

Board of Directors Meeting
August 14, 2009
Item No. 10.A., Special Order of Business



Via USPS & Electronic Mail

July 27, 2009

Mr. Bijan Sartipi
CalTrans
Department of Transportation, District 4
P.O. Box 23660
Oakland, CA 94623-0660

RE: Doyle Drive Reconstruction Project Traffic Impacts

Dear Mr. Sartipi,

The Bridge District greatly appreciates the Doyle Drive presentation by Mr. Gene Gonzalo of your staff. The presentation, however, generated substantial concern among Bridge Directors and staff as regards plans for implementation of the project. Given Caltrans' fast-track approach to contracts 3 and 4, it is critical that the Bridge District's and San Francisco's concerns be addressed quickly and effectively in order for the project to remain on schedule. I and my fellow Bridge Board members look forward to your responses regarding our concerns.

Traffic Management Plan Concerns

The District was very concerned to hear Caltrans staff refer to the recently published Traffic Management Plan (TMP) as "inadequate" in light of your stated plan to award construction contracts 3 and 4 within the next few months. We certainly agree that the TMP is inadequate and want to know what Caltrans is going to do to ensure that not only the issues of Golden Gate Bridge District are addressed but also the concerns of the City and County of San Francisco. In the Final Environmental documents (EIR/EIS), Caltrans committed to prepare an adequate TMP before starting construction. I trust that you will work with all stakeholders, including the Bridge District, to finalize an adequate TMP prior to awarding Contract 3.

This close coordination with the Bridge District is critical as we currently provide daily operational support to Doyle Drive via lane configuration and incident response services.

Letter to Bijan Sartipi

July 27, 2009

RE: Doyle Drive Reconstruction Project Traffic Impacts

We work to match lane allocation on Doyle Drive with that on the Bridge in order to provide smooth traffic flow. We need to know specifically how this lane allocation will work during the construction period, particularly in light of your plan to use a moveable median barrier on a portion of the temporary detour. It is also critical that we have a clear incident response plan during construction. At one point in his presentation, Mr. Gonzalo referenced a not-yet-seen Traffic Operations Plan. Maybe this information will be developed in that Plan?

We are also concerned that much of the impact to traffic will substantially exceed what was studied in the EIR/EIS. Caltrans now acknowledges that the closures for the ramps that connect Doyle Drive with Park Presidio will be in effect for a longer period of time than was disclosed in the environmental document. For example, we now know that the ramp from northbound Doyle Drive to southbound Park Presidio will be closed as much as three years. The other ramp will also be concurrently closed for twelve to eighteen months. While it is not uncommon for there to be slight variations between closures shown in the EIR/EIS and those shown in the construction drawings once complete, we are concerned that the closures are at least double in duration when compared to what is shown in the EIR/EIS. Your staff person showed little concern about this discrepancy, but we are not at all sure we agree with his conclusion that the difference is insignificant in regards to the duration and concurrent nature of the closures. We were told that 40 percent of the peak traffic volume will be rerouted through our Toll Plaza area, which is a substantial addition to already crowded conditions.

Detour Impacts on Toll Plaza Area Circulation, Golden Gate Bridge Through-Traffic, and San Francisco Streets

As a result of the closure of both of the ramps connecting Doyle Drive and Park Presidio, traffic will be redirected onto both the San Francisco street network and the roads in the vicinity of the Toll Plaza, including Merchant Road and Lincoln Blvd. and the already congested East Parking Lot. The current plans for Contract 3 direct all the detoured traffic to the Toll Plaza ramps. This is in stark contrast to the commitment made in the EIR/EIS in response to District concerns regarding temporary construction impacts on roads not designed to accommodate high volumes of through traffic. The EIR/EIS response states: "During the construction period all efforts will be made to minimize traffic related impacts to the GGB visitor area."

