize community, stakeholder, and agency input:

- **Interagency Coordination Group** – Stakeholder and agency participation was coordinated through a group comprised of SCAG, Metro, OCTA, Gateway Cities COG, and the Orangeline Development Authority.

- **Elected Official Briefings** – One-on-one meetings were held to solicit elected official input on the transportation and other challenges facing their city, ideas for alternatives to be studied, and guidance on how to best involve their communities in the AA study. This effort included presentations to city councils to provide an overview of the study efforts and results and encourage participation in the community meetings.
- **Project Advisory Committees** – Two policy committees were formed to guide the planning process both from an elected official perspective and a city and other affected agency viewpoint.
- **Stakeholder and Community Groups** – Meetings were held with stakeholders, business leaders, and community groups to hear their concerns and project input, and to encourage their participation in the study process and upcoming community meetings.
- **Community Meetings** – A series of public meetings was held three times at locations throughout the Corridor to present information about the AA study process, and to hear community input on project-related issues and challenges, and possible transportation alternatives.

A *PEROW/WSAB Corridor AA Public Participation Meeting Matrix* was prepared and updated frequently to document meeting dates, the organization or group, and the type and purpose of the meeting. The matrix is included as Appendix G to this report. Input was summarized and recorded through memorandums, community meeting summary reports, comment cards, and emails and letters documented in *Appendix G: PEROW/WSAB Corridor AA Log of Public Comments*.

The following participation tools were used during the AA study process:

- **Project Fact Sheet** – A tri-lingual fact sheet (English, Spanish, and Vietnamese) was developed to present a project overview, including a map of the study area, the purpose of the AA study, a project schedule, and key milestones for public involvement to set the framework for community discussion. These were distributed at all briefings, meetings, and work sessions.
- **Project Overview Handout** – An overview of the AA study process, including a discussion of the six AA study steps, anticipated study and outreach efforts, and project schedule, was developed and updated throughout the study process to develop a public understanding of the study process and to encourage public participation by identifying how to provide it.
- **Websites** – A project website (www.pacificelectriccorridor.com), with current project information, including all reports, other study information, and a calendar of upcoming events, was designed for ease of public access. AA study “business” cards with the website information were distributed at all briefings, meetings, and work sessions. In addition, a project page was created on the SCAG website (www.scag.ca.gov/perow).
- **Facebook** – Project study information was posted and updated on SCAG’s Facebook page throughout the AA study process.
- **Project Information Line and Email** – The SCAG Project Manager’s phone number and email address were provided to receive and respond to project comments and inquiries. Comments were recorded in the *Log of Public Comments*.

- **Database** – A project database was developed of Corridor individuals and organizations affected by and interested in any future transit project. The database also included interested parties and/or affected individuals and organizations outside of the study area. This database was utilized to communicate meeting dates and study updates.
- **Electronic newsletters** – Newsletters presenting project study information were posted on the project website and SCAG's Facebook page at key decision points throughout the study process.
- **Meeting Notices** – Trilingual information about upcoming community meetings was posted on the project websites, most city websites, and distributed door-to-door within a 0.25 mile of the Corridor by Walking Man for the first two series of community meetings. City websites, newspaper ads, and emails to the project database were used for the final community meetings.
- **Survey Forms** – Phase-specific project survey forms were developed and used at each of the community meetings to record public comments and alternative preferences.

6.1.1 Conceptual Screening Efforts

During this first AA study phase, the purpose of the public involvement efforts was to communicate information about the AA study, solicit input on key Corridor transportation and related community issues, identify possible transportation solutions, seek input on the project goals and evaluation criteria, and establish outreach strategies. The following discussion provides an overview of the public outreach efforts conducted during this phase: elected official briefings, stakeholder interviews, project advisory committee meetings, stakeholder and community group presentations, and community meetings that are summarized at the end of this section.

Outreach efforts in this phase resulted in the identification of a set of nine Conceptual Alternatives representing a wide range of possible technologies. The proposed alternatives were evaluated on a meets-does not meet level of technical and policy assessment, along with additional stakeholder input, to define eight Initial Alternatives to be studied further in the next study phase.

Elected Official Briefings and Stakeholder Interviews

During project initiation, interviews were conducted with elected officials or their representatives from each of the study area cities, including Anaheim, Artesia, Bell, Bellflower, Buena Park, Cerritos, Cudahy, Cypress, Downey, Garden Grove, Huntington Park, Lakewood, La Palma, Los Angeles, Lynwood, Maywood, Paramount, Santa Ana, South Gate, Stanton, and Vernon, and the counties of Los Angeles and Orange. The goal was to ensure that elected officials and their staff fully understood the project's objectives, the process and schedule, opportunities for community involvement, and conversely to ensure that their priorities, values and needs, and concerns were understood and reflected in the project efforts.

Interviews were also conducted with stakeholders identified by elected officials as people who they felt would offer valuable insight into transportation, land use, and economic issues facing their communities. Interviews were conducted in-person, or by telephone, and were used to explore critical

issues and questions, and to evoke strategic thinking to assist in the development of the project purpose and need, goals and evaluation criteria, and possible transportation alternatives.

Project Advisory Committees

During Project Initiation, two Project Advisory Committees were established to guide planning efforts:

- **Steering Committee (SC)** – The purpose of this committee was to represent their communities, advise the project team, and guide study decision-making. Membership consisted of elected officials from the communities located throughout the Corridor Study Area, along with representatives from the Los Angeles and Orange County Supervisors, Gateway Cities Council of Governments (COG), Orange County COG, and Caltrans, and was chaired by a Metro and OCTA Board member and/or elected official.
- **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)** – This committee’s role was to represent their city’s needs and concerns, advise the project team on the technical requirements of the project, and serve as a sounding board throughout the study process. The TAC was composed of staff members from the transportation, public works, and/or planning departments of the Corridor cities and counties, and included staff representatives from Metro, OCTA, the Gateway and Orange County COGs, and other affected agencies, including the FTA, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Caltrans Districts 7 and 12, California Public Utilities Commission, UP Railroad, Southern California Regional Rail Authority (Metrolink), Orangeline Development Authority, and Long Beach Transit.

