

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MONTHLY REPORT

DECEMBER 2013

SCAG Sustainability Grant Program Update

SCAG is continuing to move forward on all 73 projects under the Sustainability Call for Proposals. All applicants have been notified of the awards. Consultant Request for Proposals for Sustainability Planning Grant projects have been released for 13 projects and procurements are in preparation for the remainder of projects for which funding is currently available. Planning work on Sustainability projects will begin in January 2014 and all 73 projects should be initiated by the end of 2014, pending available funding.

Draft Primary Freight Network Designation

The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) includes the development of a National Freight Strategic Plan (NFSP) in consultation with states and other stakeholders, as well as the establishment of a national freight network (NFN) to assist states in strategically directing resources toward improved system performance. On November 19, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) released the draft Primary Freight Network (PFN) as part of the NFN designation process. The statutory language in MAP-21 limits the designation to highways only and caps total mileage at 27,000 centerline miles of existing roadways, resulting in an incomplete network nationally. Out of the 27,000 miles initial draft PFN designations, California's share of designation totals about 2,789 miles while the SCAG region totals about 1,310 centerline miles. Recognizing statutory constraints and limitations of the 27,000 mile PFN, U.S. DOT staff employed a designation methodology resulting in a more comprehensive network of approximately 41,000 centerline miles to fill in some of the gaps. SCAG staff is currently commenting on the draft PFN, working in coordination with regional partners and the California Department of Transportation.

U.S. EPA Announces Grants for Non-profit and Native Americans on Public Health Issues

The U.S. EPA's Office of Environmental Justice announced the opening of its Request for Applications for the 2014 Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving (EJCPS) Cooperative Agreement Program. The EJCPS Program is designed to help eligible non-profit and Native American communities understand and address local environmental and/or public health issues within an affected community. The total estimated available funding for awards under this competitive opportunity is \$1,200,000. Awards will be made in amounts of up to \$120,000 per award for a two year project period. Information on the program and information on a series of conference calls with EPA to address questions about the EJCPS Program and this solicitation is available at <http://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/grants/ej-cps-grants.html> or by contacting U.S. EPA representative Sheritta Woodruff Taylor at (202) 564-1771 or taylor.sheritta@epa.gov.

Bottom-Up City/County Local Input: Draft Socioeconomic Projections

In November, SCAG began sending out the draft socioeconomic projections (population, household and employment for years 2012, 2020, 2035 and 2040) at both the jurisdictional and transportation analysis zone (TAZ) levels for local review. A critical component to the success of the 2016 RTP/SCS will be the participation and cooperation of all 197 local government partners within the SCAG region. To this end, SCAG will ensure that all local governments are fully informed of the planning process and have clear and adequate opportunities to provide input. As part of this effort, SCAG will also still accept input on the land use datasets contained in each jurisdiction's Map Book, which have been updated and are being resubmitted to local jurisdictions. We look forward to working together with all SCAG local jurisdictions and stakeholders to ensure the success of the bottom-up input and review process for the development of 2016 RTP/SCS.

California Active Transportation Program

On November 25, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) released the Preliminary Draft Active Transportation Program Guidelines, which describe the policy, standards, criteria and procedures for the development, adoption and management of the ATP (see http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/transprog/ctcbooks/2013/1213/24_4.15.pdf). The California Active Transportation Program (ATP) was created by Senate Bill 99 (Chapter 359, Statutes 2013) and Assembly Bill 101 (Chapter 354, Statutes 2013), to encourage increased use of active modes of transportation, such as biking and walking, as well as to ensure compliance with the federal transportation authorization Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21). The draft Guidelines are the result of a series of five meetings held with stakeholders throughout the state. SCAG staff participated in each of these meetings. Pursuant to state law, the majority of ATP funds (60%) will be awarded by the CTC through a statewide competition with 10% set-aside for projects in small urban and rural regions, while the remaining 40% will be awarded by the large MPOs

through regional competitive processes in accordance with the draft Guidelines. Senate Bill 99 has specific requirements related to the funds apportioned to SCAG, including directing SCAG to obtain concurrence from the county transportation commissions. The Southern California hearing regarding the draft Guidelines is scheduled for January 22, 2014 with the adoption of the final Guidelines scheduled for March 20, 2014. The Statewide Call for Projects is anticipated to open on March 21, 2014 with the MPO competitions to follow.