As you know, these long-term ramp closures will affect local San Francisco traffic travelling in both directions between the Marina District and the Richmond District. Are specific routes going to be identified as detour routes? What level of signage and traffic control will be in place to assist not only San Francisco locals but visitors in moving through and around the congestion area? San Francisco representatives on the Bridge District Board would like to see maps identifying detour routes as soon as possible. Additionally, the District would like to see analysis of the travel time impacts that drivers and transit users will incur as a result of the diminished capacity in the corridor.

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The EIR/EIS offers no information regarding the operational impacts and associated congestion due to the ramp closures. On page 3-88 the EIR/EIS states: "Closure of these ramps will entail a shifting of an estimated 1,360 vehicles in the AM peak hour and 1640 in the PM peak hour to other routes or times." Later, on the same page, it says that 40 percent of these trips will utilize the ramps at the Toll Plaza. This equates to an extra 544 cars using the both the northbound off-ramp and the southbound on-ramp at the Toll Plaza during the busiest hour in the morning and an extra 656 cars using the northbound off-ramp and the southbound on-ramp during the busiest hour in the afternoon. The EIR/EIS offers no context regarding the current number of cars using these ramps or the traffic capacity of these ramps. Similarly, the closure of the ramps connecting Doyle Drive and Park Presidio will result, during the peak hour, in almost 1,000 extra car trips on already busy City Streets. Yet no information is provided to show which streets will see an increase in traffic along with the magnitude of that increase.

According to your current contract plans, all construction truck and equipment traffic is directed to use the Toll Plaza ramps. How will this impact the operation of these ramps and the local roads in the vicinity of the ramps, not only in terms of today's traffic levels but in terms of the additional traffic that will be diverted to these areas during ramp closures? Has Caltrans looked at how the extra additional traffic will impact pedestrian and bicyclist safety in the East Parking Lot?

According to Caltrans's schedule, starting in February 2011, after Contract 3 and 4, Caltrans will implement a multi-year detour that will provide only five lanes for both directions of traffic for mainline Highway 101 by utilizing the southbound high viaduct and the southbound Battery Tunnel. Today there are six lanes through this stretch of roadway so this will create a "choke point" that will reduce current traffic capacity. As Caltrans and San Francisco County Transportation Authority staff acknowledged at the meeting with District staff on Tuesday, July 21, no traffic analysis has been performed to determine the adequacy of the five lane detour. This is of great concern to us. How will Caltrans operate these five lanes during different times of the day? For example, currently in the A.M. peak this stretch of Highway 101 is operated with four lanes southbound and two lanes northbound. How will the five lane detour be operated on both weekdays and weekends? What will be the additional travel time for buses and motorists using this five lane detour? The Bridge District is also concerned that delays in the completion of construction will extend the period of time that the multi-year detour, which completely eliminates one lane on mainline Doyle Drive, is in place. In a construction project of this magnitude and complexity, delays are a possibility and would place an even greater burden on the five lane detour route.

Transit, Pedestrian, and Bicycle Travel Impacts

In the peak hour about 1/4 of all trips in the corridor are carried by transit. The TMP devotes only one sentence, on page 8, to transit. When the TMP is re-done, Caltrans should explore the need to expand transit service to carry more people, at least during the period of time when there is the complete elimination of one traffic lane. If Caltrans determines additional transit is needed, how would you propose to implement and fund

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this additional transit service? Please note that the Golden Gate Ferry system is currently operating at or near full capacity in the morning peak period and there is not sufficient excess parking available for many new riders at our Larkspur parking lot.

It is also important to note that both PresidiGo and MUNI buses use the ramps and roads in the vicinity of the Toll Plaza where the ramp closure traffic will be detoured as discussed in the previous section of this letter. Additionally, there is substantial pedestrian and bicycle traffic in the East Parking Lot area. Has Caltrans analyzed how the traffic diverted to travel through this area will impact pedestrian and bicyclist travel patterns and safety in the East Parking Lot at the Toll Plaza?