The approximately 30-member Steering Committee was identified through letters sent to each city mayor or agency head requesting them to serve or to appoint a representative. The approximately 40 TAC members were identified through letters and emails sent to each city manager or public works/agency director asking them to serve or to designate a representative. Committee meetings were held in various locations in Los Angeles and Orange counties to encourage participation.

During the Conceptual Screening phase, the committees met two times and members provided advice on framing the study process and goals, defined the Conceptual Set of Alternatives, and, based on technical assessment and community input, approved an Initial Set of Alternatives. The TAC meetings were conducted on May 25, 2010; and July 13, 2010, and the Steering Committee meetings on May 26 and July 21, 2010. Both sets of advisory committee meetings had similar purposes:

- May 2010 – The meeting included a project overview, and a group discussion of Corridor transportation issues and possible solutions, strategies for engaging their communities, and input on the presentation and informational materials for the upcoming community meetings; and
- July 2010 – The meeting included an overview of the project initiation efforts and community comments received, and a discussion of Project Goals, and related screening criteria. Screening results of the nine Conceptual Alternatives was presented resulting in the identification of the eight Initial Alternatives to be evaluated in more detail in the next AA study phase.

Stakeholder and Community Groups

More than 150 community-based organizations, civic organizations, and Chambers of Commerce were identified in each city through on-line research and in interviews with elected officials and city staff during project initiation. Before each series of community meetings, these organizations were contacted by telephone and email to make them aware of the study and encourage participation. City managers and public information officers were also contacted and asked to provide information about the study and promote attendance at the upcoming community meetings through their information channels, including public access cable TV, city newsletters, city websites, and meeting notices at city hall public counters. Staff for city planning and transportation commissions were also contacted to provide meeting information to the commissioners.

Community Meetings

During the first phase, a series of six interactive community meetings were held from Tuesday, June 15 through Wednesday, June 23, 2010. The community meetings were designed to accommodate two-way communication where the public was first educated about the AA study, its goals and objectives, and the process; and then encouraged to provide their views about community needs and transportation concerns, possible alternative solutions, and criteria for evaluating the alternatives. The meetings were publicized by a variety of methods to maximize awareness and participation from the community:

- Approximately 37,000 flyers were hung on the doors of businesses and residents located within a 0.25-mile radius of the Corridor and the northern railroad corridors connecting to Downtown Los Angeles and Union Station. Flyers were bilingual (English and Spanish), and tri-lingual in Garden Grove (English, Spanish, and Vietnamese).
- An invitation was emailed to 410 stakeholders and other interested parties.
- A press release was distributed to local newspapers, local transit blogs, and other media outlets.
- Public service announcements were aired on Vietnamese-language radio.
- Meeting notices were posted on many city websites and presentations were made at local city council and other government agency meetings throughout the Corridor.
- Phone calls were made and invitations emailed to business groups, community-based organizations, environmental justice and bicycle groups, as well as city commissioners.



Approximately 185 participants attended the meetings held in accessible locations in the following PEROW/WSAB Corridor cities:

- Garden Grove, Tuesday, June 15, 2010, 6:30-8:30 PM;
- Huntington Park, Wednesday, June 16, 2010, 6:30-8:30 PM;
- Cypress, Thursday, June 17, 2010, 6:30-8:30 PM;
- Cerritos, Saturday, June 19, 2010, 1:00-3:00 PM;
- Paramount, Tuesday, June 22, 2010, 6:30-8:30 PM; and
- Stanton, Wednesday, June 23, 2010, 6:30-8:30 PM.

The meeting format included an open house set up with 13 presentation boards providing information on the AA study process, the Corridor, and potential transit opportunities. Participants had an opportunity to view the boards and ask questions of project team members. Spanish-speaking staff was available at all meetings with Vietnamese capabilities at the Garden Grove meeting. Following the open house, attendees were welcomed to the meeting and the project team gave a presentation providing an overview of the project purpose, process, outcomes, timeline, and opportunities for public involvement. Information providing an overview of the Corridor context and potential transit opportunities from previous studies and stakeholder interviews was included. At the conclusion of the presentation, participants divided into small discussion groups. Each group had a facilitator who started the discussion and recorded comments on a flip chart as the group addressed the following questions:

- What do you think are the transportation issues and challenges in your community?
- What transportation solutions make sense to you?
- Where do you want to go? What work, shopping, education, entertainment, recreational, and other destinations would you like easier travel to?
- How should the proposed transportation solutions be evaluated? What should we consider when making Corridor transportation decisions?

A volunteer from each of the discussion groups reported back to the meeting-at-large to allow for all participants to hear key ideas from each discussion group. At the conclusion of the meeting, the project team members identified how the public could submit additional comments and stay informed as the project progressed. Participants were encouraged to submit comment cards addressing the questions and to identify a preferred method of communication. The questions on the comment cards were similar to the group discussion questions, but participants were encouraged to share any comments, concerns, or ideas related to the Corridor and AA study. Input received from the group discussions and comment cards is summarized below and was documented in the *PEROW/WSAB Corridor AA Community Meetings Series #1 – Summary Report*.

Summary

Public involvement efforts conducted during the Project Initiation and Conceptual Alternatives Screening phase are summarized in Table 6.1 and documented in *Appendix G: Public Comments*.

Table 6.1 – Summary of Conceptual Screening Phase Outreach Efforts

Meeting Type	Number of Meetings	Number of Attendees	Type/Number of Comments Received
Elected Official/Stakeholder Interviews	50	57	Verbal comments
Technical Advisory Committee	2	53	Verbal comments
Steering Committee	2	61	Verbal comments
Stakeholder/Community Groups	10	40	Verbal comments
Community Meetings	6	185	Verbal comments Written comments (86)
Total	70	396	

6.1.2 Initial Alternatives Screening Efforts

During the second AA study phase, the Initial Alternatives were assessed based on a comparative initial evaluation of technical and environmental benefits and impacts. The purpose of this phase's public involvement efforts was to communicate the resulting technical information and seek stakeholder and community input to identify the most viable transit solutions to be included in the Final Set of Alternatives to be studied and evaluated further based on more detailed engineering and related technical and environmental information.

