



# MINUTES

## *Special State Route 91 Advisory Committee Meeting*

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### **Committee Members Present**

Tim Shaw, Chairman  
Bob Magee, Vice Chairman  
Brian Berkson, RCTC  
Berwin Hanna, RCTC  
Michael Hennessey, OCTA  
Kevin Jeffries, RCTC  
(Teleconference)  
Karen Spiegel, RCTC

Ryan Chamberlain, Caltrans  
District 12, Ex-Officio  
Ray Marquez, SBCTA, Ex-Officio  
Syed Raza for Michael Beauchamp,  
Caltrans District 8, Ex-Officio

### **Committee Members Absent**

Gene Hernandez, OCTA  
Mark A. Murphy, OCTA  
Donald P. Wagner, OCTA  
Michael Beauchamp, Caltrans  
District 8, Ex-Officio

### **Staff Present**

Darrell E. Johnson, OCTA, Chief Executive Officer  
Anne Mayer, RCTC, Executive Director  
Ken Phipps, OCTA Deputy Chief Executive Officer  
Kirk Avila, OCTA, General Manager, 91 Express Lanes  
Laurena Weinert, OCTA, Clerk of the Board  
Olga Prado, OCTA, Assistant Clerk of the Board  
Steve DeBaun, RCTC, Legal Counsel  
James Donich, OCTA, General Counsel  
OCTA and RCTC Staff  
Members of the General Public

### **Call to Order**

The June 7, 2019 Special meeting of the State Route (SR) 91 Advisory Committee was called to order by Committee Chairman Shaw at 9:02 a.m. at the City of Corona – City Hall, Council Chambers – First Floor, 400 South Vicentia Avenue, Corona, California.

### **Roll Call**

Committee Chairman Shaw announced that several of the Members would participate in today's meeting via teleconferencing, and all votes would be taken by roll call.

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

Committee Vice Chairman Magee led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **1. Public Comments**

No public comments were received.



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### **Special Calendar**

There were no Special Calendar matters.

### **Consent Calendar (Items 2 and 3)**

#### **2. Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Member Hennessey, seconded by Committee Vice Chairman Magee, and following a roll call vote, declared passed 7-0 by those present, to approve the minutes of State Route 91 Advisory Committee meeting of March 1, 2019.

#### **3. Joint 91 Express Lanes Status Reports**

A motion was made by Member Hennessey, seconded by Committee Vice Chairman Magee, and following a roll call vote, declared passed 7-0 by those present, to receive and file the Joint 91 Express Lanes Status Reports for the months of January 2019 through April 2019.

### **Regular Calendar**

#### **4. Draft 2019 State Route 91 Implementation Plan**

Anne Mayer, Executive Director, Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), provided opening comments and introduced Kia Mortazavi, Executive Director of Planning, Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA), who provided a PowerPoint presentation on this item as follows:

- SR-91 Implementation Plan (Draft Plan);
- Culmination Efforts;
- Guiding Principles;
- Orange County Projects;
- Riverside County Projects;
- Bi-County Projects;
- SR-91 Corridor Operations Project (91 COP)
- SR-241/91 Express Lanes Connector (241/91 Connector);
- Project Implementation; and
- Recommendation/Next Steps.



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### 4. (Continued)

Public comments were heard from:

Mike Kraman, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Transportation Corridor Agencies (TCA), who provided comments as follows:

- Referenced the first paragraph of Page 4 of the staff report and Page 22 of the Draft Plan. Without supporting technical analysis or stakeholder coordination, the wording alludes to project sequencing prior to the implementation of the 241/91 Connector.
- TCA supports the Interstate 15 (I-15)/SR-91 Express Lanes Connector (15/91 Connector) project and agrees that the 241/91 Connector should not be completed until the 15/91 Connector is done.
- TCA's traffic analysis does not show any relationship to the timing of RCTC's two other priority projects the: 91 COP and SR-73/SR-91 Interchange.
- TCA is working with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), RCTC, and OCTA to understand the 91 COP analysis to ensure that the modified design for the westbound (WB) 91 COP accommodates projects in the Draft Plan.
- Slide 12 of the PowerPoint presentation noted concerns with coordination of projects as it relates to construction fatigue, community impacts, and throwaway costs.
- TCA wants to ensure that the 241/91 Connector is in coordination with all impacted agencies.

