



Transportation Authority of Marin Stakeholder Working Group Meeting #3 Summary

Northbound US-101 – Eastbound I-580 Direct Connector Project
Tuesday, August 25, 2020, 3:00 p.m. via Zoom

The third meeting of the Stakeholder Working Group (SWG) provided information and discussion on the following topics:

1. Bellam Boulevard Bike/Pedestrian Options
2. Project Alternatives including:
 - Summary of Alternatives Information from SWG#2
 - Visual Renderings of Alternatives
 - Clarification of Alternatives 3A and 3B Design and Traffic Flows.
 - New Information for Alternatives Comparison - Preliminary Right of Way (Property) & Environmental Assessment

SWG members provided comments and requested various clarifications summarized below. The meeting was open to the public. The PowerPoint presentation for the meeting is [available here](#).

Bellam Boulevard Bike/Pedestrian Options

The three options presented and discussed included:

- Option 1: Directional Protected Bikeways
- Option 2: Two-way Protected Bikeway on North Side of Bellam Blvd.
- Option 3: Simms/Castro Protected Bikeway and Bridge

SWG Member Comments

- For the Bellam Blvd. Bike/Pedestrian options, explain what driveway management and limiting traffic movement means in layperson terms.
- Clarify if any of the three options presented for bike/pedestrian improvements on Bellam Blvd. would improve the traffic congestion on Bellam Blvd.
- Clarify if any traffic lanes on Bellam Blvd. will be lost with the construction of any of the three bike/pedestrian options.
- Explain the benefits for pedestrian.
- Clarify if bikes and pedestrians will be separated.
- Include improved bike/pedestrian connectivity and wayfinding signage to the Cal Park bike path entrance from Jacoby Street and from Andersen Drive.
- Clarify how the options will improve safety for middle school children, particularly at the freeway entrances and exits.

NB US101 to EB I-580 Direct Connector Project

- Provide quantification of the current bicycle and pedestrian use on Bellam Blvd. including origin and destinations and crossing locations.
- Include future projections of bicycle and pedestrian movements and potential increased use of the Bellam Blvd. corridor with the improvements.
- Landscaping would be a good addition along Bellam Blvd.
- Consider reuse of storm drain runoff for landscaping.
- Traffic movements are challenging at the I-580 and Bellam Blvd. intersection for those trying to get to East Francisco Blvd. Consider improvements to this intersection for traffic, bikes, and pedestrians.
- Clarify if the Bellam Blvd. bike/pedestrian improvements are a part of the direct connector project or a separate project.
- Several SWG members indicated a preference for Option 1, directional protected bikeways, as it provides the most direct connectivity and access to businesses and services.

Comments Specific to Option 3

- Several SWG members expressed that further developing Option 3, Simms/Castro protected bikeway and bridge is not worth the effort as it is out of the way of destinations and improvements to Bellam Blvd. would still be needed.
- Clarify what the height would be of Simms/Castro bikeway and bridge in Option 3.
- Evaluate the impacts of removing 55 parking spaces; parking in that area is already very difficult.
- Consider that Option 3 does not negate the need for the continued bike and pedestrian access along Bellam Blvd.
- Option 3 is out of the way, as most bike/pedestrian travel is from the Canal area towards downtown San Rafael. Bikes and pedestrians would continue to use Bellam Blvd. because it is quicker.
- Clarify the time delay for bikes to cross Bellam Blvd. for Option 3.
- Consider that a better pedestrian crossing location would be at near Medway Road.

Public Comments

- Show the delay time for bicycles having to cross 6-7 lanes of Bellam Blvd. twice to reach destinations if using Option 2 or 3.
- Provide the origins and destinations of bicycles and pedestrians moving through the Bellam Blvd. corridor.
- Clarify if the project can improve the bicycle/pedestrian access to Kerner Blvd. for the Marin County Health Center and the grocery store.

Additional Project Alternative Information

SWG Comments

Comment about Community Benefits and Equity

- Several SWG members asked that the project consider the alternatives through an equity lens. The team should evaluate the impacts on the community and people, including access, cultural, water, and air quality impacts, particularly for the Canal area.
- Provide the pros and cons of the potential community impacts for each alternative.