Elected Official and Stakeholder Briefings

Between October 18 and November 23, project presentations or announcements were made at 18 study area city council meetings to provide information on the study and encourage participation at the upcoming community meetings. Presentations were made at seven city council meetings: Artesia, Bellflower, Buena Park, Cerritos, Huntington Park, Paramount, and South Gate. Announcements were provided during the public comment period at eleven city council meetings: Anaheim, Cudahy, Cypress, Downey, Garden Grove, Lakewood, Lynwood, Maywood, Santa Ana, Stanton, and Vernon. In addition,

approximately 20 elected official and stakeholder briefings were held from November 3, 2010 through November 23, 2010 to present the Initial Screening technical results and seek input on the Final Set of Alternatives.

Project Advisory Committees

During this screening phase, the two project advisory committees met multiple times between October 2010 and April 2011 to review the Initial Screening results and guide the identification of the Final Set of Alternatives. The Technical Advisory Committee met five times during the Initial Screening phase:

- October 2010 – The meeting focused on an overview of the Initial Screening technical results and providing input on how to present the information at the upcoming community meetings.
- January 2011 – This working session included a discussion of the Purpose and Need Report, the project goals and evaluation criteria, Initial Screening approach, and input received from the community meetings.
- February 2011 – This second working session focused in detail on the initial screening efforts, including a detailed definition of the Initial Alternatives, analytical methodology, and the draft Initial Screening Report.
- March 2011 – The meeting included a more detailed presentation of the Initial Screening results and the Final Screening phase efforts, along with an initial discussion of recommendations for the Final Set of Alternatives.
- April 2011 – At this meeting, TAC members developed a Final Set of Alternatives to be recommended to the Steering Committee.

In addition, four station area planning work sessions were held with TAC members on September 9, 16, 21, and 29, 2010 to identify station locations and city-specific planning goals and plan.



The Steering Committee met three times during the Initial Screening phase:

- November 2010 – At this meeting, the committee members received a presentation on and discussed the study Purpose and Need Statement and the Initial Screening Results, and provided input on the presentation of the Initial Screening Results at the upcoming community meetings.
- February 2011 – The meeting focused on discussing study framework information, including an overview of the AA planned process, the anticipated Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) actions and schedule, a more detailed definition of the Initial Set of Alternatives, the Initial Screening approach, an overview of the Initial Screening technical results, and input received from the community meetings held in November and December 2010.
- April 2011 – At this meeting, the committee received a presentation on and approved the Final Set of Alternatives recommended by the TAC.

Stakeholder and Community Groups

From November 16 through December 11, 2010, more than 150 city commissions, civic organizations, chambers of commerce and community-based organizations were contacted by email and telephone to invite their participation in the upcoming community meetings. Special efforts were made to target “hard to reach” populations, i.e. Spanish-speaking and Vietnamese-speaking communities. Six presentations were made; two in Spanish – to Kingdom Causes in Bellflower on October 28, 2010, and to the Women’s Club in Huntington Park on November 9, 2010. Other groups that received presentations were: the Bellflower Kiwanis Club on November 12, 2010, and Cypress College Associated Student Body on December 1, 2010.

Community Meetings

During the second phase, a series of six interactive community meetings were held from Tuesday, November 16 through Saturday, December 11, 2010. The community meetings were designed to accommodate two-way communication where the public was first provided with an overview of the AA study process, Draft Purpose and Need Statement, and results of the Initial Screening technical efforts; and then encouraged to provide their views about which alternatives should be included in the Final Set of Alternatives for further study. The meetings were publicized by a variety of methods to maximize awareness and participation from the community:

- A first project E-Newsletter was prepared sharing information on the AA study process, study area description and mobility challenges, what was heard at the first community meetings, a description of the Initial Set of Alternatives, and information on the upcoming meetings.
- Approximately 38,000 flyers were hung on the doors of businesses and residents located within a four block radius of the Corridor and the northern railroad corridors connecting to Downtown Los Angeles and Union Station. Flyers were bilingual (English and Spanish), and tri-lingual in Garden Grove (English, Spanish, and Vietnamese).
- Presentations were given at seven city council meetings and announcements were made during the public comment period at 11 city council meetings.

- Meeting information was provided to the public information officers of 19 cities to notify elected and appointed officials and to distribute to the public; and meeting notices were posted on many city websites.
- Approximately 5,000 flyers were provided to cities to be made available in public areas, such as city halls and libraries.
- Steering Committee and TAC members were requested to notify their cities and interested stakeholders.
- An invitation was emailed to 500 stakeholders and other interested parties who requested notification.
- Phone calls were made and invitations were sent to community-based organizations, business groups, civic organizations, and environmental justice groups located in all 21 study area cities.
- A press release was distributed to local and community newspapers, including the *Orange County Register*, the *Long Beach Press Telegram*, *Paramount Journal*, *Los Angeles Wave* (Lynwood), *Downey Patriot*, *Downey Connect*, *Buena Park Independent*, *Garden Grove Journal*; local transit blogs; and other media outlets.



Approximately 170 participants attended the community meetings held in the same six cities as those in the first series of community meetings in Los Angeles and Orange counties:

- Paramount, Tuesday, November 16, 2010, 6:30-8:30 PM;
- Cerritos Tuesday, November 23, 2010, 6:30-8:30 PM;
- Huntington Park, Wednesday, December 1, 2010, 6:30-8:30 PM;
- Garden Grove, Thursday, December 2, 2010, 6:30-8:30 PM;
- Cypress College, Tuesday, December 7, 2010, 6:30-8:30 PM; and
- Stanton, Saturday, December 11, 2010, 6:30-8:30 PM.

