

ALAMEDA CORRIDOR, LOS ANGELES COUNTY, USA

OVERVIEW

LOCATION: LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CA.

SCOPE: INTRA-URBAN

TRANSPORT MODE: RAIL

PRINCIPAL CONSTRUCTION: TRENCH

NEW LINK: YES

PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVES

STRATEGIC TRANSPORT LINK

CONGESTION RELIEF

REDUCED POLLUTION & ACCIDENTS

TRAVEL TIME SAVINGS

REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

SUSTAINABILITY

EMERGENT OBJECTIVES:

LOCAL ACCESSIBILITY/REGENERATION

PRINCIPAL STAKEHOLDERS

SPONSOR: ACTA

FUNDER: FEDERAL GOVT, PORTS, PRIVATE INVESTORS

PROJECT MANAGER: ACET

MAIN CONTRACTOR: TUTOR-SALIBA

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

PLANNING START DATE: 12/1984

CONSTRUCTION START DATE: 04/1997

OPERATION START DATE: 04/2002

MONTHS IN PLANNING: 148

MONTHS IN CONSTRUCTION: 60

PROJECT COMPLETED: 13 MONTHS

BEHIND SCHEDULE (MID-CORR. TRENCH)

COSTS (IN 2010 USD)

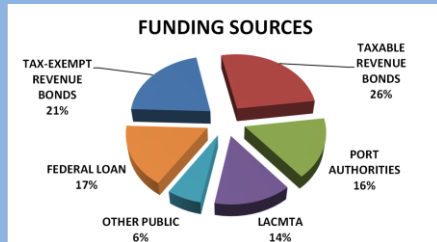
PREDICTED COST: 2.50BN

ACTUAL COST: 2.88BN

PROJECT COMPLETED:

15% OVER BUDGET

FUNDING: 52% PUBLIC : 48% PRIVATE



INFRASTRUCTURE QUANTITIES

LENGTH: 32KM

COST PER KM (2010 USD): 0.09BN

PATRONAGE

FORECAST TRAFFIC:

100 TRAINS PER DAY BY 2020 (1991)

ACTUAL TRAFFIC:

44 TRAINS PER DAY (2008)



INTRODUCTION

The Alameda Corridor, a 32km express freight rail line, links the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach to the national rail network and railyards of Los Angeles. It opened in 2002.

The line is owned by the Alameda Corridor Transportation Authority, and is funded through user fees paid by private railroads.

BACKGROUND

The main objective of the project was to serve increasing levels of activity at one of the world's busiest port complexes, relieving congestion on the surrounding road and rail network and in the ports and nearby areas. It also enabled the elimination of 200 at-grade rail crossings, improving accessibility for local traffic and the local urban environment, and helping stimulate economic development in the area.

The Southern California Association of Governments was the initiator of the project, forming a Ports Advisory Committee which recommended consolidating the four existing rail lines into one grade-separated route, and subsequently setting up the Alameda Corridor Task Force.

The Alameda Corridor Transportation Authority, a joint powers agency, was formed in 1989 by the two city governments, and also represented other bodies including the port authorities, and federal road and rail administrations. The three private railroads operating in the area sold their rights-of-way to the port authorities and now share rights of way on the Corridor.

Three successive pieces of legislation on multi-modal transport planning strengthened the role of metropolitan planning organisations, increased funding flexibility and eligibility, and promoted the inclusion of freight interests in the process.

Governments of the eight 'Corridor Cities' through which the Corridor passes were also represented on ACTA's governing board, although some opposed the project. ACTA negotiated separate agreements with them, providing funds for specific mitigation measures. The governing board was restructured in 1996 to reduce the influence of the Corridor Cities.

