

SCAG Receives Strategic Growth Council and Federal Highway Grants

On June 3, the California Strategic Growth Council (SGC) awarded SCAG nearly \$1 million – the highest share of nearly \$16 million awarded – as part of its Sustainable Communities Planning Grant (Round 3). Among the 88 applicants, 33 received awards. SCAG's proposal is intended to support the implementation of the adopted 2012 – 2035 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) to achieve greenhouse gas reduction and other sustainability goals. The proposal includes six sustainability projects focusing on implementing key SCS strategies across the SCAG region. These projects include: Mixed-Use Development Standards (Burbank); Downtown Specific Plan (Hemet); Complete Streets Master Plan (Lancaster); Form-Based Street Design Guidelines (Pasadena); Healthy RC Sustainability Action Plan (Rancho Cucamonga); and Climate Action Plan (Seal Beach). In addition, the proposal includes using regional forums to share the tools developed and lessons learned among all local jurisdictions in the region.

SCAG received a grant award from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for the Surface Transportation Environment and Planning Cooperative Research Program. The federal funds are made to the California Division, in collaboration with SCAG, to implement INVEST, FHWA's sustainability self-evaluation tool, and gather lessons learned. SCAG will evaluate the existing transportation plan using INVEST and make improvements to the next plan based on the evaluation. The INVEST implementation efforts are being led by the Office of Planning, Environment, and Realty in conjunction with the Division offices.

SCAG has been recommended for six grants from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) for FY 2014-15 Caltrans Planning Grant Programs. The total dollar amount of the six grants is \$1,112,388, which was the most out of any region in the State. All of the grants are awarded under the Partnership and Transit Planning Programs, which have a sustainability focus this year and promote a balanced, comprehensive multi-modal transportation system. Furthermore, these grants will be used for a wide range of transportation planning purposes, which address local and regional transportation needs and issues. The implementation of these grants should ultimately lead to the adoption, initiation, and programming of transportation improvements.

Active Transportation Program Funding

The Call for Projects for California's 2014 Active Transportation Program (ATP) came to a close on May 21. The ATP will award approximately \$360 million to eligible applicants through statewide, rural and regional competitions. SCAG plays a significant role in the implementation of the ATP by supporting local agencies in competing for the statewide competition funds (approximately \$180 million), as well as establishing a project selection process for the Southern California regional competition funds (approximately \$76 million). Over 200 applications were submitted to Caltrans from the Southern California region for consideration in both the statewide and regional competitions. SCAG, in collaboration with the county transportation commissions and county health departments, submitted an application for the statewide competition to support a Regional Active Transportation Safety and Encouragement Campaign. Award notifications for the statewide competition are expected in August.

Local Funding Opportunity Workshops: South Coast Air District Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction Review Committee (MSRC) Annual Work Program Development

The MSRC will hold a series of six regional workshops on its Work Program throughout Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino and Riverside counties between June 18 and July 2. Through these workshops, the MSRC is seeking ideas and recommendations from stakeholders on its annual Work Program, which distributes approximately \$14 million each year to projects designed to reduce emissions from mobile sources in the South Coast Air District (Orange County and non-desert portions of Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties). The workshops will include a discussion about how the MSRC can help improve air quality in the South Coast region and assist the South Coast Air Quality Management District in meeting its clean air requirements. The workshops will also include dialogue among stakeholders about their clean air priorities and how the MSRC can help by considering funding for programs to meet these goals. The MSRC strongly encourages anyone concerned about cleaner transportation options – from either the public or private sectors – to attend one of the upcoming interactive workshops to share their views. For details about the MSRC and workshops, please visit the MSRC website at: <http://bit.ly/1kCFDEA>.

Release of the 2015 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) and Amendment No. 2 to the 2012–2035 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) for public comment

Every two years, SCAG is required by federal law to develop the FTIP, a list of capital improvement projects to be implemented over a six-year period and that implements the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). Over the past several months, staff has worked in consultation with Caltrans, our county transportation commissions (CTCs), and transit operators to develop the Draft 2015 FTIP, which is expected to be released for public review in early July. In addition, in response to requests from several CTCs to amend the 2012–2035 RTP/SCS to reflect additions or changes to projects for a number of critical transportation projects that

are ready to move forward toward the implementation phase, staff has also developed Draft Amendment No. 2 to the 2012–2035 RTP/SCS along with the 2015 FTIP. Both draft documents will be available for a 30-day public review and comment period beginning July 1. Staff will review and respond to comments received during the comment period in August and return to the Transportation committee and the Regional Council with a recommendation to adopt both 2015 FTIP and Amendment No. 2 to the 2012 RTP/SCS in September.

