



Board Report

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Response

Agenda Number:

**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 L RTP. 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 pass-through tracks at Union Station.
- 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 (MBUF), high speed rail state bonds, and additional toll facilities). The

MBUF 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 MBUF 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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Technical Comments on Draft 2016 RTP/SCS

Active Transportation Appendix

Pg. 4, column 2, bullet 2 –

Reads: “Utilitarian walkers requiring easy, attractive and safe access to retail, dining and other attractions.” Suggested edits: Utilitarian walkers requiring safe access to vital services including medical, grocery, public transit, child care, retail, and other key destinations.

Pg. 4, column 2, bullet 3

Reads: “Recreation and fitness pedestrians requiring good quality infrastructure for fast walking/jogging.” Suggested edits: Recreation and fitness pedestrians requiring safe and unobstructed quality infrastructure for unimpeded walking/jogging.

Pg 15

Discussion of LA County does not recognize adopted and current efforts by Metro, e.g.: Complete Streets Policy, First/Last Mile Strategic Plan, Bike Share, LA River Bike Path Gap Closure, etc. and forthcoming Metro Active Transportation Strategic Plan. Also several cities in the San Gabriel Valley have adopted a regional bike plan. The RTP should be updated to reflect current activities for LA County.

Pg 15

Bike lockers and secure bike rooms (self-serve and attended) currently exist for long term.

Need to better define/describe what bike parking stations are as some provide additional attended services to support bike commuters such as at El Monte, Long Beach and Santa Monica. Pasadena does not have a bike station. Also Burbank, Covina and Claremont have self-serve bike stations.

Should note to mention that bicycle lockers also have issues with maintenance and the required space and footprint they take up.

Document should also recognize education on how to properly lock a bicycle. Often time people use cable locks for locking their bike that are easily defeated. Important for people to be responsible for their own property through preventable measures.

Pg. 18

Statement “Bicycle-racks are often located within an office building’s parking garage (providing increased security over bicycle racks on public sidewalks)...” This is not necessarily true as bike racks at the street level have more “eyes” on them. Whereas, bike racks in hidden places such as parking garages can be very susceptible to theft.

Pg. 19

Include 2014 existing LA County bikeway conditions not 2012:

Facility Type as of 2014
Class 1 305.29
Class 2 835.5
Class 3 522.26
Cycle Track 4.2

Pg. 18

The 2012 National Household Travel Surveys indicated that bike trips for SCAG region were calculated at 1.9%. In the 2016 draft it indicates that the bike mode share for the CA household survey is 1.12%. This is a significant reduction; please verify that the figures are accurate.

Pg. 20

Same for Pedestrian mode share 2012 NHTS CA SCAG region indicated 19.24% and now for draft 2016 it is 16.8%. Please verify accuracy of figures and/or provide discussion on reduction/change.

Pg. 25

“...has developed a ~~bicycle to transit access plan~~ Bicycle Transportation Strategic Plan (2006)...”

Pg. 28

Verify that preliminary cost estimates are carefully identified. For example, \$194 million identified for 755 miles of “Greenways” comes out to \$256,954/mile. This is a very low estimate for Class 1 and Class 4 bikeway construction costs. Bike path projects estimated for FHWA by the UNC Highway Safety Research Center in 2013 were between \$500K to \$4.2 mil/mile (pg. 12).

Pg. 28

Total estimate for active transportation needs seem low. Provide details on the underlying assumptions.

Suggest providing clear performance metrics and benchmarks to evaluate how the region is doing to meet the goals laid out in the 2016 Active Transportation Plan.

Pg. 55 (4th paragraph)

A “plan” for bike share is cited with no reference. These appear to be general statistics for bike share programs worldwide rather than assumptions made for a specific plan and should be reflected as such. Reflect information on Metro’s Countywide Bike Share Program.

Pg. 61

Regional bikeways should include those recommended by Metro’s ATSP.

Aviation and Airport Ground Access Appendix

Pg. 20, paragraph 6, last line--states that the scenarios and sensitivity tests yielded a range of airfield capacities from 82.9 to 96.6 MAP, but does not state the year(s). Please specify the year(s) for the MAP projections.

Goods Movement Appendix

Pg. 5 (Exhibit 3), the I-210 east of Glendora is not included in the Final Primary Freight Network, yet SCAG's many analyses include this stretch along I-210 to I-15 and indicate serious congestion. SCAG should address this inconsistency.

Pg. 13, under "... Drivers", the Air Quality subject should be expanded to a discussion of CO2 emissions concerns and reference SB2, etc., as developed on Page 40.

Pg. 44, there is no mention of Cap and Trade Program's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund as a funding source for the development of vehicle prototypes and infrastructure demonstrations. This should be highlighted as an opportunity for zero-emission technology research and development.

