



SAN DIEGO AND IMPERIAL COUNTIES SUSTAINABLE FREIGHT IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY - PUBLIC OUTREACH PLAN

May 2022

Project Overview

Freight and goods movement represents a critical lifeline to the overall economy and a source of good jobs in the San Diego and Imperial Counties region. Recent bottlenecks and workforce challenges related to COVID-19 illustrate how dependent our economy is on the smooth delivery of goods, and the ramifications if this is compromised. In addition, jobs serving the freight and goods movement industry can be well-paying and reliable, ranging from stevedores to truck drivers and warehouse workers, as well as a range of related industries that support the movement of freight.

However, the freight and goods movement industry is largely dependent on diesel-driven equipment, or in the case of ships, heavy fuel oil, that have historically not been subject to the same emissions controls as passenger vehicles and therefore are more polluting. In addition to the ships themselves, there is an abundance of equipment associated with servicing and offloading vessels, further compounding the issue. The international nature of the region's trade, industry, and agriculture is another factor to be considered. The maquiladora model, where parts are supplied to manufacturing facilities in Mexico and shipped back into the U.S. as finished products, is a vibrant and valuable industry that is dependent on a reliable freight infrastructure. The same can be said of agriculture on both sides of the border.

By its nature, freight and goods movement is concentrated in certain areas of the region, including near the Port of San Diego and the U.S.-Mexico border. As a result, adjacent communities bear a disproportionate burden when it comes to air pollution. Those communities of concern are typically lower income and populated by ethnic minorities. Awareness of environmental justice has highlighted this fact and demands that the inequities be addressed. However, the freight and goods movement industry offers well-paying jobs, potentially providing opportunities to communities of concern. Therefore, efforts to lessen the disproportionate burden these assets impose on disadvantaged communities must be balanced with the economic benefits they provide.

The Sustainable Freight Implementation Strategy for San Diego and Imperial Counties project will seek to preserve or enhance the competitiveness of freight infrastructure while reducing environmental and health impacts. Specific outcomes of the Strategy include the following:

- Regional momentum and consensus
- Stronger partnerships
- Vision statement and implementation plan
- Multimodal freight projects and policies that assist goods movement
- Feasibility of emerging sustainable freight projects and policies
- Framework for sustainability, efficiency, and economic competitiveness
- Data-driven vetting of projects
- Updated list of projects and policies that reduce GHG while fostering trade
- Funding opportunities
- Workforce development toolkit

Developing this Strategy will require input from a range of stakeholders. This input will both inform the Strategy and will also create buy-in from important stakeholder groups and residents, ensuring popular support, to the degree that is possible.

Stakeholder groups that should be engaged can include federal, state and local transportation and resources agencies, freight operators, logistics companies, business organizations, economic development entities, workforce development organizations, environmental non-profits, and community-based organizations.

Outreach Goals

The purpose of the public outreach campaign will be to support the development of the Implementation Plan (Task 6). Strategies identified in Tasks 3 and 4 will be paired with feedback from the public to develop the framework for how existing and new sustainable freight projects, programs, and policies can be advanced in the region.

The goals for the outreach plan include the following:

- Spark honest conversations about community impacts of freight and find a way forward for sustainable freight movement.
- Maximize broad and representative participation in the study. This will be accomplished by using an integrated approach that will begin with those stakeholders most familiar with the issues, working outwards until the general population is eventually engaged.
- Ensure all communities have a voice, including historically marginalized communities that typically are not involved in transportation planning initiatives. Special efforts will be made to work with organizations and individuals trusted by these communities.

Study Area

The area of study will include communities adjacent to major freight facilities in San Diego and Imperial Counties. Environmental justice areas, as defined by AB 617, will be a particular focus and include the Portside Environmental Justice Communities, the International Border Community, and the Calexico-El Centro-Heber corridor. Communities within these areas include the following:

- Barrio Logan
- Otay Mesa
- National City
- San Ysidro
- Chula Vista
- Logan Heights
- Calexico
- Heber
- El Centro

Outreach Methods

The outreach methodology is designed to work in a well-structured process where the earlier research informs subsequent steps, forming “Concentric Circles of Influence” with each step reaching outward more broadly than the last. The initial research is focused on gathering information from those closest to the issue who have a technical understanding of freight movement, its place in the economy, and its effects on communities. Subsequent phases cast a broader net, until finally the general public and residents of historically marginalized communities are engaged.

Target stakeholders include industry leaders, businesses, elected officials, government entities, community groups, residents, and others. Further details are provided below. All outreach strategies and supporting materials will be provided in Spanish and English, and the team will work closely with trusted community partners to ensure underserved communities have a voice.

