

Coachella Rail Station Feasibility Study

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #1 – Summary Recap

October 2024

MEETING DETAILS

MEETING DETAILS		Thursday, October 24, 2024 5:00PM –6:30 AM
Zoom Presenters	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 Presenters<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Marie Lewis Adams, HDR• Gabriel Perez, City of Coachella	
Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 26 Total Participants<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 13 project team○ 13 TAC members	
Technical Advisory Committee Attendees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Augustin Arreola – City of Coachella Appointee• Dulce Lucero - City of Coachella Appointee• Chad Austin - Coachella Valley Water District• Jonathan Gist - Anthony Vineyards• Mark Lancaster - CVAG• Reyes Lopez - ICUC• Abigail Manriquez - CVAG• Paul Mattern - SunLife Transit Agency• Garrett Powell - Peter Rabbit Farms• John Powell Jr – Peter Rabbit Farms• Pedro Rodriguez - Coachella Valley Housing Coalition• Paul Slama - Cabazon Band of Cahuilla Indians• Walter Watcher – Sunline Transit Agency	
Project Team Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anahi Fernandez - City of Coachella• Celina Jimenez - City of Coachella• Gabriel Martin - City of Coachella• Adrian Moreno - City of Coachella• Andrew Simmons - City of Coachella• Gabriel Perez - City of Coachella• Yvonne Lam - Riverside County Transportation Commission• Michael Arroyo - Riverside County Transportation Commission• Marie Lewis Adams - HDR• Joel Lessard-Clouston - HDR• Scott Gaastra - HDR• Stevie Espinoza - Arellano Associates• Eric Davidian - Arellano Associates	

I. WELCOME & PRESENTATION

A. Welcome/Introductions

A technical advisory committee meeting was held on October 24, 2024, 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 overview of the project and asked for the committee's input on study goals, evaluation criteria, and proposed site selection. The roundtable 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, Gabriel Perez, City of Coachella Development Services Director, began the presentation with a background of the Coachella's guiding principles and the history of the Coachella Rail Depot. Marie Lewis Adams then continued with an overview of the Coachella Valley Rail Project and informed of the study's purpose. The study's primary objective is to evaluate potential locations for a Coachella Valley rail station and an associated layover facility. The purpose of the TAC is to help guide the study, develop recommendations on the proposed potential sites, provide a forum for coordination, and select a site to begin the planning. During the study process, stakeholder and public engagement will be conducted to ensure all members of the public have many opportunities to voice their feedback.

II. Q & A DISCUSSION

The purpose of TAC #1 was to obtain input from the committee to discuss the study's goals, site evaluation criteria, and station site alternatives. Discussion included identifying the roles each location could play within the rail network while considering various goals, such as improving quality of life, reducing emissions, and fostering economic development. Furthermore, the group explored how to determine the preferred station location based on critical factors, including engineering feasibility, land use compatibility, environmental constraints, and equity. Discussion, questions, and comments are summarized and captured in the following section:

Questions Asked Before Discussion:

Pedro S.G. Rodriguez: Has a market study or evaluation been done? There is going to be a demand. Obviously, I know, because from my interactions with people, I think it would be great for people to be able to go from here to LA or Riverside on a train, but that I assume something like that was done already.

John Powell: If you look at Palm Springs [station], and there it is in the middle of the sand dunes right, and it is windy, and no one lives there and Coachella. The city center is close to that location about a block and a half away and it seems to me that this part of the city really grew around that, and I do not know who was using it. If people were traveling to other parts of Southern California, or how it was used. But it does seem like there is a heavy density population that already exists in that vicinity of that original station. So

that makes sense. That that you might want to locate the new station in an area that has a lot of people around it, you know, homes and apartments, etc.

Discussion Section 1: Which Rail Station Roles Would Be Best?

Pedro S.G. Rodriguez: I like the Carlsbad location; I am familiar with that station. It is really nice. The restaurants are there. There's housing there. It is perfect. Something like that would be something we would like to see in Coachella.

Question 2: What Are Some Potential Goals of a New Rail Station and the Surrounding Area?

Dulce Lucero: I agree with Mr. Rodriguez. I think increasing accessibility to the low-income community is important. There are people who travel to Riverside. I know there are a lot of health concerns in the Eastern Coachella Valley regarding asthma, and they do not have the cleanest air. A lot of people take their children to Loma, Linda and that would be a fantastic opportunity to have increased transportation and not have to worry about travel.

Dulce Lucero: A major concern to me is the increased homelessness and how I people sending buses of homeless into the community.

Pedro S.G. Rodriguez: The noise level and the noise level impact is also a concern I would think would play a huge role in this too the community.

Question 3: How Should We Determine a Preferred Station Location?

Garret Powell: I do have a question on the crossover. Obviously, that is south of Pueblo Viejo. What about a pedestrian crossover when the trains come back. How do pedestrians get to the other side of the station, and would that be a potential extension there to kind of overcome the existing track?

Chad Austin: They are great locations for one, but that is what I was envisioning but crossings will be the challenge. It would probably require overhead bridge crossings of some sort because of the freight trains so that might be challenging. I cannot imagine an undercrossing, and I am familiar with the area just because of the layout of the land there and it would probably not be cost effective to do a box carved under it. But yes, that is exactly what I envisioned, and the layover turnaround areas where I am struggling a little bit on t with it, but I am sure we will get there.

Pedro S.G. Rodriguez: I like options 2 and 3. Option 2 is close to CBWD.

Chad Austin: Yes, that is correct option 2 is next to CBWD.

Dulce Lucero: I want to jump on this point. When we are talking about accessibility and making it accessible, I think the 3rd railroad station would be great. Not only because the layover, which was one of the concerns, is going to be a little further out from the center of town, but the train will be able to have the space that it needs to be able to turn around and get maintenance.

Jonathan Gist: Are you foreseeing this passenger line being more used for people coming to the valley, or leaving to go to Riverside and LA?

Chad Austin: I know that it's proposed for the West Side, for the new 3rd track but to the city's point, if we're going to need an undercrossing or overcrossing whatever that pedestrian crossing looks like, is it a land issue for the north side and the reason I say that is, when you get into areas 2, 3 and 1 actually, there's more potential for that parking and turnaround and layover because there's ample land that can be used.

Pedro S. G. Rodriguez: The 2 and 3 are the best options.

Dulce Lucero: I am leaning more towards 2 and 3 as well 3 more, because if we think about within the next 10 years, what is that area going to look like.

Question 4: What Are Your Preliminary Thoughts and Concerns Regarding Potential Sites?

Garret Powell: I would hope that there is some regional connectivity, not just from Coachella to LA, but people around the Coachella Valley would be able to come to Coachella and get off and want to have a drink or dinner there, and make sure that there's a downtown scene around the station, and that would make it more attractive for people to come to Coachella and vice versa Indio, or the next town over, you would hope that it's a place where you can get off the station and enjoy the surrounding area.

Appendix Links

Appendix A

[PowerPoint Presentation – October 24th, 2024](#)