Economic Impacts

The District is seriously concerned that the above traffic detours and traffic restrictions will result in a reduction in motorists crossing the Golden Gate Bridge with a corresponding reduction in toll revenues. Tolls are the principal funding source for the District's bridge operations and maintenance as well as our bus and ferry services. Any reduction in toll revenues could seriously impact the District's ability to provide its current levels of bus and ferry service which would exacerbate the traffic congestion caused by the project. The project may also impact visitor access to our Gift Shop and Café, both of which are important sources of ancillary revenue. There may be other fiscal impacts as individuals seek to change their travel patterns in response to the construction. The District expects Caltrans to address any financial losses we incur as a result of your project.

Preservation of Utilities

The main power supply for the Golden Gate Bridge, including for the Toll Plaza and all of our maintenance facilities, is a PG&E power line that runs on Doyle Drive. The District seeks Caltrans commitment to preserve uninterrupted PG&E utility service during the entire course of construction.

Timing of Project Completion

In light of Caltrans' desire to accelerate the completion of the reconstruction project, we are concerned about the lack of nighttime work. Working both day and night would allow for the acceleration of project construction and reduce the length of time that the ramps are closed and detours in place. Nighttime work is done on highway projects in much more congested residential and commercial areas than the Presidio. Will Caltrans consider using additional nighttime work as a way to speed the project forward and possibly reduce congestion in the corridor during peak travel periods?

On an ancillary note, the 75th Birthday of the Golden Gate Bridge will take place over Memorial Day weekend in 2012 and it will be critical for our agencies to adequately plan far enough ahead of the celebration events to ensure that the transportation system works adequately for the large number of expected celebrants.

Letter to Bijan Sartipi
RE: Doyle Drive Reconstruction Project Traffic Impacts

July 27, 2009

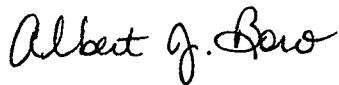
Project Funding

We would like an opportunity to talk further with you regarding the funding of the Doyle Drive project. We remain committed to our contribution of \$75M plus an additional \$5M funneled through the District on behalf of both Marin and Sonoma Counties. We have a very clear Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding the provision of that funding and are concerned that Caltrans may be unaware of the deadlines called for in that MOU. A meeting to discuss this aspect of the funding plan would be helpful to us all, I believe.

Conclusion

We recognize that Doyle Drive is a vital project and the Bridge District supports its completion. However, it is critical that the issues and concerns of the Bridge District and the City and County of San Francisco be addressed prior to award of construction contracts 3 and 4. We look forward to working with your staff to settle these issues as soon as possible. In this way, the revised approaches can be incorporated into your fast-tracked approach to the reconstruction of Doyle Drive.

Sincerely,



Albert J. Boro
President, Board of Directors

Cc: Members, GGBHTD Board of Directors
Will Kempton, Caltrans
Jose Luis Moscovitch, SFCTA
Diane Steinhauser, TAM
Suzanne Smith, SCTA
Nat Ford, SFMTA
Craig Middleton, Presidio Trust
Frank Dean, GGNRA
Steve Heminger, MTC

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE
HIGHWAY AND
TRANSPORT DISTRICT

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SECRETARY OF
THE DISTRICT



*Flex your power!
Be energy efficient!*

July 30, 2009

Mr. Denis Mulligan, District Engineer
Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District
P.O. Box 9000, Presidio Station
San Francisco, CA 94129-0601

Subject: Doyle Drive Reconstruction Project

Dear Mr. Mulligan:

This is to acknowledge the receipt of the letter dated July 27, 2009 from Board of Directors President Boro regarding the Doyle Drive reconstruction project traffic impacts. Mr. Boro's letter was sent following an informational presentation to the Bridge District Board on July 24, 2009 intended to provide an update on the Doyle Drive Replacement Project. The San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) are jointly sponsoring the Doyle Drive project and we are grateful to have had the opportunity to address the Bridge District Board. We look forward to continuing our partnership with the Bridge District on a project so vital to preserving the regional transportation system including access to the Golden Gate Bridge.


