



INSTITUTE OF TRANSPORTATION ENGINEERS

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA SECTION

NEWSLETTER

2008 – 2009, Issue No. 3

November/December 2008

President's Message

Carlos Ortiz, PE, TE, PTOE



We had another great turnout at our meeting in October. We had three speakers at the meeting: **Mr. Glenn Ogura**, Principal Transportation Engineer with the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT), **Mr. Matthew MacWillie**, Sergeant with the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), and **Mr. Michael Gregg**, Police Officer III with the LAPD. Our guest speakers presented the City of Los Angeles Red Light Photo Enforcement and Photo Blocker and Test Results. We like to thank them for sharing their experiences with us. Please see the Scribe Report for more details.

Our upcoming November Meeting will be our annual joint meeting with the Riverside-San Bernardino ITE Section. This is always one of the best meetings. In the last few years, this meeting has been held at the beautiful campus of California Polytechnic State University, Pomona. They have always been well attended by our colleagues, students, professors, and alumni, and we can expect the same this year.



We will have a very exciting presentation on Proposition 1A. Prop 1A (Safe, Reliable High-Speed Passenger Train Bond Act) was recently approved

by the voters and we are very lucky to be one of the first groups that will hear the latest and upcoming opportunities on the proposed California High-Speed Train. Our guest speaker will be **Mr. Eugene Kim**, Project Manager with the

Consensus Planning Group. Mr. Kim is responsible for the Anaheim to Los Angeles segment. We expect a great turnout at this meeting so please **make your reservations as soon as possible**. We will hate to turn our members away due to over capacity. We will have two separate tables at the meeting for registration. Please make sure you stop by the Southern California Section table.

Our lunch sponsor will be MaxCell Products. Please stop by their table and check out their display to get information about their innerduct products.

Please mark your calendar for upcoming events. The Riverside-San Bernardino Section will have their Annual Vendors Day Conference on January 15, 2009. Also, our next meeting will be on January 21, 2009. The meeting will be a joint meeting with the City Traffic Engineers (CTE). As usual, we will not have a December section meeting. ◇

We wish everyone a Happy Holiday Season!

Meeting Announcement

Joint Luncheon Meeting w/ RSBITE

Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2008
@ 11:30 a.m.

The Restaurant At Kellogg Ranch

3801 W. Temple Ave, Bldg. 79
Pomona, CA 91768

For Reservations Contact:

Lisa Martellaro-Palmer at

lisa.martellaro-palmer@lacity.org

Ph. (323) 957-6823

By 12:00 pm on Friday,

Nov. 14th, 2008

(E-mail preferred)

See Flyer for More Details

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SB375 Brief Overview

By Shirley Land

SB375 – Sustainable Communities Legislation

The governor has signed SB375 and it becomes law on January 1, 2009. SB375 is one piece of the larger AB 32 framework (enacted in 2006) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions throughout the State. Its focus is to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from two sources: cars and light trucks. The implementation strategy of this bill focuses on land use and transportation shifts supporting "sustainable communities" to reduce the degree of vehicle miles traveled, and thus lower greenhouse gas emissions, from these sources.

As a result of SB375, the assumptions of transportation models and future planning will have to be consistent (at an unparalleled degree) to key planning issues such as housing needs, growth forecasts based on revised regional "blueprints", and greenhouse gas emissions reductions. These components are now required to be integrated into the framework of the development and approval of the SCAG 2012 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The California Air Resources Board decisions will now directly influence local government and county transportation commission activities relating to land use determinations and supporting transportation infrastructure provisions to reach the greenhouse gas emission standards.

While all of us support a better environment, transportation professionals need to become familiar with what changes may be proposed and participate in the development of revised standards associated with both SB375 and AB32 to make sure they develop realistic transportation goals and do not create additional obstacles for viable transportation projects that are currently in design and implementation. ♦

Shirley Land is the Transportation Manager for the City of Mission Viejo.

