



# TRANSPORTATION CONFORMITY WORKING GROUP

## Meeting Minutes

August 23, 2022

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

The meeting was held via Zoom teleconference. A digital recording of the meeting is available for listening in SCAG's office.

### Attendee List

#### SCAG Staff:

Asuncion, John  
Barajas, Agustin  
Calderon, Karen  
Ekman, Annaleigh  
Gutierrez, Pablo  
Jones, Mike  
Luo, Rongsheng  
Milner, David  
Sangkapichai, Mana  
Sun, Lijin  
Whiteaker, Warren

#### Via Teleconference:

Anderson, Kelsie  
Arellano, Lexie  
Bade, Rabindra  
Cacatian, Ben  
Cooper, Keith  
Espinoza Araiza, Erika  
Garfio, Angel  
Gaschot, Bertrand  
Huddleston, Lori  
Kalandiyur, Nesamani  
Lau, Charles  
Lay, Keith  
Lee, David  
Lugaro, Julie  
Marroquin, Nancy  
Masters, Martha  
Miranda, Jude  
Odufalu, Olufemi  
Richmai, Michael  
Sanchez, Lucas  
Silverman, Sam  
Sutherland, Anders  
Tavitas, Rodney  
Yoon, Andrew

TCA  
Caltrans Headquarters  
Caltrans District 12  
Ventura County APCD  
ERP  
Caltrans Headquarters  
OCTA  
Mojave Desert AQMD  
LA Metro  
CARB  
Caltrans District 7  
ICF  
Caltrans District 8  
Caltrans District 12  
LA Metro  
RCTC  
Caltrans District 12  
Caltrans District 8  
LA Metro  
Caltrans Headquarters  
Terry A Hayes Associates  
Terry A Hayes Associates  
Caltrans Headquarters  
Caltrans District 7



# TRANSPORTATION CONFORMITY WORKING GROUP

## MEETING SUMMARY

### 1. CALL TO ORDER AND SELF-INTRODUCTIONS

Andrew Yoon, TCWG Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

### 2. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

None.

### 3. CONSENT CALENDAR

- 3.1. July 26, 2022 TCWG Meeting Minutes  
The meeting minutes were approved.

### 4. INFORMATION ITEMS

#### 4.1. RTP Update (10 minutes)

##### 4.1.1. Status Update on Connect SoCal-2020 RTP/SCS Amendment No. 2

John Asuncion, SCAG, reported the following:

- The Draft Connect SoCal Amendment No. 2 was released for a 30-day public review and comment period from July 8, 2022 to August 8, 2022.
- Two public hearings were held concurrently with those for the Draft 2023 FTIP on July 19 and July 28, 2022.
- No public comments were received on the Draft Connect SoCal Amendment No. 2.
- The proposed final Connect SoCal Amendment No. 2 would move forward to SCAG's Transportation Committee (TC) for approval in September 2022, the Regional Council (RC) for adoption in October 2022, with federal approval anticipated in December 2022.

#### 4.2. FTIP Update (10 minutes)

##### 4.2.1. Status Update on 2023 FTIP

John Asuncion, SCAG, thanked County Transportation Commissions (CTCs) and Caltrans for their work on the 2023 FTIP and reported the following:

- The 2023 FTIP totals \$35.9 billion in programming and contains over 1,700 projects over six years.
- A notable improvement from the adopted 2021 FTIP is that the 2023 FTIP includes a high-level discussion on equity. Looking ahead, SCAG staff is intended to engage in meetings with CTCs to address equity issues in FTIP programming for development of the next 2025 FTIP, which would be up for adoption in two years.
- The Draft 2023 FTIP had the same public review schedule and two public hearings as those for the Draft Connect SoCal Amendment No. 2, reported above under Item 4.1.1.
- SCAG received 24 public comments on the Draft 2023 FTIP. The comments were technical in nature. All comments had been addressed and included in a matrix within the staff report for the September 1, 2022 Transportation Committee meeting.
- SCAG staff would present the proposed final 2023 FTIP to SCAG's TC for approval in September 2022, the RC for adoption in October 2022, with federal approval anticipated in December 2022.

