



SACOG Board of Directors

Item #07-7-17 Report

July 12, 2007

Executive Director's Report

The following is a brief status report on some of the major issues and projects currently being advanced by SACOG.

KEY BOARD ITEMS:

Regional Housing Needs Allocation: While this continues to be a very challenging issue for many of our members, the staff believes that the methodology in front of the Board is sound, and recommend that the Board adopt it and move the RHNA process to the next phase. This will help to maximize the amount of time, once the regional process is completed, that each local government has to update its housing element. Adoption of the RHNA method does not lock in any jurisdiction to particular numbers. There are still opportunities as the process moves forward for jurisdictions to make a case that their allocation should be changed.

SB 375 (Steinberg): This is a bill we have been tracking and working on for several months. It is the only vehicle in the legislative process right now that has the potential to accomplish the Board's longstanding goal of significant CEQA reform to assist with Blueprint implementation. The current draft of the bill does not yet accomplish this, but our legal counsel is in the middle of active, on-going negotiations to remedy that problem. There are other issues associated with the current draft of the bill that also will need to be resolved, including clarifying its impact on transportation funding, modeling, natural resources and farmland protection programs, and just generally clarifying and tightening up much of the language. All of these issues will be the subject of on-going negotiations over the next several weeks (the bill is on suspense in the Assembly and will not be further considered until after the summer recess, August 18). The four members of the Board's Strategic Planning Committee in attendance at the meeting unanimously recommended a set of negotiating principles for staff to use during the summer. The recommendation is neither "support" or "oppose", but does provide clear direction to staff regarding what to negotiate for. The Strategic Planning Committee will meet at 8:00 a.m. prior to the Board meeting to review any late-breaking developments, particularly as they may relate to progress, or lack thereof, on the CEQA reform language. Stay tuned.

ISSUES:

Personnel Issues: Anna Schaffer has retired after eight years as our very capable receptionist (see Item #7). Our new receptionist is Penny McNamer. Penny has nearly 20 years of experience as a receptionist, secretary, and executive assistant. On July 2, Monica Hernández joined our staff as the Community Outreach Specialist. Monica is making a career change after ten years as a teacher. She received her BA degree in Child Development from CSUS. While her teaching skills are very transferable to community outreach, she also has done extensive volunteer work in the community that benefited from her outreach skills: blood drives, clothes and food drives for the Sacramento Food Bank, annual fundraiser for the

Mexican Cultural Center, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce annual events. She is bilingual in Spanish and English and has experience with American Sign Language.

SAFETEA-LU Compliance: Proposed Environmental Mitigation Strategies for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan for 2035: The new federal transportation act, the *Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users* (SAFETEA-LU), requires that the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) for 2035 must include a discussion of types of potential environmental mitigation activities and potential areas to carry out these activities, including activities that may have the greatest potential to restore and maintain the environmental functions affected by the MTP. The law further states that the discussion may focus on policies, programs, or strategies, rather than specific mitigations at the project level. This discussion shall be developed in consultation with Federal, State, and tribal land management agencies as well as wildlife and regulatory agencies. A working group of representatives from several federal and state environmental resource and regulatory agencies, such as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the California Department of Fish and Game, and local air districts, as well as representatives from several local habitat conservation planning efforts, including Sacramento, Placer and Yolo counties has been meeting as part of the “Linking Planning and NEPA” initiative. Native American tribal governments, such as the United Auburn Indian Community, have also participated in the working group. A draft of proposed strategies that was developed by the working group is attached as Attachment A.

Greenprint Update: The BIA requested that we author an article updating their members on our emerging efforts to begin a project to more specifically address the needs of the rural areas of our region than we have been able to so far (code named Greenprint to date, but this will probably change). The Board’s Strategic Planning Committee a few months ago asked staff to develop a work program and budget for this effort and we are finally getting the time to do that. I expect to bring something forward for the Board’s consideration this fall.

Valley Vision has been doing work under contract to us and others for over a year to develop some of the data that will provide the foundation for this effort. I am very pleased to report that we have signed a contract with Stacey McKinley, recently of Congressman Lungren’s staff, to assist us in scoping this project, raise funds for it, and help us to keep the regulatory reform initiatives with the Army Corps of Engineers and other federal agencies that she, Congressman Lungren, and all of our regional Congressional delegation have led over the last couple years. Ms. McKinley was highly effective in her role as staff person and will be a major asset to SACOG and its partners.

Community Design Round 3: The Land Use, Housing & Air Quality Committee gave some preliminary direction to staff for the next round of Community Design Funding Program. In July and August, staff will get feedback from past recipients, potential applicants, the Regional Planning Partnership and the Planners Committee for the next round regarding the potential direction of the program and application guidelines. In September, the Board will review the guidelines and decide whether to release them.

AB 414 (Jones): The Board took an oppose position on this bill, which would further restrict the amount of non-residential zoned land eligible for use in housing elements. Despite testimony from SACOG Board member Cabaldon and the City of Roseville against it at the Senate Transportation and Housing Committee, it passed and will next move to the floor of the Senate. The League of Cities is also opposing the bill. Our planners committee has reviewed the most recent amendments to the bill and concluded that it still unduly restricts the type of mixed-use zoning we are trying to encourage everyone to do through the

Blueprint growth strategy. Local governments are encouraged to write letters to the author and the governor opposing the bill. Our opposition letter is attached (Attachment B).

AB 1259 (Cabellero): The Board directed staff to investigate whether SACOG could graft onto this bill, which would extend the deadline for housing elements by 12 months for the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG). SACOG met with the author's office. HCD has expressed that 12 months may be too much time, and is informally recommending 6 months. The SACOG Planners Committee stated that 6 months would be preferable to risking getting no extension. Staff will continue to work with the author.

California Regional Progress Report: One of the statewide Blueprint planning efforts, the California Regional Progress Report, has published its first report, "One State, Many Regions, Our Future". This report provides a baseline for how California's regions are doing across a range of integrated quality of life measures within the framework of innovative regional planning. SACOG staff participated in the development and review of the report. A copy of the report will be distributed to each Board member at the meeting.

CALENDAR

There are no SACOG Board or Committee meetings scheduled for August.

Sept 6 @ 10:00 a.m.	Transportation Committee	SACOG
Sept 6 @ 1:30 p.m.	Government Relations & Public Affairs	SACOG
Sept 10 @ 10:00 a.m.	Housing, Land Use & Air Quality	SACOG
Sept 10 @ 1:30 p.m.	Flood Management	SACOG
Sept 20 @ 9:00 a.m.	SACOG Board of Directors	SACOG

Mike McKeever
Executive Director

Attachments

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