

## **ASSEMBLY TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE FREIGHT HEARING**

On January 25, 2016 I accompanied President Viegas-Walker to appear before the California Assembly Transportation Committee to provide with other statewide transportation stakeholder groups an update on efforts to develop a sustainable freight action plan. President Viegas-Walker and I briefed the Committee on the unique economic impacts that freight and goods movement have on the Southern California economy as the nation's global gateway and also stressed upon the need to utilize the existing allocation mechanism established under the state's Trade Corridors Improvement Fund (TCIF) to apportion future funding to freight projects in California's most congested corridors. We urged the Committee to support allocating any federal formula freight funding from the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, the long-term transportation authorization bill recently passed by Congress, into the TCIF to expedite funding to needed projects as efficiently as possible and to leverage that funding with any additional state funding that might arise in this legislative session in Sacramento. SCAG spearheaded an effort of regional transportation agencies to make this same request of the Administration, memorialized in a joint CEO letter to the Governor included in this month's Board packet.

## **2016-2040 DRAFT REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN/SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES STRATEGY (2016 RTP/SCS) UPDATE**

Following the release of the Draft 2016 RTP/SCS on December 3, SCAG hosted a series of 14 Elected Officials' Briefings and four (4) Public Hearings throughout the 6-County Region. These meetings were intended to inform elected officials, stakeholders and interested citizens on the key investments and strategies in the Draft Plan and to solicit feedback during the official public comment period. After a brief presentation and video, each event had robust discussion both supporting and inquiring about different facets of the Draft 2016 RTP/SCS.

Additionally, on January 19, 2016, during the 60-day Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) public review and comment period, SCAG held two public workshops, specifically on the PEIR. The purpose of these public workshops was to provide an overview of the Draft PEIR and provide information on the schedule and how to submit comments on the Draft PEIR.

On February 1, 2016 at 5:00 p.m., the 2016 RTP/SCS public comment period closed. Each comment received is currently being recorded and considered. At the March 3 Regional Council meeting, a detailed report summarizing the entirety of comments will be presented.

## **CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MOVES TO CUT \$754 MILLION DOLLARS IN PROJECTS**

Due to declining revenues for transportation, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) moved one step closer to deprogramming approximately \$754 million in transportation projects, when it is revised revenue projects for the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) last week. This action will have a significant impact on the delivery of critical transportation projects across the state. In the 6-County SCAG region, the shortfall approved is approximately \$243 million. The County Transportation Commissions (counties) have until February 26, 2016 to submit revised Regional Transportation Improvement Programs (RTIP) for their respective counties reflecting the shortfall to the CTC. The CTC will be holding a STIP hearing in Southern California on March 24, 2016 and the CTC staff is expected to release the staff recommendation on April 22, 2016. The adoption of the 2016 STIP by the CTC is expected to occur between May 18-19, 2016. In the meantime, SCAG is working with the CTC to inform the Southern California legislative delegation about this and the need to act quickly on the various transportation funding packages currently before the legislature.

## **2016 REGIONAL CONFERENCE & GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

On May 5-6, 2016 SCAG will be hosting the 2016 Regional Conference & General Assembly at the La Quinta Resort & Club. As SCAG's premier annual event, this conference promises to include engaging speakers, informative panel discussions and valuable networking opportunities. Be sure to join us as we debate critical issues and formulate ways to implement the strategies within the 2016-2040 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (2016 RTP/ SCS), a long-range visioning plan that balances future mobility and housing needs with economic, environmental and public health goals. At La Quinta, we will be bringing together our member cities, counties, state and federal agencies, private sector partners, as well as old friends and new.

## **2016 SCAG SUSTAINABILITY AWARDS**

SCAG is committed to highlighting excellent planning efforts from local agencies in sustainability. Each year, SCAG honors projects that best exemplify the core principles of sustainability with awards at the Annual Regional Conference & General Assembly. The SCAG Sustainability Awards represent the highest achievement in planning by local jurisdictions and agencies in the region and offers a prestigious platform to showcase some of the best planning work occurring in Southern California.

SCAG is now accepting nominations for these plans and projects that coordinate land use and transportation actions to improve the mobility, livability, prosperity and sustainability of our region. The SCAG Sustainability Awards program is open to all parties, including local governments, non-profits, developers and others. Partnerships are welcome; public agencies, in combination with other public or private organizations or individuals, may jointly submit an entry. Eligible submittals include plans, projects and programs completed or adopted after January 1, 2012 and prior to March 1, 2016. Along with the awards ceremony, videos of winning projects will be presented at the 2016 Regional Conference and General Assembly at the La Quinta Resort and Club on May 5 and 6, 2016.