Mr. Boro's letter addressed a number of important issues. To ensure that we provide a thorough and complete response, we will carefully review each issue with the goal of providing a reply that fully addresses Board concerns. We expect to provide that more detailed response within a few weeks.

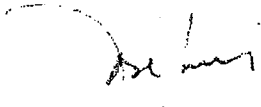
As a follow up to your meeting with Doyle project staff on July 21, 2009, we'll provide further information on planned tree removal and associated weekend morning closures of the two ramps leading to southbound Highway 1. Although work should be completed over three weekends, we have planned for a total of four weekend morning closures to provide a high level of certainty that no unplanned closures will be needed. Ramps may be closed as early as 5:30 AM on each affected Saturday and Sunday and will reopen no later than 12 noon the same day. The first weekend closure will be either August 22 or August 29, 2009. The Outside Lands concert at Sharon Meadows in Golden Gate Park is scheduled for the August 29, 2009 weekend and we may chose to avoid that date. The other three closures will occur after Labor Day over the weekends beginning September 12, 19 and 26. As is normal procedure, we will coordinate these closures with Bridge District operations staff. Please contact Gene Gonzalo at Caltrans or Lee Saage at SFCTA should you have additional questions.

Mr. Denis Mulligan
July 30, 2009
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The Bridge District is a key partner in the Doyle Drive Replacement Project and we understand the importance of avoiding impacts to Bridge District operations. We are very grateful for your continued cooperation in this challenging project and for that of all Bridge District Board members and staff.

Sincerely,


BIJAN SARTIPI
District Director


JOSÉ LUIS MOSCOVICH
Executive Director, SFCTA

c: Albert Boro, Celia Kupersmith - GGBHTD



Via USPS & Electronic Mail

August 11, 2009

Mr. Bijan Sartipi, District Director
Caltrans
Department of Transportation, District 4
P.O. Box 23660
Oakland, CA 94623-0660

José Luis Moscovich, Executive Director
San Francisco County Transportation Authority
100 Van Ness Avenue, 26th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94102

Re: Doyle Drive Reconstruction Project

Dear Mr. ^{Bijan}~~Sartipi~~ and Mr. ^{José Luis}~~Moscovich~~:

The Bridge District sent a letter to Caltrans, dated July 27, 2009, wherein a variety of significant concerns were highlighted regarding the nature in which the Doyle Drive Reconstruction Project (Project) is proceeding to construction. I appreciate that you sent a brief response on July 30, 2009, that acknowledged receipt of the letter and committed to provide a detailed response within a few weeks. However, the timing of the future detailed response is not commensurate with your pace to proceed to construction.

This is a serious concern for the District on behalf of our hundreds of thousands of customers. I am aware that subsequent to the July 27th letter, there have been several meetings between our staffs. Unfortunately, as a result of these meetings our concerns have grown, not shrunk.

We continue to be highly concerned that a meeting with all the key agencies regarding a multi-modal Traffic Management Plan (TMP) has not yet occurred. In fact, it appears that Caltrans intends to advertise Contract 3 prior to having its first meeting with all stakeholders. This is in stark contrast to the Record of Decision (ROD), dated December 2008, where on page 9 of 11 it states:

"A Traffic Management Plan (TMP) will be developed to address construction period impacts. The TMP will be prepared with coordination and review by Presidio Trust, NPS and GGBHTD."

The development of a TMP is a reasonable step that was contemplated in the ROD. However, the minimization of adverse traffic effects is predicated on developing the TMP prior to starting construction.

