



# FAST FORWARD

RIVERSIDE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

**91 Project Corona Community Task Force**  
**March 10, 2016**  
**7-9 p.m.**  
**Corona Public Library**  
**Meeting Notes**

**Attendees:**

**Task Force Members**

Tom Coelho  
Susie Mason Dana  
Bob Dressler  
Mark Kozakowski  
Cynthia Schneider  
Sol Shapiro  
Jerry Sincich  
Wes Speake  
Michele Wentworth  
Frank Zwayne

**Absent:**

Casey Horvath  
Amie Kinne  
Rowena Mendoza  
Christine Mynes  
Jeff O'Dell  
Sandy Simmons  
Muhammad Sohail

**RCTC Staff:**

Eliza Echevarria Perez  
David Thomas

**City of Corona:**

Mayor Scott  
Vice Mayor Haley  
Darrell Talbert  
Nelson Nelson

**AWJV (Design-Builder):**

Jan Bohn

**Outreach Team**

Marnie Primmer

The meeting was called to order by 91CCTF coordinator Marnie Primmer who sought feedback from the group regarding the traffic impacts and public communications surrounding the recent 55-hour 91 Steer Clear closure and the following weekend's closure of Serfas Club Drive to enable roadway lowering in the area. The group discussed the fact that the 91 Steer Clear campaign was effective and far-reaching, with members stating they had seen CMS signs from Los Angeles to San Diego. It was reported that there was increased social and local shopping activity during the closure and that those who had to use the freeway system noted the detour routes were not too crowded, and attributed that to the outreach campaign's ability to deter motorists from using the system. It was noted that the rationale for the work being done that weekend was to avoid "spreading the pain" with repeated closures over a protracted timeframe, and that the contractor was able to "do it all at once" and "get it done" in a condensed time period. It was noted that the project team had stumbled with the weather-related postponement of work at Serfas Club, not getting the word out quickly enough and negatively impacting businesses by not changing signage to clearly let motorists know the area would be open weekend of March 4-6 and again weekend of March 11-13.



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The project team asked what could have been done better. It was noted that there was some confusion over whether the Maple Street Bridge was open during and after the demolition work and noted increased traffic on 6<sup>th</sup> Street that could have been handled better during the closure. It was noted that task force members observed residents coming to view the construction activity, wondered if there were a way to make that easier. The team then asked for feedback on whether it would be palatable to the community for a future 55-hour full freeway closure, if the work warranted that approach. The group discussed how many more 55-hour closures could be needed by the project, and several perspectives were expressed as to the implications that further 55-hour closures could have. Task force members reported that they were already being asked by the public if there would be a second closure and when it would be. There was much discussion the need to give as much advance notice as possible as well as clearly articulate the reasoning behind the need for the closure, give residents a benefit statement, and the outreach will need to be just as robust if not more so because the first 55-hour closure went so well. David pointed out that the increased costs for activating additional resources over the weekend was substantial and that a full closure would only make sense if there were enough construction activities that could be done during a 55-hour time window. David also indicated that if there were a future 55-hour full freeway closure, that two time frames were being considered: sometime in June and the September/ October timeframe, and that the project team wanted to avoid summertime to minimize impacts to vacationers. The group discussed the drawbacks and merits of both timeframes, but did not come to conclusion on a clear preference. However, the group did request the project team closely consider community events such as graduations and holidays when determining the proper timing of a potential closure. David relayed that his goal is to have at least a two-month lead time on a closure to publicize the activity. If the June timeframe was selected, David indicated that more information would be brought to the April CCTF meeting for feedback.

Task force member Tom Coelho shared the impact to his business during the recent Serfas Club closure. Going into the weekend he stated that his sales were 30% above target but by the end of the weekend his sales were 5% below, and Saturday/Sunday are typically his busiest days. He pointed out that signage was critical to businesses, and that getting it right is vital. He stated that things like where equipment is staged can have an impact on business as it gives the impression that an area is under construction even though it is not closed. Tom pointed out that he includes maps along with coupons/deals in his email marketing and requested that future social media posts promoting Shop91ShopLocal supply directions or maps to businesses to help customers navigate detours. A task force member suggested working with the Chamber of Commerce for enhanced business signage.

Tom requested that the PCMS sign on NB Lincoln before the high school be changed ASAP because it was stating that work would be taking place on Serfas Club and was not clear that the work would be taking place the weekend of March 18.

Michele suggested that translation of construction alerts was needed in languages other than Spanish as she had experienced language barriers with some community members. Possible need for Korean and Vietnamese translations.

