

Faster Freight, Cleaner Air

Community Concerns Over Increased Rail Traffic

**Nancy M. Ramos
City of Commerce
February 1, 2006**

Agenda

- Purpose
- City of Commerce Overview
- Expansion and Resulting Issues
 - Rail Subsidies
 - Affect on Community Health
- What We Can Do - Solutions
- Summary/Next Steps
- Questions

My Perspective

■ Introduction

- Lifelong city resident, retired city employee, council member since 2003
- Committed to balancing need to maintain strong economic base with the community's right to live, work and play in a safe and healthy region
- Proponent for programs and policies that reduce the air quality impacts of goods movement industry including railroad activities in southeast Los Angeles

City Overview

- City of Commerce
- Incorporated: January 28, 1960
- Motto: The Model City
- Location: 6.6 miles Southeast of Downtown Los Angeles



City Overview (Cont.)

- 13,000 residents, 1,800 businesses, four parks, four libraries and an industrial base that supplies goods to the nation
 - Hub connecting the ports, rail yards and truck routes
 - Regulated growth is essential



Expansion and Resulting Issues

- Rail expansion has led to increased truck traffic, transportation issues, a loss of property and pollution for many communities
 - AQMD reports locomotives in So. California emit 37 tons per day of smog and particulate-forming nitrogen oxides



Industry reluctant to embrace environmental and safety improvements

Impact on Communities

- Southern California cities lack resources to address issues caused by industry expansion on their own
- Issues Commerce has tried to resolve
 - Derailment, unsafe rail crossings
 - Yard noise, congestion, increased diesel emissions, health issues,
- Lack of adequate Federal and State regulations

Cities need to work together with Gateway Cities, AQMD, CPUC and others to bring about changes

Impact on Communities (Cont.)

- Lack of regulation of goods movement has lead to a free ride for the rail industry
 - Industry's use of eminent domain has reduced redevelopment opportunities and local tax revenue
 - Refusal to pay fees for road repairs
 - "Exempt" from environmental documentation and CEQA regulations

Impact on Health

- Increased incidents of cancer, asthma, bronchitis and learning disabilities due to the high rate of diesel and particulate pollution that is related to rail operations



Protecting Public Interests What we can do

- Support increased federal spending and strengthen laws for track and equipment inspections
- Urge adoption of permanent container fees to fund community and regional infrastructure improvements
- Adopt emission-reduction regulations/legislation
- Support proposed regulation of OGVs auxiliary diesel engines within state water

Support measures to achieve pollution reduction goals

Summary/Next Steps

- Urge Goods Movement industry to adopt changes that reduce air pollution and compensate cities for cost of infrastructure improvements
- Hold the rail industry accountable for their action and use of public property
- Allow state and local communities some oversight of the industry

We must work together to persuade railroads to address community needs