
**TRANSPORTATION CONFORMITY WORKING GROUP
of the
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS**

**September 25, 2007
Minutes**

THE FOLLOWING MINUTES ARE A SUMMARY OF THE MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION CONFORMITY WORKING GROUP. AN AUDIOCASSETTE TAPE OF THE ACTUAL MEETING IS AVAILABLE FOR LISTENING IN SCAG'S OFFICE.

The Meeting of the Transportation Conformity Working Group was held at the SCAG office in Los Angeles.

In Attendance:

Hussainy, Yasmein El	Metro
Marroquin, Nancy	Metro
McAllester, Brad	Metro
Poe, Lisa	SANBAG
Shavit, Avital	Metro
Walecka, Carla	TCA

SCAG Staff

Amatya, Naresh	
Asuncion, John	
Ayala, Rosemary	
Del Rosario, Sheryll	
Mann, Betty	
Nadler, Jonathan	
Sherwood, Arnie	SCAG, ITS UC Berkeley
Wen, Frank	

Via Teleconference:

Alvarez, Grace	RCTC
Bechtel, Cathy	RCTC
Cacatian, Ben	Ventura County
Ewing, Andrew	Caltrans District 7
Fagan, Paul	Caltrans District 8
Johnson, Sandy	Caltrans District 11
Lay, Keith	LSA& Associates
Lopez, Josie	IVAG
Mazur, Jean	FHWA

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Medina, Shirley	RCTC
Morgan, Kurt	URS
O'Connor, Karina	EPA, Region 9
Sells, Eyvonne	ARBSAQMD
Wade, Dennis	ARB
Williams, Leann	Caltrans District 7
Wood, Michael	OCTA
Yoon, Andrew	Caltrans District 7
Behtash, Arman	Caltrans District 12

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

Brad McAllester, Metro, called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

2.0 PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There were no comments.

3.0 CONSENT CALENDAR

3.1 Approval Item

3.1 TCWG August 28, 2007 Meeting Minutes

It was noted that Eyvonne Sells and Carol Gomez of the AQMD participated in the meeting via teleconference.

4.0 INFORMATION ITEMS

4.1 RTP Update

Naresh Amatya, SCAG, stated that staff was in the process of developing a Draft 2008 RTP and planned to release it for public review and comment on November 1st. In order to achieve completion of the draft, SCAG has scheduled six workshops on the RTP.

The August 30th workshop focused on finance. Staff discussed the baseline revenue forecast and the cost associated with the 2008 RTP. At this

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workshop, the Transportation and Communications Committee (TCC) requested to have an additional workshop to discuss possible funding strategies, which would provide the TCC another opportunity provide staff direction in terms of moving forward with augmenting of the funding sources for the RTP. This workshop is scheduled for October 11th at SCAG.

There was also a workshop held in Wilmington on September 20th which focused on goods movement. There was a lot of discussion about different strategies that staff is currently reviewing. A follow-up workshop is scheduled for October 3rd at SCAG to further discuss goods movement strategies.

The workshop scheduled for October 4th, which will be held at SCAG, will focus on RTP Corridor Strategies. A workshop on October 18th, which will be held at the Ontario Convention Center, will focus on aviation, high-speed transportation system, and transit and land use. On October 25th, another workshop will be held at OCTA. This workshop will review all the strategies and recommendations that will go into the Draft RTP. This will be the final workshop prior to the public release of the draft 2008 RTP.

SCAG anticipates release the Draft RTP at the November 1st meeting of the TCC meeting. Updated information on the workshops is posted on SCAG's website.

There are four major strategies that staff will be focusing on in terms of developing the plan: 1) system preservation, 2) system operations, 3) systems management, 4) and growth. Staff is also reviewing critical system expansions.

Jean Mazur, FHWA, requested staff prepare a memo for the TCWG outlining RTP assumptions. Mr. Amatya responded that staff could put together a memo for the TCWG that would detail and list what the basic assumptions are in terms of projects and socio-economic data.

Jonathan Nadler, SCAG, encouraged the TCWG to participate in the RTP Workshops, and especially the October 18th workshop which will focus on growth assumptions.

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Frank Wen, SCAG, gave the committee an update on the Integrated Growth Forecast for the 2008 RTP. The early segment of the forecast process was used in developing the Regional Housing Needs Assessment Plan. The last segment of the process is to develop the Growth Alternative for the 2008 RTP from 2014 through 2035.

