



# BEHIND THE CURTAIN: DELIVERING ON LARGE PROJECTS

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# SBCTA – WEST VALLEY CONNECTOR

Connecting Communities, Easing  
Congestion, and Advancing  
Transit Across Western San  
Bernardino County

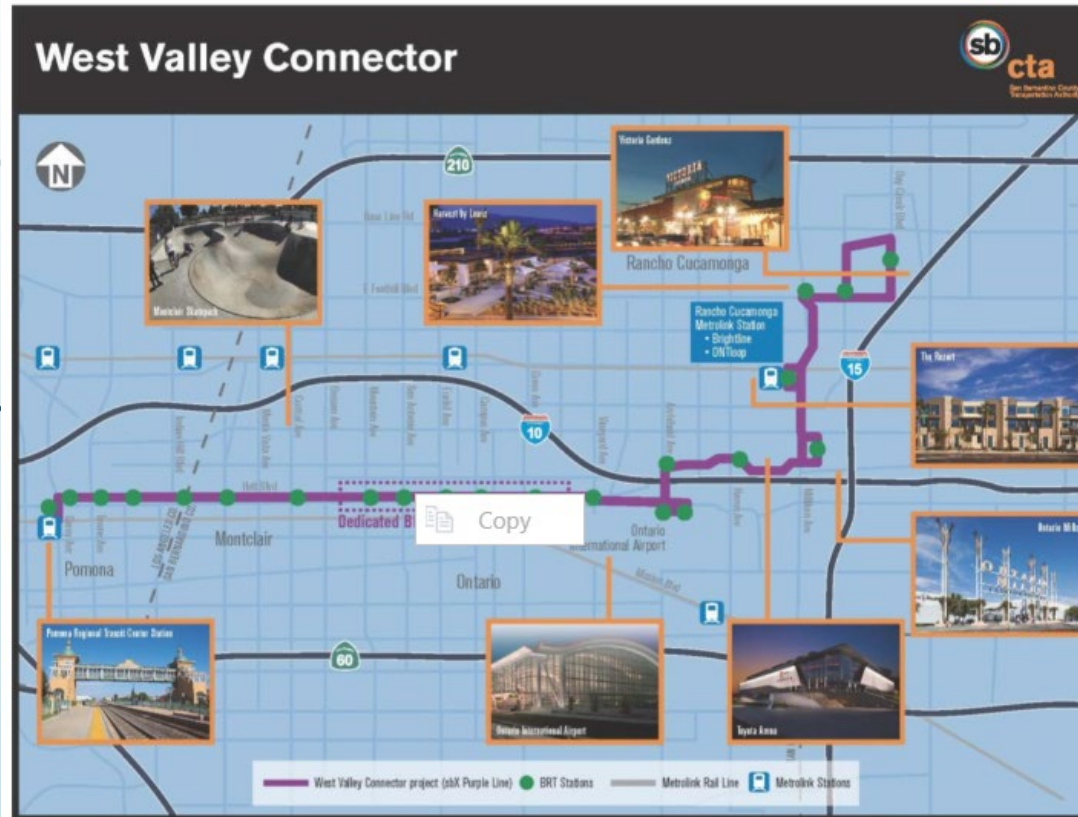


# Project Background

- Zero-emission Bus Rapid Transit system
- 35-mile-long transit improvement project
- 2 transportation entities, 5 cities, 2 counties
- Phase 1 – 19 miles, adds 3.5 miles as center running, dedicated bus-only lanes, 21 stations
- 1 Right-of-way Certification



# Project Background (cont'd)



- 241 Parcels impacted
- Partial and Fee Acquisitions
- Temporary Construction Easements
- Divided Project into 4 Segments
- Each segment had a different acquisition consultant
- Filed over 100 Cases

# Acquisition Consultants Work

- Coordinated negotiation strategy
- Document consistency
- Coordination with other consultants
- FTA oversight

## Acquisition Process

- Property Identification and Mapping
- Title and Ownership Research
- Valuation and Appraisal
- Negotiation and Acquisition
- Legal and Condemnation Actions
- Environmental and Regulatory Compliance
- Documentation and Recordation





