At this stage of the process, the Community Working Group is working towards selecting alternatives to get a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) vehicle out of express lanes planned for the I-805 corridor to a BRT platform location in Southeast San Diego. Alternatives in schematic drawings can represent a station platform location either north or south of the trolley tracks.

In order to prepare for this lunch meeting, the Community Working Group visited the project site at 47th Street Trolley Station and other stations along the I-15 corridor in order to see examples of concepts for conceptual alternatives being evaluated.

- At the 47th Street Trolley Station, the Community Working Group analyzed the existing conditions at the project site. The topography and distance from the trolley platform to the edge of the freeway were noted. To walk the distance from the trolley shelter to the east edge of the freeway, approximately 475 feet, took about 3 minutes.
- SR 15 Mid-City “Centerline” station at El Cajon Boulevard was visited to show an example of a future in-line station in the region. Barrow Emerson discussed planned features that include sound walls on both sides of the stations/bus lanes, redundant elevators/stairs to provide access to a freeway-level bus platform, and shelters/landscape treatments to create a comfortable walking area.
- During this trip, the Community Working Group also saw examples of managed lanes, flyovers, Right/Left-hand Direct Access Ramps, and Park & Ride Transit Stations along the I-15 corridor.

Danielle Kochman started the lunch meeting by providing an overview of screening criteria that were developed in conjunction with the Community Group Members to evaluate project alternatives. During this initial screening of alternatives, these criteria are equally weighted.

- **Order of Magnitude Capital Cost** is defined by the high-cost elements associated with each alternative, including flyovers, tunnels, trolley-bridge (Greenwood Underpass) replacement, rebuilding freeway interchanges, and potential relocation of existing trolley platform. Some station alternatives may have significantly greater impacts than others, and those features are considered in this criterion.

- **Effect on Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) & Light Rail Transit (LRT) Operations** evaluates how the platform location or BRT access point would affect the transit operations at the BRT/LRT station. This includes the additional time the bus spends off the freeway to access the station platform and the need to cross the trolley tracks at-grade.
o The future BRT route that will utilize this station will serve patrons from Otay Mesa to Sorrento Mesa, so any additional time spent off the freeway could negatively impact the overall travel time and patronage. Also, a number of alternatives have BRT operations cross the trolley tracks; in these cases, trolley operations would take precedent over BRT services, which could negatively impact BRT travel time.

o Alternatives that cross the railroad tracks need special approval by the California Public Utilities Commission.

o Alternatives 3B, 3C, 3E, 3F, 3G, and 3H scored the lowest under this criterion because these alternatives would need the bus to travel offline or cross the tracks.

- **Proximity of Platforms & Ease of Access** is measured by the distance between the BRT platform and the existing trolley platform, as well as the grade differences for providing access. The distances are evaluated in order to select an alternative that creates easy access to the station and effective transfer patterns between buses and between bus and trolley routes.
  
o As noted during the morning trip, the distance of 475 feet from the trolley shelter to the east edge of the freeway took about 3 minutes.

- **Economic Development Potential** evaluates the proximity and access to existing development on site and in the vicinity. Alternatives on the east side of I-805 scored the highest because of the existing development on the east side, along with the higher population density.

- **Need for Caltrans Engineering Design Exceptions** could affect the project approval. Design exceptions are needed for anything that is not in compliance with current Caltrans standards, and may vary from design standards for freeway lane widths, shoulder widths, et al.
  
o At this stage, designs are very preliminary, so alternatives all scored either 5 or a 4. The in-line station alternatives scored lower since they typically involve more design exceptions.

- **Environmental Impacts** in this case primarily refer to the need to acquire right of way (private property). Alternatives on the west side of 805 scored lower than the east side, because of potential property impacts on the cemetery.
  
o Highest scoring alternatives were 1A, 1B, 2A because they will have a smaller footprint and less environmental impacts.

- **Passenger Security & Related Operating Costs** was measured based on the level of activity and sight-lines surrounding the station. If people can see the BRT Platform and there are more
activities in the surrounding areas, more eyes will be watching over the transit station making the station more secure.
  o It is assumed that there will continue to be a security guard at the station. If light rail and bus are far apart, we may need two security guards.
  o The closer the bus platform is to the trolley platform, the higher it scored. These include 3C, 3F, and 3H.
  o The freeway-level alternatives scored the lowest, because the platform for these alternatives cannot be seen from the existing transit station or surrounding communities.

