



**Item #06-2-19  
Action**

**SACOG Board of Directors**

February 9, 2006

**Programs to Implement with Financial Support from the Air Quality Earmark**

**Issue:** Determine what programs to implement with financial support from the air quality earmark.

**Recommendation:** The Legislation & Public Affairs Committee recommends that the SACOG Board of Directors authorize spending up to \$500,000 of the \$5,000,000 earmark to support citizen involvement related to local government Blueprint implementation and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, State Implementation Plan (new air quality plan), and Long-Range Transit Plan.

**Committee Action/Discussion:** The Board in December approved in concept dedicating about half of the \$5 million earmark (\$1 million annually for 5 years) for citizen involvement programs, with the understanding that staff would bring more details to the Board before it authorized the expenditure of any of the funds. Designing the full five-year program is going to take some time to do right, and there are important planning processes underway right now that need this kind of support. Staff recommends that the Board approve the first year's allocation of \$500,000, with staff to come back for subsequent Board approval for specific uses of these funds. This will allow us to proceed to meet current needs, help us develop hands-on knowledge about how best to leverage these resources, and provide the time needed to design a high quality longer-term program.

Examples of possible uses for this first \$500,000 are listed on the attachment. These are illustrative, not exhaustive, and intended to provide the Board with sufficient detail of staff's thinking so that it can determine whether it wants to support this incremental approach.

The delivery system for the program would meet the following guidelines:

1. Any use of these funds would be structured in a manner to ensure that the money adds to, rather than supplants, current funding.
2. Further, we recommend requiring a hard or soft match of at least 20% for the recipient agency and allowing transit operators and air districts as well as cities and counties access to the funds.
3. Funds would not be spent on SACOG staff beyond a small portion for oversight and administration.
4. All programs receiving funding would need to demonstrate an explicit linkage to benefiting air quality.
5. Priority would be given to planning projects underway or starting in the very near future, as well as to citizen involvement techniques that show promise of being replicable in the subsequent four years of the program.

Approved by:

Mike McKeever  
Executive Director

MM:ts  
Attachment

Key Staff: Pete Hathaway, Director of Transportation Planning, (916) 340-6235

## EXAMPLE ACTIVITIES FOR AIR QUALITY EARMARK

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1. *Local governments updating their General Plan to address Blueprint principles who are seeking citizen input on the feasibility of doing this.* Examples of possible activities: 1) tailored educational materials such as maps, illustration and “before and after” three-dimensional graphics that depict the location and type of development that would be consistent with the Blueprint and clearly describe the linkages between the land use choices, travel behavior and air quality; 2) PowerPoint shows and speakers/facilitators to speak and answer questions at regularly scheduled meetings of neighborhood, civic, business and other organizations; and 3) interactive workshops with use of laptop computers and the Blueprint software to allow citizens to provide informed input on the best ways to implement Blueprint principles in their neighborhood and advise local governments where there are both opportunities and constraints to such development patterns. At least a half dozen SACOG members are at some stage of updating their General Plans right now; some are almost certain to have an interest in this type of assistance.
2. *Additional MTP workshops.* SACOG and its partners have scheduled 16 citizen involvement workshops on the MTP this spring. Some local governments may want additional workshops in their jurisdictions. Also, some non-governmental organizations (e.g., Chambers of Commerce, neighborhood associations, etc.) may want either complete or abbreviated workshops to help them develop informed opinions. These funds could be spent to support the staff work needed to organize, recruit attendance, and conduct the workshops as well as develop any specialized materials that are necessary to support them.
3. *State Implementation Plan and Long-Range Transit Plan workshops.* At the same time as the MTP process, the region’s 5 air districts and 13 transit districts are developing new long-range plans. Their issues have been integrated into the MTP process, but it is likely that additional education and outreach specific to the air quality and transit issues will be necessary. These funds could support the staff work needed to organize, recruit attendance, and conduct this outreach, as well as develop any specialized materials that are necessary to support them.
4. *Local government zoning codes updates, specific or community plans, and review of development proposals that relate to Blueprint implementation.* Many local governments are not in a General Plan update cycle right now. But they are actively working to implement Blueprint. The activities are varied: Some are updating codes and policies to change development and design standards to allow mixed use and more compact development; others are working on community or specific plans for transportation corridors, neighborhood or major development proposals; others are looking for ways to have a constructive dialogue with citizens, interest groups, and developers over specific development proposals that use some or all of the Blueprint principles. Some cities and counties are doing all of the above. In all cases, citizens need a way to be actively and constructively involved in the processes. These funds would support mapping, graphics, technical computer analysis, and people to assist in conducting meetings and workshops.

Note: Through this spring as funds are committed to the types of processes described above, SACOG would be working with the Board and staff from member and partner agencies to consider the feasibility of other ideas such as: 1) “Train the trainer” programs so that local and member agency staff as well as citizens and organizations that are regularly involved in planning issues develop the capacity to use the technical computer tools and interactive workshop techniques to conduct this type of citizen involvement on an on-going basis; and 2) Educational seminars and support materials on Blueprint principles and the basic principles and processes of land use planning for elected officials, planning commissioners and citizens. The Planning Academy course currently conducted by the City of Sacramento would be one model considered in this process.