

Tribal Listening Sessions October-November 2016

S U M M A R Y R E P O R T

Introduction

Caltrans conducted three Tribal Listening Sessions from October-November 2016 as part of outreach efforts for development of the California State Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (CSBPP). The purpose of the sessions was to inform interested tribal nations throughout California on the latest CSBPP developments, as well as to collect input on draft elements of the Plan. Scott Forsythe of Caltrans Systems Planning and CSBPP Project Manager presented the information and answered participants' questions, while public participation team members from MIG assisted in recording discussion items. This report provides a detailed summary of the objectives, format, outreach approach and findings.

Background

Caltrans desires to develop a bike and pedestrian plan to establish a framework that will guide the planning and development of non-motorized transportation facilities and maximize the use of future investments. The plan will provide goals that better connect the State's bicycle and pedestrian facilities with the existing network and other modes of transportation, and will help the State attain environmental goals such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled.

Objectives

The CSBPP Tribal Listening Sessions focused on achieving the following objectives.

- Explain the CSBPP purpose and process
- Facilitate input regarding the draft elements, including vision, goals, objectives and strategies
- Explain next steps in the process and how participants can stay informed and engaged

Outreach and Format

Caltrans hosted three sessions throughout the state, as follows:

- Southern California: Palm Springs, CA, October 28, 2016
- Northern California: Trinidad, CA, November 3, 2016
- Central California: Woodland, CA, November 16, 2016

As part of its protocols in communicating with tribal nations across the state, Caltrans staff

coordinated with regional associations of tribes to schedule and conduct the sessions. Caltrans' Office of Tribal Nations supported the notification process and procedures.

At each session, Mr. Forsythe provided a brief presentation on the purpose, background and latest developments with CSBPP, including draft elements related to the vision, goals, objectives and strategies. Participants asked questions and provided comments, which are summarized on the following pages.

Discussion

Participants provided comments and asked questions, primarily regarding the draft strategies. Responses from project team members are listed in *italics*.

Southern California – October 28, 2016

- How will the CSBPP link to other project plans? – *CSBPP will provide an overarching framework that will help to guide identifying projects at the District and local levels.*
- Are partnerships of value? -- *Yes, partnerships can strengthen abilities to secure project funding.*
- Frequently projects that run adjacent to tribal lands don't involve the tribes, and projects are incomplete. Bureau of Indian Affairs is an important stakeholder, and tribes can be the advocates to support coordination.
- Pursue early, proactive coordination at the planning stages
- Will CSBPP force bicycle and pedestrian facilities on future Caltrans projects? – *No, projects will not be forced to include such facilities, but will encourage and emphasize their importance, as well as guide implementation. Additionally, while not a statutorily required document, CSBPP may offer recommendations on exploring further policy development.*
- Can CSBPP be cited as part of pursuing grants and funding? – *CSBPP will likely include recommendations on how to improve the funding and application processes.*
- How are transit agencies responding to multimodal access? These agencies have limited interaction with the tribes. – *Caltrans statewide transit planning process is just kicking off, which may be of value to this issue with the tribes.*
- Agua Caliente has a new complete streets plan and standards, with a mix of design standards. Will CSBPP have a more consolidated menu of design options? – *Recommendations will be made for Highway Design Manual updates that may be valuable. Also, Caltrans endorses the NACTO Design Guidelines.*

Northern California – November 3, 2016

- Explain in the CSBPP its relevance to rural areas in California and to reservation land.
- Provide resources for rural communities and tribes who do not usually qualify for funding because of small population. –*No funding will be attached to the plan, and all of the existing funding sources still exist. CSBPP outreach efforts include focus groups in rural communities to capture these areas' needs.*
- People are often biking on the roads, but there is no shoulder to ride on.
- Kids are walking to and from school in Trinidad, with little infrastructure for pedestrians.
- Identify specific implementation strategies for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in rural communities. – *Caltrans understands there is a significant "urban and rural divide" and is attempting to create relevant strategies for specific community types.*
- There is a short time between the draft plan and plan release – it will be very hard to get input from the 110 tribes in California in 30 days.
- Coordinate with local and regional bicycle planning efforts, such as with the City of Humboldt and Humboldt County Association of Governments.

- Safety and lack of funding for improvements are the biggest issues for walking and biking in these areas.
- Tribes typically do not have the same statistics as other areas on crashes that are critical for applying for grants.

Central California – November 16, 2016

- Can we get involved with future long term rail investments and projects? – *Yes, the plan will provide guidance in policies in developing Caltrans' active transportation network, as well as how local agencies/organizations can link to these policies. With rail, the plan will emphasize how connectivity to transit can be supported.*
- Interstate-10 is the primary/singular outlet to Morongo. Better connections and access through multiple modes to local communities is important.
- How will we provide input on the Draft Plan? – *Caltrans will distribute the Draft Plan to the tribes. Consultation will be offered to meet in person with Caltrans staff. Otherwise, tribes may provide comments through written or online formats.*

Summary and Next Steps

In closing the meetings, Mr. Forsythe explained how participants can stay informed and involved in the process through signing-up for notifications on the project website, in addition to completing the web-based questionnaire. They noted that next steps include development of the Draft Plan and public review period, which is anticipated for February-March 2017. Final adoption is anticipated for Spring 2017.