



SACOG Board of Directors

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Update on SB 743 Activities

SB 743 is the state law mandating a change in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) transportation analysis, from primarily level-of-service or delay, to vehicle miles traveled (VMT) as the primary metric for measuring impacts. The law passed in 2013, and the state Office of Planning and Research (OPR) has been leading the development of CEQA guidance consistent with the law, as well as technical advice on implementing the new guidance. Drafts of the CEQA Guidance and a Technical Advisory on implementing the Guidance were published in January 2016, and both have been the subject of much discussion and debate around the state.

SACOG is active in two major “tracks” related to SB 743 implementation: organizing and facilitating a Local Agency Working Group (LAWG); and initiating, with three other MPOs, a “Case Studies” project to examine how the changes to CEQA and the proposed technical advisory might impact several actual projects around the state.

The SB 743 LAWG was organized in July 2016, and has met several times since then. The focus of the LAWG has been: 1) jointly examining the CEQA guidance and Technical Advisory to learn together the main provisions of both; 2) discussing concerns related to the proposed guidance; 3) sharing information on local implementation activities; and 4) identifying cooperative actions that can be taken to address the concerns. Examples of LAWG actions:

- Received a \$120,000 Caltrans Discretionary Grant to fund “SB 743 Implementation Tools for Local Agencies in the Sacramento Region.” The project will develop a suite of tools and data sources that local agencies can use for their implementation activities. Work on this project will start this summer.
- Organized a SACOG-hosted FTP site for sharing documents and data related to SB 743 implementation, including copies of ordinances being developed elsewhere in California.
- SACOG staff has provided technical support to jurisdictions undertaking early implementation of SB 743.

The SB 743 Case Studies project is a partnership between SACOG and three other MPOs (Southern California Association of Governments, Metropolitan Transportation Commission, and San Diego Association of Governments), with cooperation from OPR and Caltrans. The purpose is to examine case studies of projects around the state in order to learn how SB 743 would impact CEQA transportation analysis, with an eye toward learning and providing comment and suggested changes to both the draft CEQA guidance and the draft Technical Advisory. The project team has met several times to identify suitable case studies, and work is proceeding. Other actions:

- A project workshop of local agencies, business organizations, and advocates was held in Los Angeles in April 2017; a similar Northern California workshop will be held in the Sacramento region on June 26, 2017. The workshops are intended to provide interested parties with an introduction to the project and a chance to identify key concerns they would like the project to address.
- The project team worked with OPR to identify draft changes to the Technical Advisory which address some local agencies' concerns. These changes will be rolled into the next published draft of the Technical Advisory.
- The project team worked with Caltrans to identify changes that would respond to local agency concerns related to treatment of SB 743 in Caltrans' Local Development-Intergovernmental Review Program Guidelines. This guidelines document, published in September 2016, directs how Caltrans District staff reviews and comments on local agency projects. Caltrans published revisions in November 2016 which addressed some of the identified local concerns.

SACOG will continue with both of these efforts in the coming fiscal year, and will bring periodic updates to the Board.

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