

California Transportation Commission

Regional Transportation Plan Guidelines 2010 Update Subcommittee

Meeting Notes – Summary

Tuesday July 28, 2009 1:00pm – 3:00pm

California Energy Commission, Hearing Room B
1516 Ninth Street, Sacramento, CA

Facilitator: Rusty Selix, California Association of Councils of Government (CalCOG)

Summary of Key Comments:

Rusty Selix began the meeting by outlining the topics to be discussed which included:

1. General framework review of the RTP Guidelines Update and RTP Update process and,
2. Discussion of the new RTP Guidelines Sustainable Communities Strategy section.

Susan Bransen from the California Transportation Commission (Commission) informed the subcommittee that materials from the July 1, 2009 and July 14, 2009 meetings are available on the Commission's RTP Guidelines Update website located at: <http://www.catc.ca.gov/programs/rtp.htm>. A Google Group will be established for the RTP Guidelines Update Subcommittee similar to the one used by the Modeling Subcommittee. This will give subcommittee members a forum to comment between meetings. A link to the RTP Guidelines Update Google Group will be posted on the Commission's RTP Guidelines Update website listed above. Susan will also report to the Commission at their August 12th meeting regarding the progress made by the Subcommittee.

Justin Paddock from the California Air Resources Board (ARB) provided an update on the Regional Targets Advisory Committee (RTAC). The RTAC met on July 22nd where they discussed two methodology proposals for setting regional GHG targets. One proposal is modeling based while the other involves a two path approach featuring modeling and a "points for policies" system. The RTAC is considering these two proposals. ARB staff is preparing a comparison document for discussion at the next RTAC meeting which will be held August 5th in Los Angeles. The RTAC methods and factors recommendations are due to ARB by September 30th 2009 and will be heard by the Air Resources Board at a public hearing shortly thereafter. RTAC information and meeting materials are available on the ARB website at: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/sb375/rtac/rtac.htm>

Garth Hopkins, Caltrans presented an RTP Development/Approval Process for MPOs Flowchart and General Framework of the RTP Guidelines Update. He provided copies of the flowchart at the meeting. The General Framework document was e-mailed to the subcommittee by Caltrans staff on Monday, July 27th and hard copies were available at the meeting as well.

Garth explained how the flowchart documents the RTP development and approval process for Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). The flowchart illustrates the development of a public participation plan, data gathering, public review, input and board approval of an RTP. The flow chart describes the federal approval and air quality conformity determination process for MPO's in attainment and non-attainment areas. The flow chart also documents ARB review of the RTP's Sustainable Communities or Alternative Planning Strategies (SCS or APS).

Subcommittee members commented that the flowchart should contain the following additional information or clarification:

1. Incorporation of the environmental review process
2. Identification of a review process with ARB so that SCS/APS development is a consultative process
3. Clarification of how/when FHWA/FTA review will take place in relation to ARB review and acceptance or rejection of the SCS/APS.

Justin Paddock, ARB commented that ARB staff review of the SCS/APS will be a consultative process with MPOs and that formal ARB review is of the adopted RTP SCS/APS.

Garth Hopkins stated that Caltrans, CTC and ARB will be meeting at the staff level to develop a better idea of ARB review sequencing which will be presented at the August 25th meeting. Caltrans staff will also research and confer with FHWA/FTA to clarify the federal review sequencing process. Sequencing will be reflected in an updated flowchart included in the updated RTP Guidelines.

Garth presented the General Framework document which is organized using the Table of Contents for the current 2007 RTP Guidelines and annotated to illustrate how each section will be updated. The addition of SB 375 provisions to existing sections are documented in blue and the creation of new sections are outlined in red.

Subcommittee members provided numerous comments regarding the Framework Document which were noted by staff and are summarized below:

1. In early sections of Chapter 1 – Introduction, the discussion should be kept conceptual and focus on the purpose of SB 375 to reduce GHGs from passenger vehicles and light trucks.
2. The introduction should describe GHG emissions in the context of transportation, land use, natural systems, social equity and the built environment.
3. Guidance regarding best practices for rural counties should be included in the guidelines.
4. Appendix G should contain the actual SB 375 language.