#### 4.3. Status Update on Conformity Analyses for 2023 FTIP and Connect SoCal-2020 RTP/SCS Amendment No. 2 (10 minutes)

Lijin Sun, SCAG, reported the following:

- SCAG conformity staff previously developed the transportation conformity analyses for the draft 2020 Connect SoCal Amendment 2 and the draft 2023 FTIP.
- As authorized by the Regional Council at its meeting on July 7, the transportation conformity analyses were included as part of the Draft Amendment 2 and the Draft 2023 FTIP for a 30-day public review and comment



# TRANSPORTATION CONFORMITY WORKING GROUP

period. No public comments specific to conformity were received.

- Based on staff's review and analysis, the comments received on the Draft 2023 FTIP did not raise issues that affect the associated conformity analyses.
- SCAG staff has determined that the proposed final 2023 FTIP and the proposed final Amendment 2 meet all federal transportation conformity requirements.
- The transportation conformity analyses and determinations portion would be presented to SCAG's Energy and Environment Committee for approval at its September 1, 2022 meeting and the RC for adoption in October 2022, with federal approval anticipated in December 2022.
- Once approved by the federal agencies, the 2023 FTIP and the 2020 Connect SoCal Amendment #2 would allow projects to receive the necessary federal approvals and move forward towards implementation.

#### 4.4. Status Update on Regional Transportation Conformity Lockdown (10 minutes)

Rongsheng Luo, SCAG, reported the following:

- Since the July 26, 2022 TCWG meeting, the four-agency (South Coast AQMD, ARB, EPA, and SCAG) staff met two more times. At the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting in late July, EPA staff recommended a new approach after extensive internal consultation with EPA Headquarters.
- The new approach includes two elements: (1) a "bump up" request of the nonattainment classification of Coachella; and (2) a less complex Coachella air plan with replacement conformity budgets. Both elements would require separate development and approval processes by South Coast AQMD, ARB, and EPA.
- At the 5<sup>th</sup> four-agency meeting on August 10, South Coast AQMD, ARB, and EPA staff reported on their respective timelines under the new approach.
- Under the best-case scenario and assuming EPA approval of EMFAC2021 soon, March 2023 was estimated to be the earliest time for when the new replacement budgets might become effective. If the FHWA/FTA could complete their review within one month as they did for Connect SoCal, the timelines would meet our current schedule of federal approval in April/May 2023. If there are any unexpected delays, which are reasonably possible and likely, Regional Council adoption and final federal approval may be delayed as a result.
- South Coast AQMD staff started its process and presented the reclassification approach to the South Coast AQMD Mobile Source Committee at its August 19, 2022 meeting. The Committee was supportive. South Coast AQMD staff was developing the required Coachella air plan including the replacement conformity budgets, would release it for public review, and present to its governing board for adoption in November 2022. Upon South Coast AQMD adoption, the air plan would be submitted to ARB for expedited approval and transmittal to EPA.
- ARB staff also started its process and developed the draft new ozone conformity budgets for initial interagency review among the four agencies.
- EPA staff would work closely with both South Coast AQMD and ARB staff to perform advance review. In addition, EPA staff would discuss with tribes in Coachella to undertake required tribal consultation separately to save time, publish a proposed rule in Federal Register for public review, respond to any comments, and publish the final rule in Federal Register.
- Due to these multiple and complicated processes required of South Coast AQMD, ARB, and EPA, issues outside their control could affect timing and cause delay. The four agencies would meet every four weeks starting September 7<sup>th</sup> to closely monitor the process and take any necessary actions.
- SCAG staff continued to move forward with the work for the proactive concurrent 2020 Connect SoCal Amendment #3 and 2023 FTIP modeling amendment #23-03 to minimize the lockdown impact. The drafts were planned to be released for public review in November or December 2022, with RC adoption in April or May 2023, and federal approval as early as in April or May 2023, if all would go as currently planned.