After providing an overall summary of the screening criteria, Danielle Kochman started the discussion on project assumptions.

• It is assumed that there will be a bicycle/pedestrian connection across I-805. At this point, it is too early to know where that bridge will be located (north, or south of the Greenwood Underpass, or along both sides). When the project team decides on the BRT station location, different pedestrian networks will be tested.
  o It was re-emphasized that the goal for the bicycle/pedestrian connection would be to make the BRT and trolley platforms accessible to the surrounding areas. Currently, the project team has been working on a local mobility analysis, and for each alternative, there will be an associated bicycle/pedestrian network that would include this connection.
  o Although the current schematic drawings show the bicycle/pedestrian connection parallel to the track, the location will be analyzed anywhere between Imperial Avenue and Market Street.
  o Randy Van Vleck asked if the pedestrian path would run parallel to the tracks and connect all the way to the Jacobs Center.
    ▪ The project team assumes that the bridge will only connect to the 47th Street Trolley Station site. However, the selection of the bicycle/pedestrian connection location will also take into account other community needs, along with access to the station.

• Michael Brunker asked if the presence of security guards is the assumption for improving security at the location. The project team noted that security guards are assumed at this location because it is planned for I-15 Mid-City and I-805 South Bay BRT stations.

• The amount of bus bays at the 47th Street Trolley Station will be determined based on the transit service analysis that the project team is currently working on. Once there is a better understanding of how many buses are recommended to serve the station based on future population models, the bus bay design will be determined.
  o The SR 15 Mid-City “Centerline” stations will have two bus bays in each direction.
Bus Route 13 used to serve the 47th Street Trolley Station; however, after MTS completed a Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA), this route was eliminated due to poor operating performance. By creating more activity and increasing the amount of people utilizing the 47th Street Trolley Station, this type of route may be more productive than it was.

- A community member compared alternatives with flyovers (2B and 2C) to bus stops in Seattle, where the BRT would drop people off and continue on. He emphasized that efficient service like this would be most effective for our BRT services.

- A community member asked if a DAR or flyover alternative would require a reduction in the number of HOV lanes through the area.
  - No, a DAR or Flyover would not require a reduction in the number of HOV lanes through the area. The DAR and Flyover alternatives would probably not require additional freeway widening at freeway level because of the wider footprint in the middle of the freeway required for these features. However, they may require additional right-of-way for where the DAR or flyover would land on the east or west side of the freeway at track or mid-level.

- A Left-Hand Direct Access Ramp takes up less surface area on the freeway, because the on-ramp and off-ramp share the same structure. Since a left-hand DAR requires only one structure, this alternative would be less expensive than a right-hand DAR. This project would provide Bus-Only access to the station from the shared managed lanes via Direct Access Ramp; a left-hand DAR is less confusing than a right-hand DAR, and may prevent general purpose drivers on the managed lanes from accidentally exiting the Bus-Only DAR and interfering with bus operations.
  - An example of a left-hand Direct Access Ramp would be the Del Lago Direct Access Ramp. This example is similar to 3A.
  - For this location, a left-hand DAR would require a rebuild of Imperial Avenue bridge and the Greenwood Underpass.
  - Examples with Left-Hand Direct Access Ramps are 2A, 3A, 3B, and 3C

- A Right-Hand Direct Access Ramp is more expensive because it would need a separate structure for the on-ramp and off-ramp. A Right-Hand DAR also could confuse general purpose drivers on the managed lanes who might accidentally exit the Bus-Only DAR and interfere with bus operations.
  - An example of a Right-Hand Direct Access Ramp would be the Rancho Bernardo Direct Access Ramp, which allows HOV users to exit the ramp. This example is similar to 3D.
  - For this location, a right-hand DAR would require a rebuild of Imperial Avenue bridge, Greenwood Underpass, and Market Street bridge.
Sherry Brooks asked for ballpark estimates of the stations and infrastructure. It is assumed that these alternatives will range from approximately 50-120 million dollars. More accurate estimates will be developed in the next phase.

