

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MONTHLY REPORT

APRIL 2013

California Lt. Governor to Keynote SCAG Regional Conference & General Assembly

Hon. Gavin Newsom, Lt. Governor of the State of California, will be the Lunch Keynote Speaker at SCAG's 2013 Regional Conference & General Assembly, at the JW Marriott Resort & Spa in Palm Desert. Lt. Governor Newsom will speak at 12:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 2. The deadline to register for the conference is April 12. Register today at: www.scag.ca.gov/ga2013. Registration is \$100 per person and \$50 for students. The registration fee includes access to all events and meals of the SCAG Regional Conference & General Assembly. SCAG Regional Council Members, SCAG Policy Committee Members and SCAG General Assembly Delegates may register for free by contacting Tess Rey-Chaput at 213-236-1908 or rey@scag.ca.gov. For more information about the conference and sponsorship opportunities, please visit www.scag.ca.gov/ga2013.

A limited number of rooms are available at the conference rate of \$115 plus tax per night until the room block has been filled or until the hotel room reservation deadline, **April 12**. Please note that after April 12, the hotel's regular room rate and availability restrictions will apply.

I look forward to seeing all of you at this event.

2013 Local Profiles Under Review by Local Jurisdictions

First released at the 2009 SCAG Regional Conference & General Assembly and updated every two years thereafter, SCAG's Local Profiles have been utilized by jurisdictions and other stakeholders for a variety of purposes and serve as an important member benefit. The Local Profiles contain demographic and socioeconomic information to support jurisdictions in local planning and economic development. This year's profile focuses on the changes in jurisdictions since 2000.

On March 14, SCAG staff provided the draft 2013 Local Profiles to the Planning Directors of local jurisdictions and subregional Councils of Government for review by April 4. Since then, staff has received and appreciates the various helpful comments from local jurisdictions. Staff has also been invited by several subregions to provide presentations on the upcoming Local Profiles. Based on the comments received, staff is scheduled to finalize the 2013 Local Profiles in late April for release at the SCAG Regional Conference & General Assembly on May 2 – 3, 2013.

SCAG GIS Services for Local Jurisdictions

The public outreach process for the 2012 – 2035 RTP/SCS spurred the idea for and later the implementation of the SCAG GIS Services Program. Many jurisdictions in the SCAG region lacked the resources to readily compile and distribute existing land use, general plan and zoning data. With SCAG's assistance, many member jurisdictions now have these capabilities without expending scarce resources. In the process, SCAG has helped jurisdictions update their general plan and zoning maps and create an existing land use database which, among other uses, provides local jurisdictions opportunities to test land use policy scenarios using SCAG's Scenario Planning model.

SCAG would like to welcome the cities of San Fernando and Victorville as the newest members to SCAG's GIS Services Program. Additionally, we congratulate Villa Park which was selected to receive a computer, GIS software and training. I also would like to thank Desert Hot Springs for continuing to entrust SCAG in helping with GIS issues. I encourage any jurisdiction that is not currently participating in the SCAG GIS Services Program to investigate how this member benefit can assist their jurisdiction by contacting Frank Wen at 213-236-1854 or wen@scag.ca.gov.

Trial Court Rules on Perris Valley Line Project

On March 27, Hon. Judge Sharon Taylor rendered a decision in the CEQA lawsuit challenging the Riverside County Transportation Commission's (RCTC) EIR for the Perris Valley Line (PVL) project (Friends of Riverside's Hills v. RCTC, RCSC Case No. RIC1113896). The trial court judge denied in part and granted in part the requested writ of mandate. Specifically, the court ruled against RCTC on five separate issues: (1) impacts from construction noise, (2) impacts to pedestrian safety; (3) impacts from wheel-squeal noise; (4) water quality impacts related to waste side lubricators; and (5) impacts from soils export.

On a positive note, the court found in favor of RCTC with respect to the two issues that SCAG addressed in its amicus letter to the court: air quality impacts and adequacy of the EIR alternatives. (The court also officially filed SCAG's amicus letter into the record of the case proceedings). According to RCTC's counsel, the judge did not state what remedy is appropriate in light of the decision. A follow-up hearing has been ordered for April 24 to further consider the matter. More will be known about the ultimate outcome of the case following this hearing.

