

# South Bay Cities Council of Governments

January 9, 2017

TO: SBCCOG Steering Committee  
FROM: Jacki Bacharach, Executive Director  
RE: CALCOG Membership

## Adherence to Strategic Plan:

Goal B: Regional Advocacy. Advocate for the interests of the South Bay.

## Background

Jim Goodhart, incoming League of California Cities President; Jim Osborne, SBCCOG Chair, and Jacki Bacharach met with Bill Higgins, CEO of the California Association of Councils of Governments (CALCOG) to discuss the organization and the SBCCOG possibly joining. Attached to this memo is a fact sheet that was received outlining the vision, structure and focus areas of CALCOG.

## Analysis

CALCOG is the only statewide organization that is becoming a sounding board for state agencies who are dealing with sustainability legislation such as SB 375 and SB 743 and other issues before the Strategic Growth Council. Their conferences offer an opportunity to network with state leaders and discuss the SBCCOG's perspective of focusing not only on transit but also on neighborhoods. Staff has mentioned several times that the guidelines that the state is promulgating for sustainability legislation are not taking into consideration areas without a robust amount of transit. Participating in CALCOG could provide forums for SBCCOG to bring these issues to the forefront.

Membership would cost \$2500/year. In addition, there would be three membership meetings as well as meetings of the Executive Directors four times per year. Should the SBCCOG join, staff would plan to ask CALCOG to work with SCAG on getting compatible video conferencing equipment so that at least some of the meetings could be video-conferenced. Bill Higgins seemed to be open to this.

Besides the membership cost, the following costs are assumed for 1 board member and the Executive Director to attend the regular meetings for a year:

3 membership meetings – Flights and ground transportation @ \$500/person/trip	\$3000
Annual Conference Registration at about \$450 per person	900
Lodging for 3 nights in Monterey @ \$300/night/person	1800
2 Executive Directors meetings in Sacramento (of the 4)	1000
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	\$6,700

With the membership cost, the total would be approximately \$9200 for a year which would be the maximum. However, Bill Higgins has said that if we join now, he would have the membership cover 18 months from January 2017 to June 2018 for the \$2500. Also, he has included one conference registration for this year.

## RECOMMENDATION

That the Steering Committee recommend the Board approve membership in CALCOG for the 18 month period of January 2017 to June 2018 for \$2500 and additional meeting costs of approximately \$9600 to cover both the 2016-2017 & 2017-2018 fiscal years and which would be for one Board member and the Executive Director to attend membership meetings, the Annual Conference and at least 2 Executive Directors' meetings.



# California Association of Councils of Governments

Effective Regions Through Partnership

## ABOUT CALCOG

CALCOG works to serve *its* regional members so that they can better serve *their* local cities and counties. CALCOG facilitates peer-to-peer learning and information sharing among professional staff, local officials, state and federal agencies, involved stakeholders, and the public. We recognize that each region in California is unique. But all can learn from the experience of others.

The interests and character of CALCOG members vary. Our membership ranges in size from the Lake County/City Area Planning Council (population 64,000) to the Southern California Association of Governments (population 18 million). Almost all members are involved in planning and funding transportation infrastructure. Many deliver specific projects. Some are self-help county sales tax authorities. Eighteen members are federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organizations responsible for developing regional transportation.

But many are also councils of governments (COGs) formed under joint powers authorities that may engage in any activity in which the member cities and counties share authority. plans under federal law and sustainable communities strategies under state law.

This "small number, diverse interest" character creates a unique forum. Members may not always agree, but CALCOG provides a venue to have important policy discussions. CALCOG also works to educate others about the role that regional governments play, and encourages partnerships to find new solutions for the problems for tomorrow.

## ORGANIZATION VISION

CALCOG's vision is that every city and county in California is served by effective regional governance. It starts from the ground up. Every Californian is part of a community, which is part of a city or county, which in turn is part of a region. Residents live, work, and spend most of their quality time in communities within a region. Although each community creates its own sense of place, the quality of life and prosperity also depends on the ability of local governments within the region to work collaboratively.

Regional governments are also essential to the principle of local control. They provide a forum to collaborate on issues that transcend local boundaries that could otherwise be filled by a stronger state role. We call this model "bottoms-up" regionalism. Regional solutions can be tailored to account for specific population, environment, infrastructure, and economic factors. As such, regional governments are uniquely positioned to build consensus across political boundaries and create important efficiencies for local governments.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE & FOCUS AREAS

The California Association of Councils of Governments is a nonprofit, social welfare organization formed to serve regional governments. Currently, 45 regional agencies are members. Each member may appoint a voting member of their board to the CALCOG Board. In addition, in recognition of the inter-relationship between regional and local governments, both the California State Association of Counties and the League of California Cities also appoint a representative to the CALCOG Board of Directors. The board oversees the following critical elements of the work program:

- **Advocacy.** A consensus-based advocacy program that targets high priority Legislation in which our members have a common interest.
- **Policy Implementation.** Coordinate government-to-government communications between state, regional, and local governments as it relates to implementing policy that relates to transportation, housing, and climate change.
- **Education.** Provide general educational information to interested stakeholders, governmental partners, and the public on the structure, role, constraints, and opportunities for effective regional governance.
- **SB 375 Specialization.** As the only entity that counts all 18 of the state's MPOs amongst its membership, focus on SB 375 (requiring regions to achieve a greenhouse gas reduction target within their transportation planning process).
- **Point of Contact.** Coordinate transportation policy implementation with Caltrans, the California Transportation Commission, and California State Transportation Agency. California is a leader in devolving authority to make decisions at the regional level. But with that duty comes a responsibility to work with the state.