The format of the meetings was similar to the community meetings conducted during Project Initiation and started with an informal open house where participants could view boards presenting an overview of the project-to-date. Information presented included an overview of the AA planning process,

Corridor facts leading to the definition of the Purpose and Need Statement and Mobility Statement, the eight Initial Set of Alternatives being evaluated, and potential alignments. Participants had an opportunity to view the boards, ask questions of the project team members, and take a bi-lingual (English and Spanish) handout summarizing the project information presented on the boards. Spanish-speaking staff was available at all meetings with Vietnamese capabilities at the Garden Grove meeting.

Following the open house, attendees were welcomed to the meeting and the project team gave a project overview, after which participants split into discussion groups. Each discussion group discussed the proposed alternative modes of transportation, the pros and cons of each, and their preferences for their community. A volunteer from each of the discussion groups reported back to the meeting-at-large to share key ideas from each discussion group. In addition, participants were provided with comment cards requesting that they identify the three alternatives they felt were the most viable and should be studied further, along with any project-related comments. Input received from the group discussions and comment cards is summarized below and was documented in the *PEROW/WSAB Corridor AA Community Meetings Series #2 – Summary Report*.

Communicating the Final Set of Alternatives

With approval of the Final Set of Alternatives by the Steering Committee on April 19, 2011, a variety of efforts were made to provide the community and stakeholders with information on the No Build, Transportation Systems Management, and four build alternatives to be studied in the last phase of the AA study. Two community open houses were held, one each in Los Angeles and Orange counties on the following dates:

- South Gate, Monday, June 27, 2011, 5:30-7:30 PM; and
- Garden Grove, Tuesday, June 28, 2011, 5:30-7:30 PM.

The informal community open houses were designed to provide the community and stakeholders with an overview of the Final Set of Alternatives as presented on presentation boards. Information presented included an update of the AA planning process, the Corridor facts leading to the definition of the Purpose and Need Statement and Mobility Statement, detailed information on the six Final Alternatives being evaluated, along with their potential alignments. Participants had an opportunity to view the boards, ask questions of the project team members, and take a bi-lingual (English and Spanish) handout summarizing the project information presented on the boards. Spanish-speaking staff was available at all meetings with Vietnamese capabilities at the Garden Grove meeting. Participants were asked to complete a bi-lingual comment card asking the following questions:

- What are your thoughts about the Final Set of Alternatives?
- What should we consider when making the decision on the final recommended alternative?
- Do you have comments on any other issue related to the study?

The open houses were publicized by a variety of methods to maximize awareness and participation from the community:

- A second project E-Newsletter was prepared introducing the Final Set of Alternatives and inviting participation in the upcoming open houses and emailed to: all persons and organizations on the project database; TAC and Steering Committee members; federal, state, county, and city elected officials; and community organizations, city commissions, and chambers.
- A meeting notice was printed in local and community newspapers, including the *Orange County Register*, *Long Beach Press Telegram* serving the Gateway Cities, *La Opinion*, and *Viet-Herald*.
- Steering Committee and TAC members were requested to notify their cities and interested stakeholders.
- Phone calls were made and emailed invitations were sent to community-based organizations, business groups, civic organizations, and environmental justice groups in all 21 study area cities.
- Presentations were made to community-based organizations, business groups, civic organizations, and other groups, including the Bellflower Kiwanis Club on November 12, 2010, Cypress College Associated Student Body on December 1, 2010, South Gate Chamber of Commerce on May 24, 2011, and South Gate Planning Commission on May 25, 2011.

Environmental Justice

Public outreach for EJ communities was an important part of outreach efforts due to the high population of EJ communities along the PEROW/WSAB Corridor. Initial outreach efforts began in the conceptual screening phase with 10 meetings and presentations to EJ communities. This was followed by 52 meetings and presentations conducted in the initial screening phase.

Summary

The public involvement efforts conducted during the Initial Alternatives Screening phase are summarized in Table 6.2 and documented in *Appendix G: Public Comments*.

Table 6.2 – Summary of Initial Screening Phase Outreach Efforts

Meeting Type	Number of Meetings	Number of Attendees	Type/Number of Comments Received
City Council Presentations	18	NA	Verbal comments
Technical Advisory Committee Meetings	5	128	Verbal comments
Steering Committee Meetings	3	87	Verbal comments
Stakeholder/Community Groups	168	NA	Verbal comments
Community Meetings	6	169	Verbal comments Written comments (86)
Community Open Houses	2	80	Verbal comments Written comments (17)
Total	202	464*	

*Total number of attendees excluding City Council Presentations and Stakeholder/Community Groups

6.1.3 Final Alternatives Screening Efforts

During the final AA study phase, the Final Set of Alternatives were evaluated in detail based on including conceptual level engineering and station area working sessions with the Corridor cities. The purpose of this phase's public involvement efforts was to communicate the resulting technical information and seek stakeholder and community input to identify the Final Recommendations for future study.

Elected Official and Stakeholder Briefings

During this phase, approximately 12 elected official and stakeholder briefings were held from July 2011 through June 2012 to present the Final Screening technical results and seek input on the Final Recommendations.

Project Advisory Committees

During this final screening phase, the two project advisory committees met multiple times after the Steering Committee's approval of the Final Set of Alternatives on April 19, 2011. Between July 2011 and June 2012, advisory committee activities focused on refinement of the Final Set of Alternatives, discussion and review of the Final Screening technical results, and development of the Final Recommendations. The Technical Advisory Committee met five times during the Final Screening phase:

- July 2011 – This TAC meeting focused on hearing the results of the city work sessions held during June 2011 to refine station and alignment decisions. The project team presented an overview of the technical efforts that were to be initiated, along with the comparative evaluation methodology to be followed. After this meeting, and TAC agreement on the refined definition of the Final Set of Alternatives, the project team efforts were going to focus on preparing the engineering, cost, ridership, environmental, and other technical analytical efforts.
- March 2012 – This meeting focused on providing committee members with an update on the project schedule and an overview of the Final Screening results from the technical analytical efforts, including a summary comparison of the alternatives. An update on the definition of the Final Set of Alternatives based on work sessions with individual cities was also provided.
- April 2012 – The working session focused on a detailed discussion of the technical analytical results and the methodologies used in the technical evaluation of the alternatives.
- May 2012 – At this meeting, TAC members were asked to provide their input on the community meeting format and presentation materials. An initial discussion was held on what the Final Recommendations should include.
- June 2012 – In the final TAC meeting, a presentation of the project team recommendations was made to start the discussion of the Final Recommendations. The TAC developed and approved Final Recommendations including technology, alignment, and phasing recommendations, to be forwarded to the Steering Committee for discussion and approval.

