



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 11, 2002

INTEREST DEMONSTRATED IN THE NATIONAL I-10 FREIGHT CORRIDOR STUDY I-10 MEETINGS ARE A SUCCESS

Eight state Departments of Transportation (DOTs) hosted Elected and Appointed Officials Meetings and Open Houses during February and March 2002 as part of the National I-10 Freight Corridor Study. This study is a joint effort by eight state DOTs to analyze multimodal transportation needs and develop a plan for improving the Interstate 10 (I-10) Corridor. I-10 extends coast to coast across California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida and includes 17 major urban areas.

Elected and Appointed Officials meetings and public Open Houses were held in 14 selected locations throughout the project area - Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Phoenix, Tucson, Las Cruces, El Paso, San Antonio, Houston, Baton Rouge, Kenner/New Orleans, Gulfport, Mobile, Tallahassee, and Jacksonville. Meeting attendees included state legislators; city and county officials; representatives from economic development corporations, councils of government, metropolitan planning organizations, and chambers of commerce; port and airport officials; representatives from railroad and trucking associations; university faculty; environmental agencies; public safety representatives; and officials of local community groups.

At the Elected and Appointed Officials Meetings, the project team, which is led by Wilbur Smith Associates, presented information about the study. Following the presentation, meeting attendees were encouraged to ask questions and make comments about existing conditions and needed improvements throughout the corridor. (This presentation and summaries of the meetings are posted on the project web site, www.i10freightstudy.org.) The meetings were well attended, and there was considerable discussion. Extensive notes were kept for the use of the study team.

Attendees identified local plans, concerns, needed improvements and issues. Some common issues discussed at the various meetings included:

- The National I-10 Freight Corridor Study should be coordinated with other recent and ongoing transportation studies along the corridor.
- Roadway maintenance needs to be a high priority along I-10 and the alternative and connecting routes used by freight carriers and other vehicles.
- The safety of local communities, motorists, and truckers needs to be part of the study. Safety issues include traffic congestion, the mix of truck and passenger vehicles, environmental concerns such as air quality/pollution and noise, and the impact on neighborhoods. Also mentioned was the need for improved truck routes, improved alternative routes or truck-only lanes with additional rest areas or parking areas along the route for truckers.
- The multimodal aspects of how freight is and can be transported to increase efficiency, economy and reliability should be a focus of the study. This includes the concept of "inland ports" or "freight villages," a combined virtual warehouse facility for intermodal transportation located outside the urban area. The study should look at the opportunities to utilize air, rail, barge and marine transport and consider ways to improve roadway linkages to these freight facilities. Ports of entry, border interests and U.S. trade with Mexico should be included in the study.

- An effort should be made to preserve transportation corridors for future needs. Neighborhoods, critical natural habitat or other factors restrict the ability to expand I-10 in certain locations. Relief routes that avoid these areas or congested metropolitan areas should be considered.
- The importance of the I-10 corridor to trade and the economy of the U.S. and the world were noted.

Web Site

Summaries of the meetings at each site are available on The National I-10 Freight Corridor Study web site (www.i10freightstudy.org). The web site provides the latest information on the study, gives information on the Steering and Technical Committees, and includes the anticipated timeline for the study. Comments are welcome.

The web site had over 600 different visitors in March who visited the site, in total, over 3,700 times. Some of the recent suggestions or questions received on the web site include: the need to widen I-10 and add lanes or create bypasses; concerns about hazardous cargo; requests for explanation of the criteria used to identify airports and rail facilities; identification of specific facilities along I-10 or near the corridor; and the need to evaluate operating policies, such as speed limits, to increase enforcement of current regulations or to create truck-only lanes. Several comments stressed the importance of the I-10 route to the trucking industry, the corridor states and the nation.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is this study being undertaken?

A recent federal study suggests that domestic freight traffic will increase by 85 percent through 2020, while international trade will grow by 115 percent over the same period. As a new federal transportation bill is being developed for post-2003, it is important that both short-term and long-term needs and improvements along I-10 be addressed.

What are the goals of this study?

The ultimate goals of this feasibility study are to provide an efficient and reliable intermodal transportation system, including an improved highway system, for the movement of goods in international and domestic trade and to foster development of multimodal freight transportation facilities.

How is this study being funded?

Eight state Departments of Transportation (DOTs) along I-10 are contributing to this study. These are DOTs from California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida. The Texas DOT is serving as the contract administrator.

Is the purpose of this study to regulate truck traffic?

No. We are seeking input from the trucking industry and other users of I-10 to help identify problem areas and develop solutions that will benefit everyone that travels on I-10. The study will gather information about freight movement, inventory the physical condition of the interstate, identify operational problems for all motorists on I-10, and determine what improvements can be made to ease congestion and enhance safety in the future.

For additional information, please write to The National I-10 Freight Corridor Study, 11301 Olympic Blvd. #413, West Los Angeles, CA 90064, call 1-866-4-I-10-FWY (1-866-441-0399) or visit the project web site, www.i10freightstudy.org, to send an e-mail.

A digital copy of this article is available on the project web site, www.i10freightstudy.org.