Trevor O'Neil, Anaheim City Council Member, who provided comments as follows:

- The SR-91 corridor is both a lifeline and a nightmare for Anaheim Hills constituents.
- Expressed appreciation to OCTA and RCTC for having the SR-91 Advisory Committee working together to better the SR-91 corridor.
- Supportive of TCA's work done to provide north/south traffic relief to his community.
- RCTC and OCTA need to work cooperatively with TCA on the 241/91 Connector, as this is a critical project for its constituents and for the cities of Orange and Yorba Linda.
- Reviewed the draft traffic analysis by Stantec, and there are significant benefits with the added throughput; however, the Draft Plan does not reflect those benefits.
- Agrees there should be some sequencing for all these projects; however, he has not seen a technical basis for that sequencing.



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### 4. (Continued)

- Concerned about the following:
  - OCTA and RCTC do not consider the 241/91 Connector to be an important project.
  - Traffic back-up along the SR-241 and traffic weaving/cut-through in the City of Anaheim to the SR-91.
  - The 91 COP taking away the existing median where the 241/91 Connector would have its merging lane.
  - Proposal of an additional lane and the WB 91 COP expansion does not consider 241/91 Connector.

Wes Speake, City of Corona (Corona) Council Member, who provided comments as follows:

- Residents of Corona suffer every morning and afternoon and cannot access the freeway.
- In order for commuters to access the freeway daily from Green River Road (Green River), they must sit in their vehicle for about 30+ minutes.
- Supports the 91 COP that will provide commuters to Orange County an option and will minimize traffic cutting through city streets.
- He believes the 241/91 Connector should be sequenced and will address the WB SR-91 traffic issues.
- The traffic analysis for the 241/91 Connector eastbound (EB) shows more vehicles going onto Green River in the afternoons.
- Commuters exit the freeway where there is a path of least resistance, and the 91 COP will help traffic flow from Green River into the SR-91.
- Opposed to increasing the tolls if the 241/91 Connector goes in too early.

Dean Stamp, Corona resident, who provided comments as follows:

- Lives a few blocks from the SR-91, between the Maple Street and Serfas Club Drive on-ramps, and every weekday the street is used by hundreds of commuters as a cut-through street to the Serfas Club Drive on-ramp.
- His street is used by parents to walk their children to the area schools, and highlighted concerns about the street traffic endangering the residents.
- Would like the construction of the 91 COP and SR-91 traffic to move faster.
- Supports the 91 COP and would like it to be built as soon as possible in order to protect families in the neighborhood.



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### 4. (Continued)

Michelle Wentworth, Greater Corona Traffic Alliance (GCTA), who provided comments as follows:

- There are many Corona residents at the meeting today to remind the TCA, OCTA, and Caltrans, how the residents streets are collateral damage to any improvements made on the SR-91.
- The WB ramp at Green River has the same throughput previous to the RCTC 91 Corridor Improvement Project (91 CIP) being built; yet, the demand has increased.
- Green River is important to residents because that on-ramp is not functioning how it should be and has only one lane allowing one car to merge in at a time.
- RCTC has worked with the community to address the traffic weaving into the toll lanes and freeway, which creates a bottleneck.
- Served on the 91 citizens task force that supports the 241/91Connector.

Matt Olsen, Corona resident, who provided comments as follows:

- Displayed a map, on the overhead projector, the SR-91 where the RCTC projects are being considered.
- Highlighted this morning's SR-91 traffic conditions that occurs daily.
- The 91 COP is not a new project; instead, it is finishing up a project that was part of the original 91 CIP, and absolutely needs to be completed.