Regardless of the issue, CALCOG members are all public agencies striving to deliver high quality, cost effective services to their own member local governments. There are commonalities in their responsibilities—like public education related to regional roles and responsibilities, effective board governance, staff, and understanding new developments and technologies. CALCOG was founded to facilitate these discussions among members so that all could provide better service to their own constituencies.

## KEY 2015-2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **FAST Act Funding Allocations.** CALCOG staff worked with RTPA members to negotiate the implementation of the traditional 60/40 split of federal funds between the state and local/regional governments after the adoption of the FAST Act. CALCOG was successful in negotiating several key changes that resulted in **\$100 Million more** for local and regional projects over the five-year implementation period of the FAST Act. Previously, these funds were taken “off the top” for elements such as state planning and research.

- **Fix Our Roads Transportation Funding Coalition.** CALCOG supports finding new revenues and has worked closely with the League and CSAC in the Fix our Roads Coalition in the regular and Extraordinary Sessions to find a legislative solution to the long term transportation funding crisis.
- **AHSC Program Transportation Criteria.** CALCOG was the *only* organization to point out how project readiness and funding subordination criteria in the *First Guidelines* favored private housing development projects over transportation projects. These comments were incorporated into the *Second Round Guidelines*.
- **Representing Members in Developing State Plans.** There are several planning and regulatory processes that directly affect regional agencies. CALCOG has forged consensus to comment on the following processes: California State Transportation Plan (CTP2040), Regional Transportation Plan Guidelines, California State Transportation Plan Guidelines, SB 743 CEQA Implementation Guidelines, SB 375 Target Setting Update, ARB Mobile Source Strategy. In addition, CALCOG is also coordinating comments between members on the NPRM (Notice of Proposed Rulemaking) relating to implementation of MAP-21.
- **Amicus Brief.** CALCOG coordinated the *amicus* brief in *SANDAG v CNFF* (CEQA challenge to the RTP/SCS). We helped identify a CEQA expert to write the brief, drafted part of the brief, and facilitated the signatures of other associations, such as the California League of Cities and Self-Help County Coalition.
- **Road User Charge.** CALCOG supports investigating all user-pay funding tools like Caltrans' road user charge (VMT) study and has been involved in meetings with the administration to that end.

## II. ONGOING FOCUS AREAS

1. **Information Sharing and Best Practices.** CALCOG's most important work is sharing information between our members and with key partners such as the League of California Cities and California State Association of Counties. Each year, CALCOG facilitates several meetings for executive directors, planning directors board, and local government officials that provide briefings and in detail updates on the latest funding and policy developments.
2. **Targeted, Consensus-Based Advocacy.** CALCOG provides effective, targeted advocacy, often working in concert with members to coordinate messaging.
3. **SB 375 Implementation.** CALCOG works to improve knowledge and practices for SB 375. We facilitate the *MPO-State Agency SB 375 Implementation Group* and are in constant contact with the Strategic Growth Council, Air Resources Board, California Department of Transportation, California State Transportation Agency, Department of Housing and Community Development, and other state agencies.

4. **Communication & Education.** One challenge for CALCOG members generally is that the public—and even state policy makers—do not understand the role and function of regional governments. CALCOG conducts original research and maintains a social media presence that highlights the role and value of member activities and presents it in a way that helps others understand the role and value of regional government.
  5. **State Transportation Program and Funding Expertise.** Under SB 45, our members maintain a strong partnership with the state to operate and maintain the transportation system. CALCOG maintains relationships with key personnel from the CalSTA, the California Transportation Commission, and Caltrans to assure open communications are beneficial and continuous.
  6. **Federal Issue Monitoring.** CALCOG monitors events, helps coordinate state messaging, and works with national counterparts to ensure that the changes made in Washington are workable and benefit California’s regions, large and small.
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## CALCOG MEMBERSHIP & DUES

- **General.** CALCOG has a seven tier dues structure based on population. Where two or three members have overlapping jurisdiction, the population is divided.
- **Small COG Rate.** The lowest tier in the dues structure is reserved for COGs with smaller budgets. The dues is \$2500.
- **Other Southern California Members:**
  - Western Riverside Council of Governments
  - Coachella Valley Association of Governments
  - Orange County Councils of Governments
  - Orange County Transportation Authority
  - Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
  - Imperial County Transportation Commission (and COG)
  - Riverside County Transportation Commission
  - San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (formerly SANBAG)
  - Southern California Association of Governments
  - San Diego Association of Governments
  - Ventura County Association of Governments

**Board Meetings.** The CALCOG Board meeting 3 times per year, once in Monterey (Annual Conference) and twice more usually in Sacramento (because of proximity to state agency speakers and central location for members from the North)