

**Board Report**

File #: 2015-1730, **File Type:** Program**Agenda Number:** 19.

**PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
JANUARY 20, 2016****SUBJECT: COMMENTS ON SCAG DRAFT 2016 RTP/SCS****ACTION: APPROVE COMMENTS****RECOMMENDATION**

APPROVE technical comments on the **Southern California Association of Governments' (SCAG) Draft 2016 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS)**.

ISSUE

In December 2015, SCAG released the Draft 2015 RTP/SCS for public comment. The RTP/SCS identifies regional transportation priorities for the six-county region through 2040, and ensures that air quality and greenhouse gas emission reduction requirements are met. All 2009 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) projects and priorities must be included in SCAG's RTP/SCS to be eligible for federal funds. We have reviewed the Draft 2016 RTP/SCS and Board authorization is being requested to transmit our comments to SCAG in time for their February 1, 2016 deadline.

DISCUSSION

As part of SCAG's role as a regional planning agency, they are responsible for addressing regional issues in the six-county area of Southern California. The 2016 RTP/SCS is the vehicle to provide solutions to regional mobility, land-use, air quality and sustainability issues. Per the requirements of SB 375, the Draft 2016 RTP/SCS includes Southern California's second SCS. The SCS is required to analyze how the collective impact of transportation policies, transportation investments and land-use policies affect the GHGe based on population projections in 2020 and 2035.

Starting in 2008, SB 375 compels SCAG to continue a more extensive outreach process than has been historically required for RTP development. This outreach process yielded unprecedented levels of public participation and engagement, particularly among environmental and public health advocates championing increased funding for active transportation to reduce GHGe and provide great opportunities for physical activity. Those advocating for increased funding and roles for active transportation have expressed their approval of the 2016 Draft RTP/SCS.

SB 375 also requires regions to reduce per capita greenhouse gas emissions from passenger vehicles down to 1990 levels, and sets specific goals to reach this level. The 2016 Draft RTP/SCS

accomplishes the goal of the 2020 target of reducing per capita GHG by 8%. The 2035 target of reducing per capita GHG by 13%, is exceeded by the Draft 2016 RTP/SCS, which provides a reduction of per capital GHG of 18%. In addition, the region is required to meet federal Clean Air Act requirements for air quality improvement. The Clean Air Act was enacted to protect public health by regulating hazardous air pollutants such as ozone, arsenic, benzene, carbon monoxide and fine particulate matter. If these requirements to reduce these pollutants are not met, federal funds for transportation projects would not be available to the region. The Draft 2016 RTP/SCS meets these federal Clean Air Act goals.

Key Issues

In general, the Draft 2016 RTP/SCS is a well-written document that properly identifies many key transportation issues that the region is facing. It includes all of the projects and programs in our 2009 LRTP. There are several issues that the Draft 2016 RTP/SCS addresses:

- The SR-710 North continues to be an issue for advocates and opponents. SCAG intends to use the title “SR-710 North Project Study Alternatives (Alignment TBD)”. Metro concurs with that recommendation.
- Each commercial airport in the six-county region is provided a range of Million Annual Air Passengers (MAP). Some airports have expressed their requests to change their MAP to show an increase in expected MAP.
- The California High Speed Rail (CAHSR) project (Phase 1 from central California to Anaheim) remains in the constrained portion of the Draft 2016 RTP/SCS. There are opponents who have requested the removal of this project, although the CAHSR Authority is providing \$1 billion in funding for our regional rail facilities (Amtrak, LOSSAN and Metrolink), such as the run-through tracks at Union Station (SCRIP).
- The RTP/SCS meets or exceeds the required goals and targets for air quality and GHG emissions that are indicated in state and federal legislation.
- Decreased funding available from federal and state sources and the need to identify new revenue sources continues to be a key RTP concern. SCAG continues to propose to incrementally phase-in (MBUF to replace the gas tax).
- The exponential cost of deferred maintenance on highway and transit systems, the need to maintain the regional systems in a state of good repair, and the need for additional operations and maintenance funding, also continue to be key RTP concerns. The Draft 2016 RTP/SCS takes a “fix it first” approach to focus on maintenance and repair.
- Areas of growth are assumed to mainly be near High Quality Transit Corridors (HQTC), which SCAG is relying upon to meet goals and requirements of air quality, sustainability, and to reduce the housing cost burden.
- The recommended growth scenario will more than double the share of households living in

HQTCs, which is intended to increase the competitiveness of transit service and reduce VMT.