TIMELINE

- CONCEPTION: 1970S: PORTS CONSIDER RAIL AND HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS IN RESPONSE TO INCREASES IN CARGO CROSSINGS
- CONCEPTION: 1981: PORTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED
- CONCEPTION: 1984 (DEC)/85: PAC PLAN ADOPTED. ALAMEDA CORRIDOR TASK FORCE ESTABLISHED
- INCEPTION: 1989: CITY GOVERNMENTS FORM ALAMEDA CORRIDOR TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (ACTA)
- CONTEXT: 1991: INTERMODAL SURFACE TRANSPORT EFFICIENCY ACT AUTHORIZES FUNDING FOR HIGH PRIORITY CORRIDORS
- CONTROVERSY: 1993: FOUR CORRIDOR CITIES SUE PORT OF LONG BEACH AGAINST EXPANDING
- INCEPTION: 1993: ACTA ISSUES (STATE) ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
- INCEPTION: 1994: RAILROADS AGREE TO SELL RIGHTS OF WAY TO PORTS
- INCEPTION: 1995: CORRIDOR NAMED NATIONAL HIGH PRIORITY CORRIDOR – ELIGIBLE FOR FEDERAL LOAN
- INCEPTION: 1996: ACTA ISSUES FINAL (FEDERAL) ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT. FEDERAL APPROVAL FOR PROJECT
- CONTROVERSY: 1996: LEGAL CHALLENGE BY FOUR CORRIDOR CITIES REJECTED
- CONSTRUCTION: 1997 (APR): CONSTRUCTION BEGINS – BRIDGE ACROSS LOS ANGELES RIVER
- INCEPTION: 1997: DESIGN-BUILD APPROACH AUTHORIZED FOR MID-CORRIDOR TRENCH, SAVING 14-18 MONTHS
- INCEPTION: 1998: RAILROADS AGREE TO PAY USER FEES, CREATING REVENUE STREAM FOR LOAN REPAYMENTS AND BOND ISSUE
- CONSTRUCTION: 1998: TUTOR-SALIBA AWARDED CONTRACT FOR MID-CORRIDOR TRENCH, CONSTRUCTION BEGINS
- INCEPTION: 1999: PRIVATE INVESTORS PURCHASE LAST OF REVENUE BONDS
- CONSTRUCTION: 2001: EXCAVATION OF MID-CORRIDOR TRENCH COMPLETED
- DELIVERY: 2002 (APR): OPERATION BEGINS
- DELIVERY: 2004: ACTA REPAYS FEDERAL LOAN 28 YEARS AHEAD OF SCHEDULE

ACTA also introduced a range of community outreach measures. Environmental impact assessments were required under both federal and state law (the former only after federal funding was identified), and involved public hearings and community meetings.

CHARACTERISTICS

The project cost was estimated at USD 1.8bn in 1996 (USD 2.50bn in 2010 prices)ⁱ. The final cost was USD 2.4bn in 2003 (USD 2.88bn in 2010 prices). Construction, design and engineering accounted for 70% of the total, acquiring rights-of-way from the railroad companies 16%, and financial and legal costs 14%.

The project was managed by the Alameda Corridor Engineering Team, a joint venture between DMJM Harris, Moffatt & Nichol, Jenkins/Gales & Martinez, and TELACU, on behalf of ACTA. It consists of three sections: North End Project, Mid-Corridor Trench and South End Project.

The Mid-Corridor, the largest part of the project, was built through one of the country’s largest Design-Build contracts, let to the Tutor-Saliba Corporation. It is a below-ground, triple-tracked rail line, 16km long, 10m deep and 15m wide, and allows trains to bypass 145 km of early 20th century branch lines.

FUNDING

In 1998, the railroads agreed to pay ACTA a container-based user fee for access to the Corridor. The projected revenue stream allowed ACTA to finance a revenue bonds issue for USD 1.1bn and helped secure a federal loan for USD 0.4bn. The project’s eligibility for federal funding rests on the 1991 Act (‘ISTEA’) and its designation as a national high priority corridor. Other public bodies provided additional grant funding, including the port authorities and the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transport Authority.

In the year of opening, 2002, an average of 39 trains per day used the Corridor. Numbers peaked at 55 in 2008, falling to 44 in 2008. This represents approximately a third of the freight traffic from the two ports. The share is lower than initial expectations, as road freight has remained extremely competitive. However, a general increase in port activities and the empty container discount have maintained performance levels and ACTA repaid its federal loan 28 years ahead of schedule, in 2004.

ⁱ Costs have been converted to USD at 2010 prices, using historic inflation rates and current exchange rates, to allow comparison between projects.