The Steering Committee met twice during the Final Screening phase:

- April 2012 – At this meeting, the committee members received a presentation on the technical study process and the results. Information presented included refined definitions of the alternatives, conceptual capital and operating cost, daily ridership estimates, cost-effectiveness, and environmental benefits and impacts. An overview of the upcoming schedule through the Steering Committee’s approval of the Final Recommendations at the upcoming June 2012 was presented and discussed. Committee members were also informed about the community meetings to be held during May at six locations in Los Angeles and Orange counties.
- June 2012 – At this final meeting, Steering Committee members received a brief presentation of the Final Recommendations developed by the TAC, and then discussed the proposed recommendations for further study. Minor revisions were made to the recommendations and the Steering Committee voted on June 20, 2012 to approve Final Recommendations to be forwarded to SCAG’s Transportation Committee and Regional Council for action.

Community Meetings

During the second phase, a series of six interactive community meetings were held from Tuesday, May 15 through Thursday, May 24, 2012. The community meetings were designed to accommodate two-way communication where the public was first provided with an overview of the technical findings of the AA study process; and then encouraged to provide their views about which alternatives should be included in the Final Recommendations for further study. The meetings were publicized by a variety of methods to maximize awareness and participation from the community:

- Steering Committee and TAC members were requested to notify their cities and interested stakeholders.
- An invitation was emailed to 500 stakeholders and other interested parties who requested notification about future meetings.
- A press release was distributed to local and community newspapers, including the *Orange County Register* and the *Long Beach Press Telegram*, *La Opinion*, and *Nguoi Viet Daily News*.

Approximately 149 participants attended the community meetings held in the following six Corridor cities located in both Los Angeles and Orange counties:

- Santa Ana, Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 5:30-7:30 PM;
- Garden Grove, Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 5:30-7:30 PM;
- Buena Park, Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:30-7:30 PM;
- Little Tokyo (Downtown Los Angeles), Tuesday, May 22, 2012, 5:30-7:30 PM;
- Bellflower, Wednesday, May 23, 2012, 5:30-7:30 PM; and
- South Gate, Thursday, May 24, 2012, 5:30-7:30 PM.

The community meetings provided an opportunity for the project team to share the results of the technical and environmental analytical results of the Final Set of Alternatives. The meetings were designed to allow residents from throughout the region, people who own property adjacent to the Corridor, business and civic leaders, transit advocates, and other interested members of the public to share issues, ideas, and perspectives about the Final Set of Alternatives and provide input to the development of the Final Recommendations. The format of the meetings was similar to the June 2011 community meetings with an informal open house, with a formal presentation mid-way through.

An open house was set up in each meeting room and included presentation boards containing information about the PEROW/WSAB Corridor, the Alternatives Analysis (AA) study process, the Final Set of Alternatives being analyzed, the alignment alternatives, a comparison of cost, ridership, and environmental impacts, and a project schedule of the next steps. Attendees had the opportunity to review the information on the presentation boards and ask questions of members of the project team, and refer to a bi-lingual (English and Spanish) handout summarizing the project information presented on the large boards. Spanish-speaking staff was available at all meetings, with Vietnamese capabilities provided at the Garden Grove meeting. Participants were asked to complete a comment card, provided in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese, asking the following questions:

- Please rate each of the six final alternatives (from strongly oppose to strongly support) and explain why you provided that rating.
- What factors are most important to you when evaluating the alternatives?
- Which transit alternatives are you most likely to use?

After allowing meeting attendees time to review the presentation boards and ask questions, the project team then gave a presentation on the results of the AA study process. The presentation provided a detailed overview of the Final Set of Alternatives and focused on the characteristics that distinguished each transit option. A comparison of the estimated cost, ridership, and environmental impacts was also presented. At the conclusion of the presentation, the project team shared the next steps in the process and identified ways for the public to submit their comments. The meeting then returned to an open house format. Public input received from the comment cards was documented in the *PEROW/WSAB Corridor AA Community Meetings Series #4 – Summary Report*.

Summary

The public involvement efforts conducted during the Final Alternatives Screening phase are summarized in Table 6.3 and documented in *Appendix G: Public Comments*.

Table 6.3 – Summary of Final Screening Phase Outreach Efforts

Meeting Type	Number of Meetings	Number of Attendees	Type/Number of Comments Received
Technical Advisory Committee Meetings	5	125	Verbal comments
Steering Committee Meetings	2	80	Verbal comments
Community Meetings	6	149	Verbal comments Written comments
Total	12	354	

6.2 Summary of Public and Agency Comments

Public comments were received at elected official, advisory committee, community and stakeholder groups, and community meetings. Comments were documented through written meeting summaries and community meeting reports, public comment sheets, letters, and emails.

6.2.1 Themes Identified During Conceptual Alternatives Screening

During Elected Official briefings and Stakeholder interviews, the following dominant issues and concerns were identified:

- **Traffic disruption** – The diagonal right-of-way (ROW) crosses numerous heavily-traveled streets, and there were concerns about how impacts to traffic capacity and flow can be minimized.
- **Noise impacts** – The ROW is adjacent to well-established and quiet residential neighborhoods and concerns were expressed about how the peaceful character, privacy, and quality of life be maintained.
- **Cost to build, operate, and ride** – Given the current economic realities being experienced by city governments and transit operator, there were concerns about whether an affordable transportation option could be provided, and the funds available to build and operate it.
- **Resulting system travel speed** – Even with implementation of a transit system, travel times between key points may not be reduced and concerns were given that whether Corridor residents and employees would just continue to drive.