SCAG is holding a series of workshops regarding SB 375's effect on local governments and transportation agencies, to be held at various locations throughout the 6-county region beginning November 12 and running through December 9, 2008. See the following link for information:

<http://scag.ca.gov/events/pdfs/SB375-Flyer-lores.pdf>

October 2008 Scribe Report

By John A. Dorado II



The ITE Southern California Section monthly meeting was held on Wednesday, October 15, 2008 at the Monterey Hill Restaurant in the City of Monterey Park. The vendor sponsor for this meeting was **Iteris, Incorporated**. There were three guest speakers: **Mr. Glenn Ogura**

with the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT), **Sgt. Matthew MacWillie**, and **Officer Michael Gregg** with the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD). They provided a presentation regarding the "City of Los Angeles Red Light Photo Enforcement" and "Photo Blocker and Test Results".

Mike Beyke with RoadFx and representing Iteris' products conducted a brief presentation outlining the supplier's product line, showcased the "Iteris Vantage Video Detection System", and discussed the benefits and applications: intersection control, traffic data collection on roadways, incident management on highways, and surveillance.



Mr. Ogura, Principal Transportation Engineer for the LADOT, is the Department's Coordinator for the Automated Photo Red Light Enforcement Program and introduced the City's program.



Sgt. MacWillie (LAPD) is the Department's Photo Red Light Coordinator and provided a presentation discussing the current and future red light enforcement program. He summarized 2007 traffic statistics and identified the following:

- Percentage of accidents due to the red light violations
- Red light violation fine, \$381
- The differences between old and new equipment/technologies
- Review of new equipment

In addition Sgt. MacWillie's presentation included two videos showing accidents due to red light violations, which included a "T" bone type accident where the driver ran a red light at approximately 35 miles per hour (mph) and a right-turn on red violation where the vehicle collided with pedestrians. These videos revealed the severity of what happens when running red lights and to identify the type of enforcement required.

Sgt. MacWillie also discussed the review and process of issuing tickets due to red light violation, intersection selection for photo enforcement, and recent news regarding red light enforcement.



Officer Gregg, Police Officer III with the LAPD, is the Department's Photo Red Light Officer for LAPD's South Traffic Bureau and provided a presentation outlining the "Photo Blocker Test Results".

Background: Counter enforcement measures have been developed by companies claiming that their product(s) can reduce the possibility of obtaining a ticket by decreasing the reflectivity of your license plate through a type of photo blocker spray and license plate cover. The idea is that these counter measures will make the license plate numbers/letters illegible in conjunction with the "flash" of the red light enforcement cameras. Therefore, the owner of the vehicle cannot be identified by the license plate and cannot be issued a ticket. Currently, these counter measures are illegal to buy and sell in California.

In order to determine if these counter measures were effective, LAPD developed a photo blocker testing program. This included a test vehicle that violates a red light enforced intersection under the following scenarios:

- License plate without any counter measure
 - Used as a control to rate the effectiveness of the counter measures
- License plate with photo blocker spray
- License plate with photo blocker spray and license plate cover
- License plate with an off-the-shelf lacquer spray
 - Used for comparison purposes with photo blocker spray

Other roadway conditions were also taken into consideration during the test, such as the direction of travel, through/turning movements, and the glare of the sun.

The methodology of the testing program was explained. Test results were based on a ranking system and comparison ratios. Graphs and bar charts represented the test results, and had the "Engineer" type look and appealed greatly to the crowd.

The "Photo Blocker Test Results" concluded that even though counter measures worked "to a degree" in some cases, all scenarios would have resulted in a violation since the photo enforcement camera's takes multiple photos prior to and after a violation (as aforementioned, the counter measures were suppose to work in conjunction with the "flash" of the red light enforcement cameras). Therefore, the counter measures do not impact the City's Automated Photo Red Light Enforcement Program.◊

Mobility 21

By Lisa Martellaro-Palmer



On Monday, October 20, 2008, transportation leaders and elected officials from California gathered at the Wilshire Grand Hotel in downtown Los Angeles to attend the 7th Annual Southern California Transportation Summit named Mobility21. Mobility21 was created to develop solutions to complex transportation issues such as land use, public transit, streets and highways, goods movement, transportation financing and coalition building. The sponsors included AAA, Caltrans, Caltrop, Los Angeles World Airports, Port of Long Beach, Port of Los Angeles, Alameda Corridor Transportation Authority, Southern California Edison and many more.



