

## Coachella Rail Station Feasibility Study

### Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #2 – Summary Recap

January 2025

#### MEETING DETAILS

MEETING DETAILS		Thursday, January 30, 2025 5:00PM –6:30PM
<b>Zoom Presenters</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2 Presenters<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Marie Lewis Adams, HDR</li><li>• Joel Lessard-Clouston - HDR</li></ul></li></ul>	
<b>Attendance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 23 Total Participants<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ 13 project team</li><li>○ 11 TAC members</li></ul></li></ul>	
<b>Technical Advisory Committee Attendees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dulce Lucero - City of Coachella Appointee</li><li>• Jonathan Gist - Anthony Vineyards</li><li>• Mark Lancaster - CVAG</li><li>• Reyes Lopez - ICUC</li><li>• Paul Mattern - SunLife Transit Agency</li><li>• Garrett Powell - Peter Rabbit Farms</li><li>• John Powell Jr – Peter Rabbit Farms</li><li>• Pedro Rodriguez - Coachella Valley Housing Coalition</li><li>• Walter Watcher – Sunline Transit Agency</li><li>• Joey Acuna - Paul Slama - Cabazon Band of Cahuilla Indians</li><li>• One TAC member joined via phone</li></ul>	
<b>Project Team Members</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Anahi Fernandez - City of Coachella</li><li>• Celina Jimenez - City of Coachella</li><li>• Adrian Moreno - City of Coachella</li><li>• Andrew Simmons - City of Coachella</li><li>• Gabriel Perez - City of Coachella</li><li>• Kendra Reif – City of Coachella</li><li>• Yvonne Lam - Riverside County Transportation Commission</li><li>• Michael Arroyo - Riverside County Transportation Commission</li><li>• Ariel Alcon Tapia - Riverside County Transportation Commission</li><li>• Marie Lewis Adams - HDR</li><li>• Joel Lessard-Clouston - HDR</li><li>• Stevie Espinoza - Arellano Associates</li><li>• Jennifer Velazquez - Arellano Associates</li></ul>	

## I. WELCOME & PRESENTATION

### A. Welcome/Introductions

A technical advisory committee meeting was held on January 30, 2025, to engage Coachella Valley stakeholders and community leaders on the Coachella Rail Station Feasibility Study and Integrated Land Use and Transit Network Project. The meeting provided an opportunity to review public feedback from the first community meeting and share preliminary results from the station site evaluation. The meeting began with a welcome from Marie Lewis Adams, Project Manager with HDR, thanking the attendees for their participation and asking everyone on the call to introduce themselves.

### B. Presentation

Following the introduction, Marie Lewis Adams, opened the meeting by providing a recap of the study's purpose, which is to evaluate potential rail station locations for the Coachella Valley Rail Project. She explained the two-phase study process: Phase 1 involves selecting a preferred station location, while Phase 2 focuses on developing preliminary engineering plans and transit-oriented community planning. Marie also discussed the role of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) in guiding the study and ensuring multi-agency coordination. She shared insights from community engagement efforts, including a previous workshop and survey responses. Marie then walked the group through the site selection criteria, which included land use compatibility, environmental constraints, accessibility, and ridership potential. She summarized the evaluation results, ranking Site 2 as the preferred location due to its accessibility, transit connectivity, and alignment with the city's development plans. Lastly, she encouraged TAC members to share their feedback on the selection process.

Joel Lessard-Clouston from HDR discussed the site evaluation details, focusing on the engineering feasibility of key station elements such as parking, bus loops, and pedestrian access. He compared the strengths and weaknesses of the three proposed sites: Site 1 offers proximity to existing transit but has limited space for expansion; Site 2 features strong downtown connectivity, mixed-use zoning, and walkability; and Site 3 provides a large open space but lacks existing infrastructure. The discussion also covered potential infrastructure adjustments needed for each site, such as pedestrian bridges and track modifications. Concerns about environmental constraints and land use compatibility were addressed, and the role of transit connectivity and ridership potential in the site rankings was explained.

## II. Q & A DISCUSSION

The purpose of TAC #2 was to provide an update on the study's progress and gather input from the committee. Discussions focused on key findings from community engagement efforts, evaluation criteria, and preliminary site recommendations. Below is a summary of key discussion points and feedback from TAC members.

### *Discussion Section 1: Community Engagement*

**Paul S.G. Rodriguez:** Would you say the community events were successful? I know you got 72 responses. Is that enough? Is that adequate? Or were you expecting more?

**Gabriel Perez:** There was a lot of outreach for the public meeting, though it would have been great to have more. Many people rolled in and out of the workshop, which had an open-house setting. Some attendees may not have signed up, but the purpose of this meeting is to have a standing body that participates along the way and provides input. There is a mix of people involved—some from housing, some landowners, and others from advocacy organizations—so hopefully, that combination is enough. If future meetings are needed, community members can share their thoughts. After this meeting, the site selection will go to the Planning Commission and City Council after hearing from everyone. There will be more opportunities for the community to engage, provide comments, or attend. One idea is to publicize these opportunities on social media.

**Paul S.G. Rodriguez:** I was going to suggest that we could offer community rooms in our apartments to invite people from the communities so they can attend. I know there are a lot of apartments on Tyler Street, and we could use one of the community rooms to invite those residents to provide input. This could be for future meetings if necessary.

### *Discussion Section 2: Preliminary Site Recommendation*

**John Paul Jr:** I'm very impressed with how thorough this was—I didn't expect so many elements to be considered and evaluated, so well done. Regarding Site 2, it's close to home for us, and there's quite a bit of undeveloped land in that area near downtown. We're fully supportive of it; I think it's a logical outcome. The fact that there used to be a rail station there played a big role in the idea of locating things in that area. It makes sense to continue that for the central part of Coachella. Overall, I thought this was very thorough, and I was impressed. Thank you.

**Paul S.G. Rodriguez:** I agree with John. I think that was the original location we felt was stronger in our first meeting, and your research and studies support that. My question is about the potential for a higher benefit to the larger community. Were you able to determine that Site 2 is the best option? Because I know Site 3 has more vacant land and potential for more development. There are also some residential areas near Hotel Street that could benefit those residents. But looking at the overall economic impact, was Site 2 the better choice?

**Marie Lewis Adams:** A rail station would benefit the community at any location, but Site 2 stands out. With its existing zoning and urban employment areas, it's closer to more people and businesses, making it the most viable option for economic growth. Site 3, while a blank slate, lacks infrastructure, and shifting focus there could divert investment from areas where Coachella has already prioritized development. Strengthening an already established area makes the most sense for the broader community.

**Pedro S.G. Rodriguez:** For downtown Coachella, could there be enough restaurants and amenities to attract visitors from cities like Palm Springs or LA? Could the Pueblo Viejo area develop further to support tourism?

**Gabriel Perez:** This study will help determine what’s needed to attract visitors to Coachella, not just serve residents traveling west. The key question is: What will make people pass Palm Springs and Palm Desert to come here? From the city’s perspective, we believe there are amenities that could encourage more visitors.

### III. Closing

#### Closing Remarks and Next Steps

Marie Lewis Adams and Gabriel Perez thanked participants for their input and confirmed the next steps in the process. They noted that the findings would be presented to the Coachella Planning Commission on February 19th and to the City Council on February 26th. Additionally, they mentioned that a second community workshop is scheduled for March 2025 to discuss visioning and transit-oriented development. There will also be a third TAC meeting in early Spring 2025. They encouraged continued feedback and participation from all involved.

Appendix A

[PowerPoint Presentation – January 30st, 2025](#)

[Screenshots](#)

[Zoom Recording](#)