Jim Steiner, Corona Council Member, who provided comments as follows:

- Represent Corona's District 4, which is the area around Green River and Serfas Club Drive.
- Highlighted the road rage issues, length of time to access the freeway from his District's area, and lack of capacity on the SR-91.
- He receives complaints of the results of cut-through traffic on the city streets because the SR-91 corridor cannot handle the capacity.
- Encouraged TCA, OCTA, RCTC, and Caltrans to work together to minimize the delays in building these projects so there is no further collateral damage to citizens.
- Welcomes the four projects between the SR-241 and I-15; however, it feels with all the growth occurring in his region, the projects are still just band aids solutions.
- Transportation leaders and elected officials, at all levels of government, need to come together to find alternative solutions.



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### 4. (Continued)

Karen Alexander, Corona resident, who provided comments as follows:

- Thanked the public for coming together to stress and emphasize the traffic impacts to the local community.
- The throughput on the WB SR-91 is a priority.
- The 91 COP is essential and supports it.
- The biggest aspect that to consider is traffic and community impacts.
- Concerns about traffic cut-through on city streets which impacts residents who must take their kids to school or need to run errands.
- Throughput and maximizing circulation are regional that impacts Corona.
- Make the 91 COP a priority (part of the \$600 million that was cut out of the original 91 CIP).
- The connection to the SR-241 would greatly improve the throughput.

Don Fuller, Corona resident, who provided comments as follows:

- Echoed and supports the previous comments about cut-through traffic and insufficient throughput.
- All the money spent, and work done over the past few years to improve the freeway has made things worse, especially since the completion of the 91 CIP.
- The white plastic delineators that divide the 91 Express Lanes from the general-purpose lanes are useless and very dangerous.
- Provided examples of vehicle accidents due to cutting through the delineators.
- Predicts that there will be many lawsuits if this problem is not fixed.

Joe Morgan, resident of Corona, who provided comments as follows:

- The money spent on the 91 CIP has made things worse.
- Many segments were pulled from the 91 CIP, and the 91 COP is a continuation of the 91 CIP that was not completed.
- All the weaving, traffic, accidents, and issues with the delineators are a result of all the segments taken out of the 91 CIP.
- Residents need the rest of the 91 CIP completed, and the lanes, connectors, and interchanges need to be continued as originally planned.
- The SR-91/Green River improvement needs to happen now.



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### 4. (Continued)

- In the 1970's there were two on-ramps on Green River, and now there is one lane.
- Felt there is no coordinated plan and it is time for people to get their act together and consider this as a regional plan.
- Unless done correctly, the 241/91 Connector will make traffic weaving worse.
- Corona residents need the remaining 91 CIP to be completed as originally intended.

Sharon Carriedo, Corona resident, who provided comments as follows:

- Agrees that the 241/91 Connector needs to be done; however, it needs to wait until the current problems are fixed.
- Lives on the other side of Corona in the Eagle Glen community and they have their own set of issues with the SR-91 and I-15.
- Going through a job transition and will not be driving on the SR-91 until it is fixed.
- With the additional houses being built, the traffic back-up will increase even more to the I-15 and will cause additional traffic cut-throughs to the arterials.
- Questioned the decision to remove some segments of the 91 CIP that are needed.
- Hopes that everyone gets together to review the traffic issues, from the perspective of the commuters that drive every single day, and how it causes a traffic situation and bad drivers.

Creiselda Terpoorten, Corona resident, who provided comments as follows:

- She is a local mental health advocate and is seeing an uptick of folks being impacted by their daily commute.
- Traffic can be a trigger and does not want to have one of her clients or other commuters release their trauma onto somebody else because they cut them off on the freeway.
- Commuting stressors are a trickledown effect on the commuter's family, employer, etcetera.
- Family separation is an issue, with one parent or two parents working in Orange County working while their children are in the Corona area, and if something were to happen, how does the commuter get to their family members as soon as possible.
- Concerned with commuter fatigue and construction fatigue having a major effect on quality of life.





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### 4. (Continued)

Michelle Demora, Corona resident, who provided comments as follows:

- She drives this SR-91 everyday, has lived in Corona her whole life, and conditions have gotten worse since the completion of the 91 CIP.
- Her bank accounts are a lot less because she uses the toll road in order to try to make her life better.
- Asked everyone to drive the SR-91 during the early morning hours from 5:20 a.m. – 6:30 a.m.
- Highlighted her driving challenges and how she drives around the SR-91 traffic by using the arterials.
- Concerned with the EB 91 Express Lanes ingress/egress, and thinks it is very dangerous.
- Her commute does not add anything to quality of life, it adds stress, and affects folks every single day.

