



## Transportation Authority of Marin Community Working Group (CWG) Meeting US 101/I-580 Multi-Modal and Local Access Improvement Project

**Wednesday, May 1, 2024, 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm**

The Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) established a Community Working Group (CWG) to provide community input to the project team during the environmental review phase for the project. The CWG provides a forum to discuss project alternatives and features so that the project team can understand community concerns during project development. CWG #1 meeting was held in person at TAM headquarters and on Zoom.

The agenda for this meeting was designed to orient the participants, especially the new CWG members, to the project and the environmental review process. TAM provided the project background, current updates, and next steps with a review of the timeline and the alternatives selected to proceed during the environmental phase. The PowerPoint presentation for the meeting is available [here](#).

### Welcome

Executive Director, Anne Richman, welcomed and thanked the CWG members for their interest and participation. She then asked everyone attending to introduce themselves. (See the full list of attendees on page 6).

### Agenda

Charles Gardiner reviewed the agenda and meeting protocols. He informed the members of the public that they would have time to comment after the presentations and CWG member comments.

He then reminded everyone of the purpose of the existing project committees – to ensure the various interests of elected officials, agency leadership and technical staff, and the community provide input and remain current on the project status. The Ad Hoc Committee is a subset of the TAM Board of Commissioners. It includes elected officials from the board that represent this project area. The Executive Steering Committee (ESC) is comprised of the executive staff of those agencies that are involved in the project. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is comprised of the technical staff of those agencies and the Community Working Group (CWG) represents diverse perspectives from the community.

The purpose of the CWG is to provide input and guidance to the project team regarding the local improvements alternative and the other alternatives, and going forward discuss the environmental issues that will be studied as part of the environmental review process. As the analysis is developed, the project team is looking for community input regarding benefits, impacts, and preferences, which will be important for shaping which alternative is selected. In addition, the project team is looking for the CWG to share information with the community and bring forth issues that impact the neighborhoods, businesses, and interests represented by the CWG members.

### Project History, Accomplishments, and Schedule

Chadi Chazbek provided the history of the US 101/I-580 Multi-Modal and Local Access Improvement Project and reminded the participants of the problem TAM is trying to solve with this project – the congestion and travel delays related to access to the Richmond-San Rafael bridge from northbound US

101 at Sir Francis Drake Boulevard and Bellam Boulevard. The project team is reviewing the main corridors in the area to determine what type of enhancements can be made to improve travel times for vehicles and public transit, connectivity, and bicycle and pedestrian safety. He stated the project goals and objectives.

- Enhance circulation on local streets.
- Enhance the active transportation network.
- Enhance bicycle and pedestrian safety.
- Improve connectivity between NB US 101 and EB I -580.
- Enhance and support economic prosperity.

The project accomplishments and project team activities since the last SWG meeting were highlighted:

- Changed the project name to better reflect the scope of the project, new State requirements regarding climate planning and vehicle miles traveled, local concerns about access/egress and connectivity.
- Narrowed the alternatives from thirteen to the recommended four to move into the environmental review phase.
  - Alternatives 2, 3A, 7, and a no-build alternative were selected to advance to the environmental phase.
  - The Stakeholder Working Group (SWG) input and thoughtful discussion helped shape the alternatives advancing, which were supported by the San Rafael City Council and the TAM Board.
- Completed Caltrans Planning Document (PSR-PDS) – approved September 2023.
- Developed Bellam Corridor Improvement concepts for all alternatives, incorporating bicycle, pedestrian, and traffic circulation enhancements.
- Initiated preliminary traffic studies with post-pandemic conditions.
- Conducted capacity building for Spanish-speaking community in fall 2023.
- Planning the environmental review phase, with the scoping meeting in fall 2024.

The project costs range from \$192 million for Alternative 3A to about \$241 million for Alternative 2. The costs are in 2031 dollars and include a 35% contingency. Costs for Alternative 7 improvements on Bellam are not included as more evaluation of the Bellam corridor intersection and traffic improvements is needed before putting a cost to it. Current funding for the project is \$135 million from Regional Measure 3 (RM3) and \$16.5 million from Measure AA, the local sales tax measure, which is funding part of the current work on the project. There is a gap between the programmed funding and the full project cost. TAM and other regional agencies will be looking at sources for the additional funding to carry the project forward.

The project schedule was reviewed. The Caltrans planning document was signed in 2023 with the environmental scoping meeting planned in fall 2024. The EIR is expected to take three years to complete. After public circulation of the draft EIR document and gathering community input, a local preferred alternative will be selected. Then project design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction will follow, with completion around 2033, pending the availability of construction funds.

#### [CWG Comments/Questions](#)

Consider the congestion and concern for the Bellam Boulevard exit ramp at southbound 101/Eastbound I-580 also. How will Alternatives 2 and 3A impact the southbound ramp traffic?

*The off-ramp backup at both locations will be considered as part of potential Bellam Boulevard improvements. The traffic analysis will show potential backups on both off-ramps.*

Look at improving the signals at Bellam Boulevard and Francisco Boulevard East. Currently, Caltrans and the City of San Rafael each maintain part of the signals today. When that signal is out of sync it takes a lot to get it fixed.