Release of the California Freight Mobility Plan Administrative Draft

The California Freight Advisory Committee (CFAC) most recently convened on May 14 in Sacramento to discuss key components of the California Freight Mobility Plan (CFMP) Administrative Draft scheduled for public release in June. The CFAC is currently reviewing and discussing key chapter components of the CFMP along with the development of a statewide freight project list.

In advance of the public release, SCAG has been collaborating with our local transportation partners and other regional MPOs throughout the State to jointly comment on the Draft CFMP and freight project list. We have been encouraging the State to work with the MPOs, local transportation partners, as well as other Caltrans and California Transportation Commission staff, to build upon the current processes used to evaluate and prioritize projects as appropriate. Additionally, work is currently being conducted amongst the regional and local agencies to submit a comprehensive list of regional freight initiatives that reflect SCAG's adopted 2012 Regional Transportation Plan.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Action Update on Air Quality Standards

On May 23, the EPA published in the Federal Register two proposed actions and one interim final rule positively affecting the SCAG region. The two proposed actions for the South Coast ozone non attainment area are 1) approve California's new plan for attainment of the 1-hour ozone standard in the South Coast extreme ozone non attainment area (demonstrating attainment of the standard in 2022); and 2) approve vehicle miles traveled (VMT) emissions offset demonstrations for the 1-hour and the 1997 8-hour ozone standards, showing that emissions resulting from increased VMT and vehicle trips in the South Coast have been adequately offset by transportation control strategies and transportation control measures that reduce emissions. The plan and the demonstrations were both proposed by the South Coast AQMD as part of the 2012 Air Quality Management Plan. The proposed approval of the VMT offset demonstrations is critical as it overrides EPA's previous disapproval of VMT offset demonstrations for the South Coast. As a result, the EPA is issuing an interim final determination, effective immediately upon publication in the Federal Register on May 23 and defers pending sanctions. The EPA is providing a comment period of 30 days on the proposed rules and interim final rule concluding June 23.

AB32 Scoping Plan Update Approved by California Air Resources Board (ARB)

On May 22, ARB approved the Climate Change Scoping Plan Update after a public hearing. Pursuant to AB32 (the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006), this is the first update to the Scoping Plan that was originally approved by ARB in 2008. In April 2014, ARB staff provided a briefing on the Draft Scoping Plan Update to the Energy and Environment Committee. SCAG staff also provided comments on the Draft Update; a copy is included in the June Board Info Packet. As part of the approval, the ARB Board directed staff to prepare an updated economic assessment, and to develop a work plan by 2014. The work plan will identify the timeline and methodology to estimate the cost and benefits of AB32 measures on the California economy. It will also identify the distribution of impacts on industry, small businesses, households, environmental justice communities and the public sector. ARB Board also directed its staff to report annually on AB32 implementation to track progress toward the 2020 target and beyond. SCAG staff will continue to monitor, participate, and report on these efforts. The Climate Change Scoping Plan Update and associated documentation can be accessed at: <http://bit.ly/1jQV3QC>.

ArcGIS Software Trainings for Member Jurisdictions

SCAG's GIS Services Program has scheduled 15 intermediate and advanced ArcGIS software trainings in different venues throughout the SCAG region. Registration from staff at member jurisdictions was overwhelming, with nearly 200 registrants for these sessions. SCAG has already completed five customized GIS training sessions that were attended by 80 participants. During these classroom style trainings, SCAG performed software knowledge-sharing and skill-development at various levels utilizing the latest GIS techniques. Training participants are from a range of backgrounds, including urban planning, utilities (energy, water), asset management, transportation, and civil engineering, and are all employed in local government. Participants reported satisfaction with the high quality of the training sessions and valued the opportunity to develop substantial professional skills that will help them perform their daily duties more cost-effectively and efficiently. In their view, the strength of SCAG's GIS training is that it focuses on applied techniques to addresses real-life situations and demonstrates the broader use of GIS as an analysis and decision-making support tool.

Aerial Imagery Consortium for Imperial County

SCAG's GIS Services Program has selected a consultant for the acquisition of aerial imagery for Imperial County. This is a collaborative effort involving various agencies, including the cities of Brawley, Calipatria, Calexico, El Centro, Holtville, Imperial, Westmorland, County of Imperial (several departments), and Caltrans. Partners are contributing funds for six-inch imagery in urban and irrigated areas and one foot in rural areas, as well as for infrared bands, elevations and building representations. SCAG is contributing about 50% of the project cost. The Bureau of Land Management, US Navy and US Fish and Wildlife will also provide an integral role in the quality control of the imagery data through in-kind services. The new data sets will help local jurisdictions in their GIS capabilities in planning, engineering, and other related activities.

