



SACOG Board of Directors

December 13, 2007

Federal Advocacy Strategy for 2008

Issue: What principles should SACOG pursue at the federal level in 2008?

Recommendation: The Government Relations & Public Affairs Committee recommends that the Board approve support for six policy areas outlined below as direction for staff and SACOG's lobbyist to advocate on the Board's behalf in 2008.

Committee Action/Discussion: Last year, the Board adopted an advocacy strategy. Priorities included rail relocation funds for the intermodal station, discretionary funding for rail projects that can be ready for construction by 2008 (South Line Phase 2, Northeast and Folsom double tracking, rail car rehabilitation), bus replacements and bus facilities, and Blueprint-supporting projects from federal highway programs, and consider weighing in to support a stronger Amtrak program. Staff recommends continuing with the two-year advocacy strategy with some modifications.

Rail Relocation – Continue to seek funding for track relocation at the Sacramento Valley Intermodal Station. Congress has included \$400,000 in the latest transportation spending bill, but this is well short of the \$20 million the region seeks. The bill has not yet been signed.

Discretionary Transit Funding – Continue to seek discretionary funding for light rail projects including Downtown-Natomas-Airport extension (the FTA process for linking rail projects in the new transportation bill being signed in 2008), South Line Phase II extension, Northeast and Folsom double tracking, and passenger railcar rehabilitation. Continue to pursue funding for bus replacements and bus facilities.

Blueprint implementation – Work with region's congressional delegation to develop legislative initiatives—stand-alone and within the SAFETEA-LU reauthorization process—for Blueprint supporting programs, projects, and policies. Funding is needed to enhance I-PLACE³S software for modeling commercial vehicles, calculating greenhouse gas emissions, and analyzing rural lands issues.

SAFETEA-LU Reauthorization – Seek to influence reauthorization of the surface transportation bill. The current bill—Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users—expires in 2009.

Climate Change/Air Quality – Seek to influence legislation or administrative rules addressing climate change, especially those dealing with transportation, land use and air quality. Encourage reduction measures that support Blueprint and Metropolitan Transportation Plan objectives.

Amtrak/Capitol Corridor – Seek funding for enhanced passenger rail service on the Capitol Corridor.

Approved by:

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