Throughout the evolution of the Doyle Drive Project the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has consistently encouraged the sponsoring agencies to “*minimize potential adverse impacts to traffic in neighboring communities*”. Included with the ROD is a December 1, 2008, letter from the EPA to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) transmitting the EPA’s comments on the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). The documents referenced herein can be viewed online at http://doyledrive.org/project_docs/files/FHWA_ROD_letter.pdf. Here, in commenting on the FEIS, the EPA states:

“...EPA continues to have concerns about 1) the traffic impacts due to construction activities...”

Later, in the same letter the EPA states:

“...we reiterate our recommendation that a clear commitment be included as part of the FEIS and ROD to consult with local residents, businesses, and other affected users (including bicyclists and pedestrians) of the Presidio and Golden Gate National Recreation Area before the TMP is finalized. In addition to the necessary rerouting of transit service during project construction, we recommend that the TMP consider methods to further increase the capacity of transit to offset construction-related congestion.”

Clearly the above statement in the ROD regarding the TMP is responsive to the EPA concerns regarding the FEIS. It is troubling that you propose advertising Contract 3 next week, in light of the concerns and commitments that have been expressed regarding the TMP.

The TMP needs to include a transit component, rather than merely providing a discussion regarding changeable message signs. During construction of the Project some commuters may choose to shift their travel mode from their private automobile to ferries in order to avoid the congested roadway. As suggested by EPA, anticipating this modal shift and planning for it should be a facet of the TMP.

Clearly, the traffic handling during construction for Contracts 3 and 4 has not been resolved. No traffic analysis has been presented that indicates that the detour routes can handle the additional traffic volume. The detour route that directs traffic to the intersection of Lincoln Blvd of the East Parking Lot, which is already congested, is particularly problematic, in that it will have all construction equipment plus general traffic detoured from the ramp closures. This is on top of all the tourist traffic that already congregates in that immediate area.

Caltrans has informed the District that the Plans, Specifications and Estimate (PS&E) for Contract 4 are complete, yet many details are not available. For example, the environmental document specifies that Caltrans will use a moveable median barrier during construction to shift

the lanes to accommodate peak traffic. The details regarding the terminus on the ends of the moveable median barrier have not been developed, and there is no information regarding how the barrier transfer machines will be safely removed from the roadway. It has also emerged that Contract 4 will involve work on the District's property, yet you have not initiated negotiations regarding the use of the District's property.

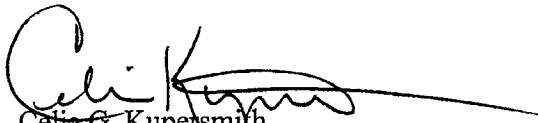
The recent meetings amongst staff have been informative, yet they have not provided answers to the questions in our original July 27, 2009, letter.

In addition to the public needing answers to the questions posed in the District's prior letter, detailed and specific answers are needed so that your construction contracts for the Doyle Drive Reconstruction provide necessary guidance to contractors.

The Doyle Drive Reconstruction Project is vitally important to the Bay Area. The Bridge District supports its timely completion, in a manner that minimizes impacts during construction. Proceeding with Contract 3, absent a TMP commensurate with the commitments made as part of the environmental process, leaves unanswered questions that undoubtedly will create uncertainty for potential bidders and significant confusion and disruption to the travelling public. I look forward to your response to both this and the District's prior letter.

Please note that the topic of Doyle Drive construction plans is included on the District's Board agenda for this Friday August 14th at 10:00 a.m. At that meeting, we will be responding to the Board's request for an update regarding what has happened on this topic since their last meeting. You are welcome to attend the meeting if you wish. This letter and the letter we sent earlier will be the focus of our discussion.