Maddy Paxton, Corona resident, who provided comments as follows:

- Is a retired resident of Corona. She drives the SR-91 for medical appointments, and echoed Ms. Demora's remarks to drive the SR-91 during the early morning hours.
- Used to work in Irvine that was a two-hour round-trip commute.
- Concerned about getting home in an emergency and provided an example of when her husband was ill for several months.
- She would listen to the news every morning, without a doubt, there was a joke about the SR-91 corridor.
- Take into consideration people's entitlement on the freeway and continuously weaving in and out of lanes.
- Some folks come from the SR-241 to Green River and are driving on the emergency lane to get home quicker which can cause major accidents.





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### 4. (Continued)

A lengthy discussion ensued as follows:

- The correspondence from TCA suggested there was no funding for the three RCTC projects, while the email from RCTC suggested there is funding, and requested for RCTC to clarify.
- RCTC clarified that the three projects are high-priority, funding information and current status of each project was provided, the deferred projects from the original 91 CIP, and the priority projects are on schedule to be delivered by 2023.
- RCTC supports the 241/91 Connector. RCTC's issue is with adding more traffic in the EB direction where traffic is already backed-up, and additional traffic being pushed into the 91 Express Lanes will only push more traffic into the general-purpose lanes and onto local arterials.
- The EB capacity needs to be addressed, and the I-15 Express Lanes Connector be built before the 241/91 Connector.
- Downstream EB commute between County line and the I-15, there is usually a one to two-mile back up before McKinley Street.
- Caltrans District 8 agrees that the 2023 delivery timeline is realistic and working very closely with RCTC on the projects.
- Stakeholder concurrence is important, and currently, there is no stakeholder concurrence.
- OCTA and RCTC have a partnership to run the SR-91 corridor and 91 Express Lanes, and one of the fundamental agreements both agencies reached early on was "do no harm," and with that basis, both OCTA and RCTC tried to come to an agreement with the TCA.
- Committee Members expressed appreciation to the public who attended today's meeting and expressed their concerns.
- Today's public comments were very accurate, and Corona has had the burden of construction.
- The input from the GCTA and others, led the 91 COP to move forward.
- Questions raised as to why the TCA was pushing the 241/91 Connector so hard, if it was because of fear of the environmental document becoming stale or loss of funding?
- The SR-91 Corridor operates great when the SR-241 was closed due to wildfires.
- The WB SR-91 to southbound SR-241 connector would be a great solution right now, but not in the opposite direction (northbound SR-241 to EB SR-91).
- Construction impacts must be considered, the SR-91 Corridor is either a lifeline or nightmare for the drivers, and sequencing is the key.



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### 4. (Continued)

- Agreements that the 241/91 Connector is important and will be a benefit; however, that benefit will not come until the other projects are complete.
- Everyone should work together to find a solution.
- The entire 30-Member RCTC Board agrees to fix what was started and needs to be completed on the SR-91 corridor.
- Construction of the 91 COP will help alleviate some of the traffic, and if the 241/91 Connector is built too early, it will create additional traffic bottleneck.

Syed Raza, Caltrans District 8 representative, read a message on behalf Member Beauchamp recommending deferring the action on the Draft Plan to a later time to allow Caltrans to better understand how it fits into planning for the region.

Mr. Kraman, CEO, TCA, stated that the TCA absolutely supports the three RCTC projects. He added that his comment on the Draft Plan was that the language that seeks to tie the 241/91 Connector with the need for downstream capacity seems premature when the previous commitments for analysis and cooperative meetings between the agencies have not occurred.

Mr. Kraman added that the Draft Plan does not identify the funding for the three RCTC projects and states the funding is pending. He added that the TCA welcomes the opportunity to be at the table with Caltrans, OCTA, and RCTC to find the right technical solution with the maximum improvements, as quickly as possible. Mr. Kraman added that the TCA is looking at the 2023 timeframe for its project.