Stakeholders who have been identified include the following:

Goods Movement

- Burlington Northern and Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad
- Union Pacific (UP) Railroad
- California Truckers Association – San Diego/Imperial Chapter
- San Diego Port Tenants Association
- National Customs Brokers and Freight Forwarders Association
- Air cargo handler, such as FedEx, UPS, or San Diego County Regional Airport Authority

Tribal Nations

- Barona Band of Mission Indians
- Campo Band of Mission Indians
- Ewiiapaayp Band of the Kumeyaay Nation
- Inaja-Cosmit Band of Indians
- Jamul Indian Village of California
- La Jolla Band of Luiseño Indians
- La Posta Band of Mission Indians
- Lipay Nation of Santa Ysabel
- Los Coyotes Band of Cahuilla and Cupeño Indians
- Manzanita Band of the Kumeyaay Nation
- Mesa Grande Band of Mission Indians
- Pala Band of Mission Indians
- Pauma Band of Luiseño Indians
- Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians
- San Pasqual Band of Diegueño Indians
- Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation
- Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Nation

Environment

- Environmental Health Coalition
- Comité Cívico del Valle
- Imperial County Air Pollution Control District
- San Diego County Air Pollution Control District
- California Coalition for Clean Air
- California Air Resources Board (CARB)

Economic Development

- San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation
- Imperial Valley Economic Development Council
- Otay Mesa Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Brawley Chamber of Commerce – Calexico Office
- California Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development

Workforce Development

- San Diego Workforce Partnership
- San Diego Community College District
- Eastern Kentucky University (Global Supply Chain - online)
- American Military University (Transportation and Logistics Management - online)
- Association for Supply Chain Management (online)
- Imperial County Workforce Development Board
- Imperial Valley College

- Imperial Valley Regional Occupational Program
- United Truck Driving School
- Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals (local roundtable)
- US Navy
- Cross border workforce/goods movement partnerships
- San Diego Unified: College Career and Technical Education

Labor Unions

- Teamsters 542
- Teamsters 683
- ILWU 29
- International Brotherhood of Boilermakers
- Warehouse Workers United
- Teacher Unions serving school in AB 617 communities

Medical Professionals

- San Diego Pediatricians for Clean Air
- Climate Action Campaign Public Health Advisory Council
- SEIU- Committee of interns and Residents

Other Community-Based Organizations

- San Diego Organizing Project (SDOP)
- San Diego Black Workers Center
- Center on Policy Initiatives (CPI)
- Mundo Gardens
- Olivewood Gardens and Learning Center
- Paradise Creek Educational Park, Inc
- San Ysidro Health Center
- Community Housing Works
- Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE)
- MAAC Project
- Chicano Federation

To achieve the goals above, stakeholder engagement will include up to ten interviews, four focus groups/workshops, and a survey.

Stakeholder Interviews

A small number of stakeholder interviews will be conducted early in the project (May and June 2022) to understand the broader contextual issues in which the Sustainable Freight Strategy is being developed. The interviews will also be used to identify new sustainable freight strategies and refine and prioritize existing ones to be carried forward into the

implementation plan. The research will describe how people currently see the situation regarding freight and sustainability and what they would like to be considered in the plan.

Stakeholder interviewees may include freight industry organizations, environmental advocates, community organizations, business organizations, and regional and state agencies, and tribal nations. Due to the difficulty of obtaining private industry stakeholder participation in on-going committees, a concerted effort will be made to interview several freight shippers and carriers.

A questionnaire for these interviews will be developed and submitted to SANDAG for approval. The questionnaire will act as a guideline, providing the interviewer with a framework that can be tailored to each interviewee. The questionnaire will include a summary of the current challenges, opportunities, and policies surrounding freight and goods movement in the region so a basis for meaningful discussion can be established between the interviewer and interviewee. The nature of these interviews will be open-ended, encouraging interviewees to share as much information as possible to inform the focus groups phase of the study and final outreach report.

Focus Groups

Focus groups will be conducted midway through the project (Fall-Winter 2022) with participants identified based on stakeholder interviews and other research. Focus groups will be organized to provide input around the existing conditions and innovative solutions that were identified in previous research and before more in-depth research is conducted. Focus groups can be organized around issues to include the following:

Focus Group 1:

San Diego County

- Environmental organizations
- Health Organizations/ Medical Professionals
- Community Organizations

Focus Group 2:

Imperial County

- Environmental organizations
- Health Organizations/ Medical Professionals
- Community Organizations

Focus Group 3:

- Workforce development organizations
- Labor groups

Focus Group 4:

- Freight industry representations
- Businesses organizations – chambers, economic development agencies

The consultant team and SANDAG will ensure representative participation through the following tactics:

- Focus groups can be held virtually and/or in person, depending on the group being engaged.
- Participation in the focus groups will be driven through trusted partners, such as stakeholder groups, as well as environmental and community groups.
- The focus groups will be held at times that are convenient for the majority of participants.
- Real time Spanish-language translation will be provided.

Other considerations:

- A slide presentation will be developed for each focus group to provide background on the topic, viable solutions, and to pose questions for discussion.
- The focus groups will be moderated by a facilitator and presentations will be made by the consultant team (WSP) and SANDAG staff.
- A sign-in sheet will record who attended and their contact information.
- The optimal format for the focus groups will be determined when more is understood about the material to be presented, the information to be collected, and each audience. This could include breakout groups, stations dedicated to certain topics, or audience-style meetings.
- The survey described below can also be promoted at the focus groups to boost participation.
- A wrap-up report of the focus groups will summarize the input and document who attended.

