



Transportation Committee

January 31, 2008

Final Environmental Impact Report on the Metropolitan Transportation Plan for 2035

Issue: The Metropolitan Transportation Plan for 2035 is subject to environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The analysis documentation on the Final Program Environmental Impact Report (Final Program EIR) has been prepared.

Recommendation: That the Transportation Committee review the analysis documentation provided on the Final Program Environmental Impact Report (Final Program EIR) and direct staff to prepare the final documentation for Board consideration of a Final Program EIR to certify.

Discussion:

The Final Program EIR

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan for 2035 (MTP2035) of the Sacramento Area Council of Governments is the subject of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). As the MTP2035 consists of a group of discretionary actions on the part of SACOG, the MTP2035 is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the State CEQA Guidelines. CEQA requires that state and local government agencies consider the environmental consequences of projects over which they have discretionary authority before taking action on those projects. Although the individual programs and projects included in the MTP2035 will be implemented by various public agencies, at the regional plan level, which is the scope of this program EIR, SACOG is responsible for carrying out and approving the MTP2035 and, as such, is the lead agency for the purpose of preparing the environmental review of this proposed project. This EIR has been prepared by SACOG pursuant to CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines.

The purpose of this EIR is to analyze, on a program level, the environmental effects of the MTP for 2035, and to provide local decision-makers and the public with an objective analysis of the potential environmental consequences of implementation of the proposed set of improvements to the metropolitan transportation system. The information presented in this document is intended to provide a full disclosure of the potential impacts and to increase public awareness and participation in the regional transportation planning process.

A program EIR is an environmental document that provides a framework for future environmental analyses. As a programmatic document, the EIR presents a region-wide assessment of the Plan's impacts. The focus of this program EIR is to address the impacts of projects which, individually or in the aggregate, may be regionally significant. Specific analysis of site-specific impacts of individual projects is not the intended use of a program EIR. Many specific projects are not currently defined to the level that would even allow for such an analysis. Individual specific environmental analysis of each project will be undertaken by the appropriate implementing agency prior to each project being considered for approval.

It is anticipated that this environmental impact report will assist SACOG's member jurisdictions and Caltrans in future project-specific environmental reviews. The focus of this Final Program EIR is to analyze potential environmental impacts of the MTP2035. The Final EIR recommends mitigation measures that should be incorporated into the environmental documentation for specific projects and that would be the responsibility of outside agencies to implement. Further, the Final EIR includes mitigation measures that will be carried out by SACOG.

Previously, SACOG prepared a Draft EIR and requested public comments on the document. Each chapter of the Draft EIR provides an introduction, a regulatory and environmental setting, an explanation of the methodology and assumptions for the analysis, the criteria for determining significance of impacts, and the impacts and proposed mitigation measures. The following topics are analyzed in this EIR: aesthetics; agricultural resources; air quality; biological resources; cultural resources; energy and global climate change; geology; soils and seismicity; hazards and hazardous materials; hydrology and water quality; land use and planning; noise; population and housing; public services; noise; public services; recreation; transportation; utilities and service systems; cumulative impacts; and growth-related impacts.

After the comment period for public review closed, SACOG prepared responses to comments received from the public and prepared changes to the Draft EIR. These responses and changes are included in the Final EIR, which contains the following five chapters: introduction, comments and responses, revisions, new references cited, and list of preparers.

Approved by:

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