At the same time, elected officials and stakeholders saw a future transit system as offering the following opportunities:

- **Traffic congestion relief** – Participants felt that providing more transportation will get more people out of their cars, but wanted to understand what ridership could be projected.
- **Transit-oriented development support** – Many cities viewed the potential system as a catalyst to support new development and new places to help their cities become a new destination attracting new shoppers, diners, and visitors.

- **Improved access to jobs and employees** – With a new transportation option, large employers can attract more employees; residents will be able to travel to employment centers more easily and more affordably.
- **Improved access to educational and cultural opportunities** – Residents could use the potential system to expand their educational and cultural experiences, and future employment opportunities.
- **Improved access to recreational opportunities** – Residents could have improved access to existing and planned pedestrian and bicycle trails and parks throughout the Corridor via the transit system; and provision of an integrated walking and biking facility would improve alternative modes of access and increase the use of existing recreational facilities.



During this study phase, major project themes were identified at the community meetings, which represent a synthesis of participant input on issues and challenges, solutions and opportunities, important destinations, and evaluation criteria for transit along the Corridor. The input was gathered through the facilitated group discussions and individual comment cards that were turned in at each community meeting. The major themes will be used in the AA study process, along with the technical assessment efforts to evaluate potential alternatives. The key themes are organized in the following areas to correspond with the discussion questions:

- Issues and Challenges;
- Solutions;
- Destinations; and
- Evaluation Criteria.

Issues and Challenges were identified by the meeting participants in response to the question – What do you think are the transportation issues and challenges in your community?

- **Traffic congestion and parking availability constrain car travel** – Participants expressed frustration with congestion on freeways and arterial streets, and there were concerns that congestion could get worse in the future because many freeways and roads are already at or near capacity. Many participants anticipated that population growth will likely increase the number of cars on the road, and thought that a limited ability to expand the existing highway

system would be a significant issue in the future. People also felt that parking was important and destinations with parking shortages, including possible future transit stations, were problematic.

- ***Current public transit systems do not adequately serve transportation needs*** – One of the strongest recurring concerns identified by participants was the perception that current local public transit is inconvenient, inefficient, and inflexible. Other areas of concern related to current transit were infrequent service, limited hours of operation, slow travel speeds, and frequent transfers with coordination between multiple transit modes and providers making reaching final destinations by transit more difficult.
- ***Transit usage faces challenges*** – Many people felt that the prevailing “car culture” led to a perception, real or not, that public transit is inferior to car travel. Safety, comfort, cleanliness, convenience, cost, and a lack of familiarity with the transit system are all factors that were expressed when describing the challenges of using public transit. Many participants believed that a well designed and properly functioning transit system could address these issues.
- ***Many barriers exist that encourage car usage*** – Community members who seek to travel without a car found mobility challenging, and expressed a need for a supportive walking infrastructure that facilitates safe, comfortable, and convenient travel related to public transit.

In response to the question – what transportation solutions make sense to you? – the following input related to possible transportation solutions was received:

- ***Enthusiasm for providing public transit in the Corridor*** – Participants were excited about the potential for public transit in the Corridor, and were eager to discuss how public transit would function in the study area. There were robust discussions on the benefits and challenges of different transportation modes. Although a preferred mode was not identified, many participants were adverse to Bus Rapid Transit and tended to prefer rail service.
- ***Opportunities for development and neighborhood revitalization along transit service in the Corridor*** – Community members were interested in the possibility that Corridor transit could provide a catalyst for residential and commercial development. In general, participants felt that mixed-use developments near transit stations would be attractive because of the ease of accessing transit and providing connections to jobs, goods, and services. Many believed that the unique characteristics and particular needs of each community should be considered, and stations could help establish distinct community identities.
- ***Widespread support for trails and open space adjacent to a transit system*** – Participants were supportive of creating a linear bicycle and pedestrian trail along the length of the ROW, and providing dedicated open space adjacent to a transit system. Many believed that this pathway system would provide additional connections between stations that would complement the public transit system.
- ***Consideration for opportunities other than transportation solutions.*** – Along with other ideas for reuse of the Corridor that were offered at each of the meetings, some participants supported leaving the Corridor as it is.



In response to the questions about desirable destinations, the following input was received on work, shopping, education, entertainment, recreational, and other destinations that the community would like easier travel to:

- ***Connections to existing and future transportation systems are essential*** – Participants strongly communicated the need for Corridor transit to integrate into the existing transportation network. Community members cited improved access to airports, other rail lines, and local bus lines and circulator services. Overall, participants expressed that they wanted an easy to use, seamless system.
- ***Employment centers, educational institutions, medical facilities, and cultural/entertainment venues provide the best opportunity for transit use*** – Major employment centers were mentioned frequently as important destinations, along with the desire to travel to universities and colleges. Hospitals and medical facilities were also frequently mentioned destinations, especially for older adults who may not be able to drive. Providing access to concert and entertainment venues and sports stadiums was also cited frequently, as long as the transit would be able to provide service during the hours those venues operate.
- ***Stations should be located within activity centers*** – Community members felt that stations should be co-located with existing activity centers to provide an enriching environment to support transit use, and that new development could be created to support the potential stations. They supported connecting to Downtown Los Angeles to the north and Downtown Santa Ana to the south as these two existing activity centers have jobs, government facilities, and other active uses.



When asked about how the proposed transportation solutions should be evaluated, and what should be considered when making Corridor transportation decisions, the following guidance was identified as important to participants:

- ***Preserving and enhancing the quality of life*** – Participants expressed significant concern over potential impacts of constructing a transit system, including environmental, safety, economic, and lifestyle impacts. Key concerns were impacts related to noise, vibration, privacy, safety, security, and air quality. Community members believed that some of these impacts could be mitigated, but complete avoidance would be difficult. Additionally, they were concerned about the impact of transit at-grade crossings on safety and traffic, and the fear that acquisition would be necessary and that property values would be negatively impacted.
- ***Balancing the necessity for convenient access to many local destinations with the ability to quickly reach regional destinations*** – Participants were aware that the more stops there are along a transit line, the slower the travel speed would be. However, they felt it was imperative that convenient access to a transit system be provided. Equally important was the need for public transportation to quickly reach key regional destinations for it to be useful.
- ***Creating a sustainable system of choice*** – Participants wanted a public transit system that is financially feasible and minimized financial impacts on taxpayers. They expressed concerns about the costs to build the system, as well as the costs to operate and maintain the system. In addition, participants said the cost to ride was an important factor, especially for older adults and students.