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The opening speech was given by "Dr. Roadmap" David Rizzo. He emphasized that one-third of our roads are in poor condition and our sewage system is close to 100 years old. He urged that for the sake of our infrastructure, we should support Measure R. This half cent sales tax could fund potholes, bus lines, rail lines and construction projects. This money could be spent locally to improve our mobility. Over the years, many municipalities have taken control of their transportation projects: Riverside had Measure A, San Bernardino had Measure I, and Thousand Oaks used Prop 1A and 1B. He commented that this is a trend and a necessity. In 2009, we will see a Surface Transportation Bill for \$1.5 billion with a majority of the funds appropriated for transit. Rizzo insisted that we must author robust transportation funding appropriations centered on transit, goods movement, air quality and mobility. The funds recently cut from public transit must be restored. Fortunately, with Mobility21, California's transportation problems can be solved.

Another speech was given by Roger Snoble, Chief Executive Officer for LA County Metropolitan Transportation Authority. He mentioned that our economy is being pulled in many directions. We have a war with Iraq, Afghanistan and we are bailing-out the banking system. As a result, we are left with crumbs.

Article Continued on Page 7

Legislative Analysis

By Walter Okitsu, PE, PTOE



Bold Election Predictions and the Grade Crossing Bill

This shouldn't be a busy month for legislation. The California Legislature and Federal Legislature have been adjourned. However, we have this election thing happening just as I submit this analysis to the newsletter editor on November 2nd. I don't know the election results, but by the time you read this, you will. That won't stop me from taking a chance on looking like a complete idiot. I'll make some bold predictions about the election results.

LA County Measure R

I predict that by the time you read this, you've been wildly celebrating, assuming that Los Angeles County's Measure R received the two-thirds majority it needed to raise the sales tax by a half-cent. If you are in the transportation engineering profession, you will benefit by the passage of Measure R even if you don't live or work in LA County, because of its influx of money into our industry. This measure, in combination with two earlier half-cent sales tax measures passed in the 1980's, means that a hefty 1.5% tax on sales will be piped into transportation projects that range from signal coordination to a Subway-to-the-Sea. Party on!

If by chance Measure R did not pass, it might have been because voters felt that the fragile state of the economy outweighed their frustration over traffic. An anti-Westside bias, raised by County Supervisors on the north, east, and south sides, could have worked against it, too. But really, its failure would be all your fault! You didn't get enough friends and family to vote for the Measure. On this count, I'd be guilty too.

Editor's Note: Measure R was passed. It drew roughly 67.5% of the votes with 100% of the precincts reporting.

California Proposition 1A

I also boldly predict that Proposition 1A will pass, a bond measure that will provide the first \$10 billion to start building a high-speed intercity rail line between San Francisco and (possibly) Anaheim. Supporters of this measure only need to get just over a 50% majority to pass. How hard could that be? This line would run a rather circuitous route through San Jose via the Pacheco pass, and bypass the Grapevine by going over Tehachapi Pass through the Antelope Valley. According to election materials, a ride on this train would take 2.5 hours. The cost to construct the entire rail line is probably in the \$30 to \$40 billion range, so additional funds would need to be found

before you can toss out your Southwest Airlines frequent flyer number.

If my prediction is wrong and Proposition 1A failed, perhaps the timing just wasn't right. But that would raise the question, when would be the next opportunity? I won't attempt to predict that.

Editor's Note: Proposition 1A was also passed. Looks like Mr. Okitsu gets to keep his job here at the Newsletter.

Mary Peters' Last Two Months?

Here's a prediction I'm more confident about: US DOT Secretary Mary Peters probably won't show up at work for too much longer. She is likely to depart even if McCain pulled an upset and won, because she is rumored to have ambitions to run for governor of Arizona.

In my opinion, if she were to stay at US DOT, she would continue with her push to replace the gasoline excise tax with other income sources, like tolls and an odometer-based fee. She torpedoed a recommendation to increase the gasoline tax made to the US Legislature by a bipartisan commission last January. But so far, no program for collecting adequate money from other sources has been established. Meanwhile, the Highway Trust Fund is likely to be drained again before the end of 2009, just as it did last September. That's another good reason to leave for another job.

The Grade Crossing (and Positive Train Control) Bill

The press and general public have been fixated over the Federal bill requiring positive train control to prevent collisions like the Chatsworth Metrolink crash, and rightly so. This bill (H.R. 2095) had so much support, it was like a locomotive to which passenger rail supporters in Congress attached the entire Amtrak system, so to speak, and dared the President to stop it. Bush didn't veto the bill, thereby reauthorizing Amtrak for five more years.

