REPORT

DATE: October 2, 2003

TO: Community, Economic and Human Development Committee

FROM: Lynn Harris, Manager, Community Development Division, 213/236-1875, harris@scag.ca.gov

SUBJECT: Release of the draft 2004 RTP growth forecast for public review

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S APPROVAL:

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Approve the release of the draft 2004 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) growth forecast for public review.

SUMMARY:

The Growth Vision (Hybrid) Plan Alternative, as described herein, is being recommended for draft RTP release, as a result of 2 years of analysis and consultation with various task forces and this committee.

This alternative contains the following features:

- Honors local input for growth for the first ten years of the plan (through 2010)
- Outperforms all other alternatives examined
- Includes the economic development strategies in Operation Jumpstart with the expectation that within the next 10 years these programs will be implemented
- Assumes some level of local land use policy change only after 2010

SCAG will continue is Growth Visioning efforts for at least seven years in order to continuing working throughout the region to accomplish needed urban form strategies after 2010. There will be 3 RTP updates in the next 10 years that will allow us to check our progress. We will be able to assess the regional feasibility of full implementation during this period. The intent of this action is to release a draft RTP for a six month period in order to receive public input on this transportation/land use approach. We will seek further CEHD action in a public hearing in March 2004 for approval of the RTP

BACKGROUND:

CEHD Approval of 5 Growth Projections for Evaluation

On May 1, 2003, five growth projections were presented to the CEHD Committee. These projections were presented after rigorous and extensive analyses over the prior 18 months by SCAG staff and the

Forecasting Technical Task Force (FTTF) and review by independent demographic and economic experts, subregional representatives, jurisdictional representatives, academic researchers, and other interested parties. The analyses incorporated future demographic and economic outlook in addition to historical trends at national, state, regional and county levels. Assumptions and methodologies for use in developing these projections at the regional and county levels were approved by the FTTF.

Upon completion of the report by the Executive Director, the CEHD Committee adopted the following:

1. Maintain Trend Projection regional totals.
2. Move forward on all five growth projections including Trend/Local Input Projection (A), Trend/Technically Balanced Growth Projection (TBGP), Trend/TBGP (Modified), PILUT Scenario 1, and PILUT Scenario 2 to Phase II evaluation.
3. Continue consultation with subregions on policy options for the purposes of consistency and bring back any technical issues to the Forecasting Technical Task Force (FTTF) and Community, Economic and Human Development (CEHD) Committee.
4. Meet with DOF on State projections through summer of 2003.
5. Bring draft RTP to both CEHD and TCC for action in September 2003.
6. Continue to bring lessons learned at COMPASS workshops to CEHD.
7. Hold future TCC / CEHD joint special meetings.

This report summarizes the progress and actions taken since this decision that lead to today's recommended action to approve the Growth Forecast as a component of the Plan Alternative and release the draft RTP for public review.

Summary of Scenario Evaluation

Following May1, SCAG staff moved all five growth projections (listed as #2 in the action approved May 1) to phase II evaluation. Phase II evaluation included adding transportation infrastructure to the five projections, now referred to as scenarios. Preliminary evaluation included analysis of mobility and accessibility using a network that included all committed projects (also referred to as Tier 2 network). The performance of these five scenarios was compared against the 2000 Base Year and the 2030 No Project condition. This analysis did not clearly identify major performance differences between the three technical scenarios; however, it did begin to reflect differences in the policy-based PILUT 1 & 2 scenarios.

Next, staff conducted a similar evaluation of the five scenarios using a Plan network which represented the modified 2001 RTP modified list of projects for the three technical scenarios and a targeted list of projects with the same overall costs for the PILUT 1 & 2 scenarios (PILUT 1 focused primarily on expanding high capacity transit services in the densified urban areas and PILUT 2 consisted primarily of highway and arterial expansions in the outlying areas of the region). The results indicated that PILUT 1 & PILUT 2 perform better than the three technical scenarios. Specifically, PILUT 1 and PILUT 2 show a reduction in hours of daily of 700,000 and 500,000, respectively. The three technical scenarios each reduce delay by 200,000 hours. Once

more, this analysis did not clearly identify major performance differences between the three technical scenarios.

