



## SACOG Federal Certification Review Report

### Information

**Prepared by:** Erik Johnson

**Attachments:** Yes

**Approved by:** James Corless

**Referring Committee:** Policy & Innovation

### 1. Issue:

SACOG has been recertified as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the region through May 2027.

### 2. Recommendation:

None; this item is for information only.

### 3. Background/Analysis:

In 1967, SACOG's predecessor was designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the six-county region. As a region with more than 200,000 residents in the urbanized area (technically known as a Transportation Management Area), federal law requires that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) jointly review the transportation planning process and certify the MPO. SACOG was last certified in 2019.

### 4. Discussion/Analysis:

Since late 2022, SACOG staff have worked with FHWA and FTA to answer their questions and provide documents to assist with the certification review. Staff, board leadership, and transit operators met with FHWA and FTA on March 21, and 22. Additionally, FHWA and FTA held a public hearing and accepted public comment.

Staff is pleased to report that there are no corrective actions in the final report, and SACOG was commended in several areas for its practices. The report did include three recommendations, which staff will consider and, where board approval is needed, bring forward for action.

The first recommendation relates to financial assumptions in the 2025 Blueprint, SACOG's long-range transportation plan. Under federal regulations, the long-range transportation plan is required to demonstrate that future revenue sources are reasonably expected to be available because the plan is required to be fiscally constrained. FHWA and FTA recommend that SACOG work closely with local governments seeking transportation sales tax measures to ensure that there is sufficient information to demonstrate that any new revenues from transportation sales tax measures meet the reasonably expected test. FHWA and FTA also reiterated the requirement that SACOG base the regional transportation plan update on the latest available estimates and assumptions for population, land use, travel, employment, congestion, and economic activity. SACOG has followed these requirements in the past and intends to do so in future updates to the long-range

plan.

The second recommendation is that SACOG and transit operators review and update the existing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that SACOG has with transit operators to ensure that it is current and clearly defines planning process roles and responsibilities. It also recommends adding all area transit providers. SACOG's current MOU with transit operators was entered into in August 2015. Since that time, the cities of Elk Grove and Folsom have ended independent service and are now served by the Sacramento Regional Transit District. The agreement does not include the City of Davis (which operates Davis Community Transit) or Unitrans. Staff will review the existing MOU and identify areas to update it, and subsequently work with transit operators to update the MOU.

The final recommendation is that SACOG modify its Interagency Consultation Process to ensure that there are appropriate opportunities to address the breadth of related topics – including the more technical elements of the process. Under federal law, SACOG is required to administer a process that ensure that transportation projects are analyzed for their impact on federal standards for air quality. As part of that process, SACOG is required to lead an Interagency Consultation Process, which SACOG currently holds quarterly. FHWA and FTA recommend that SACOG add additional meetings focused on the items required for interagency consultation. Staff is reviewing the Interagency Consultation Process and will work to make adjustments to ensure that SACOG complies with all federal requirements, either through existing meetings or supplementary meetings.

#### **5. Fiscal Impact/Grant Information:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.