- The implication of demographic issues in the future, such as fewer children, a soaring senior population, and slower growth forecast, are also discussed.
- The Draft 2016 RTP/SCS proposes increases in funding for the categories of Transportation Demand Management (TDM), Transportation System Management (TSM), and Active Transportation beyond the levels included in the six county transportation commissions' plans, including our 2009 LRTP.
- As in the 2012 RTP/SCS, SCAG continues to assume new and innovative sources of funding beyond our LRTP program. These funds are for additional projects, regional maintenance of highway and transit facilities, and meeting Federal Clean Air Act conformity requirements.

Key Projects Beyond the 2009 LRTP

There are transportation projects proposed in the Draft 2016 RTP/SCS, within Los Angeles County, which are beyond revenues that the 2009 LRTP assumes to be available from traditional sources. The following lists Los Angeles County projects identified in the Draft 2016 RTP/SCS, that continue from the 2012 RTP/SCS, which SCAG assumes are funded with sources other than Metro:

- East-West Freight Corridor will be studied along a five mile band generally following the SR-60 corridor between the I-710 and the I-15.
- Phase I of the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA), which starts at the Kern County line, travels through alternatives in the Antelope Valley, through Union Station to Anaheim in Orange County. There is an MOU, established in the 2012 RTP/SCS, that provides \$1 billion for early investments to the region's current passenger rail system, including the Union Station pass-through tracks project.
- A regional Express/HOT Lane Network that expands our ExpressLanes to include the I-405, I-105, and to continue the ExpressLanes on the I-10 and I-605 to San Bernardino and Orange County lines, respectively.
- Extension of Metro Rail lines: Vermont Short Corridor; Slauson Light Rail; Red Line from North Hollywood to Bob Hope Airport; Metro Green Line to Norwalk Metrolink Station; and Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension Azusa to the San Bernardino County Line.

SCAG is assuming that the above projects will still be funded with a combination of innovative funding (e.g., a national freight fee and public private partnerships) and increased revenues (e.g. state and federal gas tax increases of \$0.10 a gallon which will be replaced with a \$0.04 a mile mileage-based user-fee (MБУF), high speed rail state bonds, and additional toll facilities). The MБУF will be indexed to maintain purchasing power. In 2014, SB 1077 directed the State to conduct a pilot program to replace the gas tax with a MБУF beginning no later than January 1, 2017.

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

The technical comments on the Draft 2016 RTP/SCS will not have any adverse safety impacts for our employees and patrons.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no impact on the FY 2016 budget, as we are only submitting technical comments to SCAG on their Draft 2016 RTP/SCS.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Board can modify or choose not to submit technical comments. The alternative of not submitting technical comments is not recommended, as we would lose the opportunity to provide SCAG with comments to enhance the 2016 RTP/SCS document.

NEXT STEPS

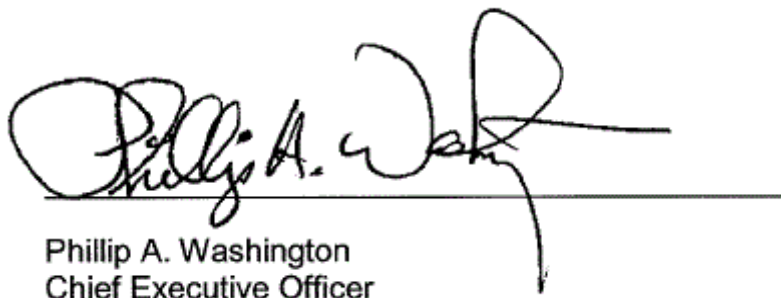
Upon Board approval, the technical comments will be transmitted to SCAG for their consideration in developing their Final 2016 RTP/SCS. SCAG is scheduled to adopt their Final 2016 RTP/SCS at their April 2016 General Assembly meeting

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Technical Comments on Draft 2016 RTP/SCS

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