

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

Livable Communities Working Group

Wednesday, October 16, 2013

2:30 to 4:30 p.m.

**South Bay Environmental Services Center
20285 Western Ave., Suite 100**

Minutes

I. Welcome & Introductions

Attendees: Masa Alkire (El Segundo), Eva Choi (Hermosa Beach), Rebecca Cutting (Torrance), Otis Ginoza (Lawndale), Erika Graves (Healthways), Eric Haaland (Manhattan Beach), Leza Mikhail (RPV), Saied Nasseh (Carson), Christopher Palmer (Hawthorne), Frank Wen and Jung Seo (SCAG), Mindy Wilcox (Inglewood), Jacki Bacharach, Rosemary Lackow, Mohja Rhoads, Wally Siembab and Dan Sturges (SBCCOG)

II. SCAG Map Books – Hermosa Beach Case Study and SCAG Commentary

Mohja Rhoads, Research Associate, SBCCOG

Frank Wen, Manager of Research and Analysis, SCAG
Jung Seo, Senior Regional Planner, SCAG

Jacki introduced the topic indicating this is important due to the concern about the Map Books, and their role in the methodologies being used by SCAG to develop the RTP. Wally explained that the Map Books data will be an important resource used by SCAG in the RTP (Regional Transportation Plan), SCS (Sustainable Communities Strategy), RHNA housing allocations, as well as the Scenario Planning Tool. The Scenario Planning Tool eventually can be used by cities to look at citywide impacts of development, however there is an investment required of the cities as they need to compare what's actually on the ground with the Map Books and this will require a parcel by parcel review. Once accurately established, the land use data base (2012 as base year) also needs to be maintained. The usefulness of the tool will depend on accuracy of the data; therefore it is very important that cities verify the Map Book land use data. Mohja is involved in tracking and developing the Planning Tool for the COG.

A controversy has emerged as to how much time the verification of land uses is being required of cities. On behalf of the COG Mohja has looked at Hermosa Beach as a case study on how much time this takes. Frank Wen and Jung Seo are present from SCAG today to be a resource, so this process can be undertaken in a timely fashion.

Mohja Rhoads presented findings with Hermosa Beach, and indicated that the biggest problem has been with vacant parcels – in that it appears that this category covered not only what has been typically considered “vacant” but also other uses, including parking lots, schools and municipal parcels, which are not actually vacant. In response to a question, Mohja indicated that, while a quick overview by land use

category can be done, it is better to review parcel by parcel. It is very important that cities understand the use codes being used by SCAG. Hermosa Beach estimated that to check each of the City's 5,000 parcels by APN against the SCAG data will take 200 hours.

In response to a question, Jung Seo of SCAG noted that the parcel boundary and land use data were acquired from *Digital Map Products (DMP)* and from SCAG's 2008 existing land use data, including info from Los Angeles County. Mr. Seo appreciates that efforts of the cities and on an on-going basis through the local input phase, SCAG will continue to receive information on discrepancies.

In response to a question as to how the cities should send in information. Mr. Seo indicated that, if a City has GIS, they can update their shape files on the SCAG ftp site. If not, the cities can send in hard copies of maps with the information noted.

Frank Wen explained a massive conversion process has been undertaken for the whole region to convert land use codes to SCAG's existing Land Use code system. Mr. Seo indicated that if the land use code was blank SCAG left that blank, for the cities to fill in. A comment was made that the issue of vacant parcels is very important, that if "vacant" this would indicate that a parcel is available for development and there can be repercussions if inaccurate. Mr. Seo indicated, as an example, they need to convert parking lots serving commercial properties to a commercial use code, not vacant, and SCAG is still making a big effort to get accurate and proper use coding.

In response to a question as to which maps are being used to do forecasting, Mr. Seo indicated Existing Land Use and General Plan maps mainly, but also Conservation maps. The Map Books have tables that show specific land use codes, and the shape file data base has very specific codes.

In response to a question as to the best way to proceed, Mr. Seo affirmed that cities should start with analyzing the inventory of "vacant" parcels, check their accuracy and then extrapolate, but SCAG is also finding discrepancies in residential zones between single and multi-family zones so these should also be checked because this will greatly affect density.

