



Land Use and Transportation

Land use and transportation projects inevitably trigger broad interest and controversy. The types of decisions to be made - from the siting of highways and new residential developments, to investments in public transit and important urban infrastructures - impact a broad range of stakeholders and spark community-wide discussions related to a city or region's underlying needs and objectives. Should an urban area invest in new highways or is it better off sinking available resources into more buses and trains? Are there ways to build affordable housing without sacrificing open lands? Is it possible to clean up old industrial sites in a manner that address environmental justice concerns from traditionally marginalized neighborhoods?

Structured deliberations can play a significant role in transforming these typically contentious topics into productive dialogues. In its more than 20 years of experience serving as neutral facilitators and mediators, CONCUR has helped forge numerous agreements around complex land use and transportation decisions, using its stepwise model to help participants identify their mutual interests, frame options for resolving longstanding disagreements, jointly explore likely project impacts and build packages that can be broadly supported by diverse parties. CONCUR's project experience is broad, ranging from new highway construction and county land use ordinances, to watershed protection plans, local coastal planning and agricultural land retirement deliberations. Our work necessitates familiarity with a range of local, state and federal laws, including NEPA/SEPA, ESA, various coastal guidelines and numerous other land use regulations.

Selected Projects

Santa Clara Valley Water Resources Protection Collaborative: CONCUR worked with a broad cross-section of interests in California's Santa Clara County over a four-year period to develop and ratify a series of landmark agreements for protecting water resources, and particularly stream resources, in this large and complex area better known as Silicon Valley. The work necessitated a mix of large group discussions and one-on-one outreach to the individual Collaborative members - first to build support and identify funding for the initiative and then to craft a common set of standards to guide development near streams. Additionally, the parties agreed to establish an early consultation program to formalize proactive interagency cooperation. Collaborative representatives included the County of Santa Clara, all 15 cities in the County, the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board, the Guadalupe-Coyote Conservation District, the Santa Clara County Farm Bureau, and representatives of property owners, environmental, community, business and agricultural interests.

Alaskan Way Viaduct: CONCUR is working as part of a multi-disciplinary team assisting the State of Washington, City of Seattle and King County to resolve a longstanding dispute over the replacement of the at-risk Alaskan Way Viaduct, a 60-year-old stacked highway that separates downtown Seattle from the waterfront. The project involves coordinating internal decision-making, extensive technical analysis of nearly a dozen different transportation options, and outreach to and discussion with a 30-member stakeholder advisory body. CONCUR's role focuses on collaborative process design, strategic planning advice and stakeholder involvement. The project, started in summer 2007, is slated to end in early 2009.

South Orange County Infrastructure Improvement Project (SOCIIP): CONCUR designed and carried out a mediation process with local, state and federal agencies in support of a decision making process to provide greater transportation capacity in South Orange County, California amid severe environmental and social constraints. A toll road has been planned for several years to alleviate congestion on Interstate 5, a major commuter route in the rapidly developing South Orange County region. Federal and state agencies were deadlocked over how to implement a joint federal-state Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) binding

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them to a complete analysis of transportation alternatives pursuant to NEPA and Section 404 wetland protection policies. CONCUR organized and facilitated a joint fact-finding process for issues related to regional traffic and transportation, land use and endangered species, as a foundation to gaining agreement on a selection of alternatives for NEPA analysis, to implement the federal/state MOU. A cornerstone of this effort was hiring a neutral transportation expert to develop objective data on current and future levels of service for all major arterials serving the impacted regional road system, including mass transit alternatives. CONCUR developed and facilitated a comprehensive ranking and screening process for participating agencies during which 22 transportation alternatives were reduced to 5. The final five alternatives were then refined to further reduce their potential environmental impact and the subject of NEPA and CEQA review to develop a preferred project alternative to meet transportation needs while minimizing environmental and community impacts.

Economic Analysis of Potential Land Retirement, Westlands Water District, San Joaquin Valley: The issue of concern in this case was the potential economic impacts of a proposal from the US government to retire 150,000 to 200,000 acres of agricultural production land. CONCUR worked with a team of resource economists to undertake a financial analysis of the potential impacts of the proposed land retirement. CONCUR conducted interviews with 35 interested parties and co-managed two public workshops. The workshops provided an opportunity to suggest questions to be addressed by the economic study and recommend potential information sources. Meetings were attended by members of the agricultural community, local government officials, federal and state agency staff, staff to state legislators, business owners and community members.

Local Coastal Program for Half Moon Bay, California: CONCUR worked with the City of Half Moon Bay to prepare an update to its Local Coastal Program (LCP). The final report for the LCP represented a four month consensus based process addressing a variety of issues including policies for natural, coastal, and scenic restoration; residential development; circulation; economic development; coastal land uses; parks and recreation; and agriculture. CONCUR convened a multi-stakeholder public advisory committee. Participants included representatives of coastal business interests, visitor servicing industries, homeowners, development interests, marine scientists, the City Council, the Sewer District and the Harbor District.

For a complete list of projects please visit our website at www.concurinc.com

About CONCUR, Inc.

CONCUR, Inc. provides services in agreement-focused mediation and facilitation, joint fact-finding, conflict assessment, environmental policy analysis, strategic planning, and environmental mediation training. Our staff has a unique dual expertise in both the process and substance of environmental decision-making. We are rigorously trained in the art and science of negotiation and dispute resolution, as well as in environmental planning and policy analysis. This dual expertise is the foundation of CONCUR's philosophy: to integrate different disciplines that strengthen our problem-solving capability so that we can provide clients the highest quality professional services.

For further information about our services please visit our web site at www.concurinc.com or contact us at:

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