



Adoption of the 2020 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy; Certification of the Final Environmental Impact Report; Adoption of Findings of Fact, Statement of Overriding Considerations, and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program; Approval of Amendment #18 to Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program and Air Quality Conformity Analysis

Action

Prepared by: Clint Holtzen

Approved by: James Corless

Attachments: Yes

1. Issue:

The board will consider final action to adopt the 2020 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS) and accompanying documents including:

- 1) Amendment #18 to the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) (Attachment A) and Air Quality Conformity Analysis (Attachment B)
- 2) Resolution Certifying the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR), and Findings of Fact Including a Statement of Overriding Considerations and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (Attachment D)
- 3) The 2020 MTP/SCS Plan and Appendices (Attachment E)

2. Recommendation:

First, staff recommends that the board pass the resolution approving Amendment #18 to the MTIP and the associated Air Quality Conformity Analysis for Amendment #18 and the 2020 MTP/SCS (Attachment C). Second, staff recommends that the board pass the resolution certifying the FEIR and adopting the Findings of Fact, Statement of Overriding Considerations, and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (Attachment D). Third, staff recommends that the board adopt the 2020 MTP/SCS (Attachment E) and accompanying board resolution (Attachment F).

3. Background/Analysis:

In September 2019, the SACOG board released the Draft 2020 MTP/SCS, Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Draft 2020 MTP/SCS, Draft Amendment #18 to the MTIP and the Draft Air Quality Conformity Analysis on both the Draft MTP/SCS and MTIP. All documents were available for a 45-day public review and comment period which began on September 23, 2019, and concluded on November 7, 2019. The release of the draft plan was a major milestone in a multi-year process to update the plan that began in 2017 with the adoption of a policy framework for the 2020 MTP/SCS. That policy framework outlined a focus for the plan around economic prosperity for the region's diverse collection of rural, suburban, and urban communities: a plan that moves the region towards positive transportation, air quality, and quality of life outcomes for all residents, workers, and businesses. The framework also directed SACOG to explore the implications of new technology and mobility options (e.g., electric vehicles, ride hailing, and shared mobility services), and options

for raising revenues that can support transportation investments, in light of the likely decline of fuel tax revenues over the next decades.

Adoption of the 2020 MTP/SCS on November 18, 2019, is roughly three months earlier than the February 2020, date originally planned by staff. The early adoption will allow staff to submit the plan to the U.S. Federal Highway Administration for approval ahead of a change in federal rules that would make adoption in February impossible. Specifically, the One National Program Rule withdraws the 2013 California Clean Air Act Waiver and asserts that federal law preempts state and local tailpipe Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions standards, as well as Zero Emissions Vehicle Mandates. Once the federal rule takes effect on November 26, 2019, the vehicle emissions modeling conducted for the 2020 MTP/SCS that demonstrates conformity with Federal Clean Air Act requirements will be invalid. Without a federally approvable MTP/SCS, local and regional transportation projects and access to funding will be at risk. Early adoption mitigates this risk by seeking federal approval ahead of the November 26 effective date of the One National Program Rule.

4. Discussion/Analysis:

Adoption of the 2020 MTP/SCS includes the multistep process outlined below.

1) Amendment #18 to the MTIP and Air Quality Conformity Analysis

The MTIP contains near-term transportation projects that are either federally funded or regionally significant in terms of air quality impacts. Inclusion in the federally approved MTIP is an essential step for any transportation project that will be delivered with federal funds. All projects in the MTIP are included, either individually or as part of lump sums, in the MTP/SCS. Federal rules require that the MTP/SCS and MTIP be consistent with one another and that they conform to the region's plan for attaining clean air.

Both MTIP Amendment #18 and the 2020 MTP/SCS necessitate that SACOG model and determine whether they conform to our plan for attaining clean air. Draft Amendment #18 adds projects to the MTIP and revises projects that are regionally significant or are non-exempt from air quality conformity, making it a Type 5 Formal Amendment. A Type 5 Formal Amendment is one that includes a conformity determination and a new regional vehicle emissions analysis. SACOG used an emissions modeling process to determine that the proposed changes in the Draft 2020 MTP/SCS and Draft MTIP Amendment #18 conform to all applicable federal air quality requirements and would not impede the region's plan to attain air quality goals and standards. The Air Quality Conformity Analysis documents that determination.

See Attachments A and B for comments and responses on Amendment #18 and the Air Quality Conformity Analysis.

2) Certification of the Final EIR

Pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), SACOG must prepare a programmatic EIR for the 2020 MTP/SCS. CEQA requires that state and local government agencies consider the environmental consequences of projects over which they have discretionary authority before taking action on those projects. Although the individual programs and projects included in the MTP/SCS will be implemented by various public agencies, at the regional plan level, which is the scope of this program EIR, SACOG is responsible for carrying out and approving the MTP/SCS and, as such, is the lead agency for the purpose of preparing the environmental review of this proposed project. This EIR has been prepared by SACOG pursuant to CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines.

The purpose of the FEIR is to analyze, on a programmatic level, the environmental effects of the MTP/SCS,

and to provide local decision-makers and the public with an objective analysis of the potential environmental consequences of implementation of the sustainable communities strategy and of the proposed set of improvements to the metropolitan transportation system. The information presented in the FEIR provides a full disclosure of the potential impacts and increases public awareness and participation in the regional transportation planning process. Attachment D includes all associated documentation.