Rodney Tavitas, Caltrans Headquarters, stated that regional conformity analyses are required each time for RTP and



# TRANSPORTATION CONFORMITY WORKING GROUP

FTIP amendments and that amendments must be federally approvable, such as using the EPA-approved EMFAC for the required regional emissions analysis. As a heads up, Caltrans Headquarters staff would engage with SCAG staff regarding the upcoming 2020 Connect SoCal Amendment #3 and 2023 FTIP modeling amendment #23-03. Rongsheng Luo, SCAG staff, clarified that the regional emissions modeling for Amendment #3 and 2023 FTIP amendment #23-03 would use EMFAC2021 that is expected to be approved by EPA soon.

Rongsheng also clarified that the Coachella air plan with replacement conformity budgets is for the 2008 8-hour ozone standard. The Coachella Valley is currently classified as a severe nonattainment area for that standard. The bump up request is to reclassify Coachella Valley from severe to extreme. The Coachella Valley is already classified as an extreme nonattainment area for the previous 1997 8-hour ozone standard. The 2015 8-hour ozone standard is being addressed through the South Coast AQMD's 2022 Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP). Another important aspect to note is that ozone pollution in Coachella Valley is transported from the South Coast Air Basin. Coachella Valley is not going to attain the ozone standard without emission reductions in the South Coast Air Basin.

#### 4.5. EPA Update (10 minutes)

Lijin Sun, SCAG, reported on behalf of EPA staff that EPA staff had not received updated EMFAC2021 submittal or the adjustment factors from ARB.

#### 4.6. ARB Update (10 minutes)

Nesamani Kalandiyur, ARB, reported the following:

##### **EMFAC2021:**

- ARB staff had resolved technical issues of the updated EMFAC2021, which was under ARB management review. EPA completed the draft federal register notice, which was under internal EPA review.
- EPA's approval of the updated EMFAC2021 was expected in fall 2022. This timeline was expected to meet SCAG's April/May 2023 timeline for the concurrent 2020 Connect SoCal Amendment #3 and 2023 FTIP modeling amendment #23-03, as reported above under Item 4.4.

##### **Draft New Mobile Vehicle Emissions Budgets for the 2015 8-hour Ozone Standard:**

- ARB staff had developed the draft new conformity budgets for the South Coast Air Basin, Coachella Valley, and Ventura County portion of the South Central Coast Air Basin in the SCAG region and provided them for initial interagency review and consultation.
- ARB staff would present the draft new conformity budgets at a future TCWG meeting to seek feedback.

##### **Revised Proposed 2022 State Strategy for the State Implementation Plan (2022 State SIP Strategy):**

- On August 23, ARB staff conducted the last public workshop on the revised proposed 2022 State SIP Strategy and would bring it to ARB Governing Board for adoption in September 2022.

#### 4.7. Air Districts Update (10 minutes)

Ben Cacatian, VCAPCD, reported the following:

- VCAPCD's Draft 2022 AQMP for the 2015 8-hour Ozone standard would be released for a 30-day public review and comment period on August 31, 2022 through September 30, 2022, including a public workshop on September 29, 2022, with the public hearing tentatively scheduled on November 10, 2022.

Bertrand Gaschot, MDAQMD, reported the following:

- MDAQMD staff continued work on MDAQMD's 2022 AQMP for the 2015 8-hour Ozone standard.
- MDAQMD staff was in contact/working with EPA on a revised local fee rule to correct the rule deficiencies



# TRANSPORTATION CONFORMITY WORKING GROUP

following the EPA's proposed limited disapproval in June 2022.

## 5. INFORMATION SHARING

None.

## 6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:32 a.m. The next TCWG meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 27, 2022. Please submit PM Hot Spot Analysis Interagency Review Forms for the next meeting to Lijin Sun, [sunl@scag.ca.gov](mailto:sunl@scag.ca.gov), two weeks in advance, by Tuesday, September 13, 2022.