6.2.2 Comments Received During Initial Screening

During this study phase, the discussion focused on the alternatives under consideration, and stakeholders and the community were asked the following questions about the transit alternatives:

- Would this alternative meet your community's transportation needs? Why or why not?
- Would you use this alternative if it were provided? Why or why not?
- Is this alternative a reasonable solution considering the investment required to implement it?



The discussion themes identified during the second series of community meetings are listed below and reflect the feedback, perspectives, experiences, issues, and ideas on the different alternatives identified in the group discussions and submitted through comment cards during the six meetings. The input has been synthesized to reflect identify issues that address issues relevant to the project as a whole and/or related how the Corridor should be used, and/or specific input on each of the different alternatives.

- ***Continued enthusiasm for providing public transit in the Corridor*** – Participants remained excited about the potential for providing transit in the Corridor, and were eager to consider and discuss different transportation solutions. Many attendees felt that the Corridor is a unique asset that provides a special opportunity to provide a critical link between Los Angeles and Orange counties. They saw the need for public transit to meet future local and regional transportation challenges.
- ***Preserving and enhancing quality of life remains a critical issue*** – There were concerns regarding potential impacts to the quality of life from the introduction of transit service in the Corridor. Similar to the first community meetings, concerned attendees identified possible air quality, noise, vibration, visual, privacy, and crime impacts as critical issues. Participants inquired about the potential mitigation measures that could be incorporated into the project design to reduce the impacts.
- ***Awareness of the challenges from potential at-grade crossings along the Corridor*** – Participants understood the diagonal orientation of the Corridor and the large number of street crossings, especially major arterial streets, will present a challenge in providing public transit. Concerns were expressed that at-grade crossings would negatively impact both the transit system and local traffic. Several people expressed concerns about pedestrian and bicycle safety.
- ***Consideration of other opportunities for the Corridor*** – Many participants were supportive of including a linear bicycle and pedestrian trail, either in conjunction with or instead of a transit system. Some community members, particularly those with houses adjacent to the PEROW/WSAB Corridor ROW, supported leaving the Corridor as it is.

- **Concerns over funding for providing transit in the Corridor** – Attendees were concerned with whether adequate funding would be available to implement transit in the Corridor. Concerns were expressed that any future funds would be well spent and Corridor transit is well-utilized.



Based on group discussion and comment cards received, the major alternative-specific points were:

- **Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is a pragmatic and sensible solution, but it has obstacles to successful implementation.** Participants felt that BRT was possibly a good solution due to its relatively low cost to build and operate, and perceived shorter construction time that would allow it to be in operation sooner than the other alternatives. Overall, BRT received lackluster support because it was viewed as “second-rate” transit service. Many people expressed doubts that the negative public perception of buses could be overcome, and that the system would not have the ridership necessary to be successful. Participants doubted its efficiency without a dedicated ROW beyond the PEROW/WSAB Corridor ROW.
- **Although not widely considered a right fit for the Corridor, Street Car service was viewed favorably.** In general, participants liked the street car vehicle and saw it as providing a smooth ride utilizing an electric system. Its slow travel speed was viewed as possibly having less community and environmental impacts than some of the other alternatives. However, a majority of the community members did not see it as a right fit for this Corridor. The slow travel speed and frequent stops were perceived to meet local transportation needs, but not the regional transportation needs viewed as essential for connecting communities along the Corridor. There were concerns that this alternative would have low ridership because of the mismatch between the Corridor’s capacity needs and street car seating characteristics, and many felt it was not worth the investment required to implement it.
- **Strong support was expressed for Light Rail Transit (LRT) based on its potential for serving the community’s transportation needs.** Of all the transit alternatives, participants indicated the strongest preference for the LRT option. Many considered it to be an efficient system that would provide the right balance between local and regional service for the Corridor. Participants felt the station spacing was appropriate to support community economic and transportation needs. In addition, it was viewed as a familiar technology that has been proven successful locally and that it would be compatible with existing systems.

- ***Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) was generally viewed unfavorably because of its diesel-based technology.*** Although some participants saw DMU service as a potential solution for the Corridor, it did not receive widespread support. Great concerns were expressed over its use of diesel fuel – even clean diesel fuel. Participants cited air quality impacts and public health concerns as their dominant reasons for not supporting this option. Other attendees felt introduction of a new transit technology was inconsistent with other locally proven systems, and may not be cost-effective.



- ***Conventional high speed rail was seen as a good solution for statewide transportation needs, but would not provide access to local destinations needed along the Corridor.*** Most attendees felt that high speed rail was not a right fit with the Corridor as it was perceived to primarily serve regional trips. People expressed the concern that Corridor communities would be burdened with the impacts without receiving sufficient benefits. Others felt that high speed rail service in the Corridor would be duplicative of the planned California High Speed Rail System (CAHSR) between Union Station and Anaheim. There were also significant concerns about the high cost to build, operate, and ride high speed rail, and that the low ridership projections in the Corridor would not make it a cost-effective solution.
- ***High Speed Maglev had a mixed reception, with many participants expressing that it was an unreasonable solution, but other suggesting a lower speed option that could meet community needs.*** As with conventional high speed rail, participants were not generally supportive of maglev high speed service. Many felt that the Corridor is too short to support high speed travel, and that the costs to build, operate, and ride are too high. Some people supported a modified maglev system option that would operate at a slower speed and have more station stops than high speed service. Those participants felt that it was more of a cutting-edge approach and would provide cleaner and quieter service. Others expressed concern that the technology was unproven in the United States, would be incompatible with existing systems, and would be redundant to and incompatible with the planned CAHSR system.