But this same bill includes a section on grade crossing safety that may also interest you. For instance, by 2010, every railroad will be required to post signs at every grade crossing listing a toll-free telephone number so that the public can report signal and gate malfunctions, or obstructions. I've wanted to know who to call whenever I see a crossing signal go haywire: pretty soon, I'll know.

The bill requires the Secretary (Mary Peters' replacement, that is) to provide guidance to railroads on strategies to prevent pedestrian injuries at or near passenger stations, which could include audible warning devices, signs, signals, and fencing. The Secretary will also develop model legislation to States regarding removal of obstructions to roadway user

sight distance at grade crossings. These parts of the bill could save more lives than the more publicized positive train controls.

Text Messaging Ban

Last month, I mentioned that SB 28 (Simitian), which bans text-messaging while driving, also bans motorists using broadband personal communication devices, laptop computers and two-way messaging devices. But the new law, effective retroactively to July 2008, is more specific than that. The new law prohibits driving a motor vehicle while manually communicating with any person by writing, sending, or reading a text-based communication such as text-messaging, instant messaging and email. This prohibition does not include reading, selecting, or entering a telephone number or name for the purpose of making or receiving a telephone call, as long as the phone call is hands-free.

That sounds like a reasonable attempt to prohibit texting while allowing talking. However, as those of us with Blackberries, Windows Mobile phones, or iPhones know, we can do a lot of distracting things on those devices that don't involve "manually communicating with any person." I've come close to rear ending somebody while looking at Google Maps, but that's still legal. How is a cop supposed to know the difference? This new law seems to be unenforceable.

HOV Lane Signs for Motorcycles Vetoed

Alex Zupanski points out that AB 2617, which I wrote in September passed into law, was actually vetoed by the Governor. This bill would have required Caltrans to post signs in HOV lanes indicating it's OK to ride motorcycles in carpool lanes. Some motorcyclists asked for this bill because they were getting unkind looks from automobile drivers. You didn't know they were that sensitive, did you? Unlike most of his vetoes, Governor Arnold actually had time to explain his reasoning, which was that this would have cost the State too much money.

Speed Limits: Round Off, or Round Down?

By next month, Caltrans is expected to decide on a proposed change to the California MUTCD's setting of prima facie speed limits. Currently, we must round off the 85th percentile speed to the nearest 5 miles per hour. We can deduct at most another 5 miles per hour for roadway features not readily apparent to motorists. In short, the posted speed limit cannot be lower than 7 mph below the 85th.

The proposal from the California Traffic Control Devices Committee (CTCDC), according to the Auto Club's Hamid Bahadori, would allow the speed limit to be within 5 mph of the 85th percentile speed, that is, you can round down by more than 2 mph, plus take an

additional 5 mph reduction for unapparent roadway features.

Caltrans has been insisting on a median-valued "hard" floor, where the speed limit SHALL NOT be less than the 50th percentile. But the CTCDC proposes a soft floor, so that the posted speed SHOULD NOT be less than the 50th percentile. This was because many cities pointed out that for streets with very tight speed distributions, the difference between the 85th and 50th percentile could be less than 5 mph. Hamid says that Caltrans isn't allowed to change CTCDC's proposal for rounding either up or down with a soft 50th percentile floor. Caltrans either must approve CTCDC's proposal or let the current rules stand.

These analyses, and my predictions, are based on the world as it stood November 2, 2008, which is to say, before Obama won. Send comments to wokitsu@koacorporation.com. ◇

Announcements

Bird Rock Roundabout Showcase & Training

December 10, 2008, San Diego

There will be a showcase in San Diego providing information about how the Bird Rock community of San Diego uses roundabouts as part of their comprehensive traffic improvement plan.

Engineers from the City of San Diego will share their experiences in overcoming project opposition, collaborating with the disabled community to remove access barriers, develop trust and meaningful partnerships with the community, reduce cut-through traffic on residential streets, and more.

Following the showcase (December 11-12), Tech Transfer will be hosting a two-day comprehensive training course on design specifics involved with constructing roundabouts. Attendees will be guided through the design aspects and processes for roundabouts at existing and new intersections.

For more information about the roundabout showcase, please contact Pamela Pyle at (435) 797-2931 or Pamela.pyle@usu.edu.