Danielle Kochman continued with a discussion on scoring and alternatives analysis.

As seen on the I-805/47th Street Initial Screening Matrix, the alternatives with smallest footprints are the ones that scored the highest. For this reason, left-hand Direct Access Ramps scored higher than right-hand DARs which require a wider footprint.

A community member asked if any of the alternatives would require buying properties. At this stage in the project, it is too early to know.

Sherry Brooks reminded the group that the sites visited earlier in the day along the I-15 corridor were built on a wider right-of-way, so because there was a lot of room to work with, there wasn’t as much of a need for design exceptions. The I-805 BRT/47th Street Trolley Station Area project is an infill development, so there will definitely be more design exceptions that would need to be considered.

Barrow Emerson clarified that the projects on North I-15 still had design exceptions. The project was built in an existing freeway environment, so there were constraints with freeway width in the center median.

Although design exceptions could lower the project cost, during the next phase the project team will move forward assuming a standard design. As the project gets further along, we will then evaluate possible design exceptions that may make the project cheaper.

Keryna Johnson, a regular trolley rider from the Euclid/Market Station, emphasized the importance of picking a design that provides a service that efficiently picks up and drops off patrons the fastest, because doing so would attract and increase ridership throughout the corridor.

Nan Deforrest disagreed and said riders could be more productive with the additional time on the bus versus walking. While walking, you can’t get much done; however, on the bus, you could continue reading, listen to music or do other activities. Nan also stated that people like purchasing expensive condos around transit when there is a direct service to a destination; in Southeast San Diego, this isn’t the case because there are too many transfers.

Michael Brunker was impressed by the examples of transit stations along I-15, and noted that a transit station on that scale could be feasible at the 47th Street Trolley Station Area if it were part of a larger Master Plan.

Michael would like to have the Jackie Robinson YMCA expand all the way to Imperial Avenue, but surrounding development does not support that large of a project. He
Karen Bucey clarified that the City of San Diego has just launched preliminary work on the community plan update. The City is also planning this in coordination with Caltrans and SANDAG to include planned land uses. The Euclid and Market Mobility plan includes the entire vicinity, including developments as far west as 47th Street. Community plan updates were segmented into manageable sizes to create one General Plan update for Southeast San Diego.

Derryl Williams would like engineers working on projects in the area to attend the I-805 BRT/47th Street Community Planning Group Meetings in order to ensure that they know what is being planned, and can coordinate regional plans with plans for this project.

- Karen Bucey is a regular attendee of both the I-805 BRT/ 47th Street Community Planning Group Meetings, as well as the monthly coordination meetings for the regional plans.

- Derryl Williams requested that he receive more information on the SR 94 project. He would also like to attend its project meetings.

- Barrow Emerson reminded the group that at this stage, our main goal is to figure out how to get the bus out of the freeway and connect with the trolley station. Further details on how this project will affect the project vicinity will be evaluated at a later time.
  - The first goal is to figure out how to get the bus out of the freeway. Once you find feasible alternatives to get out of the freeway, the project team and community working group can evaluate what other facilities would be desired for the general location around the access point. Lastly, we will start to take other parcels of land into consideration.

- Patrick Ambrosio reminded the community working group that there will eventually be opportunities for input on surrounding projects. Eleven years ago, he was one of the people who voted on the Martin Luther King Mural on SR 94, and although other opportunities for related subject came years later, he was grateful for that opportunity when it came.

- Barrow Emerson stated that 2C and 2E are variations of 3H because it provides access to the same location.

- A community member asked why this project needs to wait until 2020 when there is already a need to provide access to people in this area to jobs up north.
  - It was clarified that the actual BRT service will not start until 2020, so this I-805 BRT/47th Street Trolley Station Area Planning project will catch up to that schedule. Also, the Route 960 currently runs a similar service from the Euclid/Market Transit Center to Sorrento Mesa and Kearny Mesa.
• Miles Pomeroy wanted to reinforce the comments Keryna Johnson had made. He stated that while selecting alternatives, it’s important to select alternatives that don’t go off the freeway because it may significantly delay the freeway BRT service.