Milestone Reached – South Coast Air Basin Meets Health-Based Air Quality Standard for Coarse Particulate Matter (PM-10)

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has proposed to find the South Coast Air Basin in attainment for the 1987 PM-10 National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) set by U.S. EPA to protect public health. U.S. EPA is also proposing to approve the state's maintenance plan that demonstrates how the area will continue to achieve the PM-10 NAAQS standard for at least the next ten years. The control measures needed to demonstrate maintenance of the PM-10 standards for the next ten years have already been adopted by the California Air Resources Board and the South Coast Air Quality Management District. Finally, U.S. EPA is proposing to approve the motor vehicle emissions budgets associated with the maintenance plan for use in future transportation conformity determinations. The proposed action will soon be published in the Federal Register and will include a 30-day public comment period from the date of publication.

2012 – 2035 RTP/SCS and 2013 FTIP Conformity Re-determination for 2008 8-hour Ozone NAAQS Submitted to FHWA/FTA for Approval

The U.S. EPA finalized the area designations for the 2008 8-hour ozone standards effective July 20, 2012. Seven areas including two areas of Indian Country (Morongo and Pechanga) were designated as non-attainment areas for these updated ozone standards. As a result, transportation conformity for these ozone non-attainment areas needed to be re-determined for the 2012 – 2035 RTP/SCS and 2013 FTIP. On March 7, the Regional Council adopted the required ozone conformity re-determination (except for the two Indian Country non-attainment areas which underwent a separate transportation conformity process). Subsequently, the conformity re-determination has been submitted to FHWA/FTA for approval. The timely approval of the conformity re-determination by FHWA/FTA by July 20 will allow important transportation projects to proceed smoothly in these ozone non-attainment areas. SCAG staff has since completed the transportation conformity analysis and determination for the Morongo and Pechanga (and the remainder of the South Coast Air Basin) non-attainment areas. The Regional Council will consider adoption of this conformity determination at its meeting on April 4.

Professional Recognition and Information Sharing

SCAG and its Research and Analysis Department are being increasingly recognized as setting national, state and regional modeling and planning data/GIS direction and policy. Jung Seo has been recognized for SCAG's work with employment data, particularly as it relates to home-to-work trips. SCAG will present "Visualization of LODES/OnTheMap Work Destination Data Using GIS and Statistical Applications," at the 2013 Local Employment Dynamics Partnership Annual Workshop, June 12 – 13, at the U.S. Census Bureau headquarters in Washington D.C.

John Cho presented a paper on Network-Based Simulation of Air Pollution Emissions Associated with Truck Operations at the 54th Annual Transportation Research Forum (TRF) in Annapolis, Maryland March 21 – 23. This paper was selected as the winner of the 2013 TRF Student Paper contest. The TRF is an independent organization of transportation professionals founded in 1960.

Additionally, Frank Wen, Simon Choi, Javier Minjares and Jung Seo will present research papers on (1) Goods Movement Environmental Justice Analysis in Southern California and (2) Integration of a Parcel-Based Sketch Planning Model with GIS to Measure GHG Emissions, at the 14th Transportation Research Board (TRB) Transportation Planning Applications Conference in Columbus, Ohio, May 5 – 9. These efforts are strong indicators of SCAG's continuing relevance and contributions to regional planning, in Southern California and across the country.

Draft Amendment #1 of the 2012 – 2035 RTP/SCS and Amendment #13-04 of the 2013 FTIP

In collaboration with local County Transportation Commissions (CTCs), SCAG has prepared the draft Amendment #1 of the 2012 – 2035 RTP/SCS and Amendment #13-04 of the 2013 FTIP. This amendment will reconcile proposed changes to some of the critical transportation improvement projects in the 2012 – 2035 RTP/SCS and add a few new ones that are critical to the region. The amendment includes revisions to 36 projects and seven new projects. Most of the project modifications are relatively minor in nature, including changes to completion years, costs, as well as minor modifications to project scopes. The new projects include transit, freeway and arterial projects that are consistent with the overall goals and policy objectives of the 2012 – 2035 RTP/SCS. Staff has conducted technical analysis and documented necessary findings that ensure that the 2012 – 2035 RTP/SCS continues to meet all of the state and federal requirements, including those associated with SB 375, transportation conformity and fiscal constraint. In addition, an addendum to the Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) associated with the 2012 – 2035 RTP/SCS has been prepared in compliance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff will present the draft amendment to the Transportation Committee on April 4 and seek the committee's approval to release the document for a 30-day public review and comment period. Upon successful completion of the public review process, staff anticipates seeking the Regional Council's approval of this amendment on June 6.