



SUMMARY

TAC Meeting #1

Wednesday, December 21, 2011, 1:30 pm
City of Yuma Public Works Training Room
155 W. 14th St
Yuma, AZ 85364

TAC Participants:

Abrahams, Michael – Quechan Tribe
Backs, Paula - Marine Corps Air Station*
Brooberg, Paul – City of Yuma
Brooks, William K. – US Customs and Border Protection
Hoffman, Mark – ADOT Multimodal Planning Division *
Jasenovec, Georgi – Federal Highway Administration
Mahon, J.P. – Yuma County Planning
Mansheim, Dave – Bard Date
Misemer, Robert - Marine Corps Air Station*
Perez, Rudy – Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) *
Reed, Michael – Greater Yuma Port Authority and Cocopah Tribe
Reichelt, Russell – City of Yuma
Salaza Pompa, Fernando – Secretaria de Infraestructura y Desarrollo Urbano
Starkey, John – City of San Luis
Travis, Robert – ADOT Utilities and Railroad*

* Participated via phone

Study Team:

FitzGerald, Charlene – Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization
Gutierrez, Charles – Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization
Bornstein, Kristin – KDA Creative
Fly, Greg – Parsons Brinckerhoff
Hester, Tom – Parsons Brinckerhoff
LaMont, Doug – Parsons Brinckerhoff
Nicholls, Doug – Core Engineering Group



MEETING SUMMARY

Charlene FitzGerald opened the meeting by welcoming everyone, after which participants introduced themselves to the group one by one. Kristin Bornstein asked each participant to articulate their expectations of the study and potential opportunities related to freight rail in Yuma County. Their responses are listed below.

Expectations related to study process

- Transparency
- Consensus/ Buy-in
- Make sure we have a comprehensive list of partners, including BOR and UPRR
- Talk to other AZ short line railroads to determine opportunities
- Coordinate with other relevant studies, including State Rail Plan
- Be sure to consider multimodal freight movement
- Look at viability of 2 ports—which comes first?
- Look at both short line and class I (economic analysis may inform this)
- Be aware of “Class I” terminology- don’t confuse w/ Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) track class.
- Address system safety (not just RR, also roads)
- FHWA’s biggest concern is process: ensuring that stakeholders have access/input to the study
- Prioritize study activities to meet study budget—don’t try to do more than is realistic within the study budget
- No pre-conceived ideas
- Protect community interests
- Be mindful of the UPRR Colorado River crossing bottleneck

A TAC member asked “What will be done with the final document?”—and the answer was that it is intended to be a building block for future action

Expectations related to study recommendations

- Identify crossing/corridor
- Crossing location (Baja, CA or Sonora, Mexico, San Luis, AZ or Nogales, AZ)
- How are we going to go N-S
- Trucking may be more economical than short line rail
- Viable, realistic plan
- Route needs to allow for border patrol activities
 - X-ray inspection system
 - Container inspection area



- Close to their inspection facility but far enough to get a whole train inside the US

Expectations related to potential impacts of recommendations

- Minimize impact on agricultural community
- Coordination of Rail Plan and roadway plans for minimal impact/maximum benefit
- Concerned about the impacts of potential double tracking
- Tribe- Concerned about impacts on environment and economy
- General Impact and agricultural land impacts
- Splitting land/access/emergency vehicles, etc.

Expectations related to economic development

- Analysis of economic benefit
- Capture economic benefit
- Agriculture industry – how to interplay (increase output)
- Depending upon port (Punta Colonet or Guaymas) concern of Asian import/export—need to make movement east toward US easier (Port further south in Mexico)

Opportunities Noted

- Other multimodal corridors
- Short line—benefit for import/export
- Industrial cluster around San Luis POE II, RR and Ave 3E
- Rail for exporting agricultural products same as second bullet?
- Coordination between rail/air transportation to explore potential for major cargo facility
- Both short and long-term development around port
- Industrial growth
- There is existing infrastructure at Guyamas- don't focus too much on Punta Colonet for short term
- Focus on existing opportunities (e.g., Guaymas)—could be served by short line, which can go places Class I cannot
- BOR and the possible reactivation of the Yuma Valley Railroad to the Desalination Plant was mentioned by Robert Travis
- Large population in Mexicali

After each participant identified their expectations of the study, the study team provided an overview of the proposed work plan, task by task, and solicited TAC input. They were asked to think about the following for each task:



1. What outcomes do you expect/anticipate from each task?
2. What resources can you provide the study team to help each task be complete and successful?
3. What advice do you have for the team on methodology/approach for this task?

TASK 1—WORK PLAN

Task Objectives:

- Develop a mutual understanding on the interest/need for long-term and short-term economic development opportunities associated with rail
- Identify a potential multimodal freight corridor connecting Sonora Mexico and Yuma County
- Identify a border rail crossing location that accommodates short- and long-term improvements
- Review and analyze the commodity flow summaries from the MAG Freight Transportation Framework Study and Arizona Multimodal Logistics Complex Analysis to identify potential market opportunities
- Investigate funding sources and opportunities for short-term and long-term improvements
- Consult with a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to oversee the project development
- Provide a comprehensive public involvement plan

Discussion Items:

1. TAC's vision for Yuma as a Redistribution/Warehousing center
2. What are the interests of the Community in freight transportation with and without the development of Punta Colonet?
3. Does the TAC see a role in commerce with the US, Mexico and Canada? Synergies with San Pedro Bay Ports (e.g., LA / Long Beach)? Others?