A program FEIR is an environmental document that provides a framework for future environmental analyses. As reported to the board in prior meetings, pursuant to SB 375, the MTP/SCS is analyzed for impacts from both the transportation and land use components of the plan. The FEIR presents a programmatic assessment of the Plan's impacts. Specific analysis of site-specific impacts of individual projects is not the intended use of a program FEIR. Individual specific environmental analysis of each project will be undertaken by the appropriate implementing agency prior to each project being considered for approval. However, the MTP/SCS can serve as a first-tier environmental document under CEQA to support second-tier environmental documents for transportation projects developed during the engineering design process and residential or mixed-use projects and transit priority projects consistent with the SCS. Such tiering may provide streamlined environmental review at the project level for SACOG's member jurisdictions and Caltrans. In all cases, the local lead agency will have to do some amount of project-level CEQA review. It is up to the local lead agency to determine what impacts are significant (if any) and whether/how potential impacts can be feasibly mitigated.

As noted above, the Draft EIR was circulated for public review and comment for 45 days. Each chapter of the Draft EIR provides an introduction, a regulatory and environmental setting, an explanation of the methodology and assumptions for the analysis, the criteria for determining significance of impacts, and the impacts and proposed mitigation measures. The following topics are analyzed in this EIR: aesthetics; agricultural and forestry resources; air quality; biological resources; cultural and paleontological, and tribal cultural resources; energy and global climate change; geology, soils, seismicity, and mineral resources; hazards, hazardous materials, and wildfire; hydrology and water quality; land use and planning; noise and vibration; population and housing; public services and recreation; transportation; utilities and service systems; growth-inducing impacts; and cumulative impacts.

After the comment period for public review closed, SACOG prepared responses to comments received and prepared changes to the Draft EIR. A total of ten comments were submitted on the Draft EIR. Some comments resulted in minor revisions to the EIR that clarify or amplify material in the Draft EIR; however, these changes do not alter the conclusions, or require recirculation, of the Draft EIR. These responses and changes are included in the FEIR (contained in Attachment D-2), which contains the following five chapters: introduction, list of commenters, comments and responses to comments, revisions to the DEIR, and list of preparers.

Attachment D is the Resolution Certifying the FEIR. It includes the proposed Findings of Fact, Statement of Overriding Considerations, and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (Attachment D-1) and the Final EIR (Attachment D-2). The draft volume of the Final EIR is available separately on the MTP/SCS project webpage at <https://bit.ly/2HrMJgf>.

3) Adoption of the 2020 MTP/SCS

The 2020 MTP/SCS included as Attachment E outlines a strategy for future development and transportation infrastructure investment that protects the Sacramento region's natural resources, cleans our air, manages congestion, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and provides housing and transportation options that work

for all of our region's current and future residents. As mentioned above, this plan is the culmination of more than two years of work and direction from the board including coordination with many local, state, and federal partners and stakeholders. The technical work, milestones, and overall plan update process is documented on the project webpage at <https://bit.ly/2HrMJgf>. Attachment G provides an overview of the 2020 MTP/SCS development process to date.

The draft MTP/SCS is built around four main goals including:

1. Build vibrant places for today's and tomorrow's residents
2. Modernize the way we pay for transportation infrastructure
3. Foster the next generation of mobility solutions
4. Build and maintain a safe, reliable, and multimodal transportation system

The end result is a balanced plan that lays out a path for a brighter future, but acknowledges the many challenges and departures from business as usual that will be required to achieve the plan's many positive outcomes. Chapter 4 of the plan in particular, lays out policies and actions that are critical to support the implementation of the region's vision for the future.

The proposed final 2020 MTP/SCS incorporates the board's direction as well as feedback from member and partner agencies, stakeholder groups, and the public over the last two years. Following the last public review period that concluded on November 7, staff reviewed and responded to all comments. Comments and responses for the draft 2020 MTP/SCS are found in Attachment H. Attachment I includes a summary of changes made to the plan with proposed revisions in strikethrough and underline.

Following board adoption of the plan and accompanying documents described above, staff will submit the plan to federal and state partners for final approval. Staff will complete final design and layout for a publishable plan that we anticipate will be available later this winter. Adoption of the 2020 MTP/SCS will also allow staff to move ahead with the implementation activities outlined in Chapter 4 of the plan and begin working with local jurisdictions and partners at the state and federal level to take meaningful actions toward achieving the objectives of the plan.

5. Fiscal Impact/Grant Information:

Work on the 2020 MTP/SCS and related documents are included in the fiscal year 2019-2020 Overall Work Program and Budget.

6. This staff report aligns with the following SACOG Work Plan Goals:

1 - Advance Economic Prosperity 3 - Assist Local Economic Development Strategies 4 - Connect Low-Income & Disadvantaged Populations to Jobs & Opportunity 5 - Establish the Sacramento Region as an Innovator & Test-Bed for New Ideas 6 - Help the Region Advance a Vision for "Next Generation Transit" 7 - Deliver Key High-Profile Transportation Projects