

District 3–Highway 99 Soundwall Community Safety and Enhancement Project

Project Summary

Caltrans District 3, the City of Sacramento, and Sacramento County, with assistance from MIG, partnered to address health and safety concerns in the right of way between the Highway 99 soundwall and several properties on the east side of Highway 99. MIG coordinated and facilitated a public outreach process to incorporate stakeholder input on outreach implementation strategies, to discuss issues and concerns, effectively present the community benefits of eliminating this buffer area by selling the State right of way to property owners, and facilitate the steps in the process. This relinquished right of way will result in savings in costs and resources for Caltrans maintenance.



Project Success

This planning and outreach work will be used as a model for future partnerships between Caltrans, local jurisdictions, and low-income communities. The project resulted in the creation of a guide which other Caltrans districts can utilize in similar processes.



Outreach Methods

- Door-to-door outreach and outreach packets (English and Spanish language materials)
- Letters to community members in English and Spanish
- Postcard invitations for community meetings
- Project web page (www.99soundwall.org)
- Meeting amenities including food and bilingual childcare



Public Involvement Tools

Community Meetings

The project team organized and facilitated two community meetings in order to provide project information to property owners and residents in the project area. Both meetings were held at convenient locations in the project area. Food and bilingual childcare were provided. All meeting materials were provided in both English and Spanish.

On the Ground Outreach and Communications

The MIG Team included a grass-roots subcontractor who conducted door-to-door outreach in the project area. This provided a “friendly face” for the project, and provided project updates and an opportunity for property owners to ask questions and voice their concerns. This helped the project team remain responsive to community requests for information and action, as needed.

Environmental Justice Community Involvement

One of the primary objectives for this project was to promote environmental justice through improved public safety within the project area, which is a predominantly low-income residential area. Public participation in this process was necessarily targeted towards property owners and residents of the project area. All project information and community meeting materials were provided in English and Spanish languages.



Lessons Learned

This project represents Caltrans’ first effort to sell excess highway right of way lands to adjacent property owners to address public safety concerns and improve the environment for community members. Key lessons learned include the importance of working collaboratively within Caltrans and with local jurisdictions, and identifying answers

and solutions to key process points prior to sharing information regarding the project and project timeline with the community.



Results

MIG’s facilitation of this planning process helped result in a strong and effective collaboration between Caltrans District 3 Planning, Right of Way, Maintenance and Surveying departments. Approximately 25 percent of the property owners in the project area have already expressed intentions to participate and the vast majority of key issues and challenges associated with this process have been addressed and resolved.

Deliverables

PDT and Community Meeting Summaries

Community Meeting Outreach Materials–Postcard Invitations, Flyers and PowerPoint

“Frequently Asked Questions”

Step by Step Guide to the Property Purchasing Process

Visualizations/Sketches of Current Conditions and Potential Improvements to Property

Project Guide for Other Caltrans Districts