Highways & Arterials Appendix

Pg. 6 - Additional System Initiatives - Recommend adding Caltrans ATM Study on I-105 and the RIITS and IEN Data Exchange efforts.

Overall - Comment - Recommend discussing Freight Signal Priority.

Mobility and Innovations Appendix

Page 7 - First/Last Mile Strategies - Recommend discussing Ride Sourcing as a potential strategy.

Page 7 - Automated/Connected Vehicles - Recommend discussing potential impact of AV/CV on age profile of licensed drivers.

Page 9 - ITS-Roadways - Recommend adding discussion on ATM (Active Traffic Management) strategies.

Natural/Farm Lands Appendix

There is currently policy language supporting urban greening as a component of a larger natural lands strategy. We support this as consistent with Metro's Urban Greening Plan and Toolkit,

but would further request that SCAG include in “Strategies, Next Steps and Recommendations” a commitment to further integrate greening strategies into regional planning efforts.

Passenger Rail Appendix

Pg. 2, First paragraph under Metrolink--The South Perris connection will be in operation in 2016.

Pg. 2, Second paragraph under Metrolink--Metro owns 40% of the Ventura County Line within L.A. County. “Much of the track is owned by the the Member Agencies of Metrolink and/or the freight railroads.” Suggest referring to the CTCs that are Member Agencies of Metrolink as being a Member Agency.

Pg. 2, Third Paragraph--Perris Valley will begin operations in 2016. PTC will begin operations in 2016.

Pg. 4, Second paragraph--Metrolink will be operating the efficient locomotives in 2017.

Pg. 4, First paragraph under Metrolink’s history--The Ventura line started in 2002.

Pg. 4, Second paragraph under high speed rail--It has been almost 20 years for the development of HSR.

Pg. 7, In the MOU paragraph--The language should state “\$1B from Proposition 1A and other funds” That is the language in the MOU.

Pg. 9 and throughout the document--Should state that the projects are for operational efficiency. Although ultimate capacity is a benefit, operational efficiency is the key.

Under the Master Plan--SCRIP preceded the Master Plan. The Master Plan accommodates SCRIP.

Pg. 11, Under the Freight paragraph include language about the agencies owning the right of way that the freights operate on as tenant railroads.

Pg. 13, Add two projects--Bob Hope Airport/Hollywood Way Station; and Bob Hope Airport Station Pedestrian Bridge

Pg. 18, The Perris Valley Line will open for revenue service in 2016.

Pg. 24, The pedestrian bridge at the Bob Hope Airport Station is not Phase 2 of RITC. Add language about the new Bob Hope Airport/Hollywood Way Station.

Pg. 26, The Metro Orange Line is connected to SCRRA in Chatsworth.

Pg. 9, Los Angeles Union Station Master Plan, 1st bullet, add “expanded multi-modal” between “new” and “passenger concourse” and replace “the current tunnel” with “currently called the “tunnel”” (“a new expanded multimodal passenger concourse (the current tunnel currently called the “tunnel”) that would be widened)”

Pg. 9, 5th bullet add “accommodating” before “future tracks”—it should read “accommodating future tracks and platforms for the CA HSR project”;

Pg. 9, 7th bullet delete “new and” and replace with “3.25 million square feet of” It should read, “3.25 million square feet of improved retail and transit-oriented development (TOD) uses.”

Pg. 9, ADD 8th bullet: “improved pedestrian and bike network”

Pg. 12: insert “SCRIP run through tracks and to incorporate the” before larger passenger concourse and replace “has been approved” with “was developed”. It should read: “An additional component of the work is to study the effects of raising the entire platform areas in order to accommodate the SCRIP run-through tracks and to incorporate the larger passenger concourse that was developed-as part of the Union Station Master Plan...

Project List Appendix

Pg. 140, RTP ID #1TR1012, California High-Speed Rail Phase I – Env/PE, should have the Lead Agency as “California High Speed Rail Authority”. It is currently blank. The completion date is listed as 2011, and SCAG may want to update this.

Pg. 147, RTP ID # 1122005, SR-138 Loop Road – this project is not in the Metro 2009 LRTP, and the Lead Agency is listed as “TBD”. This should be clarified that the project is not a Metro-funded project.

Pg. 148, RTP ID #1C0401, “I-710” project, Lead Agency should read “Los Angeles County MTA”, as this is a project from Metro’s 2009 LRTP. Lead Agency is currently blank.

Pg. 148, RTP ID # 1M1002, “I-710 Early Action Projects”, Lead Agency should be “Los Angeles County MTA”, as this is a project from Metro’s 2009 LRTP. “Lead Agency” is currently blank. The completion year should be “2022” and it is currently “2025”.