Sincerely,


Celia G. Kupersmith
General Manager

cc: Members, GGBHTD Board of Directors
Dan Bernal, District Director for Speaker Nancy Pelosi
Assemblyman Jared Huffman
Randy Iwasaki, Caltrans
Lucille Baca, Caltrans
Gene Fong, FHWA
David Ortiz, FHWA
Kathleen Goforth, EPA
Frank Dean, GGNRA
Craig Middleton, The Presidio Trust
Steve Heminger, MTC
Nat Ford, SFMTA
Dianne Steinhauser, TAM
Suzanne Smith, SCTA

August 13, 2009

Celia Kupersmith, General Manager
Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District
Box 9000, Presidio Station
San Francisco, CA 94129

Subject: Doyle Drive Reconstruction

Dear Ms. Kupersmith:

Your letter of August 11, 2009 reiterated your concerns, similarly expressed in a July 30, 2009 letter from Bridge Board President Boro, that the Bridge District was not satisfied with planning work underway to manage traffic during reconstruction of Doyle Drive. The Bridge District is a key partner in this undertaking and we recognize the importance of our agencies continuing to work cooperatively to replace this crumbling roadway linking the Golden Gate Bridge to San Francisco and the South Bay.

We have undertaken the replacement of Doyle Drive on an accelerated schedule for a number of reasons. Replacing this seismically vulnerable facility is urgently needed to eliminate the risk of a catastrophic failure during a major seismic event that would totally isolate the Golden Gate Bridge. The accelerated schedule minimizes the length of time that your customers and others must endure the inconvenience of an ongoing major construction project. Our current schedule has reduced the construction period by more than 18 months and, of no less importance, reduced the cost of the project sufficiently to allow it to go forward. The public is often frustrated at the pace with which agencies complete major projects that seem to drag on interminably. We are trying to change that paradigm and move swiftly to complete this vital piece of work.

Speedier project delivery means that many activities need to be managed concurrently rather than sequentially and that includes implementation of plans to manage traffic during construction. While the initial major construction contract is now being advertised, the Authority has not agreed to any long-term closures or any other changes to Doyle Drive prior to February 2010 unless interagency traffic management planning can clearly support an earlier timeframe. We have assurances from Caltrans that this commitment will be honored. Additionally, we are pushing hard to complete an update to the Traffic Management Plan as soon as possible and will be grateful for continued Bridge District participation in that effort. There is sufficient time to address whatever concerns the Bridge District has. When all public agencies have worked cooperatively, Caltrans has been successful in managing construction traffic challenges more daunting than those posed by Doyle Drive and I am confident that Doyle challenges can be effectively managed as well.

Bridge District staff members were first briefed on construction staging for Doyle in late 2006 and have been members of the standing agency coordinating committee since 2000. This committee met bi-monthly during preparation of the Doyle Drive Environmental Impact Statement and Report and now meets monthly. Additionally, a number of ad hoc meetings have taken place with Bridge District staff over the past few weeks that have helped clarify real expected traffic impacts during construction and have better focused attention on areas where mitigation needs are actually supported by data. We look forward



Moving the City.

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

to continuing these meetings and to Bridge District staff participation in upcoming Transportation Management Plan Working Group meetings. These issues better lend themselves to resolution by technical staff than by exchanges of agency letters.

One matter that ought not to be left to an informal staff communication, however, is the sudden decision by the Bridge District to terminate lane management operations on Doyle Drive. In a meeting on August 12, 2009, Bridge District Engineer Denis Mulligan informed Caltrans staff that the Bridge District would end this long-provided service commensurate with the start of construction on contract 3. Traffic management on Doyle should transfer to the construction contractor when actual construction activity shifts to Doyle Drive proper but that will not happen for some 16 months. It is not clear how your customers or the Doyle Drive project can benefit from the untimely abrogation of this vital safety and traffic management service. We now have no time to plan for an orderly transition of responsibility to a construction contractor and may suffer a project delay because of this sudden action by the Bridge District.

I urge you to reconsider this decision and, at a minimum, give us sufficient time to work out alternate arrangements.

Sincerely,



José Luis Moscovich
Executive Director

cc: Authority Commissioners
Mayor Gavin Newsom
GGBHTD Board Members