

2016 RTP/SCS DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

In October, SCAG continues its stakeholder outreach with two Tribal Consultation Workshops on the 2016-2040 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (2016 RTP/SCS). The workshops, to be held on Oct. 14 at SCAG's office in downtown Los Angeles and Oct. 19 at the Coachella Valley Association of Governments, are open to tribal council members, tribal representatives, cultural resource specialists and any other interested persons. SCAG will provide an overview of the 2016 RTP/SCS and its Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR), and will seek input on the priorities of tribes in the region, tribal cultural resources as it pertains to the PEIR as well as input on potential impacts from transportation projects and feasible measures for preservation or mitigation. For more information, please visit: <http://scagrtpscscs.net>.

In the remaining months, staff will continue to prepare the Regional Council and Policy Committees for the anticipated release of the Draft 2016 RTP/SCS and the Draft PEIR for public review and comment at its Dec. 3 meeting. Over the last several months, SCAG staff has been engaged in informing the Regional Council and Policy Committees about the various key issues, analyses, and policy considerations for the development of the 2016 RTP/SCS and its associated PEIR. The purpose of these meetings was to ensure that the Regional Council and Policy Committees had the opportunity to learn, understand, review and provide input to staff on issues such as the shift in age demographics of the region; the condition of state highways and local roads, the implications of technology on mobility and sustainability; investments to reduce congestion and improve transportation system efficiency; finding sustainable ways of paying for the region's transportation system; developing first/last mile solutions to increase transit usage; integrating public health into the planning process; and a regional natural/farm lands conservation strategy, among others. A summary of these discussions is available in the Oct. 8 Regional Council agenda.

DRAFT AHSC PROGRAM GUIDELINES RELEASED

The Strategic Growth Council has recently released the draft program guidelines for the next round of the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) competitive grant program. This statewide program funds transportation and housing projects that reduce vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions program. An estimated \$400 million will be available in this new round of the AHSC program, an increase from \$120 million in FY 2014-2015. The Strategic Growth Council will hold a public workshop on Oct. 21 at SCAG's office in downtown Los Angeles, with videoconferencing to the regional offices. Comments on the draft AHSC program guidelines will be accepted through Oct. 30. The Strategic Growth Council anticipates finalizing the program guidelines in December and releasing a Notice of Funding Availability for the AHSC program in January 2016. More information is available at <http://www.sgc.ca.gov/>. SCAG sees this program as an important funding source to implement its Sustainable Communities Strategy, and recently held a workshop titled, "California Gold: Bringing Cap and Trade Dollars to Southern California" to help position the region for future funding. For any questions or technical assistance, please contact Kristen Pawling at pawling@scag.ca.gov.

"GO HUMAN" CAMPAIGN LAUNCHES ACROSS THE REGION

On Sept. 28, SCAG and its partners launched "Go Human," a marketing campaign to promote traffic safety and encourage members of the public to walk or bike. On Oct. 5, billboards with messages encouraging drivers to slow down and look for pedestrians and cyclists began appearing in all six counties. Advertisements will run in both English and Spanish and will also appear on local transit buses, on the radio, Facebook and Pandora radio. The campaign launch coincides with the dwindling daylight hours – a time when bicycle and pedestrian collisions typically peak during the year. "Go Human" is a reminder to all that people on the road are not just objects that get in our way – they are human beings, just like us. The campaign is a collaborative effort with agencies across the region, and SCAG encourages local cities and jurisdictions to participate. All

the digital files are now available for co-branding. A blog and community calendar of events will be available soon on the campaign website, <http://gohumansocal.org>. For more information on how to participate, please contact Julia Lippe-Klein at lippe-klein@scag.ca.gov.

FTA ANNOUNCES LOW- OR NO- EMISSION VEHICLE DEPLOYMENT FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

On Sept. 24, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announced the availability of \$22.5 million in FY 2015 for the Low or No Emission Vehicle Deployment Program. The capital program is a highly competitive grant program that supports the deployment of low or zero emission transit buses, along with supporting facilities and related equipment. The program is a great opportunity for entities to upgrade their fleet for the cleanest and most energy efficient U.S.-made transit buses. During the previous request for proposals, SCAG, in collaboration with SunLine Transit Agency, received the largest grant award of \$9.8 million, to deploy five hydrogen electric hybrid fuel cell buses. Due to the program requirements, SCAG must apply as the lead applicant for large urbanized areas in the SCAG region. Interested, eligible sub-recipients in the SCAG region must submit their applications to SCAG by Nov. 11, 5:00 p.m. SCAG will review the applications and submit to FTA by the Nov. 23 deadline. For more information, please visit <http://bit.ly/1MV2jw5> or contact Alfonso Hernandez at hernande@scag.ca.gov.