Pg. 150, RTP ID # 1120005, Metro Green Line Extension—this is a project assumed to be funded with innovative financing, and not a constrained project in Metro’s 2009 LRTP.

Pg. 150, RTP Project # 1TR1011, West Santa Ana Branch ROW Corridor -- this is a project assumed to be funded with innovative financing, and not a constrained project in Metro's 2009 LRTP.

Pg. 154., RTP #10M08D01, this is TIP #LA0G159, and is nearly complete. This should be moved into the TIP section.

Pg. 157, RTP #UT101, Metro Purple Line Westside Subway Extension Section 3 – Century City to Westwood/VA Hospital—the completion year should be 2035 (12/31/2015), and the Project Cost is \$2,157,100 (YOE). Also, this listing is duplicative of a listing on page 158. Please correct and list only once.

Pg. 157, RTP ID # 1TR0101 (TIP # LA0G1162), Airport Metro Connector, the completion date is 07/01/2023.

Pg. 158, RTP ID #1TR1003 (EIR is TIP # LA0G642) – This appears to be a duplicate of the incorrect entry listed above on page 157. There needs to be only one “Metro Purple Line Subway Extension Section 3”, completion date of 12/31/2035 with a project cost of \$2,157,100. Please delete one of the duplicates.

Pg. 158, RTP ID #1TR1017 – please delete this project.

Pg., 158, RTP ID #1TR1020 – Please delete this project.

SCS Background Data Appendix

General – The SCS Technical Appendix provides a clear and sound description of how the 2016 RTP/SCS complies with SB 375, both from a content and process standpoint. We are confident that the Plan as presented will be approved by ARB.

Metro explicitly partners with SCAG on SCS development and implementation through the SCAG/Metro Joint Resolution and Work Program, most recently adopted by the Metro Board of Directors on May 28, 2015. The Plan and Appendix could be strengthened through further discussion of Joint Work Programs, including acknowledging completed efforts and identifying future initiatives that will advance the goals of the Plan. For example, the scenario planning exercise described in the appendix prompts preliminary steps in addressing sea level rise and other climate vulnerabilities as well as habitat protection needs. Through the plan, SCAG should describe and commit future planning activities in these areas or others.

Similarly, the Metro Board has adopted various sustainability policies acknowledging climate adaptation needs, and would suggest that sea level rise and climate vulnerabilities be explicitly included as priorities in the adopted plan, as opposed to a factor in a scenario exercise that does not influence policy and future activities.

Also, of note, the updated SCAG/Metro Joint Work Program commits a coordinated effort on deploying future planning funding, particularly from SCAG's Sustainability Planning Grant program. We would request that the Plan clearly acknowledge this commitment and further commit that future planning funding will be allocated in consultation with Metro such that priority activities are given consideration, and that local planning projects are structured appropriately for near term funding opportunities such as the Cap-and-Trade Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program, the California Active Transportation Program, and the Metro Call For Projects.

Among other items, Metro collaborates with SCAG on the development and implementation of the First/Last Mile Strategic Plan. As such, we appreciate the emphasis on first/last mile implementation (transit/active transportation integration) with the Draft RTP/SCS and the SCS Technical Appendix. The appendix could do more to acknowledge and be consistent with Metro's recent work on this subject. In particular the estimated region-wide funding need for first/last mile, as reflected in the Active Transportation Appendix is substantially lower than our own estimates for Los Angeles County alone prepared for the current Active Transportation Strategic Plan effort. We encourage SCAG to coordinate with us on this aspect of the Plan.

We appreciate the inclusion emerging transportation technologies within the scenario planning exercises, as this is consistent with Metro's policies and work products including the Countywide Sustainability Planning Policy, First/Last Mile Strategic Plan and emerging pilot projects. As a technical matter, we are unclear on why the use of ride share and ride hailing services would be reflected in a direct reduction in VMT. It would seem more supportable through data as well as more consistent with policy goals to reflect these travel choices through an assumed reduction in vehicle ownership.

Transportation Finance Appendix

Pg. 10, near bottom of page (concept also applies to page 26): New Starts: "As with the FHWA sources, fuel consumption declines by 0.9 percent (in real terms) annually." We would like to suggest it state that, "As with the FHWA sources, fuel consumption declines by 0.9 percent (in real terms) annually making it increasingly difficult for Congress to back fill with general funds."

Pg. 23, top of page: ...State Transit Assistance (STA) are included under this source (meaning Local Agency Funds for LA County). STA should be included under State sources on page 24.

General Comment Concerning Above Appendix Comments

If any comment above pertains to any section of the main documents of the Draft 2016 RTP/SCS, SCAG may also want to apply the changes beyond the appendices and into the body of the main document.