Working Group

SANDAG's Freight Stakeholder Taskforce (FSTF) will be engaged as the primary advisory committee throughout the project. Imperial County Transportation Commission (ICTC) and additional San Diego County stakeholders will be added to the distribution list of FSTF for the duration of the project. This advisory committee provides input to the development of freight planning efforts throughout the region. It is comprised of public and private freight stakeholders, including entities responsible for freight planning and freight project development, resource agencies, transportation agencies, and industry representatives. The FSTF will provide input on all major project deliverables at approximately eight meetings during the project.

Standing Committees

Outreach efforts will also engage standing committees and working groups. Outreach will include the following and will be primarily conducted by SANDAG staff.

SANDAG

- Social Equity Taskforce
- Sustainable Communities Working Group
- Tribal Transportation Taskforce
- Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO)

External

- Imperial-Mexicali Binational Alliance (IMBA)
- AB 617 - International Border Community
- AB 617 - Portside Environmental Justice
- AB 617 - Calexico, El Centro, Heber

The consultant team and SANDAG will also coordinate with San Diego Regional MD/HD ZEV Blueprint (Blueprint) project regularly throughout the project

Survey

A public survey will be conducted to focus on the general public with special efforts made to ensure participation from underserved communities heavily impacted by freight and goods movement. Information from the stakeholder interviews and focus groups will identify topics the general public should be engaged on. The survey questionnaire will obtain feedback on goals and needs for the strategy and enable a better understanding of the concerns and preferences of those most directly affected by its implementation. The input will be used to help evaluate and refine projects, programs, and policies.

Survey participants will be from the general public, underserved communities, those heavily impacted by freight, the freight industry, and other target audiences.

The consultant team will drive participation in the survey by partnering with trusted community-based organizations (CBOs). These can include groups such as the Environmental Health Coalition, community healthcare workers (promotores), San Diego Black Workers Center, Center on Policy Initiatives, Paradise Creek Educational Park, Inc., Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment, Chicano Federation, Comité Cívico del Valle and others in San Diego and Imperial counties. The consultant team will partner with these trusted CBOs to disseminate the survey and encourage participation by framing the value to the community.

Other tactics for promoting the survey will include a press release to drive media coverage, coordination through elected officials and public agencies, email notifications, social media, distribution at key community functions and meetings, and notifications through other partner organizations.

The survey will be made available in English and Spanish. In addition, print copies will be circulated by community partners for populations with low digital connectivity or literacy. Digital versions of the survey will also be made available and posted on the website.

Key Messages

The development of key messages is critical in communicating the vision of the Strategy and to inform stakeholders, focus group, and survey participants. Key messages (not listed in order of priority) include the following:

- SANDAG highly values input from the community, businesses, workers, and agencies about how to achieve emissions goals.
- The freight industry is vital to the economy and provides good jobs for the region.
- Freight creates emissions.
- The State of California has aggressive emissions reductions goals.
- Reducing emissions from freight transportation is good for the health of communities.
- Marginalized communities are historically more impacted by goods movement and can share perspectives on how to re-envision a healthier, sustainable, and equitable goods movement.
- Sustainable and reliable freight and goods movement is dependent upon workforce development.
- Sustainable freight movement is achievable through study, planning, community engagement, and innovative solutions.

Communications Materials

Supporting materials will serve to educate audiences, provide background information, direct users to other assets for more information, and encourage further participation in outreach tactics, such as the survey and focus groups. Channels and materials will include:

Website content

- Project background
- Information repository
- Fact sheet
- Previous studies
- Links to agencies studying the issue

- Previous reports
- Summaries from focus groups
- Link to survey to take online
- Survey results and other findings
- Contact information
- Comment form

Fact sheet

- Background on study
- Study goals
- Study area
- Contact information

PowerPoint

- Will be utilized for focus groups
- Will contain project background and context
- Information on existing needs and issues and potential strategies
- Q&A time

Handouts

- Will be utilized for focus groups and stakeholder interviews
- Similar information to fact sheet and PowerPoint
- Map and other graphics
- Project goals and timeline

Outcomes

The consultant team will provide an overarching summary report and synthesis of the public outreach described above, including stakeholder interviews, focus groups, and the survey.

Timeline and Milestones

Engagement milestones include:

- Stakeholder Interviews – May 2022 – June 2022
- Final Interview Summary – July 20, 2022
- Focus Groups – December 2022
- Field Survey – December 2022 – January 2023
- Final Focus Group Summary – January 27, 2023
- Final Survey Summary – February 24, 2023
- Final Outreach Summary – March 15, 2023

- Final Workshop Meeting Focused on Working Group and other stakeholders – September 2023
- Final Presentation Materials – November 23, 2023

Note: This document is subject to change as the project and public outreach efforts develop.