EPA FINALIZES MORE STRINGENT OZONE STANDARD

Under the Federal Clean Air Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is required to review its National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ground-level ozone and other pollutants every five years and revise them if necessary to reflect the latest health science. On Oct. 1, the U.S. EPA announced a final rule to strengthen the national standard for ozone from the current 75 parts per billion (ppb) to 70 ppb in order to protect public health and welfare. Most of the SCAG region is already in nonattainment under the current standard. These current nonattainment areas, especially the South Coast Air Basin, are developing air plans and facing daunting challenges to demonstrate attainment with the current less stringent ozone standard. To attain the new stricter ozone standard, the nonattainment areas would be required to do more to reduce pollution but would be given more time to comply. In addition, more areas in the SCAG region may be classified to be nonattainment and thus subject to the planning requirements under the new ozone standard.

As reported in the February 2015 Executive Director's Report, final nonattainment classifications for the new standard are required to be promulgated by EPA within two years or by Oct. 1, 2017; attainment dates for a given nonattainment area would vary from 2020 to 2037 depending on its classification; and air plans demonstrating attainment of the new standard would need to be developed and adopted by local air districts as early as 2020. In addition, those future air plans will include new transportation conformity emission budgets that will be used by SCAG in the RTP/SCS after 2020. The final rule will become effective 60 days after its publication in the Federal Register. It is important to note that the U.S. EPA is prohibited from considering costs when setting the national ozone standard but can factor in costs when determining what control measures are included in the air plans to attain the standard. SCAG staff will closely monitor and be involved in activities related to the implementation of the new ozone standard and will provide updates as needed. For additional information on the new standard, see the pre-publication Federal Register Notice: <http://1.usa.gov/1NhCsS1>.

OPR RELEASES PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION DRAFT OF PROPOSED UPDATES TO CEQA GUIDELINES

On Aug. 11, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) released a preliminary discussion draft of proposed updates to the CEQA Guidelines for public review and input. The preliminary discussion draft proposes to amend the CEQA Guidelines to provide efficiency, as well as substantive and technical improvements to the environmental review process. However, it does not include changes to transportation analysis, required by Senate Bill 743 (Steinberg, 2013), which is being revised

separately by the OPR. Nor does the preliminary discussion draft include changes to other CEQA issues that are currently pending consideration before the California Supreme Court. The OPR is accepting comments on the preliminary discussion draft through Oct. 12, by 5 p.m. For detailed information on the preliminary discussion draft, please visit OPR's website, at http://opr.ca.gov/s_ceqaguidelines.php.

CTC TO ANNOUNCE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM AWARDS

Staff at the California Transportation Commission recently released their recommendations for the Statewide and Small Urban and Rural component of the 2015 Active Transportation Program (ATP), with \$83.9 million recommended for projects within the SCAG region out of a total of \$180 million over a three-year period (FY 2017 - 2020). The California Transportation Commission is expected to approve the staff recommendations on Oct. 21. Projects that were not selected in this first round are eligible for second-round funding at the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) level. The SCAG region receives \$76.2 million as part of this component. SCAG's Regional Council is scheduled to review and approve the MPO component project list in January 2016. For the recommended project list and additional information on the ATP, visit <http://www.catc.ca.gov/programs/ATP.htm>. For questions related to current and future active transportation funding, please contact Stephen Patchan at patchan@scag.ca.gov.

SURGEON GENERAL CALL TO ACTION ON PROMOTING WALKING AND WALKABLE COMMUNITIES

On Sept. 9, the Surgeon General of the United States called on Americans to be more physically active through walking and asked the nation to better support walking and walkability. Improving walkability means that communities are created or enhanced to make it safe and easy to walk and that pedestrian activity is encouraged for all people. It also encourages a culture that supports these activities for people of all ages and abilities. More information is available at <http://1.usa.gov/1MV2yam>. SCAG is available to provide technical assistance to cities that are interested in incorporating health and walkability in their planning efforts. For information, contact Sarah Jepson at jepson@scag.ca.gov.