Mr. Wen also stated that staff anticipated releasing the Growth Forecast along with the Draft RTP on November 1st for public review and comment. Staff will be presenting the forecast to the Imperial Valley Association of Governments (IVAG) on October 4th

Mr. Wen described the four Growth Alternatives for the 2008 RTP Environmental Impact Report:

- 1) **2035 Baseline** – This will incorporate all subregion/local projections.
- 2) **2004 RTP Update** – This will be based on the 2035 baseline at the regional/county level.
- 3) **Compass Blueprint Land Use Alternative** – This will utilize the land use scenarios based on Compass 2%. This focuses development on employment centers, transit centers, and establishing a jobs/housing balance.
- 4) **Envision** – For the PEIR, SCAG will develop a more aggressive land use scenario based on the transit stations, regional employment centers, and the interaction of those two locations in the area.

Based on staff's scenarios and building and modeling exercises, SCAG's Community Housing Economic Development (CEHD) Committee has requested that staff identify the transit stations, where they are located and how they are prioritized. Staff will then see what kind of growth can be worked out with local jurisdiction and sub-region jointly to include the additional growth.

Richard Kuzmyak, Caliper Corporation, discussed 4D Modeling for Compass Blueprint. The 4D's of modeling include: diversity, density, design, and regional transit accessibility. The goal of the 4D modeling is to quantify the effects of the Compass Blueprint land use concepts on travel and air quality. The model will modify/enhance SCAG's regional model to reflect "intra-zonal" changes. At the macro level, the 4D model will

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primarily analyze commuting travel. The micro level will focus more on non-work travel.

The models are now in the process of being applied. The 4D model will run two primary scenarios: 2035 Baseline and 2035 Compass Blueprint. These will be applied to each Transportation Analysis Zone (TAZ) in order to calculate vehicle miles traveled.

4.2 RTIP Update

John Asuncion, SCAG, announced that Amendment No. 10 had been posted on SCAG's website. The public review of the amendment ends on Friday, October 19. SCAG has one last scheduled amendment currently in development. Submittals are due to SCAG in October. The 2008 RTIP Guidelines will be brought forward to the Transportation & Communications Committee and Regional Council for approval on October 4.

Jessica Kirchner, SCAG, announced that staff had done a conformity finding for Amendment No. 10, which is also posted on SCAG's website.

John Asuncion gave the TCWG an update on the efforts to include clarification of unique project modeling scenarios in the RTIP Guidelines. SCAG staff has had on-going discussions with FHWA, EPA, and Caltrans to review the following scenarios:

- 1) **Arterial gap closure widening project:** It was agreed that any time there is a gap closure (with no lane limit) it would be have to be modeled.
- 2) **Extended inter-change ramp acceleration/deceleration lanes:** There is no need for this scenario to be modeled if the ramp is a quarter mile or less.
- 3) **Mainline auxiliary lanes:** It was agreed that if there is an auxiliary lane between two interchanges it needs to be modeled.
- 4) **Interchange entry ramp widening that includes an HOV preferential lane:** This project is not considered regionally significant. As a result, this ramp scenario does not need to be modeled.
- 5) **Interchange improvement with exit and/or entry ramp lane widening:** This project is not considered regionally significant. As a result, this ramp scenario does not need to be modeled.

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6) **Extended arterial right-turn lanes:** The key question raised was, “How long does the extended arterial right turn lane need to be before it is required to be modeled?” A comment was made on Scenario 6 that the description and the diagram did not support one another in a way that is not ambiguous. It was recommended that staff acknowledge this when it rewrites the final revised guidelines.

One question raised was regarding capacity enhancing projects, specifically a lane off-ramp all the way to the street. Mike Brady responded that if it is currently one lane and a lane is going to be added all the way to the street so that there will be two lanes, that is capacity enhancing and would need to be regionally modeled. On the other hand, if there is currently one lane off the freeway and will retain having one lane off the freeway but there is a need to punch the ramp out to four lanes to accommodate all left and right turns, that is channelization.

John Asuncion stated that it appeared the TCWG had reached an agreement on how Scenarios 1 through 5 should be approached. However, the correct distance needs to be established for Scenario 6, Extended Arterial Right-Turn Lanes.