5. Chapter 2 – Section 2.5: Consistency with other Planning Documents should include housing elements, climate action plans and County-wide transportation plans.
6. SB 375 CEQA exemptions should be incorporated into the guidelines along with guidance for local jurisdictions regarding exemptions.
7. More detailed CEQA information should be added to the appendices.
8. Housing provisions of SB 375 need to be incorporated into the Guidelines.
9. The SCS should be identified as a new required component of an RTP (for MPOs).
10. Guidance should be provided regarding Government Code 65080(K) concerning how project exemption takes place.
11. The internal consistency provision of Gov. Code 65080 regarding RTP elements should be researched by staff.
12. Chapter 3 – Section 3.2: Update Cycles and Amendments, should include the SB 375 option for MPOs to adopt a 4-year RTP update cycle to match the 8-year housing element and RHNA cycle.
13. Financial incentives for cities and counties should be identified in the guidelines as outlined in Gov. Code 65080 paragraph (C).
14. Chapter 3 – Section 3.15: Consultation with Resource Agencies, should include consultation with appropriate resource agencies to identify resource and agricultural lands.
15. Chapter 3 – Section 3.15: Consultation with Resource Agencies and HCD should be added to this section.
16. Chapter 3 – Section 3.26: Performance Measures, this section should incorporate modeling subcommittee recommendations.
17. Policies from the 2008 Addendum should be incorporated into the Guidelines (Ron Milam, Modeling Subcommittee member noted that the modeling committee will begin their update on page 4 of the Addendum).
18. High Speed Rail, passenger rail, intercity rail and transit should be described separately and not identified as simply “transit”.

Garth Hopkins presented the document entitled Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS): Definition, Process and Contents prepared by Caltrans staff for review by the subcommittee. The document represents a framework for the SCS section of the RTP Guidelines which is proposed to be inserted as Chapter 3 – Section 3.40: Contents of a Sustainable Communities Strategy. Subcommittee members provided several comments regarding the SCS document which were noted by staff and are summarized below:

1. Roles for specific jurisdictions and sub-regions should be clarified and include specific reference to the Bay Area, Multi-County Sub-regions, and the Central Valley.
2. SCS document should provide clarification of federally required realistic local land use assumptions.
3. How and where in the SCS the transportation network is identified should be clarified.
4. The inter-regional commute concept needs to be addressed in the SCS document.

5. Federal requirements requiring SCS consistency with 23 CFR 450 and 40 CFR 93 need to be clarified.
6. Clarification of the SCS component as it relates to the Policy, Action and Financial Elements of the RTP.

Rusty concluded the meeting by asking subcommittee members to begin compiling language suggestions and amendments. Caltrans staff will prepare and circulate to the committee a draft Sustainable Communities Strategy Chapter in advance of the August 25th meeting. Committee members were encouraged to provide written comments to Caltrans staff before August 25th so that the next meeting can focus on the discussion and incorporation of proposed update language.

Action Item Summary:

- Caltrans and CTC staff will meet with HCD and Housing CA staff to clarify housing requirements in the SCS.
- Caltrans and CTC staff will meet with ARB staff to develop a better idea of ARB review sequencing. Staff will also confer with FHWA/FTA to clarify the federal review sequencing process and planning assumptions.
- Caltrans staff will prepare a draft Sustainable Communities Strategy Chapter to be distributed to the committee for review prior to the August 25, 2009 Subcommittee meeting.

Next Meeting:

The next subcommittee meeting will be held Tuesday August 25, 2009 from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM at the California Energy Commission Hearing Room B.

Meeting Materials Provided:

- 2009 RTP Guidelines Update Proposed Framework – Prepared & Presented by Garth Hopkins, Caltrans
- RTP Development/Approval Process Flowchart – Prepared & Presented by Garth Hopkins, Caltrans
- Chapter 3.40 SCS Framework – Prepared by LaNae Van Valen, Caltrans & Presented by Garth Hopkins, Caltrans