



## SACOG Board of Directors

Item #05-11-3  
Consent

November 10, 2005

### Executive Director's Report

*The following is a brief status report on some of the major issues and projects currently being advanced by SACOG. An asterisk (\*) notes items included on this month's Board agenda.*

#### Key Board Items

**\*Negotiating Parameters for Meet and Confer:** We are beginning the meet and confer process with the Employees Association regarding our labor agreement, as required by the existing Memorandum of Understanding. The Administration Committee has asked, and the EA has agreed, that we attempt to complete this process this calendar year. This agenda item provides general guidance from the Board to me about how to approach these negotiations. I think we have a good climate for these discussions with the EA and I am optimistic we can reach agreement on this important matter. (Item #12)

**\*Agenda and Approach for Elected Officials Summit:** The Elected Officials Summit is scheduled on the evening of January 19 to kick-off the update process for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. We are requesting that Board members encourage all of the elected officials on their Council or Board to join us. (Item #13)

**\*Flood Protection Implications for the MTP:** At its September meeting, the Board requested additional information on flood issues. This issue, obviously, is vital to the entire region for many reasons. It is vital to SACOG specifically because it may influence the location of growth in the 2030 Blueprint Map which will underpin the MTP. (Item #23)

#### Administration

**Staffing:** Following Board approval of his employment agreement in September, Bruce Griesenbeck joined the SACOG staff as our Principal Transportation Analyst; he is helping to bring our new travel modeling tools on line. Another recent hire is Tina Glover, Assistant Planner, a former SACOG intern who returned via the Community Services Planning Council; she is helping the Blueprint Implementation Team and the Economic & Demographic Forecasting Team. We are nearing completion of a recruitment to fill a vacant Public Information Coordinator position, which will assist the Communications Team and coordinate the Rideshare Program.

**SACOG Salutes!:** Staff is currently reviewing 30 nominations for the 2005 SACOG Salutes Regional Awards cycle. SACOG received seven nominations for the Blueprint Excellence Award, three for Business of the Year, two for Citizen of the Year, two for the Bill Hughes Elected Official of the Year, three for Organization of the Year, 12 for Project of the Year and one nomination for a Special Recognition Award. The jury will meet on November 16 to select the winners, and they will be honored at the December Board meeting.

## Issues

**Shingle Springs Court Ruling:** The Appellate Court ruling on two cases was published November 8. Our legal counsel has not had time to study and fully assess the impacts of the 58 page opinion. The short story: 1) The Court upheld the lower court ruling and agreed with El Dorado County that under the California Environmental Quality Act, a project level air quality analysis on the impacts of the interchange and associated casino and other facilities should have been conducted; the court also ruled that an alternative including a smaller casino and associated facilities should have been analyzed; 2) The court agreed with Caltrans and the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians on several other aspects of the EIR because objections were not raised early enough in the process (i.e. administrative remedies were possibly available that were not pursued). This issue will become relevant to the full SACOG Board in December when it must release for public hearing a draft MTP and MTIP. The Board's Strategic Planning Committee will meet on this specific aspect of the draft document to make a recommendation to the full Board on whether to include the Shingle Springs interchange in those draft documents or not.

**NEPA Streamlining:** We had a productive meeting last week with senior level people from many federal and state agencies to move forward with our NEPA streamlining project. It is both heartening, and a challenge to us, that so many of these agencies see successful implementation of the Blueprint as the key to a more certain and efficient process of building transportation projects in the future.

**CEQA Reform:** The three initiatives (Governor's CEQA Improvement Committee, Senator Perata's Working Group, and BT&H Secretary Sunne Wright McPeak's housing reform initiative) continue to meet and attempt to move forward. We are involved at either the Board or staff level in all the discussions. Hopefully now that the special election is over, there will be a move at the Capitol to work together to get some of this done next year.

**Elk Grove to El Dorado County Connector Project:** We held an initial highly productive meeting with SACOG General Counsel Kirk Trost and representatives from the five directly affected local governments on the governance issue (i.e. should a Joint Powers Authority be formed to guide some or all future activities on the project). A second meeting is scheduled for early December. SACOG received one consultant proposal for the next technical element of the connector study, from URS Engineering for a scope and cost significantly more ambitious than was intended. SACOG staff met with staff from the five local jurisdictions along the connector route, discussed the intended scope of work, and is negotiating with the consultant to revise the proposed scope and budget. SACOG expects to complete these negotiations and commence work before the Board meeting date. I very much appreciate the timely, constructive involvement of representatives from the five local governments and the good work SACOG staff is doing on this. I believe we have found a way to keep this moving forward at a good value to the agency.