For more information and to register for the Tech Transfer two-day training course, please visit: www.techtransfer.berkeley.edu/training. ◇

Mobility 21 - Continued from Page 4

He said that ridership is at an all-time high because people are trying to escape congestion and the high cost of gas but no state or federal money is available. At this time, we need to look for opportunities for public and private partnerships. He commented that we need to be the hunting dogs that sniff out funding opportunities. We also need technology to help become more efficient in our endeavors. We should also look at congestion pricing. There are many places around the world, from Singapore to Salt Lake City that have tested congestion pricing but not LA. With congestion growing on the Harbor Freeway and the San Bernardino Freeway, we need to examine this approach.

California State Assemblymember Mike Feuer spoke and urged us to take control of our local government by supporting Measure R. He commented that this funding could synchronize our signals, repave streets, fill potholes and expand the Gold Line but it would take a 2/3 vote. It could generate \$40 billion for the region in 40 years and would average about \$25 per person each year. This could give us more ways to improve air quality and spend more time with our families and not on the road. This measure has no jurisdictions or boundaries. A commuter travels between cities but doesn't want to think about crossing city limits. She just wants a smooth commute. We should all share this vision and gain control of our own destiny in LA County.

There were several break-out sessions such as the Environment and Goods Movement, Reducing Congestion in Major Metropolitan Areas and the Self-Help Model for a Path Towards a More Mobile Future. The session regarding congestion started with a speech from Steve Heminger, a member of the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission and Executive Director of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and he revealed that in 1982 LA was the only city that had its commuters averaging 40 hours per year on the road. However, in 2005, there were three dozen cities across the country that averaged the same time on the road for their commuters. Now, there are ten mega regions across the country vying for transportation funding. He mentioned that these ten mega regions have 65% of the population, 78% of the GDP, 92% of the congestion and 93% of the transit. Currently there are 108 transportation funding categories and they are being streamlined into 10 categories so that we can rebuild America. He also stressed that we are in a global community and that we must strive to be globally competitive and that's why goods movement and metromobility are so important to our economy. For more information go to:

www.transportationfortomorrow.org

Then Alan Lowenthal, Chair of the California State Senate Transportation and Housing Committee, spoke about a strategy for mobility. He said that we need to examine our infrastructure, ensure that we have accountability and work with the "political will." He mentioned that our infrastructure is deteriorating and that we must repair it before it is too late. We also need to create accountability and really measure what we say we are going to accomplish. We need to examine how funds are distributed and how projects are assessed. He said that we should strive for better performance standards and that we need to include environmental issues such as reducing pollution, vehicle miles driven and green house effects. The political will must take hold on a federal, state and local level. Changes must be implemented towards multi-modal travel, transit and congestion pricing. He said that the political will unfortunately took \$1.6 billion from transit and placed it into the general fund. Transportation funds for highways and transit should be a sensitive issue for all of us.

Robert Poole, Director of Transportation Studies for the Reason Foundation, said that there are three important issues today which are Urban Mobility, Goods Movement and Safety. He mentioned that interstate commerce should not be held hostage by local governments. However, local governments should not bear the whole burden for providing interstate commerce. It would be ideal if the federal government would allow urban regions to oversee their needs for multi modal transportation. He said that we should empower our urban regions. Right now, the money goes to Washington and it has a hard time finding its way back here. Mary Peters, DOT has a plan called Refocus, Reform and Renew regarding funding to metropolitan areas. A majority of the funding should be set aside for urban areas and multi modal projects with a benefit to cost ratio equal to or greater than two. He recommended stronger performance targets for these programs. There should also be more public-private partnerships, which are known as P3's, for projects over \$250 million.

Many of the speakers ended their presentations by reminding us that we should include all of the stake holders in the transportation process. When these stake holders have a stake in the project and feel a sense of ownership, the project can overcome many obstacles. Some of the stake holders may include railroads, trucks, autos, ports, environmental activists, transportation professionals and elected officials. ♦

More information about Mobility 21 can be found at their official website: www.mobility21coalition.com.

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This newsletter is a perfect venue for advertising your products and services, as it is circulated nine (9) times a year to more than 700 ITE recipients all over Southern California. Advertisements are priced reasonably for the benefit of our members.

