

SCAG Energy & Environment Committee meeting, July 1, 2021

reported by

Britt Huff, City Council/Rolling Hills Estates, 7/22/21

ACTION ITEMS:

Recommended that the Regional Council approve the 2020 Sustainable Communities Program (SCP) Smart Cities & Mobility Innovations (SCMI) **Award Recommendations** and authorize staff to initiate projects.

Recommended the Regional Council (RC) authorize the Executive Director to release the **transportation conformity analysis** of the Draft Connect SoCal (2020 RTP/SCS) Amendment No. 1 and 2021 FTIP Consistency Amendment No. 21-05 for Public Review and Comment, as requested by County Transportation Commissions (CTCs).

INFORMATION ITEMS:

4. Overview of Regional Transportation Conformity

As a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), SCAG is responsible for transportation conformity analysis of the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) and the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) for the six-county SCAG region. This information item provided an overview of regional transportation conformity. The transportation conformity determination is a very important part of the RTP/SCS, the FTIP, and their amendment development and approval process. SCAG received federal approval of the transportation conformity determination for Connect SoCal (2020 RTP/SCS) and the 2021 FTIP in June 2020 and April 2021 respectively. Staff has just prepared the conformity analysis of the Connect SoCal Amendment No. 1 and the 2021 FTIP Consistency Amendment No. 21-05 which was a separate item mentioned above on today's EEC meeting agenda. Staff will soon begin the conformity analysis of a significant amendment to the 2021 FTIP, to be followed by the conformity analysis of the 2023 FTIP next year, and the conformity analysis of the 2024 RTP/SCS in 2023.

5. California Air Resources Board (CARB) 2022 Scoping Plan Update

In early June 2021, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) held a series of kickoff meetings to initiate the Assembly Bill (AB) 32 Climate Change Scoping Plan. The update to the Scoping Plan is due in Fall/Winter 2022 and will reflect California's goal to assess progress towards the Senate Bill (SB) 32 target of reducing GHG emission to 40 percent below 1990 levels in 2030, and to achieve climate neutrality by 2045. There are not currently any draft materials out for review, but CARB is seeking comments by July 9, 2021. SCAG staff are considering submitting a brief letter by the deadline to request clarification or assessment of greenhouse gas reduction pathways that would lead to future policies or regulations, provide insights on the challenges and opportunities for advancing proposed pathways in the SCAG region, and seek alignment between the Scoping Plan and SCAG's regional policies for reducing GHG emission in Connect SoCal.

6. SoCal Greenprint Background & Status Update

Following the adoption of Connect SoCal and certification of its related Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR), initiatives have been underway to provide assistance to cities, counties and transportation agencies with regard to growth, transportation infrastructure, and resource conservation opportunities. SCAG has been developing the SoCal Greenprint, a required mitigation measure in the PEIR, to provide a practical, accessible resource to help stakeholders prioritize lands for growth and conservation based on the best available scientific data. The SoCal Greenprint will serve as a web-based tool that compiles more than 100 existing data sources into interactive maps that help stakeholders visualize how to better integrate nature into future growth and development. The Greenprint is not a “plan,” nor will it produce any new data; rather it will aggregate data from existing public sources to support local jurisdictions, transportation agencies, developers, non-profits and other stakeholders in advancing the policies adopted in Connect SoCal. In February 2021, SCAG staff and The Nature Conservancy presented to both the EEC and CEHD detailing the project’s progress to date and identifying 2021 deliverables and milestones. A presentation was also provided at the Emerging Technology Committee in April 2021. SoCal Greenprint is on schedule for completion in late 2021.

7. Second Quarterly Update on Climate Change Action Resolution Activities

On January 7, 2021, the Regional Council adopted Resolution 21-628-1 affirming a climate change crisis in Southern California and called on SCAG and other local and regional partners to join together to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, improve regional resilience, and reduce hazards from a changing climate. The Regional Council’s action will help to promote climate adaptation, mitigation and resilience in support of the 197 jurisdictions in Southern California and the 19 million residents who call the SCAG region home. This report serves as the second quarterly update on the agency’s progress in implementing the Resolution. Quarterly updates will continue to be provided to the Energy and Environment Committee on the agency’s progress in addressing Resolution 21-628-1 action steps.

8. 2020-21 CivicSpark Climate Fellows Capstone Presentation (CivicSpark Fellows: Natalie Arreaga, Amanda Caswell, and Vannesa Reyes Salazar)

The CivicSpark program is a statewide Governor’s Initiative AmeriCorps program administered by the State of California’s Office of Planning and Research and the Local Government Commission (LGC). The program places 90 Fellows in local governments around the state to build local capacity around climate, water management, affordable housing, and mobility issues. SCAG is a regional partner and beneficiary of the CivicSpark program and has hosted CivicSpark Fellows in the Sustainability Department for the past seven (7) years. To help advance the goals and key connections of Connect SoCal, SCAG once again partnered with LGC to host three CivicSpark Climate Fellows, as well as three CivicSpark Housing Fellows

The final deliverables of the 2020-21 CivicSpark program year include: SoCal Greenprint launch preparation, an agricultural conservation workplan, an extreme heat and public health report and StoryMap which will be linked on SCAG's website, current information on tax increment financing and best practices available on SCAG's Infrastructure Financing and Funding website, and updated data on greenhouse gas emissions inventories, health, and urban greening in the Green Region Indicators (GRI) tool. These projects support Connect SoCal's land use strategy to support local sustainability planning, highlighting best practices around the region and serving as a resource for other cities to replicate existing projects and tailor them to suit their unique needs. SCAG's partnership with CivicSpark will continue through the 2021-22 program year.

9. Ventura County Air Pollution Reduction Program

Dr. Laki Tisopulos, Executive Officer, Ventura County Air Pollution Control District (VCAPCD), briefed the EEC Committee on the latest air quality issues and programs to address air pollution in Ventura County. The presentation included information about the Santa Barbara Channel vessel speed reduction program to reduce air pollution from nearby cargo ships. The VCAPCD is a special district in Ventura County formed in 1968 to address the severe air quality problems in the County. Among the many District programs is a unique program to reduce nearby cargo ship speeds. It relies on voluntary vessel speed reduction (VSR) zones in the Santa Barbara Channel region and fulfills multiple objectives of AB 32 (Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006) and AB 1532 (Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund). Through a single policy mechanism, the program can cut shipping emissions of greenhouse gases, nitrogen oxides, and other air pollutants by up to 50 percent. For the Program, financial incentives are awarded to shipping companies based on the percent of distance traveled by their vessels through the VSR zones at 10 knots or less and with an average speed that did not exceed 12 knots.