Mr. Wen explained that SCAG will be making maps available online by Thanksgiving for cities that do not have a sophisticated GIS program.

In response to a question about timing, Mr. Wen explained that the second phase of the local input process is now underway and the growth forecasting will occur from November to May 2014. SCAG wants to demonstrate that city zoning has sufficient capacity to accommodate growth allocations. SCAG is willing to visit individual cities to assist.

This Friday (October 18) cities will be receiving information about the local review process, so everyone should look for this. If cities do not complete their review in the first phase, they can continue to do so in the next. Mr. Wen stated that he is the main contact person for cities. A question was raised as to how to designate parcels, like Hollywood Park, that may soon become vacant and then will take several years to build out, and Mr. Wen advised that such parcels should be shown as vacant if that is the existing use, and then this should be updated in future.

Jacki Bacharach indicated that it may be worthwhile for the COG to arrange a special workshop for the cities in January, and meanwhile if the cities have any questions or issues, to let Wally know and he can work with Frank Wen to resolve.

III. Metro's Open Streets Program

Avital Shavit
Transportation Planning Manager
LACMTA Countywide Planning

Wally introduced Avital Shavit, who proceeded with a PowerPoint presentation on Metro's recently approved Open Street Program, which covers special events like CicLAvia. A copy of the presentation can be viewed on the COG website at:

http://www.southbaycities.org/sites/default/files/livable_communities/OpenStreets_PP-COG_NEW_0.pdf

Main points:

- Provides up to \$2 million annually for CicLAvia similar events throughout LA County.
- Program framework includes a competitive application process and a technical process to collect data and evaluate the costs and benefits.
- Goals:
 - increase sustainable transportation mode share (transit, bicycle & pedestrian)
 - provide opportunities for 1st time transit usage, and
 - encourage cities to develop multi-modal polices.
- Benefits: economic and public health benefits as well as opportunities to highlight & promote cultural resources.
- To solicit feedback on guidelines (that will form the basis of the final Open Streets application package), Metro is providing presentations to the Council of Governments, the Metro Technical Advisory Committee and the Metro Streets and Freeways Subcommittee during fall, 2013.
- Comments on the guidelines due to Metro December 2, 2013.
- Winter, 2014 Metro to release final application package, conduct workshop.
- Spring, 2014: applications due.
- To submit comments or for more information about the program please contact Avital Shavit @ (213) 922-7518 shavita@metro.net.

MS. Shavit responded to several questions as follows:

- Q. How will transporting of bikes on buses be handled?
A. Metro will be working with the transit providers to handle large volume of bikes.
- Q. Is there a minimum/maximum allocation of funds?
A. Has not been determined; Metro wants to see what agency/city applicants put together as this is the first year.
- Q. Are there consultants who can advise applicants of guidelines, e.g. cost per mile?

- A. Costs will vary depending on setting of the event (residential neighborhood event in Portland, less than \$100k, has less staffing cost than a setting in a main commercial area)
- Q. Shouldn't a potential downside such as temporary impacts to a neighborhood or businesses be explored more?
- A. It was agreed that evaluation process should seek input on possible impacts, as disruption impact mitigations can be pre-planned and this can be added to Metro's process.
- Q. Is there interest for such an event in South Bay?
- A. Any interested city should let Jacki Bacharach know. Erika: the Beach Cities Health District is very interested and wants to be kept involved. Applicant needs to be a city or group of cities.
- Q. Will Metro provide any planning support?
- A. Not on a one-on-one basis, but in upcoming workshop next winter, Metro to bring in experienced folks from Portland, Los Angeles to provide "nuts and bolts" in putting on their events.
- Q. How can cities get eligibility criteria?
- A. Avital: info is in Metro staff report- will provide to COG to disseminate to cities.

Brief discussion followed. Lawndale stated that it is considering incorporating into an existing event. Wally noted that UCLA has provided data and Metro has a menu of items to measure including the linkage between these events and how affects regular bike ridership. Metro is open to suggestions of ways to get data and do surveys. It was suggested that a bike "expo" be held for people to become educated as to what is available for bike riding. At such events, also cities can have booths about sustainability, electric bikes, etc.

