



S A C O G

SACOG Board of Directors

Item #05-10-17
Action

October 13, 2005

Options for SACOG Soundwall Policy

Issue: What policy options does the SACOG Board want to consider for soundwalls in response to the increasing number of local requests?

Recommendation: The Housing & Land Use Committee recommends that the SACOG Board of Directors approve the first four of the five soundwall policy options in Attachment A for further analysis and direct that the analysis be restricted only to soundwalls requested on state highways.

Committee Action/Discussion: This item was presented to the Housing & Land Use Committee and the Transportation & Air Quality Committee. For the past several months, several aspects of the soundwall debate have been presented to these two committees, including a soundwall issue paper and an inventory of current soundwall needs in the SACOG region as shown in Attachment B. Given what we heard and learned during this period, SACOG staff developed the five policy options in Attachment A, ranging from maintaining the status quo policy to SACOG committing to fund soundwalls in all the 48 identified locations.

The Housing & Land Use Committee, in considering the five options, noted that: freeways were the main source of continuous noise that generate public complaints; SACOG owns first line responsibility for state highway soundwall funding since SB45; rail noise is an intermittent and less severe responsibility of private railroads or Sacramento Regional Transit, and local arterial soundwalls should be a local agency responsibility. The committee recommended that the Board evaluate and consider only policy options that would provide soundwalls along state freeways, thus eliminating option 5.

SB 45, the programming reform bill of 1997, devolved from the state to the region the responsibility to fund retrofit soundwalls along state highways through either the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) or regional programs using federal funds, or to local agencies using their own transportation or general funds or local assessments. SACOG has received an increasing number of requests from citizens and community groups for soundwalls, once those people figure out what responsibilities various agencies carry to fund and build soundwalls, and conclude that the buck now stops here at SACOG. In the past, and for the foreseeable future, soundwalls would not compete well against other regional-scale - or even local - transportation investments. Staff will evaluate and return to the Board those policy options it wants to consider, as a means for clearer communication or to express policy that does not now exist.

Approved by:

Mike McKeever
Executive Director

MM:SAO:ts
Attachment

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SACOG SOUNDWALL POLICY OPTIONS

- 1. Maintain the status quo:** Currently, soundwall projects are allowed to compete with other transportation projects for funding, but SACOG has never funded a soundwall project in competition with transportation improvements or rehabilitation. In the meantime, the ranks of neighborhoods that need soundwalls continue to grow. As traffic volume increases, the number of neighborhoods eligible for soundwalls may increase. At the least, unbuilt soundwall projects will continue as a demand for transportation funds. SACOG may be able to continue its current policy for an indefinite time, thus conserving millions of dollars to be used in other transportation needs that could solve congestion.
- 2. Set a one-time only fixed amount limit, say \$10 million, requiring a 50% local match commitment, and administer the funds on a first-come, first-served basis until the funds are exhausted:** Such a policy could satisfy both those who currently believe that SACOG is entangling itself in the soundwall quagmire and some areas that want soundwalls urgently enough to share in paying for them. If SACOG tries to satisfy every neighborhood that needs a soundwall, there may be no funds left for the most pressing transportation needs.
- 3. Require a 50 percent match from those who request soundwalls on a state highway and fund other soundwalls only as part of a system development:** This policy is estimated to cost SACOG \$14 million or more, depending on which areas may agree to match, and restrict the requests to those who truly need the soundwalls and are ready to make some financial commitments.
- 4. Agree to fund a one-time provision of soundwalls only along state highways:** This policy will set the list of such soundwall needs at 23 locations, 20.43 miles, costing about \$27 million. Under the programming reform bill, SB 45 of 1997 that gave SACOG authority to program State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds, only soundwalls along state highways were specifically identified as one of SACOG's responsibilities.

The HLU Committee recommends dropping option 5 from consideration.

- 5. Fund all 48 projects identified in the survey as a one-time effort, and stipulate that in the future soundwall development or other noise attenuation barriers should be considered only when developing a new project or making a major modification to an existing one; in essence, clear the slate and start afresh:** If funding was not a consideration, this could be the best thing to do. But with the current funding situation and deteriorating transportation infrastructure, this could not be a serious consideration at this time. Of the 48 locations identified in the survey needing soundwalls, the total length of 47 of them comes to an estimated 37.45 miles. At the current \$1.33 million estimate supplied by Caltrans for constructing a mile of soundwall, the total construction cost for the 47 locations is about \$50 million.

