

District 4–Alameda-Oakland Estuary Crossing Feasibility Study

Project Summary

Caltrans District 4 partnered with the City of Alameda, the City of Oakland, and the Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority (ACTIA), with MIG’s assistance, to engage residents in discussions about a potential bicycle and pedestrian crossing of the Oakland Estuary. The crossing would provide an alternative to the narrow, poorly lit bicycle/pedestrian path in the Posey Tube, which is the only connection available between West Alameda and Downtown Oakland. The process featured a series of technical and policy advisory committee meetings and five community workshops that yielded three preferred crossing alternatives for further study.



Outreach Methods

- Print advertising in local newspapers
- Online advertising
- Project brochure
- Workshop announcements: postcards, e-mail, local radio, City website
- Project stands at local festivals
- Brochures and promotional items for Bike-to-Work Day
- Meetings of local transportation commissions
- Meetings with Chinatown and Webster Street business districts
- Meetings with local advocacy groups

Graphic Recording

Graphic recording is a hallmark of MIG meeting facilitation in which workshop comments are recorded with colored markers on a large sheet of paper. This method allows participants to see that their comments have been noted, serves as a useful tool to guide the discussion, and provides a formal record of the meeting.

Comment Cards

MIG provided comment cards for participants who did not wish to speak publicly. Participants could fill out the cards and turn them in at the workshop itself or mail them afterward.

Policy and Technical Advisory Committees

The project team invited local and regional agency representatives to serve on a policy advisory committee to review and comment on project work and identify strengths, weaknesses, and potential regulatory constraints. Staff from these agencies and organizations was invited to join a technical advisory committee, which reviewed materials for technical feasibility, operability, efficiency, and other key issues.

Environmental Justice Community Involvement

Bilingual Chinese/English meeting invitations were sent to community residents, with special attention to the Chinatown neighborhood in Oakland. Posters included both Chinese-language and Spanish-language text, and a Cantonese interpreter provided language services at meetings upon request.



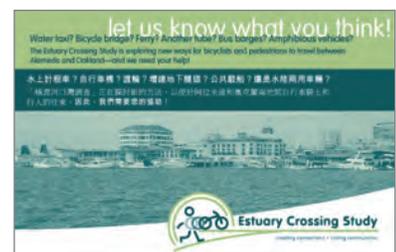
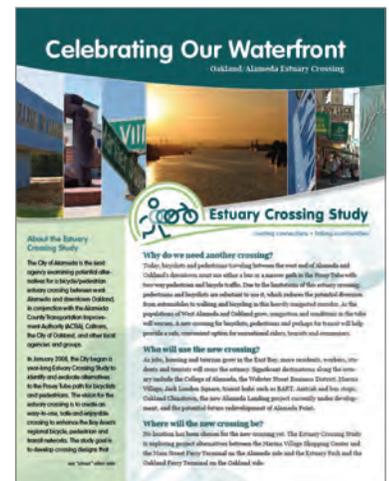
Public Involvement Tools

Community Meetings

Meetings held at different times on both the Oakland and the Alameda sides of the estuary ensured that any obstacles to crossing did not prevent attendance. This served a dual purpose—providing accessible locations for both Oakland and Alameda residents and offering alternative times.

Large Group Discussion

MIG staff facilitated a large group discussion around questions designed specifically to solicit input that could be utilized by the cities of Alameda and Oakland and Caltrans planning staff.



Deliverables

- PAC and TAC Meeting Summaries
- Community Workshop Summaries
- Final Project Report

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Lessons Learned

The value of public participation is greatly increased by providing materials and interpretation in all languages spoken by community members, and taking steps to engage members of all communities affected by a plan. These considerations aid in ensuring environmental justice in community involvement. Engagement of stakeholders, including elected officials, from other communities affected by the project is also critical to building strong local support for implementation.



Results

Oakland and Alameda communities came together for a common purpose and helped select three preferred alternatives for further study. Staff and officials from throughout the region came together for the first time to identify feasible solutions.