• Nan DeForrest stated that passenger security and related operating cost could be mitigated with technology. For example, rather than hiring an additional security guard, we could purchase a Segway for the security guard to cover a larger surface area. Regardless, security is a factor that should be weighted more heavily at this location.
  o It was clarified that when we do the detailed evaluation of alternatives, which is the next step, the project team will refine the criteria.

• The I-15 Direct Access Ramps are shared with automobiles. Any direct access ramp at this station location would only serve buses, and would not be shared with automobiles, making 3A viable for this project site.

• A community member asked if the planned station would be accessible to those with disabilities.
  o It was clarified that all transit stations follow ADA standards and are accessible.

• In previous meetings, the community working group suggested that west side alternatives should be dropped because having a pedestrian/bicycle connection across I-805 would be just as effective.
  o Community members mentioned that the West side still might be a viable alternative, because it could be a Greenfield development by procuring cemetery land.
  o Michael Brunker mentioned that it would also be nice to provide access to communities on the northwest side of the freeway by having the BRT platform at that location.
  o Derryl Williams stated that the SCI Funeral Services Director, Dan Narveson, could be contacted about a west side alternative.
  o A community member expressed concerned about whether taking right-of-way from apartment complexes is necessary for an east side station.
  o Moving the trolley platform may be expensive because of the existing curve of the tracks. Also, there are topography issues, no public road access, and no current development density. It might be difficult to reclaim cemetery land and turn it into an urban development zoning within a timeframe that this project team could control.
  o Michael Brunker re-emphasized that there are a lot of existing destinations on the west side of the freeway, including the YMCA, Imperial Market Place, Educational Cultural Complex (ECC), and Lincoln High School. Unfortunately, patrons of these locations cannot easily get to and from the trolley at the moment. It would be nice to create a connection to the station with this project.
  o Keryna Johnson mentioned that the project team shouldn’t discount the fact that there will still be a pedestrian/bicycle bridge that will provide a connection between the east.
and west side of I-805. Although there were a lot of successful projects seen during today’s field trip, it is important that we select a project alternative that fits this location and its existing land uses.

- Derryl Williams appreciates the current process, but re-emphasized the importance of connecting this project’s decisions to other projects in the region.
  - Connery Cepeda, a Caltrans Planner, stated that the City and Caltrans have started to meet and have discussions about SR 94 at Euclid, and the community working group will be hearing more updates from Connery and other Caltrans Project Managers.

The project team would like to further analyze 4 – 5 alternatives, which will probably include the top ranked projects, along with a few others to add variety.

- The SR 15 Mid-City “Centerline” stations project went into its Environmental Document with four alternatives that were very different. As the alternatives are further analyzed, criteria and scoring became more and more effective until a preferred alternative was selected.

- Based on the rankings and the need to have a set of alternatives that represent a range of project design concepts, the following alternatives are recommended for detailed analysis:
  - 3C -- Track Level, Off-Line Station, Left Hand DAR, East Side Platform
  - 3H – Track Level, Off-Line Station, Flyover, East Side Platform
  - 3A – Track Level, In-Line Station, Left Hand DAR
  - 2A – Mid-Level, In-Line Station, Left Hand DAR
  - 1A – Freeway Level, In-Line Station, Side Platforms

- The inclusion of Alternative 1A will enable analysis of alternatives at all three levels. In addition, Alternative 2C (Mid-Level, Off-Line Station, Flyover, East Side Platform, Tunnel Crossing Under Tracks) and 2E (Mid-Level, Off-Line Station, Flyover, East Side Platform, Open Crossing Under Tracks) are variations of Alternative 3H. Considering both mid and track level designs for this alternative will provide sufficient analysis to identify environmental and other trade-offs between the two. Within this set of alternatives, there are designs at every grade (freeway level, mid-level, track level), stations in-line and off-line and different ramp types (left hand DARs and flyover ramps).

- In response to community interest expressed at this working session, additional analysis of the feasibility of the west side alternatives will also be conducted. This effort will include consideration of right of way availability and the impact of relocating the Trolley platform to the west side of the freeway.