PRELIMINARY INVENTORY OF SOUNDWALL NEEDS IN THE SACOG REGION
(By Category)

Soundwalls Needed Along Highways

#	LOCATION	DISTANCE (In Miles)
1	Along I-80, Madison Avenue to Greenback Lane – Sacramento County	0.46
2	Along Verner Avenue (I-80), from Goldenwood Circle to Goldenwood Circle – Citrus Heights	0.29
3	Along East Stockton Boulevard at Highway 99 (frontage Road at 99), from Valley Oak Lane to the north end of Elk Grove Park – Elk Grove	0.38
4	Along southside of US 50, from Bradshaw Road to Sanbury Circle – Rancho Cordova	2.5
5	Along northside of US 50, from Fite from Circle to Mather Field Road – Rancho Cordova	1.2
6	Along the northside of US 50, the length of White Rock Community Park – Rancho Cordova	0.2
7	Along northside of US 50, from Folsom Blvd. to Erla Court – Rancho Cordova	0.6
8	Along Cosumnes River Bl / I-5 future interchange; limits to be decided – City of Sacramento	1.52
9	Along westside of I-5, near Pocket Road – City of Sacramento	1.0
10	Along eastbound Business 80, from eastbound Arden Way on-ramp to eastbound El Camino off-ramp – City of Sacramento	0.51
11	Along westside of I-5, from 35th Ave undercrossing to Riverside Blvd undercrossing – City of Sacramento	0.61
12	Along Hwy 160, near 902 Del Paso Blvd – City of Sacramento	0.5
13	Along southside of Hwy 50, from 37th to 42nd Street – City of Sacramento	0.5
14	Along both sides of State Route 113, from Russell Blvd to Covell Blvd. – City of Davis	2.0
15	Along eastside of State Route 113, from Covell Blvd to north City Limit – City of Davis	0.8
16	Along southside of Interstate80, from about 600 feet east of Pole Line Road to La Vida Way – City of Davis	1.1
15	Along westside State Route 113, from Covell Blvd to north City Limit – City of Davis	0.5
18	Along southside of Interstate 80, from Putah Creek to about 600 feet east of Pole Line Road – City of Davis	0.9
19	Along southside of Interstate 80, from La Vida Way to east City Limit – City of Davis	1.6
20	Along both sides of US 50, from Jefferson Boulevard on/off-ramps (eastern boundary) to just east of the Harbor Boulevard interchange – City of West Sacramento	2.0

**Soundwalls Needed Along Highways
Continued**

#	LOCATION	DISTANCE (In Miles)
21	Along westside of I-80, from a point approximately halfway between the Rocklin Road Interchange to the northwest-bound Hwy 65 connector ramp – City of Rocklin	0.5
22	Along Old Sacramento on westside of I-5, from Capitol to I Street –City of Sacramento	0.38
23	Along westside of Hwy 99, from La Mancha to westbound off-ramp intersection with Mack Road – City of Sacramento	0.38
	Estimated Total Distance in Miles	20.43

**Soundwalls Needed Along Local Streets –
Not Recommended by Housing & Land Use Committee for Inclusion in Policy**

#	LOCATION	DISTANCE (In Miles)
1	Along the westside of Sunrise Blvd, from Arcadia Drive to Lawrence Avenue	0.15
2	Along the eastside of Sunrise Blvd, from Arcade Lake Lane to Woodmore Oaks	0.36
3	Along the eastside of Sunrise Blvd, from Woodmore Oaks to Oak Ave	0.42
4	Along the westside of Sunrise Blvd., from Sungarden Drive to La Salida del Sol	0.10
5	Along the eastside of Sunrise Blvd., from Oak Ave to Old Auburn Road	0.12
6	Along the westside of Sunrise Blvd., from Oak Ave to Old Auburn Road	0.06
7	Along the northside of Antelope Road, from Saybrook Drive to Summerplace Drive	0.19
8	Along the southside of Antelope Road, from Saybrook Drive to Tupelo Drive	0.30
9	Along the northside of Antelope Road, from I-80 to Rosswood Drive	0.40
10	Along the southside of Antelope Road, from Garden Gate to Poplar Avenue	0.28
11	Along Madison Avenue, miscellaneous locations	0.10
12	Along westside of 65th, from Elder Creek Rd to City limits	0.39
13	Along Diamond K Mobile Home Park, 16 Richards Blvd by Washington Blvd	0.16
14	Along Kaseberg Commons, Main Street, from 200 ft east of Porter to 550 ft west of Porter	0.14
15	Along West Stockton Blvd on Hwy 99, from Jacinto Road to Sheldon off-ramp	0.67
16	Along southside of Meadowview Road, from Amherst to 24 th Street	1.24
17	Along Freeport Blvd, from Meadowview Road to Florin Road	4.0
	Estimated Total Distance in Miles	9.08

**Soundwalls Needed Along Rail Tracks –
Not Recommended by Housing & Land Use Committee for Inclusion in Policy**

#	LOCATION	DISTANCE (In Miles)
1	Future needs along rail tracks on Folsom Blvd. in Rancho Cordova	TBD
2	Along Light Rail tracks east of Florin Road LRT Station	1.0
3	Along RT's track in East Sacramento, from 37th to 42nd Streets	0.11
4	Future needs for RT will include the South Line Corridor Phase 2 extension project now in the preliminary engineering stage. This project will require soundwalls for approximately 3/4 mile along the railroad right of way, and another 2 to 3 miles along Cosumnes River Blvd.	3.75
5	Along southside of Union Pacific Rail Road, from Richards Blvd to Olive Drive.	0.7
6	Along northside of Union Pacific Rail Road, from I Street to L Street.	0.2
7	Along northside of Union Pacific Rail Road, from Pole Line Road to Mace Blvd.	1.8
8	Along rail tracks on Southwind Estates back property line, from Florin Road north to Nancy Lane	0.38
Estimated Total Distance in Miles		7.94+