

CVAG Chronicle

May 2008

HOT TOPIC: TAKING ON THE INTERCHANGE CHALLENGE

By Allyn Waggle



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It is no secret that CVAG has been struggling with the efforts to advance the five interchange projects, currently under design on Interstate 10, to the beginning of construction. One interchange project which has constantly been under some level of review or other evaluation is the new interchange at the extension of Bob Hope Drive, which will replace the existing interchange at Ramon Road. This interchange was first approved for funding in 1998 and it still is not scheduled for construction until next year. The other four Interstate 10 interchange projects, at Indian Avenue; at Palm Drive/ Gene Autry Trail; at Date Palm Drive; and at Jefferson Street have likewise been somewhere in the design process since their initial approval dates between 2000 and 2003.



After trying several approaches to improving the delivery of the interchange projects staff determined a major problem was coordination of the myriad elements of work which needed to be accomplished by all the agencies involved with the process; there was no one agency attempting this effort. Staff felt that if an oversight position could be created, represented by a professionally qualified firm, a relationship could be established among those involved to monitor progression of the elements of work in order to identify any roadblocks and to recommend a means to return to a productive schedule. Staff decided this over-

sight position would be best served by retaining a qualified consultant who could “prod” the agencies, the cities, the county, Caltrans, FHWA, etc., by pointing out problems and helping keep everyone on track and focused on completing the interchange projects in an efficient and timely manner. It was recommended this position would reduce the recurring delays all of the interchange projects were suffering, thus, saving on the ever-increasing costs of property and construction materials, as well as the design consultants’ on-going costs, generated by these delays.

After much discussion and refinement through the CVAG Committee process, in March the Executive Committee approved the distribution of a Request for Proposals for retention of a Project Management Consultant specifically to organize and advance the five current interchange projects on Interstate 10. They further directed that the Transportation Technical Advisory Sub-Committee (TTAS) should discuss and establish the scope of work for this “Prodding” Level of the Project Management Consultant Position.

The TTAS members, typically the city Public Works Directors or City Engineers, debated the parameters for the “Prodding” Level of the Project Management Consultant. They recognized that in order to effectively accomplish any plan to aggressively advance the Interstate 10 Interchange Projects would require the cooperation of CVAG’s Lead Agency partner jurisdictions, particularly since CVAG’s current, and continuously successful, policy is to make the partner jurisdiction responsible for all aspects of project completion. To accomplish a change in relationship would require a very clear definition of project responsibilities well in advance of any change in the current status being undertaken.

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HOT TOPIC: TAKING ON THE INTERCHANGE CHALLENGE

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CVAG Department Heads

John Wohlmuth
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Community
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Katie Barrows
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GIS Program
Director

Catherine McMillan
Governmental
Services

Toni Eggebraaten
General Counsel



The TTAS members also recognized that the concept of this change in relationships would establish that much more of the responsibility for project oversight would fall to CVAG. In this manner, the concept was developed of retaining a consultant who would be charged with “prodding” the Interstate 10 interchange project consultants, as well as the jurisdictions which actually oversee the projects. This would allow that the jurisdictions retain the major responsibility for completing the projects. Also, the bulk of the work of relations with contractors, other agencies and other partner jurisdictions, would still fall on the cities, or their designated consultants, who could be “prodded” by the CVAG consultant to maintain an appropriate pace.

Also, since this proposed position would be accomplished by a consultant, CVAG will be able to measure the impact of any change in our relationships with our jurisdictions, and, should the consultant position be determined a success, as well as become better defined, CVAG could then consider modifying the position to address other major, regional transportation projects. The benefit of retaining a consultant for this work allows the position to be tested in a variety of compositions, since a consultant can add or subtract staff from the position as needs develop or change.

A Request for Proposals was advertised during April, and specified the following requirements particularly identified as important:

- The Consultant will need to collect all necessary data to appropriately establish the existing impediments and constraints affecting development and approval of the project plans.
- The Consultant will need to identify the critical path for each interchange improvement project and action plans to circumvent the critical path.
- The Consultant will need to prepare updated project status reports outlining the strategies and action plans to maintain and accelerate the progress for each interchange project.

- The Consultant will assist CVAG in administering the overall program, including documentation, funding administration and all other program related activities, and will deliver monthly status reports to CVAG’s Committees.

Following an extensive interview process, which involved the jurisdictions most particularly affected by these five interchange projects, the firm of Harris & Associates was recommended for performing the work of the “Prodding” Level of the Project Management Consultant. The interview panel determined Harris & Associates most clearly expressed the qualifications and experience needed to successfully accomplish the work, and should be able to “hit the ground running”. The Project Manager assigned to oversee the interchange work will be Joe Shaw whose past experience on major Caltrans projects has brought him high praise. Work by Harris & Associates should begin in early July, with first reports to the CVAG Committees during their September cycle.