# Acquisition Consultants Work (cont'd)



Importance of personal interaction with property owners and tenants

Common issues encountered

Finding relocation sites

Involvement of legal counsel

# Legal Team Involvement

- Appraisals were completed and offers had been made
- Prepared templates for all legal documents to ensure consistency
- Participated in weekly calls with consultants and Project Manager
- Had take areas staked
- Walked every property to become familiar with potential issues





# Legal Team Involvement



- Discussed potential mitigation measures with team
- Willingness to meet with and listen to concerns raised by owners and tenants and their attorneys
- Engaged experts early in the process
- Took inventory of tenants
- Propounded discovery to narrow the issues
- Mediation



# Overlap Between Acquisition Consultant and Legal Team

- Responsiveness to issues raised by owners and tenants
- Lots of discussions relating to relocation, as well as assessing and managing risk/exposure
- Construction mitigation measures
- Street widths widely varied
- So many surprises!



# DIAMOND VALLEY RESERVOIR



# Project Background



- Metropolitan Water District
- 54 Board members
- Real estate committee
- No federal funding
- 13,000 + acres
- 6-month supply of water for Southern California
- \$2 billion project

# Challenges

- Native American artifacts
- Skeletons of Saber Tooth tiger, Woolly Mammoth & other fossils
- ❖ Site uncovered 100,000+ fossils and artifacts, including prehistoric animal remains of mammoths recovered during excavation
- Stevens Kangaroo Rat
- Challenging topography





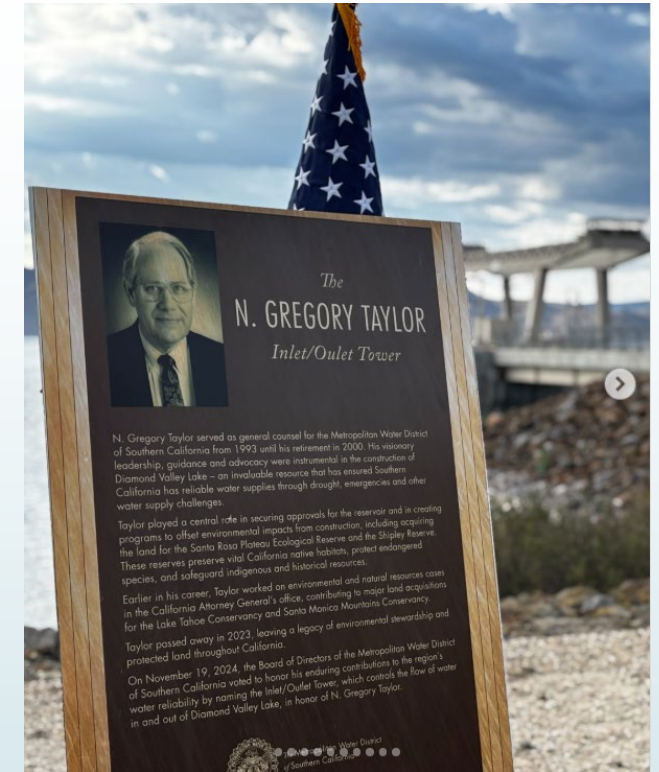
# Pre-Acquisition Work

- This area was not developed like it is now
- A variety of very unique land uses
- Valuation of improvements
- Engaging appropriate experts
- Lots of people living in isolated areas, off the grid
- They were not proponents of the Project



# Legal Team Involvement

- 4 law firms - outside counsel
- A variety of interesting property uses (dairy farms, quarter horse farms, breeding pigeons for racing, agricultural uses, airplane landing strip, meth labs)
- Sensitive archeological artifacts
- Walked every parcel
- I handled about 35 parcels, several went to trial
- Importance of expert witnesses



# Insights from Both Perspectives



- Understand the Project and the timing constraints
- Communication with experts and consultants is critical
- Know the property and the business being acquired

- Look for ways to mitigate damages
- Listen to concerns raised by owners and tenants



# A Few More Insights

- Importance of the internal relocation appeal and hearing process
- Resistance faced was significant (literal shots were fired)
- Best fishing spots





**Questions!**