*TAM is aware of this issue and is working with Caltrans and the City of San Rafael as part of this project.*

Is there data on how many people are using Bellam Boulevard as a direct connector today versus how many are going to the Canal neighborhood?

*Of the traffic from northbound 101 heading to the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge, 85% use Sir Francis Drake Boulevard and 15% use the Bellam off-ramp. The traffic studies will show how much of the Bellam off-ramp traffic is going to local destination versus eastbound I-580 and the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge.*

Request that the team refer to the Bellam Boulevard corridor and surrounding area as East San Rafael because there are businesses there in addition to the Canal Neighborhood residents.

Explain what the ranges of travel times mean as interpreted for now and in the future (Slide 8).

*These current travel times and forecasts for 2040 show the range of travel time through the peak commute hours (4:00 to 7:00 p.m.). Motorists would prefer the Sir Francis Drake route because the Bellam route would take longer. These travel times do not show the volumes of traffic on either route.*

Before the pandemic, a member noted that the travel time could take an hour or more via Sir Francis Drake to the East Bay. Has the travel time improved with the addition of the third lane? Are the travel times in the presentation post-pandemic?

*The travel times shown are from Tamalpais Drive in Corte Madera to the bridge only. The third lane on the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge has made a significant improvement in travel times to the East Bay. The improvements to Sir Francis Drake Boulevard have also improved travel times. The numbers are based on post-pandemic traffic counts.*

Is it possible to complete the project in phases, with the Bellam Boulevard improvements happening first, during, or after the environmental review?

*The local improvements would be part of all alternatives. Once the environmental review is complete, the project could be phased to implement some parts sooner while funding is secured for other parts. The costs shown do not include the Bellam Boulevard operational improvements. They do include the replacement of the eastbound Bellam undercrossing and bike/pedestrian lanes.*

How has Alternative 2 been received by the community?

*Some community members have favored Alternative 2 because it is farther away from the congested interchanges on Bellam Boulevard. Others have preferred to keep the direct connector route closer to existing Bellam off-ramp and away from the main commercial/industrial areas of East San Rafael between 101 and 580.*

Alternative 2 is a substantial structure to add to the area. While it is farther away from other neighborhoods in San Rafael, it is directly in front of the California Park neighborhood.

Community involvement is critical to the project. The Spinnaker neighborhood has not been involved in the Stakeholder Working Group discussions until now. Recommend inviting other HOAs that border the Canal community.

*The project team is continuing to expand the project contact list. Please provide any contacts for other organizations that should be included. All Stakeholder working group meetings were and will continue to be open to the public and there is always time for members of the public to comment.*

*TAM met with members of the Spinnaker Point community to update them on the project's progress, answer any questions, and gather their input and perspectives. Additionally, TAM has offered to meet with other interested HOAs.*

What are the Bellam improvements? Will TAM share the details with the community?

*The Bellam improvements are in development and community workshops are planned in spring and fall 2024 to gather community input on the improvements.*

The funds from Regional Measure 3 and local tax measure AA total \$151 million. If Alternatives 2 and 3A are not built and Alternative 7 is built for a cost less than \$151 million, what happens to the remaining funds? Is it split between the communities? What is the budget for Alt 7?

- *The RM3 funds (\$135 million) are intended for a direct connector from NB US 101 to EB-I-580. The RM3 funds must stay in the 580 corridor if they are not used for this project because they are intended to be used to improve connectivity to the bridge.*
- *The Measure AA funds (\$16 million) will be used during the project development phase.*
- *TAM is working on the costs for Alternative 7. The Bellam improvements would be included in all alternatives.*

Are there any savings by combining one connector alternative with the other? Recommend an alternative summary that includes structure height, costs, and other variables.

*The connector alternatives are independent and will be evaluated separately. The project team will provide comparative details of all the alternatives.*

Enhance accessibility at Bellam Boulevard and Andersen Drive and Bellam Boulevard and Kerner Boulevard. Cyclists may face challenges once they reach Andersen Drive. Evaluate the need for additional infrastructure or signs to guide them directly and safely through the Bellam Boulevard/Andersen intersection to connect to the CalPark Bike Path and SMART stations. The entrance to this path is not obvious.

## Outreach and Communications

Connie Fremier outlined the planned communication and outreach for the project's environmental phase.

- The project has a complete streets approach for the Bellam corridor, meaning the team is looking at improvements that serve the transportation needs of all users.
- The CWG agenda and presentation for this meeting will be added to the TAM 101/I-580 Multi-modal project website, along with a meeting summary.
- A Bellam Boulevard community workshop is scheduled for May 29, 2024. It will be hosted at the Marin Health Center. Invitations will be sent by email. There will be an additional Spanish-language workshop in July 2024.
- The environmental scoping meeting is planned for October 2024.
- The TAM project team offered to present the project updates to interested HOAs and community organizations in the area.
- Coordination with the City of San Rafael continues.