Member Chamberlain stated that a letter will be forthcoming with a "united" message from Caltrans. He added that Caltrans has not had sufficient opportunity to review the Draft Plan.

Committee Vice Chairman Magee directed Ms. Mayer, RCTC, Executive Director, to agendize an item for the next RCTC Board of Directors (Board) meeting to fully understand why Caltrans recommended deferring the action on the "Draft 2019 State Route 91 Implementation Plan".

A motion was made by Member Spiegel, seconded by Member Hennessey, and following a roll call vote, declared passed 7-0 by those present, to receive and file as an information item.



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### **Discussion Items**

#### **5. 91 Express Lanes Customer Service Center**

Anne Mayer, Executive Director, RCTC, provided opening comments and introduced Jennifer Crosson, Toll Operations Manager, RCTC, who provided a PowerPoint presentation on this item as follows:

- Relocated March 11<sup>th</sup>;
- Customer Service Center;
- Video of the Customer Service Center (CSC); and
- Joint 91 and 15 Express Lanes Walk-in Center (Spring 2020).

No action was taken on this information item.

#### **6. General Manager's Report – Orange County Transportation Authority**

Kirk Avila, General Manager, OCTA, 91 Express Lanes, reported on the following:

Back-Office System and CSC:

- On April 22, 2019, the request for proposals for operating services, which includes the back-office system and customer service center was jointly released by OCTA and RCTC, and proposals are due in mid-July.
- The Evaluation Committee is scheduled to make a recommendation to the OCTA and RCTC Boards in October 2019.
- The current agreement between OCTA, RCTC, and Cofiroute expires in June 2021. This is another example of both agencies collaborating.

Customer Satisfaction Survey:

- OCTA and RCTC will conduct a survey in the coming months.
- The last survey was performed in 2014.
- The survey results will be presented at a future SR-91 Advisory Committee meeting.

Monthly Reports:

- Item 3 on today's agenda included the monthly joint operations reports from January through April 2019. For the OCTA segment, traffic volumes continue to increase in May.
- Since the RCTC segment opened two years ago, traffic volumes have increased steadily on the Orange County side.
- Average daily traffic has increased from 37,000 in fiscal year 2017 (pre-RCTC opening) to 47,000 for fiscal year 2019.



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### **6. (Continued)**

Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA):

- Beginning July 1, 2019, OCTA and RCTC agencies will apply COLA to the toll rates for the 91 Express Lanes.
- The COLA adjustment is imposed annually to the toll rates that have not been increased over the past year.

### **7. Toll Program Director's Report – Riverside County Transportation Commission**

Committee Chairman Shaw announced that Michael Blomquist, Toll Program Director, RCTC, was not present at the meeting and deferred the item to Anne Mayer, Executive Director, RCTC. Ms. Mayer announced that there were no items to report.

### **8. Committee Members' Reports**

Committee Vice Chairman Magee and Members Hennessey and Spiegel thanked the public speakers for their comments.

Committee Vice Chairman Magee expressed being extremely shocked by the last-minute announcement from Caltrans District 8, as noted under today's agenda Item 4, and requested a detailed explanation.

Committee Vice Chairman Magee asked Ms. Mayer, RCTC, Executive Director, to convey his request, to RCTC's Board Chairman, for an agenda item at the next RCTC Board meeting the reason for Caltrans District 8's request.

Committee Chairman Shaw asked when the Draft Plan will go forward to OCTA and RCTC Board.

The Draft Plan will go forward to the OCTA Board on July 8, 2019 and the RCTC Board on June 12, 2019.

### **9. Closed Session**

There were no Closed Session items scheduled.



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### 10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:41 a.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of this Committee will be held at **9:00 a.m. on Friday, October 4, 2019**, at the:

Orange County Transportation Authority Headquarters  
550 South Main Street  
Board Room - Conference Room 07  
Orange, California

ATTEST

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Laurena Weinert  
OCTA Clerk of the Board

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Tim Shaw  
Committee Chairman