TAC comments were as follows:

- Industrial park/opportunities at airport
- Big box manufacturing companies
- AG Coolers along Gila Ridge Rd/Ave 3E
- Yuma is not Laredo. What is the Yuma Niche?
 - Computers
 - Electronics
 - Car parts
 - Agricultural products



- San Luis area zoned as industrial (“piggy back” job creation)
- Within 3 years, construction could start on both- be aware

TASK 2—PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

Task Objectives:

- Transparency, Interaction, and Responsiveness leading to stakeholder Consensus on rail line corridor and process used to arrive at the recommendation
- Communication and Interaction with TAC, Stakeholders, and the Public

Discussion Items:

1. Members and description of each group
2. Frequency of communication (tied to project milestones)
3. Schedule of TAC meetings
4. Schedule for Stakeholder/Public Meetings

TAC comments were as follows:

- Community is not anti-rail
- They want to be involved
- Education- relationship between rail and agriculture
- Build Relationships – Undergird (?) leadership
- What does this study need to do for you today
- How to get rail in the room... JOBS, ECONOMY... then line on map
- Need to get out to public early and often
- Suggest open house format

TASK 3 EXISTING AND FUTURE CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

Task Objective:

Identify and fully comprehend the existing and future commodity movements into, out of, within and through the Yuma region.

Existing Conditions

- MAG Freight Transportation Framework Study
- Arizona Multimodal Logistics Complex Analysis
- Arizona Rail Plan
- UPRR and Ferromex Rail Plans



Future Conditions

- Rail and Freight Forecasts: UPRR and Ferromex Rail Plans
- Assess the viability of a major rail system with and without the development of Punta Colonet
- Identify drivers of rail system demand
- Key performance parameters
- Network capacities
- Economic factors
- Technical and regulatory factors

Discussion Items:

1. Are there any other plans or studies that need to be reviewed referenced that may inform the study?
2. What does the TAC view as niche markets?

TAC comments were as follows:

- Some additional data may be available from Mexico- maybe on activity at current operating ports?
- Short line operators in AZ
- University of Texas report on commodity flows and freight corridors in Mexico
- University of Arizona studies (economic analysis)
- Contact Big Box stores on their desires/requirements/Dole
- Yuma Port Authority to provide information
- Robert Travis has data and can provide contacts (?)for UPRR
- UPRR
- BOR- reactivation of line into desalination plant
- Reactivation of Sunset Route (Wellton Branch)
- Rudy has contact info for Port of Guaymas
- Protect Mesa/Valley- understand agricultural area nuances
- SR195 Extension Study
- Niche Markets
 - Agricultural
 - Big box
 - Grain exports
 - Fertilizer import/export
 - Mining import/export
 - Automobile parts for Mexican assembly
 - Hazardous transport
 - Large population areas (consumers)



TASK 4 FEASIBILITY ASSESSMENT AND ALTERNATIVE ANALYSES

Task Objectives:

- Identify potential corridors and border crossing location
- Establish evaluation criteria
- Conduct alternatives analysis including environmental overview, corridor evaluation, rail operations, multimodal logistics center operations, no-build option, and port of entry requirements
- Identify an area of land for a switching yard that can handle commodity flows from Punta Colonet and multimodal redistribution/warehouse center
- Identify Constraints such as MCAS Joint Strike Fighter Boundary and Barry Goldwater Range, Mexico and California Borders, the airport, and certain land uses
- Protect the pristine Yuma Mesa area

Development Considerations:

- Potential locations for a Multimodal Redistribution/Warehousing Center
- Compatibility with footprints of other planned facilities
- Foreign Trade Zones
- Agriculture Concerns
- Border Security
- Environmental

Discussion Items:

1. What are some of the major constraints that may not be listed?
2. What are some of the do's and don'ts that we need to be mindful of while looking at alternatives?
3. Footprint for an redistribution/warehousing center

TAC comments were as follows:

- Interface with UPRR optimal at existing switch
 - (understand FRA requirements as well as border patrol)
- Additional constraints
 - Valley agricultural land
 - Tribal
 - Existing Railroads
 - Roads
 - Colorado River
 - Stay 200-300 feet from parallel road (?)
- Opportunities?



- State land
- Footprint needs to include allowance for all related infrastructure
- Items to consider
 - Land availability
 - Industrial parks- existing general plans

TASK 5 ECONOMIC ANALYSES

Task Objectives:

- Provide an economic evaluation to determine rail benefit
- Determine the economic development potential associated with Yuma niche market opportunities associated with freight rail switching yard and redistribution/warehousing center
- Explore adding value to products coming from Mexico to the US
- Evaluate potential land catalyst locations
- Understand and blend catalyst locations with existing land use plans
- Identify funding opportunities
- Determine the proposed economic benefits associated with long-term and short-term implementation strategies

Discussion Items:

Since the AZ Multimodal Logistics Center Study is evaluating the concept of a major inland port opportunity in Yuma, should the economic analysis be focused on short-term improvements (e.g., niche markets) that could be expanded in the future?

TAC comments were as follows:

- Think in terms of turning POTENTIAL into OPPORTUNITY

WRAP UP AND NEXT STEPS

The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:45 pm. The next steps are that the TAC will receive the Work Plan and Public Involvement Plan for review and comment, and the team will schedule a public open house in January to get the public involved as soon as possible. The work plan and public involvement plan will outline a schedule for future TAC meetings and deliverables, as well as stakeholder and public interactions.