Visit [www.scag.ca.gov](http://www.scag.ca.gov) for more information and to download the nomination packet. The application deadline is 2:00 p.m., Friday, March 1, 2016. If you have questions, please contact India Brookover at [brookover@scag.ca.gov](mailto:brookover@scag.ca.gov), 213-236-1919.

## **APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE FOR 2016 SCAG SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

Now currently accepting applications, the SCAG Scholarship Program is designed to offer local government and planning experience that students can use to develop long-term career goals and a monetary award. The program provides a \$4,000 scholarship award for up to eight high school or community college students from the SCAG region plus a two-week internship with a local planning agency, council of governments, or SCAG. Eligible students must both reside and attend school within the SCAG region (i.e. Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, or Ventura County), be currently enrolled as a high school junior or senior, or community college student, have at least a 3.0 grade point average and provide proof of eligibility to work in the United States. In addition, graduating students must provide proof of enrollment in higher education. All materials for the 2016 SCAG Scholarship Program must be postmarked by Friday, April 1, 2016. For more information and to apply online or download an application, please visit the program's webpage at: [www.scag.ca.gov/scholarship](http://www.scag.ca.gov/scholarship).

## **SCAG SHARES KNOWLEDGE AT THE TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH BOARD'S ANNUAL MEETING**

In early January, SCAG staff was invited to present at the 2016 Transportation Research Board (TRB) Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. The spotlight theme of this year's meeting was Research Convergence for a Multimodal Future. Other "hot topics" at the conference included Transformation Technologies, Resilience and Transportation and Public Health. This year's meeting brought more than 12,000 transportation professionals from around the world. Its program covered over 5,000 presentations in nearly 800 sessions and workshops. Staff made four paper/poster presentations including (1) Challenges and Realities of Deploying

a Regional Network of Express and HOT Lanes in Southern California (Annie Nam); (2) Spatial and Socioeconomic Analysis of Commuting Patterns in Southern California Using LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics, CTPP and ACS Public Use Microdata Sample (Tom Vo); (3) Spatial Distribution of Urban Runoff Pollutant in the Southern California Region and Its Impacts on Environmental Justice Analysis: Application of GIS Using EPA's PLOAD Model and SCAG Land Use Scenario Dataset (Tom Vo); and (4) Local Demographic Projections and Traffic Safety: Integrating Census, California Department of Public Health and Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System Data (Derek Hung). Akiko Yamagami also successfully planned and conducted a three-hour workshop titled "On-demand Technology and Sharing Economy for Freight – Urban Freight Story," sponsored by TRB's Urban Freight Committee. The outcomes of the workshop will be incorporated into a proposal for a National Corporative Highway Research Program to examine the impact of an increase in e-commerce sales on urban delivery demand and how emerging technology applications might play an important role in effectively and responsively matching supply and demand within the current and future built environment.

## **SCAG SECURES CAP AND TRADE RESOURCES TO DEPLOY PILOT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

SCAG has secured nearly \$200,000 from the California Strategic Growth Council (SGC) to participate in a pilot technical assistance program as part of the next Affordable Housing Sustainable Communities (AHSC) grant round. This pilot program will focus on strengthening specific concept applications from 2015 that did not advance to State's the final round. Resources will support applications that benefit disadvantaged communities and will also be used to build capacity for future grant rounds.

Additionally, SCAG has deployed its cap and trade assistance team to help a broad range of potential applicants throughout the region prepare for the 2016 AHSC grant round. During December 2015 and throughout January, staff conducted over 40 technical assistance work sessions to help regional stakeholders identify projects that may be ready for the next grant round. Projects fostering connectivity between housing, transit and active transportation infrastructure that also demonstrate a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions will be considered most compelling to the State. Staff will continue to coordinate technical assistance efforts with the SGC throughout the upcoming AHSC grant round.

## **DRAFT 2017 ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM (ATP) GUIDELINES RELEASED**

The Draft 2017 Active Transportation Program (ATP) Guidelines (Guidelines) have been released for public review and comment. A Guidelines workshop will be hosted by SCAG and the California Transportation Commission (CTC) on February 3, 2016 (1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.) at the SCAG Downtown Los Angeles office. The workshop will provide an opportunity for stakeholders to submit comments for consideration by the CTC before Guidelines approval on March 16, 2016. The approval of the Guidelines also marks the opening for the Call for Projects, with project applications tentatively due by June 15, 2016 and selected by March 2017. To view the draft Guidelines visit <http://bit.ly/1Pb5oHD>. For more information on the ATP program, visit <http://www.catc.ca.gov/programs/ATP.htm>. For any additional questions or comments, please contact Stephen Patchan, [patchan@scag.ca.gov](mailto:patchan@scag.ca.gov), 213-236-1923.