These findings were presented to the Plans & Programs Technical Advisory Committee (P & P TAC) on August 26, 2003 and at the Joint Policy Committee RTP Workshop on September 11, 2003. These findings were then used to develop a land use adjustment strategy upon which to develop the draft Plan.

CEHD Direction to Adjust Growth Projections for RTP/EIR No Project Alternative

On September 4, 2003, the CEHD Committee received a report summarizing the discrepancies and/or uncertainties between SCAG's trend projections and recently released DOF and EDD data as follows: 1) the population appears to be underestimated in SCAG's forecast; 2) SCAG's households data appear to be overestimated; and 3) SCAG's job projections appear to be overestimated.

CEHD directed staff to continue to refine and evaluate the data, and make adjustments to the Trend Projections according to the recent DOF Population, Household, and EDD Employment data for 2000 – 2003 for use as No Project RTP/EIR Alternative and to then present the adjusted Trend Projections, the results of the evaluation of the Trend at the Joint Policy Committee special meetings on September 11 and 29, 2003. This was presented on September 11.

Comparison of Trend Projections to Revised No Project (in 1000's)

	Trend		No Project		Difference (No Project - Trend)	
	2010	2030	2010	2030	2010	2030
Population	18,759	22,410	19,236	22,890	480	480
Households	6,243	7,869	6,073	7,476	-170	-390
Employment	9,047	10,434	8,778	10,168	-270	-270

Development of Growth Vision RTP Alternative

Based on the analyses of the initial five scenarios, the adjustment to the regional totals, and input from the Compass (Growth Visioning) program, including the workshops, the Growth Vision RTP Alternative has been developed. This Alternative is intended to represent a targeted distribution of population, households and employment to best meet the 2004 RTP goals recommended by both the P & P TAC and TCC and approved by the Regional Council, most notably to maximize the performance of the anticipated 2030 regional transportation system.

The Growth Vision RTP Alternative includes evaluation, analysis and input from a variety of sources. In addition to the analysis of the initial five scenarios, three other pure land use "sketch" alternatives were examined to isolate the benefits of specific land use measures – jobs/housing balance, centers

development, and transit-oriented development (TOD). This analysis shows the benefits of targeted land use policies in centers and along corridors that have the greatest potential of improving mobility in the region.

As a parallel effort, SCAG staff, with assistance from Fregonese Calthorpe Associates has reviewed the analysis from the 11 Compass public workshops held in the spring. These findings not only substantiate the benefits of land use/transportation linkages, yet, more importantly, suggest that a broad spectrum of stakeholders and citizens in the SCAG region may support such ideas.

The above analyses, along with the body of work conducted by the Growth Visioning Subcommittee has led to the following tenets used as input to the building of a Growth Vision RTP Alternative:

- using in-fill where appropriate to revitalize underutilized development sites,
- focusing growth along existing and planned transit corridors and nodes to utilize available capacity,
- providing housing opportunities near job centers,
- providing housing opportunities to match changing demographics,
- ensuring adequate access to open space,
- providing job opportunities, when appropriate, in housing-rich communities,
- changing land use to correspond to the implementation of a decentralized regional aviation strategy and its consequent short- and long-term job creation,
- changing land use to correspond to the implementation of Operation Jump Start and its consequent short- and long-term job creation, and
- evaluating and refining the above by continually referencing the local input and feedback received from 90% of the jurisdictions in the SCAG region.

Evaluation of the Growth Vision Alternative

The Growth Visioning Alternative was subject to a similar evaluation of the initial five scenarios as described above. The results will be mailed to all CEHD members prior to the September 29, 2003 Joint Policy Committee RTP Workshop.

Conclusion

The integration of the Compass Growth Visioning program and the 2004 Regional Transportation Alternatives development has yielded a significant, realistically achievable planning framework for the future of the SCAG region. As the above analyses have shown, the draft 2004 RTP with Growth Visioning as the cornerstone is ready for release for public review.