One-on-One Meetings with Local Jurisdictions for the 2016 – 2040 RTP/SCS

A critical component to the success of the 2016 RTP/SCS will be the participation of all 197 local government partners within the SCAG Region. To this end, a significant amount of SCAG staff resources have been expended to ensure all local governments are fully informed of the planning process and have a clear and adequate opportunity to provide input, thereby emphasizing a bottom-up process and enabling regional collaboration. Over the last six months, SCAG staff has met with over 187 (95%) local jurisdictions in the SCAG Region. The goal of this significant undertaking was to answer questions on the local input process, to offer assistance, and to solicit input on the base data that will feed into the 2016 RTP/SCS. Although the deadline for providing input at this stage of development was May 30, staff continues to reach out to the remaining jurisdictions to ensure they are informed of the process and are familiar with the various data elements that are involved in SCAG's regional analysis. We highly value the effort that local jurisdictions have devoted to ensure that SCAG's datasets reflect their on-the-ground knowledge and expertise. Your contribution cannot be overstated; city and county staff have devoted a significant amount of time and resources to ensure that our future regional plan has local relevance. For more information, please contact Frank Wen at (213) 236-1854 or at wen@scag.ca.gov.

California Career Pathways Trust Grant Awardees Announced

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson announced on May 30 the 39 consortia that will be the first recipients of grants under the State's \$250 million dollar program designed to help students stay in school and move toward college and employment in a high-demand field. The California Career Pathways Trust (CCPT), administered by the California Department of Education, was spearheaded last year by Senate President pro Tempore Darrell Steinberg, which featured prominently in his remarks to Southern California civic and business leaders at the 4th Annual Southern California Economic Recovery & Job Creation Summit co-hosted by SCAG and the Southern California Leadership Council on December 5, 2013, in Downtown Los Angeles. Under the grant program, recipients are tasked with creating sustained career pathways programs that connect businesses, K–12 schools, and community colleges to better prepare students for the 21st century workplace. State officials received 123 eligible applications containing about \$709 million in requested grants; nearly triple the \$250 million in available funding. Applicants included community college districts, county offices of education, direct-funded charter schools, and school districts. SCAG received numerous requests for letters of support and of those that requested letters, the following consortia will receive grants (and amount awarded):

- Long Beach Community College District (\$15 Million Grant Category)
- Orange County Department of Education (\$15 Million Grant Category)
- Long Beach Unified School District (\$6 Million Grant Category)

The following are the remaining consortia in the SCAG region that will receive grant funds:

- \$15 Million Grant Category
- Los Angeles Unified School District
- Pasadena Area Community College District
- Ventura County Community College District
- Victor Valley Community College District
- \$6 Million Grant Category
- Antelope Valley Community College District
- Fullerton Joint Union High School District
- Glendale Unified School District
- Los Angeles County Office of Education
- Montebello Unified School District
- Oxnard Union High School District
- Rancho Santiago Community College District
- \$600,000 Grant Category
- Centinela Valley Union High School District
- Inglewood Unified School District

In total, the SCAG region received 16 of the 39 grants with funding at approximately \$139,200,000, which is more than half of the overall amount available (\$249,750,000 according to the California Department of Education). Congratulations to all consortia that received grants under this new and exciting program!

Southern California Receives U.S. Department of Commerce “Manufacturing Community” Designation

On May 28, US Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker announced the first 12 communities that will be designated “Manufacturing Communities” as part of the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP) initiative. The Commerce Department-led program is designed to accelerate the resurgence of manufacturing in communities nationwide by supporting the development of long-term economic development strategies that help communities attract and expand private investment in the manufacturing sector and increase international trade and exports. From the 70 communities that applied, Southern California (Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego), led by the University of Southern California Center for Economic Development and including SCAG as a partner, was one of the 12 communities selected by an interagency panel, which took into consideration the strength of the applicants’ economic development plans, the potential for impact in their respective communities, and the depths of their partnerships across the public and private sector to carry out their plans. The 12 designated Manufacturing Communities will receive coordinated support for their strategies from 11 federal agencies with \$1.3 billion available in federal economic development assistance as well as a dedicated federal liaison at each of the 11 agencies that will help them navigate available federal resources. Later this year, the Obama Administration plans to launch a second IMCP competition to designate additional communities, as well as convene the 70 communities that applied for designation to share best practices in economic development planning. Please visit <http://www.eda.gov/challenges/imcp/index.htm> for more information.

Southern California Stormwater Conference

Leaders in stormwater management will convene at SCAG on June 13 from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. to discuss practical strategies for overcoming challenges to stormwater capture. The event is co-sponsored by the California Water Boards, US EPA, Planning and Conservation League, Southern California Water Committee, Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority, and SCAG, among many others. I will be joined by Congresswoman Napolitano and Fran Spivy-Weber, State Water Resources Control Board, in providing opening remarks for this important event. More details on the program will be posted on the SCAG website when the agenda is finalized. To register, please visit: <http://www.sawpa.org/epa-conference/>.