RANDALL LEWIS HEALTH POLICY FELLOWSHIP ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

The Randall Lewis Health Policy Fellowship has announced that it is currently accepting student applications. The purpose of this graduate-level program is to ensure the development of health professionals who possess the necessary skills to influence positive change in public policy, systems and the built environment in our local municipalities. In addition, these fellowships will create educational and professional opportunities for students in health policy and related disciplines, provide support for regional health policy initiatives and retain essential intellectual capital in our local communities. Cities and local agencies are also being sought to host a fellow for the 2015-16 school year. For more information, please contact Maggie Hawkins mhawkins@p4bhealth.org.

SCAG RECEIVES GRANT FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLE READINESS

SCAG has been awarded a \$125,000 grant from the California Energy Commission's Alternative and Renewable Fuel and Vehicle Technology Program to deploy its Multi-Unit Dwelling Plug-in Electric Vehicle (PEV) Readiness Strategies. Starting in October, grant funds will be used to overcome barriers to implementing electric vehicle charging stations infrastructure in multi-family housing within the SCAG region. SCAG staff will be working closely with the UCLA Luskin Center for Innovation, with support from the Westside Cities Council of Governments. We are excited to be continuing our efforts to support PEVs, and will be scheduling regular steering committee meetings open to all jurisdictions.

GIS SERVICES PROGRAM UPDATE

SCAG recently welcomed the cities of Downey, Huntington Park, Grand Terrace, Maywood, Norwalk and South Gate to its GIS Services Program. Staff will assist these jurisdictions with some of their GIS project needs, such as map-making, data conversion and GIS training. To date, there are nearly 100 jurisdictions participating in the program. SCAG is also pleased to announce that 24 member cities will benefit from the GIS Rollout program. This program gives participating jurisdictions a laptop, docking station, ArcGIS software, spatial data and GIS training (at no cost) with the goal of assisting our partner agencies with their day-to-day activities, as well as increasing the inter-agency sharing of local data. Recipients include the cities of Aliso Viejo, Bell, Beaumont, Bradbury, Colton, Cudahy, Jurupa Valley and Upland. For more information on the SCAG GIS Rollout program, please contact Javier Aguilar at aguilar@scag.ca.gov.

SCAG STAFF PRESENTS AT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ECOLOGY AND TRANSPORTATION

In late September, SCAG staff presented at the biennial International Conference on Ecology and Transportation in Raleigh, North Carolina. This year's conference theme was "Strengthening Essential Transportation and Ecological Assets across Diverse Landscapes." The conference attracted more than 180 technical papers, posters, and panel discussions from over 20 countries and tribal nations. SCAG's poster presentation was titled, "Urban Runoff Pollutant Spatial Distribution in Southern California: An Application of GIS using EPA's PLOAD Model and SCAG's Land Use Scenario Dataset." Staff members Tom Vo, Frank Wen, Simon Choi, Ping Wang and Alison Linder participated in the development of the poster and the associated research.

SCAG CLEAN CITIES COALITION SHARES BEST PRACTICES

SCAG staff recently attended the annual U.S. Department of Energy Clean Cities Coalition training workshop in Lemont, Illinois. The SCAG Clean Cities Coalition was recognized for Most Petroleum Gasoline Gallons reduced from Liquid Natural Gas use, based on input from an extensive survey of county and municipal transit operators. In addition, SCAG staff facilitated a breakout session for coalitions housed at metropolitan planning organizations. During the conference, the Department of Energy highlighted coalition success stories and best practices, and provided an update on new alternative fuel vehicle tools and technologies, as well as new federal and state legislation affecting transportation fuels.

SCAG PARTICIPATES IN INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE

On Aug. 17, SCAG hosted a delegation from the Sustainable Urban Transport Research Center at Ajou University in Suwon, South Korea. The center, established in 2010, focuses on research on urban planning, transportation planning, traffic engineering and IT convergence technology related to transit-oriented development. SCAG staff gave a presentation on its transportation planning process and practice to the university's Professor Keechoo Choi and two other visiting professors. On Sept. 9, SCAG hosted a five-member delegation from China's Sustainable Transportation Center and the Beijing Transport Energy and Environment Center (BTEC). SCAG staff gave the delegates an introduction to the 2016 RTP/SCS planning and PEIR process, including regional collaboration on SCAG's programs such as the Regional Electric Vehicle Program, Goods Movement Program, Data/GIS programs and transportation modeling. The delegates also provided information to SCAG staff on BTEC's programs regarding the study of green transportation in China.