## **U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA) HAS APPROVED CALIFORNIA'S LATEST MOTOR VEHICLE EMISSION FACTOR MODEL**

On December 14, 2015, the U.S. EPA approved and announced the availability of the latest version of California Air Resources Board's motor vehicle emission factor model for use in air quality planning and transportation conformity in California. The new model, EMFAC2014, is based on updated regulations as well as new and improved vehicle emissions data and calculates air pollution emissions factors for passenger cars, trucks, motorcycles, motor homes and buses. The U.S. EPA also set a two-year grace period during which the previous version of the emission factor model (EMFAC2011) may still be used. However, on or after December 14, 2017, only EMFAC2014 may be used for all new regional and project-level transportation conformity analysis

purposes. The conformity analysis for SCAG's Draft 2016-2040 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) includes emissions results using both EMFAC2011 and EMFAC2014 in anticipation of the latter's approval. With the approval of EMFAC2014, the conformity analysis for the Final 2016-2040 RTP/SCS will only be based on emissions results using EMFAC2014. For detailed information about the U.S. EPA action, see the Federal Register Notice at: <http://1.usa.gov/1WYbBM4>.

## **REVISED CEQA GUIDELINES PROPOSAL REGARDING ANALYSIS OF TRANSPORTATION IMPACTS**

The Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) is accepting comments until February 29, 2016 on a revised proposal to update the CEQA Guidelines regarding the analysis of transportation impacts. OPR developed a preliminary discussion draft of such changes by summer 2014 as required by Senate Bill 743. This revised proposal reflects input that OPR received on that preliminary discussion draft. The revised proposal contains: 1) an explanation of the changes and how they respond to public input; 2) the revised section of the proposed new CEQA Guidelines; 3) a draft technical advisory containing recommendations related to methodology, thresholds of significance, safety and mitigation; and 4) case studies illustrating how the proposed analysis would apply to sample projects. The revised CEQA Guidelines proposal is available for review on the OPR website at: <http://bit.ly/1nJ7x6P>.

## **U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA) SEEKS PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE DRAFT UPDATE OF ITS ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE STRATEGIC PLAN**

The USDA is preparing a four-year plan that establishes goals to increase outreach and participation in its agency programs in historically underserved communities. The draft update builds on existing USDA plans and includes resilience in the context of climate change and improving access to USDA financial and technical assistance programs for underserved communities. The draft USDA Environmental Justice Strategic Plan is available here: [USDA Environmental Strategic Plan](#). Comments on the Plan are due by February 14, 2016 and should be submitted to [EJStrategy@usda.gov](mailto:EJStrategy@usda.gov).

## **SCAG CONTINUES INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

During the second week of December 2015, SCAG hosted a 4-day workshop for a delegation of Chinese officials on regional planning for sustainable transportation, low carbon economy growth and strategies for GHG reduction. SCAG staff presented on the technical models that were utilized for the 2016 RTP/SCS, including our economic and demographic growth projection model, small area forecast and allocation model, regional transportation model, GIS/data spatial analysis model and SCAG's air quality conformity and emissions model. The workshop also included a visit to the South Coast Air Quality Management District to review their air quality forecasting techniques and alternative energy vehicles. The workshop participants included three (3) staff from the Chinese Academy of Sciences' Institute of Policy and Management and six (6) staff from the China Academy of Transportation Sciences within the Ministry of Transport. Participants introduced their issues and challenges on policy and planning, sustainable economic growth and transportation development, which are parallel in both the U.S. and China. SCAG continues to hold dialogs and collaborate with our international partners.

On December 11, 2015, SCAG hosted a separate international delegation from South Korea's Presidential Committee on Regional Development (PCRD). PCRD is presidential advisory committee orchestrating overall regional development policies in South Korea. Staff provided the delegation with a presentation on Future Growth and Transportation in Southern California: Governance, Planning, Funding Programming and Local Collaboration Examples. Also joining SCAG as visiting student researchers are Chang-Yong Kim and Sang-Yoon Kim from Incheon National University and Ki-Dong Lee and Myeong-Sub Shin from Myongji University.