## CWG Comments/Questions

Is there a clear front-runner among the alternatives that have been presented tonight?

*The Caltrans process for this project requires that each alternative be analyzed at the same level of detail. At this point, all will be evaluated equally.*

## Public Comments

A community member asked about the Bellam off-ramp exit project planned to start in September 2024. Are there public documents with the drawings? Will the traffic studies be incorporated in this project?

*The Bellam off-ramp project is a separate, near-term project with a different schedule. The Bellam off-ramp from 101 North will be widened to add a turning lane. In addition, the crosswalk from the post office will be realigned so that it is straight and high visibility. The traffic studies will incorporate this project.*

A community member supported Alternative 3A for the freeway connector due to its cost-effectiveness and smaller footprint. They stated that it will go a long way in alleviating the current backup on northbound 101 at the exit. The design speed of 35 miles an hour is not a drawback. The commenter also made the following points:

- Regarding Alternative 7, Bellam Boulevard, the commenter recommended completing the corridor improvements regardless of which alternative is chosen.
- This year, several grant funding opportunities align well with this project. TAM should consider applying.
  - The Bay Trail regional grant. Bellam Boulevard is a gap in the San Francisco Bay Trail, ranked as one of the top gaps in this area.
  - The Safe Streets and Roads for All federal grant. The corridor is on San Rafael's high collision network and is a good match for the goal of this grant.
  - TAM Safe Routes to School grant. It is not clear if TAM can be both the grantee and grantor. Many students use this route to Davidson Middle School from the Canal neighborhood.
- A CWG member noted that the western end of this project should be changed from Andersen to the North-South Greenway. It is important that this final connection is made. It would utilize part of Andersen in front of Tap Plastics and Mulberry Pizza and then Jacoby Street, and the ramp from Jacoby Street up to the Greenway next to the SMART tracks. It may require modification to make it ADA accessible – currently it is steeper than 5%. The North-South Greenway is extremely useful from a regional standpoint for people in the Canal neighborhood. It will connect the CalPark tunnel and everything south of Corte Madera Creek.
- For protected bike lanes, recommend three-foot buffers instead of two-foot buffers. Consider bi-directional bikeways on both sides of the street. If there were only single-direction bikeways on each side of the street, many people would use them riding their bikes in the wrong direction because it is a long distance to get to a safe crossing.

TAM leadership thanked everyone for their participation and engagement and the meeting was adjourned.

## Community Working Group Members

<b>CWG Participation – CWG #1, May 1, 2024</b>			
<b>Present</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Interest</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
	Air Gallegos	Commuter	East Bay to/from San Rafael
✓	Alex Vollmer	Community	Spinnaker Point HOA
✓	Dave Pedroli	Community	San Rafael City Schools
✓	Dave Troup	Transit Rider	Rides GGT through project area
✓	David Bonfilio	Community	Baypoint Lagoon HOA
✓	Esmeralda Garcia	Community	Multicultural Center of Marin
✓	Greg Brockbank	Environmental	Sustainable San Rafael
✓	Jim Draper/Richard Bernstein	Community	Fed. of San Rafael Neighborhoods
	Jim Rosenfield/ Elaine Lin	Business	Country Mart, Larkspur Landing
✓	Jon Horinek	Community	College of Marin
✓	Karen Strolia	Business	San Rafael Chamber of Commerce
✓	Kate Powers	Environmental	Marin Conservation League
✓	Kevin Hagerty	Community	League of Women Voters
✓	Michele Barni	Community	Pt. San Quentin Village HOA
✓	Omar Carrera	Community	Canal Alliance
✓	Philip R. Mooney/Barry Bergman	Bike & Pedestrian	San Rafael Bike/Ped Adv. Comm.
✓	Richard Atwood	Business	Larkspur
	Scott Gillespie	Commuter	East Bay to/from Sausalito
✓	Stephanie Plante	Business	East San Rafael Working Group
✓	Warren Wells/Tarrell Kullaway	Bike & Pedestrian	Marin County Bicycle Coalition
	Wendi Kallins	Environmental	Sustainable Marin

✓ signifies in attendance.

### Project Team attendees

- Anne Richman, Executive Director
- Dan Cherrier, Principal Project Delivery Manager
- Molly Graham, Public Outreach Coordinator
- Connie Fremier, Project Manager
- Chadi Chazbek, Project Manager, Kimley-Horn
- Davy Huang, Project Engineer, Kimley-Horn
- David Parisi, Parametrix
- Charles Gardiner, Facilitator, Catalyst Group
- Linadria Porter, Outreach Manager, Catalyst Group

### Other attendees

- Joanna Kwok, City of San Rafael
- Raymond Santiago, GGBHTD
- Robert Betts, Marin Transit
- Ronald Sangalang, Caltrans
- Alice Fredericks, Tiburon Council Member
- Andy Dillard
- Breeze Kinsey, CivicKnit
- Dan Bell, Golden Gate Transit Bus Passenger Advisory Group
- Farid Javandel, County of Marin
- Taylor Petersen, Landowner
- Matthew Hartzell, Transportation Alternatives for Marin