**MTP Update:** Staff briefings on the MTP 2030 process have been completed for 21 of the 28 SACOG jurisdictions. Additional briefings to approximately 15 agency stakeholders and community groups have also been completed. More briefings are scheduled throughout the fall and will be done by SACOG and Valley Vision. MTP Partners representing regional transportation planning agencies, local air districts, and transit agencies are fully involved in all staff efforts. 16 Blueprint-style, interactive public workshops are being scheduled throughout the region between February and May, 2006. Early efforts at developing the exercises for the workshops led to a clear sense that we should consider returning to the Blueprint workshop approach -- four distinct scenarios that participants

select from and then refine to create their preferred scenario. For the MTP game, this means that participants select from four distinct 2030 transportation system scenarios for each SACOG county and study area neighborhood. The four scenarios proposed for each geography fall along a spectrum that emphasize local circulation on one end and regional travel on the other end. Two open briefings on the scenario approach will be held for interested members of SACOG's advisory groups and committees in mid to late November.

**2006 Programming:** Staff has received many requests for programming in the cycle coming up in January 2006, far exceeding funds available, for regional and local projects, road rehabilitation, air quality, transportation demand management, and bicycle & pedestrian programs; community design nominations are due in December. Staff has discussed the projects with local agencies, and will bring a recommendation for programming jointly both the 2006 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and regional (CMAQ & RSTP) funds to the Board for review and hearing in December and adoption in January. As noted in Item #21, the state's tenuous financial situation has put this cycle's programming in a constrained and uncertain situation, which may encourage SACOG to adopt primary and contingency programs.

**Long-Range Transit Plan:** The kick-off meeting for a regional long-range transit plan (LRTP) was held on October 10 at SACOG. The LRTP will enable SACOG and the 14 transit operators to develop a coherent long-range transit element for the MTP 2030, a particularly important effort because the Blueprint intends that transit become a more effective and prominent mode. A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will guide the first phase consultant work by the Transit Resource Center team. The first phase is expected to be complete in March 2006 with a second phase to follow and conclude in the late summer of 2006. The second phase will build on the earlier work to develop a coordinated MTP 2030 transit element that fits Blueprint and expands transit to handle projected demand.

**2006 MTP and Restored MTP:** Work proceeds on schedule toward an interim State Implementation Plan (SIP) for air quality and the Restored MTP (update and readoption of the 2002 MTP which has lapsed for air quality conformity). The Restored MTP will come to the Board in December for hearing and start of public review period; both plans should be adopted by SACOG and the five air districts by February. Meanwhile, work continues on the first phase of the new 2007 MTP (covering to 2030), as noted above.

**Transportation Reauthorization Bill:** Congress remains undecided about across-the-board or specific cuts to programs, to pay for hurricane relief and repairs, and reduce the budget deficit. Signals remain unclear, but Congress continues to pass pieces of the overall budget package (which includes 13 bills) with few cuts. Final decisions will probably be held until an omnibus budget conference committee, which would meet after all 13 bills have been passed, probably in early December.

**Passenger Rail Ridership and Revenues Exceed Expectations:** AMTRAK advises that the October numbers are very strong for both the Capitols and the San Joaquin Trains. On the Capitols, ridership was 110,173 passengers, an increase of 8% vs. October 2004 and revenues were \$1,192,260, up 11% with a fare box recovery of approximately 46%. On time performance was the only dark spot at 73% due to track improvements being conducted by Union Pacific for the Capitols between Oakland and San Jose. On the San Joaquins, 63,250 passengers took the train in October, a 12% increase vs. October 04 and \$1,756,842 in ticket revenues were collected, a 16% increase.

**Meetings & Conferences**

**CALCOG:** CALCOG will hold its fall policy meeting of CALCOG Delegates on November 30 in San Jose. Director Flory, SACOG representative to CALCOG, and I will attend this meeting.

**Calendar**

Dec 1 @ 12:00 noon	Elk Grove-Rancho Cordova-El Dorado PAC	SACOG
Dec 1 @ 1:30 p.m.	Administration Committee	SACOG
Dec 5 @ 10 a.m.	Housing & Land Use Committee	SACOG
Dec 5 @ 1:30 p.m.	Transportation & Air Quality Committee	SACOG
Dec 5 @ 3:30 p.m.	Legislation & Public Affairs	SACOG
Dec 15 @ 9 a.m.	SACOG Board of Directors	SACOG

Mike McKeever  
Executive Director

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