There is no charge for brief job announcements or course announcements (about 100 words) that would be of interest to our members. Free announcements may be edited or condensed as necessary, though.

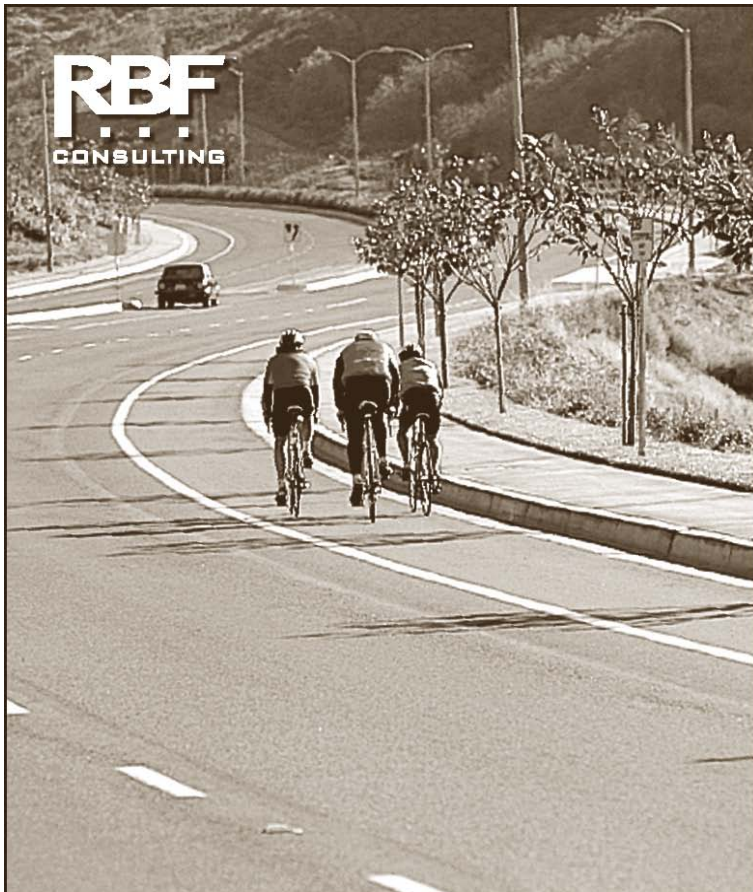
Thank you in advance for your contribution to the ITE Southern California Section.

On behalf of our Newsletter committee, I, Julia Wu, would like to thank you, all currently-committed sponsors, for your support. It is thanks to your help in sharing the production costs that makes the newsletter distribution possible and allows us to increase our student support. I hope the advertisements in our newsletter have contributed to raising your profiles in the local transportation industry. Please note that with the electronic newsletter, the ads are now full-page and in color. To our prospective sponsors, I encourage you to make your companies better known in the

community. We have vacancies **after March**. Feel free to contact me, Julia Wu, at jwu@koacorporation.com, to schedule your sponsorship ad. ◊

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Transportation Engineering/Public Works
Project Managers – Irvine, Camarillo &
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RBF is seeking Project Managers to lead a team of engineers and design staff in the development of technical transportation design work associated with Caltrans freeway, highway and local roadway improvement projects. Position requires a BSCE, PE, and 7+ years of progressively responsible experience in the design and management of transportation/public works projects. A strong background in AutoCAD and/or Microstation is essential.

Bridge Design Project Engineer - Irvine, CA

RBF has an additional need for an experienced Project Engineer to work on newly awarded state highway design projects. Requirements include 5+ years of experience, a career focus in bridge design and experience in bridge project development - initial studies (APS) to final PS&E for Caltrans reviewed projects. Position requires California PE and proficiency in preparation of design calculations, quantities, estimates and specifications.

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A Joint Luncheon Meeting You Don't Want to Miss !!

A Presentation on

“High-Speed Trains in Southern California

Project-Level EIR/EIS Briefing

By Eugene Kim

Anaheim to Los Angeles Project Manager, Consensus Planning Group

To be held on **Wednesday, November 19, 2008 at 11:30 AM at**



The Restaurant
AT KELLOGG RANCH



On the campus of **Cal Poly Pomona**
3801 W. Temple Avenue, Bldg. 79
Pomona, CA 91768

\$25 with advance reservation
(Before noon, Friday, November 14th)
\$30 at the door \$10 for students

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