Another question raised was whether the projects submitted via the ~~Highway Safety Program Improvement Project~~ *State Highway Operation and Protection Program* (SHOPP) are exempt. Mike Brady stated that the exemption is not based on whether or not the scenario is in the SHOPP, rather, the exemption is based on the character of the project. Most of the projects on today’s agenda would probably be SHOPP funded and not all of the projects would necessarily be exempt from conformity.

Staff will incorporate the changes into the RTIP Guidelines and send it out to the TCWG to give it the opportunity to review it before staff moves forward. In response to a question, staff confirmed that the new transportation model includes Imperial County.

4.3 AQMP Update

Jonathan Nadler, SCAG, stated that he had sent an e-mail to the TCWG with the staff report which ARB released regarding the State

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Implementation Plan (SIP) as well as the South Coast Plan both of which will be considered this Thursday by the Air Resources Board (ARB). The ARB is also considering a potential SIP modification relative to pesticide regulation in Ventura County.

The ARB is now proposing emission reduction commitments that meet the carrying capacity target for PM_{2.5} attainment by 2014 in the South Coast Air Basin that was derived from SCAQMD modeling. The additional control measures are identified and summarized on the AQMD and ARB websites. In terms of goods movement control measures, the measures that were originally proposed by SCAG are not in the SIP.

Mr. Nadler noted that the revisions to the State Strategy necessitated revision to the defined state measures that were previously included in the on-road emission budgets. The revisions will be noted by the ARB for a future hearing on the budgets because the ARB felt the items would need to be released for a 30-day review.

Dennis Wade, ARB, clarified that the ARB will release the budgets by mid-October for the November 15th ARB hearing in Sacramento.

ARB and the Ventura, Mojave, and Antelope air districts are still working on the attainment demonstrations for these non-attainment areas. The emission budgets for these areas will be forthcoming as that work progresses.

4.4 Projects Requiring Follow-Up

- RIV031218: Mid-County Parkway
Qualitative PM Hot Spot Analysis
Karina O'Conner, EPA, and Jean Mazur, FHWA, both requested that the project sponsor send a revised document that addressed the new PM 2.5 standard. Once the revisions are incorporated, the project will be deemed acceptable for NEPA review.

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- Mission Boulevard Widening Qualitative PM Hot Spot Analysis
Similar to Mid-County Parkway, lMs. O’Conner and Ms. Mazur requested that the project sponsor send a revised document that addressed the new PM 2.5 standard. Once the revisions are incorporated, the project will be deemed acceptable for NEPA review.
- SBD031276: Ranchero Road PM Hot Spot Analysis Form
It was determined that the project is not in a PM2.5 non-attainment area. No further interagency consultation is necessary.
- ORA120316: Crown Valley Parkway PM Hot Spot Analysis Form
Caltrans had submitted this project to the FHWA in July at which time the TCWG had determined that it was not a project of air quality concern. Caltrans is waiting for FHWA, via e-mail, on the project.
- SBD35556: Victorville PM Hot Spot Analysis Form
The Project Description has been revised. This may potentially require an RTIP Amendment. Project is pending until this discrepancy is reconciled.

4.5 Review of PM Hot Spot Interagency Review Forms

- **ORA120326 - Ortega Highway:** Not a POAQC.

- **RIV050534 – I-215/Newport Road:** Not a POAQC.

- **RIV031209 – Portola Avenue and I-10 Interchange:** Not a POAQC.
However, awaiting pending confirmation with Caltrans District 8.

- **RIV011241 – City of Corona, Auto Center Drive/Burlington Northern Santa Fe:** It was determined that the project should not have been included in the PM Hot Spot review as a result of it being a grade separation. This project will be removed from consideration.

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Andrew Yoon, Caltrans District 7, stated that there was a PM Hot Spot Analysis still pending from the May 2007 TCWG meeting, LAOD332, I-405, La Tierra. This is a Section 6004 CE. Determination is requested from Caltrans. Jonathan Nadler stated that he would follow-up on the project and bring a determination back at the next meeting of the TCWG.

5.0 CHAIR'S REPORT

No new items to report.

6.0 INFORMATION SHARING

7.0 ADJOURNMENT

Chair McAllester adjourned the meeting at 12:05 p.m.

The next Transportation Conformity Working Group meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 23, 2007 at the SCAG office in Los Angeles.