Comments Received During Open Houses

Based on group discussion and comment cards received, the major points were:

- ***Enthusiasm for providing public transit in the Corridor.*** A majority of participants supported providing for a future transit system in the Corridor.
- ***Light Rail Transit (LRT) was identified as the preferred modal option.*** The BRT and Street Car alternatives were identified as being too slow and not being able to interline with the Los Angeles rail system. While some respondents questioned using an unproven technology, more information was requested on the Low Speed Maglev Option.
- ***The No Build Alternative was preferred by some residents living along the PEROW/WSAB Corridor ROW.*** Residents expressed significant concerns about the impacts resulting from implementing a transit system which would negatively impact their quality of life and property values.
- ***There was strong support for provision of a bicycle and pedestrian trail either in conjunction with or instead of a transit system option.***
- ***The key concerns expressed about implementation of a transit system were related to possible noise and vibration impacts, and the need to build a cost-effective solution.***

6.2.3 Comments Received During Final Screening

The final series of community meetings was intended to provide the public with results of the analysis for each alternative. The discussion themes identified during the fourth series of community meetings are listed below and reflect the feedback, perspectives, experiences, issues, and ideas on the different alternatives through comment cards during the six meetings.

- ***Concerns about transit funding, feasibility, and impacts.*** Some community members that supported the No Build Alternative expressed concerns about the high overall cost of providing transit, as well as the limited sources of funding, and the generally troubled state of government finances. Community members, especially those who live, operate businesses, and own property adjacent to the Corridor also expressed a strong desire for preserving quality of life in areas near the Corridor, and shared specific concerns about potential impacts to air quality, aesthetics and privacy, noise, property values, traffic (especially at intersections), and safety.
- ***Additional transportation options are needed to meet future transportation needs of the growing region.*** Most community members were enthusiastic about providing transit in the Corridor, and they commented that the Corridor was a unique and valuable asset that should be used to provide additional transportation options. Community members who opposed the No Build Alternative often commented that it would be a continuation of the status quo, and that consequences for not proactively taking action to address the region's transportation problems. The No Build Alternative would rely exclusively on freeways for regional transportation and would not provide a solution as congestion worsens as the region grows in the future.

- ***Consider additional uses of the Corridor instead of, or in addition to, transit.*** Overall, community members generally supported the use of the Corridor for recreational purposes in conjunction with transit service. Other comments specifically addressed the use of the Corridor as a transportation route for bicyclists. A few community members commented that the Corridor should be used for only for open space and recreation instead of transportation.
- ***Measures that improve the efficiency of the region's transportation system should be implemented to alleviate congestion.*** Overall, community members supported the TSM Alternative as a way to address the region's transportation challenges in the short term, but not as a comprehensive long-term solution. Many community members opposed the TSM Alternative because it does not provide an alternative to the congested road and highway network. Community members who expressed support for the TSM Alternative often commented that improvements to existing bus service, providing pedestrian and bicycle paths, and other small improvements to the transportation system would be most effective in combination with providing a transit option in the Corridor, and the improvements would likely be insufficient without a transit option. Overall, the low-cost solutions included in the TSM Alternative were supported by many community members.
- ***BRT is practical but is not the best transportation solution of the Corridor.*** In general, community members were not very enthusiastic about the BRT Alternative as a transportation solution in the Corridor. However, some community members thought that its relatively low cost, the speed in which it could be implemented, demonstrated success in the region, adaptability, and that no transfers would be needed between Santa Ana and Los Angeles made it a practical transportation solution. Some community members commented that BRT was better than no transportation solution at all, and that it could serve as an interim transportation solution and a precursor to another solution in the future. Other community members were opposed to BRT because it is an old technology and would not appeal strongly enough to people to choose it over driving. In addition, many community members commented that BRT would not meet the transportation needs of the Corridor because it would have to operate in the already congested street network, leading to unpredictable travel times and contributing to further congestion.
- ***Although adequate, Street Car is not the ideal transportation solution for the Corridor.*** Some community members supported the Streetcar Alternative because it would provide a quality, lower cost transportation alternative that would serve the communities along the Corridor. However, most community members commented that it was not worth the investment compared to other alternatives because it has a similar overall costs and similar noise, safety, traffic, and impacts to adjacent property as other alternatives. The Streetcar Alternative also has a lower projected ridership, slower travel speeds than other alternatives, and it would not be compatible with the existing Metro system.
- ***Light Rail Transit is the best investment of all the transit alternatives and would provide a beneficial transportation solution for the region.*** Community members expressed strong support for the Light Rail Transit Alternative, and many commented that it was the best out of all the alternatives. Supporters commented that it was the best fit for the Corridor because it would

have faster speeds, higher capacity, and higher projected ridership. They also commented that it would not have any transfers from Santa Ana to Los Angeles, and, therefore, is the best alternative to address the region's transportation needs. Light rail transit would also benefit from being compatible with the existing Metro transit system because it would be adaptable and would benefit from using existing facilities. In addition, because light rail transit is already used by Metro, it is known to be reliable, is a proven technology in the region, and is familiar to transit riders.

- ***The cost of providing Low Speed Magnetic Levitation seems prohibitive, but the technology could provide a new solution to meet future transportation needs.*** The Low Speed Maglev Alternative had support from some community members because it would be faster, quieter, and safer, and would cause minor traffic impacts compared to other alternatives. Some community members believe that, in addition to meeting the current transportation needs, the Low Speed Maglev Alternative is the best long-term solution to meet future transportation needs. Other community members commented that it had a significantly higher overall cost that was prohibitive, and that it would cost more to operate and maintain, and to ride. Community members also opposed Low Speed Maglev because it would only provide a marginal benefit compared to other alternatives, is an unproven technology in the United States, and would not be compatible with the existing Metro transportation system. Community members were also concerned that the Low Speed Maglev Alternative would potentially require property acquisition that would displace residents who live adjacent to the Corridor.