Discussion closed with Jacki asking that any interested cities can email her describing their interest in such events, and they will be kept informed of any new information, and further, the COG would be interested in working with the Beach Cities in a plan for a multi-jurisdictional application.

IV. Updates

Wally Siembab, SBCCOG

- Ecotality Bankruptcy – Implications. Wally asked if any cities currently have agreements with Ecotality or if your city is using the Blink Network (a charging network service and asset of Ecotality), then this may affect you - if this is the case please contact him as there are certain steps to be taken. The lesson overall is that the Blink Network was a proprietary system for Ecotality and as such there was a specific protocol that had to be followed that limited or prohibited retro-fitting their charging stations. Going forward, cities would be better to use an open, non-proprietary system. Ecotality had issues, was underfinanced and had a few technical problems. This experience also underscores what the Luskin Center has been saying – that home charging will be the first area where EV charging takes hold, followed by the workplace (as opposed to public areas).

- PEV Readiness – Multi-Family Analysis - Wally is looking for advice from cities. David Magarian shared the experience of one multi family situation of the BEV project, where the participant plugs into a laundry room outlet that is shared with two other residents. This is a communal power situation and they pay an access fee. Wally also stated that he needs to find an inspector or electrical engineer, someone who can advise on all the aspects of multi-family installations that would be important. For example, if you go to talk to the building owner and talk about installing stations, what should be discussed with the owner? RPV suggested some plans for a condo project may be available, and there were other suggestions of vendors such as EV GO and EV Connect, but Carson indicated there is a project being built with some charging stations, and there may be an opportunity there and will check on this.

- Community Readiness Handbook - OPR

 Wally noted that this document is on the OPR website.
 (http://opr.ca.gov/docs/ZEV_Guidebook.pdf) This will be discussed in more detail at a future meeting.

IV. Sustainable Transportation Concepts

Dan Sturges, Consultant to SBCCOG

Jacki introduced Dan, noting that he is an expert in sustainable transportation and a pioneer in the area of EV design. Wally showed slides of very dense new development on the Westside, noting that traffic there has gotten extremely congested with a distinct pattern of industrial uses converting to high density residential. There appears to be no linkage between land use and transportation. The commercial uses in dense mixed-use projects also often have no relationship to the residential units above (not neighborhood serving). In the future he will try to have a planner from LA or Culver City discuss the “new density” and sustainable transportation.

Dan Sturges proceeded to present “Right-Size Transportation” which addresses concepts on how to break through the problems of ever worsening traffic congestion, using technology. Dan’s **presentation can be viewed on the SBCCOG website:**

http://www.southbaycities.org/sites/default/files/livable_communities/Right-Size%20Transport_LCWG_Dan.pdf

Main points:

- **Statistics cited:** using our private cars as a main mode to travel involves 75% of empty space (i.e. one person per 4 seat car), and 25% of Americans can get to work in 90 minutes or less using public transit.
- The future of mobility is about getting access to various modes of transportation to address the user’s needs which can be either local or far.
- The concept of “compression” is key - that to reduce congestion we want to encourage modes to be used that carry the most amount of travelers while using less amount of roadways. Modes include good public transit, “Near Gear” (bikes and NEVs) and a “Far Car” (e.g. BEVs).

- Bottom line: we need to consider mobility from the user perspective. “Go Points” are hubs that provide access from one mode to another and need to be created. Neighborhood Oriented Development facilitates this.
- The “MobiTree” graphic illustrated the concept of how people would access various modes to get from home to a hub to another hub where they can get to their jobs.

V. Other Business

- There will be one more meeting this year, in November at which he may invite a planner to present. December will be cancelled due to the holidays. He encouraged anyone who wants to see a certain topic at future meetings to contact him.
- David Magarian announced a training on November 14, 8:30 am to 2:30 pm at the Environmental Services Center, on updates to the Title 24 Residential and Non-Residential Energy codes that will come into effect January 1, 2014.