

RCTO CONSIDER RELEASE OF DRAFT RTP/SCS AND PEIR

Based upon the joint recommendation of SCAG's three Policy Committees at last month's Special Joint meeting, the Regional Council will meet on Dec. 3 to discuss the release of the Draft 2016-2040 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (2016 RTP/SCS) for a 60-day public review and comment period beginning Dec. 4, 2015 and ending Feb. 1, 2016. The Regional Council will also consider the release of the Draft 2016 RTP/SCS Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for public review and comment, with a concurrent 60-day public review and comment period as the Draft RTP/SCS.

Over the past many 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 Policy Committees have reviewed and taken action on several of the plan's major components, including finding near-term transitional strategies and long-term initiatives to pay 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. The Dec. 3 Regional Council meeting builds upon these past actions. To allow for additional time for public comment and discussion on the proposed draft 2016 RTP/SCS, the meeting is scheduled for three hours. A staff report on the major components of the Draft 2016 RTP/SCS and PEIR, as well as links to a preview PDF of both documents, is included in the Regional Council agenda.

FTA TRIENNIAL REVIEWS OF TRANSIT OPERATORS IN SCAG REGION

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is currently conducting triennial reviews of recipients of Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Program funds to examine grantee performance and adherence to statutory and administrative requirements and policies. As part of the triennial review, FTA asks a number of questions which directly relate to SCAG planning and programming processes and/or documentation. This includes questions about agreements between SCAG and transit operators that specify cooperative procedures for carrying out transportation planning and programming; SCAG's public participation process, which some operators rely on to satisfy public participation requirements for their program of projects; and the annual reporting of Associated Transit Improvements which SCAG performs. SCAG staff are coordinating with the County Transportation Commissions and transit operators in the region to address these questions in a consistent manner. This matter will be discussed at the Dec. 3, 2015 RTTAC meeting.

SCAG HOSTS CIVICSPARK FELLOWS

In mid-November, SCAG welcomed three new CivicSpark fellows – Mackenzie Bolger, Mike Kloha and Breanna Swenson – who will all be working on the Sustainability Department's Green Region Initiative. The CivicSpark Program is a statewide AmeriCorps Program administered by the Local Government Commission (LGC) in partnership with the State of California Governor's Office of Planning & Research (OPR). Specifically, LGC through the CivicSpark Program works with organizations to address climate change issues in their respective areas and provide capacity-building support to local governments through research, planning and project implementation activities. These CivicSpark Fellows are assisting SCAG staff in identifying sustainability strategies and best practices that can be implemented by local jurisdictions and included in the RTP/SCS. The Sustainability Program is a key SCAG initiative for implementing the RTP/SCS sustainability strategies, as well as supporting SCAG member jurisdictions in implementing regional policies at the local level, focusing on voluntary efforts that will meet local needs and contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and providing the range of local and regional benefits outlined in the SCS.



INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

In November, SCAG hosted an international visit from the Audit Office of Henan Province, China. SCAG staff provided Chinese delegates with an overview of SCAG's finance and accounting system, governance structure and major programs, as well as integrated planning concepts on land use, open space and protected land. The Chinese visitors introduced their audit system and their responsibilities in China. Also joining SCAG as a visiting student researcher is Yuan Zeng. Mr. Zeng is a Ph.D candidate from the Institute of Policy & Management of Chinese Academy of Sciences. The Institute is SCAG's partner agency in China and is devoted to the study of strategy and policy issues for science and technology, innovation development, sustainable development, administration of public security and management science. Mr. Zeng will stay at both SCAG and UCLA for one year and will focus on the analysis of regional transportation and land use planning.

SCAG GIS ROLLOUT PROGRAM UPDATE

Since July, SCAG has implemented 12 GIS rollouts to local jurisdictions in the region. The GIS Rollout Program provides free GIS software and hardware resources to SCAG member cities, including a laptop, docking station, ArcGIS software, spatial data and GIS software training (at no cost) and aims to increase regional data sharing, as well as assist jurisdictions with their day-to-day activities. Recipients include the cities of Aliso Viejo, Bell, Beaumont, Bradbury, Colton, Cudahy, Eastvale, Jurupa Valley, Lawndale, Loma Linda, Maywood and Upland. In the next few weeks, GIS rollouts are anticipated for the cities of Huntington Park, South Gate and Wildomar. In addition, SCAG provided introductory GIS trainings at the City of Aliso Viejo. For more information on SCAG's GIS Rollout Program, please contact Javier Aguilar at aguilar@scag.ca.gov.