Partial Rulings Issued in Two California High Speed Rail Lawsuits

Sacramento County Superior Court Judge Michael Kenny issued two partial rulings on November 25, with a key finding that the California High Speed Rail Authority's funding plans for bond validation do not meet the stipulations set forth in Part C of AB 3034, the statute authorizing Prop. 1A. According to the Authority, the Prop. 1A Connectivity projects at other agencies (such as the Metro Regional Connector or Metrolink's Tier IV locomotive purchases) will not be affected by the rulings. However, MOU projects such as the State College Grade Separation will be affected, although the Authority has indicated that the rulings do not impair their ability to submit smaller bond validations in the future for only a portion of the \$8 billion.

In the Tos/Fukuda/Kings County Lawsuit, the judge ruled that the California High Speed Rail Authority did not comply with Prop. 1A because its 2011 funding plan did not identify funding for the entire Initial Operating Segment (IOS) from Merced to the San Fernando Valley, and because the Authority has not certified completion of all environmental clearances for the IOS (only the Merced to Fresno section has been completed). The Authority has indicated it will continue to move its projects forward and work on completing a new funding plan; however dates for submittal of a new funding plan have yet to be issued by the court. The ruling allows for the Authority to continue spending its federal funds on the project and does not rescind the contracts issued by the Authority. In the second lawsuit, a bond validation case filed by the Authority to require all legal challenges to the Prop. 1A bonds to be heard at one time, the judge ruled that the Authority has not presented a pressing case for immediate sale of all \$8 billion via the funding plan. The ruling doesn't bar the state from issuing or selling Prop. 1A bonds, however it does potentially open the door to individual lawsuits challenging the validity of the bond issuance.

SCAG Member Agencies GIS Services Program

In recent weeks, SCAG staff has initiated several GIS trainings throughout the SCAG region, totaling 22 software trainings in nine different venues. These trainings have accommodated over 250 participants, bringing the total of individuals trained to over 800 people since the program's inception. For additional information on SCAG's GIS Services Program, please see <http://gisdata.scag.ca.gov/Pages/Home.aspx> or contact Javier Aguilar at aguilar@scag.ca.gov.

South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) Filed a Lawsuit against U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regarding Morongo Reservation

As authorized by its Governing Board, the SCAQMD filed a lawsuit with the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals on November 12, against the U.S. EPA. The lawsuit is in response to EPA's September decision which, in effect, creates a separate ozone non-attainment area for the Morongo Reservation. SCAQMD is concerned that the Morongo area now has less stringent control requirements allowing higher polluting sources to locate in the area, and that higher emitters on the Morongo Reservation would negatively affect air quality in the South Coast and especially in the Coachella Valley which is downwind from Morongo. The SCAQMD's opening brief is scheduled for January 31, 2014 and the EPA's answering brief is scheduled for March 3, 2014. SCAG staff will keep track of the lawsuit and report as appropriate.

International Collaboration with the Korea Research Institute for Human Settlements

On November 8, SCAG and the Korea Research Institute for Human Settlements (KRIHS) had a joint workshop on "Strategies of Sustainable Metropolitan Development." In the session, SCAG staff introduced various planning initiatives in the Southern California region including examples of regional coordination and intergovernmental cooperation, including the 2012 RTP/SCS and SCAG's Compass Blueprint Program. The KRIHS delegation presented their research and planning experiences on metropolitan development including development in the Gangnam District, the reformation of mass transportation system in Seoul, and Korea's Low-Carbon Green Demonstration City. Staff from both agencies also shared challenges and lessons learned from their planning processes.

International Collaboration with Several Chinese Delegations

In November, SCAG hosted three Chinese delegations from the City of Tianjing, the Province of Shanxi and the Province of Xinjiang. SCAG staff presented on the agency's governance structure, cooperation and integrated regional planning programs. The groups also discussed Southern California's economy, air quality measures, environment conservation, and SCAG's GIS data and modeling programs for regional and local sustainable planning and economic development.