NB US101 to EB I-580 Direct Connector Project

- Evaluate if the Canal area would be more segregated under any of the alternatives. The Canal area needs more access points, not fewer, sufficient for emergency response.
- Define who the improvements (with the alternatives) will help.
- Clarify the benefits of moving traffic further away from the Canal and how closing the Bellam Blvd. ramp impacts the Canal.
- Evaluate the connections and impacts from the user perspective.
- Need better access for the community that does not have another freeway slicing through the neighborhood.
- Reduce pollution near communities.
- Evaluate the air quality (particulate matter) differences between the alternatives for nearby residences and businesses. Consider air quality impacts as an equity issue.

Comments on Traffic and Travel Times

- For each alternative, provide origin and destination data for the traffic.
- Provide traffic impacts to the Canal for each of the alternatives.
- Clarify travel times for better comparison of the alternatives.

Comments about Alternatives to Consider Eliminating from Further Study

- Several SWG members expressed concern about Alternatives 3A and 3B because of the potential increase in vehicle volume through the area and the associated increase in air quality, visual and community impacts.
- Several SWG members suggested dropping Alternatives 2, 4, 5 from further consideration.
- Alternatives 3B and 4 were considered problematic because they close the offramp from I-580 to Bellam Blvd. reducing direct access to the Canal area, which needs more access for emergency response, not less.

Comments about Hillside Alternatives 1A and 1B

- Several SWG members suggested continuing to include Hillside Alternatives 1A and 1B.
- Clarify if Hillside Alternatives 1A and 1B impact the fewest number of community members and maintain Caltrans desired high-speed interchange.
- Clarify air quality and travel time impacts for Hillside Alternatives 1A and 1B compared to the other alternatives.
- The Hillside Alternatives 1A and 1B work better than the low speed Alternatives 3A, 3B, 4.

Comments about Alternatives 3A, 3B, 4

- The low speed Alternatives 3A, 3B, 4 do not work as well as the Hillside Alternatives 1A and 1B.
- 3B (which eliminates the Bellam Blvd. offramp) does not meet the basic need to facilitate convenient local access to/from the freeway.
- Several SWG members asked that the air quality, visual and community impacts for 3A and 3B be evaluated.
- Clarify if low-speed alternatives 3A and 3B could be approved by Caltrans.
- There is a marsh on Woodland Ave on private property in the vicinity of Alternative 4. The Audubon Society maybe looking at purchasing the property.

NB US101 to EB I-580 Direct Connector Project

Additional Comments

- Clarify if Alternative 5 goes directly through the Marin Square parking lot.
- Evaluate the added noise of a freeway interchange in the Bellam Blvd./Andersen Dr. area as Bret Harte residents are concerned about the potential of added noise.
- It is essential to obtain public comments from nearby residents/business owners for alternatives near Bellam Blvd.

Public Comments

There were no public comments made during the time set aside for public comments.

Standing Working Group Members

Present	Organization	Member	Interest Represented
X	Brett Harte Community Association	Betsy Swenerton	Community
X	Canal Alliance	Omar Carrera	Community
	College of Marin	Jon Horinek	Community
	Country Mart, Larkspur Landing	Jim Rosenfield, Elaine Lin (alt), Libby Schenkel (alt)	Business
X	East Bay to/from Larkspur	Becky Kittredge	Commuter
X	East Bay to/from San Rafael	Air Gallegos	Commuter
X	East San Rafael Businesses	Stephanie Plante	Business
X	Fed. of San Rafael Neighborhoods	Jim Draper, Richard Bernstein (alt., present)	Community
X	Larkspur Chamber of Commerce	Julie Cervetto	Business
X	League of Women Voters	Kevin Hagerty	Community
X	Marin Conservation League	Kate Powers	Environmental
X	Marin County Bicycle Coalition	Bjorn Gripenburg	Bike & Pedestrian
X	Multicultural Center of Marin	Douglas Mundo	Community
X	Pt. San Quentin Village HOA	Michele Barni	Community
X	Rides GGT through the project area	Dave Troup	Transit Rider
X	San Rafael Bike/Ped Adv. Comm.	DJ Allison	Bike & Pedestrian
X	San Rafael Chamber of Commerce	Joanne Webster	Business
X	San Rafael City Schools	Dave Pedroli	Community
X	Sustainable Marin	Wendi Kallins	Environmental
	Sustainable San Rafael	Jerry Belletto, Linda Jackson (alt)	Environmental