WELCOME TO A NEW EMPLOYEE

Adding to the benefit of having Harris & Associates focused on the interchange projects, CVAG’s Transportation Department will once again be fully staffed with the recent hiring of David Zacker to fill the vacant Transportation Program Manager position, previously held by former, long time employee Anne Azzu. Anne left CVAG in January for a similar position with an international engineering firm. We miss Anne, and wish her the best in her new position, and now we look forward to bringing David quickly up to speed in the operations of the department. Welcome David!

- Allyn Waggle

Don’t miss this event!

The **2008 CVAG General Assembly** will be held on June 30, 2008 at the Agua Caliente Casino Resort & Spa in Rancho Mirage. For more information and to register, please do so at: jstuee@cvag.org, cvag.org, or call CVAG at (760) 346-1127.

Executive Committee Meeting June 2, 2008

ACTION TAKEN

- Accepted the Draft Special Terms and Conditions for the USFWS Permit for the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP).
- Appointed Mayor DeRosa, Mayor Ron Meepos, Supervisor Roy Wilson, and Supervisor Marion Ashley as the 2008 Nomination Committee for Executive Committee Chair and Vice Chair and asked them to meet briefly after the Executive Committee meeting.
- Announced the opening for an appointment to the SCAG Regional Council for District 62, the Eastern CVAG Sub-region.
- Increased CVAG's per diem payments to \$100.00 per Executive Committee member per committee meeting and \$75.00 per committee member of all other standing elected committees as of July 1st; and CVAG's Amended Per Diem Policy No. 08-04.
- Scheduled a Joint Technical Advisory Committee, Homelessness Committee, and Executive Committee Meeting on September 29, 2008 at 4:00 p.m. to discuss financing the Multi-Service Center.
- Endorsed the proposed structure for the formation of a Coachella Valley Regional Housing Trust; and directed staff to proceed with the initial developmental phases of a separate, private non-profit.
- Approved a letter of support for Senate Bill 1646 which would re-authorize the South Coast Air Quality Management District's Clean Fuels Program.
- Approved Resolution 08-004, authorizing the submission of a regional application for a Used Oil Recycling Block Grant for fiscal year 2008/09 (14th cycle) by the Coachella Valley Association of Governments.
- Adjourned the Executive Committee in memory and honor of Sharon Kite, wife of Rancho Mirage Councilmember Richard Kite and CVAG Chairman.



**CVAG will be closed on
Friday, July 4, 2008
for Independence Day.**

UPCOMING CVAG MEETINGS JUNE 2008

General Assembly

June 30 - 6 p.m.
(Agua Caliente Casino Resort & Spa, Rancho Mirage)

Executive Committee

June 30- 4 p.m.
(Agua Caliente Casino Resort & Spa, Rancho Mirage)

Technical Advisory Committee

June 13 - 10 a.m. (Suite 119)

Transportation Committee

June 9 - 12:00 noon (Suite 119)

Transportation Technical Advisory Subcommittee

June 27 - 10 a.m. (Suite 119)

Energy & Environmental Resources Committee

June 12 - 12 noon (Suite 119)

Coachella Valley Conservation Commission

June 12 - 11 a.m. (Suite 119)

Energy Conservation Subcommittee

June 26 - 8 a.m. (Suite 119)

AB939 Solid Waste & Recycling Technical Working Group

July 14 - 3 p.m. (Suite 119)

Public Safety Committee

June 9 - 10 a.m. (Suite 119)

Homelessness Committee

June 18 - 10:30 a.m. (Suite 119)

Human & Community Resources Committee

June 18 - 12 noon (Suite 119)



CVAG's Executive Committee comprises 32 members. Voting members (18) are Riverside County supervisors, mayors and chairs of CVAG cities and tribes or their designés. Nonvoting members (14) are county, city and tribal managers.

Executive Committee Roster

Councilmember Richard W. Kite, City of Rancho Mirage

CVAG CHAIR

Mayor Eduardo Garcia, City of Coachella

CVAG VICE CHAIR

Vice Mayor Beverly Mays, City of Blythe

Mayor Kathy DeRosa, City of Cathedral City

Mayor Yvonne Parks, City of Desert Hot Springs

Mayor Mary Roche, City of Indian Wells

Councilmember Ben Godfrey, City of Indio

Mayor Don Adolph, City of La Quinta

Mayor Jean Benson, City of Palm Desert

Mayor Stephen Pougnet, City of Palm Springs

Supervisor Marion Ashley, Supervisor Roy Wilson,

Supervisor Bob Buster, Supervisor John Tavaglione,

and Supervisor Jeff Stone, County of Riverside

Tribal Chair Richard Milanovich, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians

2nd Tribal Vice Chair David Roosevelt, Cabazon Band of Mission Indians

Tribal Chair Raymond Torres, Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians



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