Marnie handed out the matrix of questions and responses from the CCTF over the past few weeks. Wes pointed out that he had received responses just this week to inquiries submitted February 8, and stressed the need to decrease time-lag on responses. Eliza shared that the 55-hour closure had impacted response times and it was suggested that additional communications staffing to ensure timely responses should be planned for if a future closure were to take place. Marnie then stated that the project team had earned a "very responsive" badge with Facebook by answering 100% of comments received with an average response time of less than 15 minutes. She differentiated between questions received via social media, direct messages and helpline that are looking for an immediate response to an on-the-fly issue and the need to respond to a public suggestion for review and analysis by the project team's MOT group, which could have a several week response time due to approvals and field visits that may need to take place in order to accurately address an issue or question. Marnie also referred the group to the public comment response flow chart shared at the previous month's meeting (available on the CCTF page).

Cynthia suggested that a general bill board telling motorists how to get information (like the front of the project information cards) would be helpful and perhaps during billboard "downtime" these might be displayed as a PSA by the billboard company.

David then gave a presentation about the project's QA/QC process and about upcoming work. The presentation is available on the CCTF page at [www.sr91project.info](http://www.sr91project.info)

Tom asked if we have any origin/destination data on surface street traffic. He stated that he has seen an improvement in traffic over the past 10 days. David attributed that to the recent improvements at Serfas Club completed on the last 55-hour closure.

Wes asked if the MOT action item list that was shown in David's presentation could be made public. David and Wes both acknowledged that there could be legal implications of doing so. Wes pointed to the public relations benefits that could be realized with the release as there was a perception by some members of the public that the project team does not care and that there is a "damn the torpedos" approach to construction that is impacting city streets negatively. He stated that showing the action item list or some version of it would show that the project team is actively identifying and addressing issues, and manage the negative perceptions, and allow the project team to take credit for things they have fixed already.

David explained how the team uses lane closure charts to govern the work the contactor undertakes at night. He then stated that we have identified a discrepancy between the lane closure charts and the construction alerts and that the project team is working to revise those quickly to avoid future confusion.

Sol relayed a comment he had received about changing the format of the alerts to a calendar with the search feature then being a secondary search tool. Eliza stated that the team is currently reviewing the search interface. Sol asked that we add the construction alert search interface to the next agenda.



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Tom asked what the protocol was for short term closures, and gave an example of a very brief (less than 10 minutes) ramp closure for moving equipment that he had witnessed. He was concerned that brief unplanned closures negatively impact business. David indicated he would look into that as these types of closures should not routinely be used by the contractor.

The group then discussed upcoming work at Ontario Avenue for lowering the roadway, similar to the work being done to lower Serfas Club Drive. The group cautioned the project team from doing work at this location on the weekend as this intersection is heavily traveled during that timeframe. Michele requested that there be enforcement stationed at this location during the closure to avoid backup. Nelson Nelson pointed out that properly timing the signals could achieve the same end.

Marnie then opened the floor to public comment. There were two comments from the public:

Don Fuller stated that the WB Serfas onramp and the 71/91 interchange paving was very rough and wanted to know if this would be addressed. The project team informed him that work at the 71/91 would address the rough pavement on Saturday night, and that Serfas Club would be addressed during the final configuration of the on-ramp.

Joe Morgan provided an update on the public comment received last month by Clare A. and stated that her claim had been rejected by the contractor. David stated that motorists who believe they have a claim will need to show proof that the damage occurred not only within the project limits but also that damage was caused by the contractor's activities.

Final comments from CCTF members:

Cynthia Schneider reported that she had been approached by parents in the Paseo Grande/Green River area about dangerous traffic conditions for students walking to/from school, and delays of up to 40 minutes in the area during school pick-up times. The parent was concerned about cut-through traffic from the I-15. David and Eliza shared the work that the project team has done with schools in this area including funding a crossing guard and assisting with construction of a new path to school at Cesar Chavez Academy.

Cynthia also suggested that it might be helpful for the project team to explain the claims process so the task force can be knowledgeable should questions from neighbors arise.

Wes asked a question about whether flagging was included in the recent 55-hour closure at certain locations, and David indicated that it had been used and that flaggers had been moved during the course of the closure to react to real-time versus anticipated traffic flow. Wes asked for greater clarification on conditions when flaggers are effective for traffic control because he was getting questions from the public. David explained that flaggers are mostly used in instances when there are not multiple signals being impacted, and that having flaggers at a single location may not help if several intersections are congested. He stated that signal synchronization and timing were a more effective traffic control measure than using flaggers for most cases where signals were present. Wes also pointed to cases when the signal timing seems off and asked who to go to for correction. Nelson stated that his department was generally in charge of signal timing and was also working with Caltrans in a fairly unprecedented manner to keep traffic flowing smoothly.

**The next CCTF meeting will be April 14, 2016 from 7-9pm at the Corona Public Library.**