October 28, 2011
CALAFCO University
LAFCo as Regional Partner: New Perspectives & Best Practices
San Joaquin Valley Case Studies
Subject: Assorted Acronyms

Council of Governments (COGs)

COGs represent joint powers agreements between cities and counties. Primary responsibilities of COGs include identifying the share of the region’s housing need for each community and transportation planning. Several COGs also serve as the MPO and RTPA for the region and are responsible for other functions as well, like the Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC). There are 25 COGs in the state of California. Not every county is in a COG and several COGs include multiple counties (map attached). (A matrix showing the various functional responsibilities of the COGs is attached.)

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)

MPOs are a federal designation (23 USC 134(b) and 49 USC 5303(c)). They are designated as the local decision making body that is responsible for carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning process. An MPO must be designated for each urban area with a population of more than 50,000 people. There are 18 MPOs in the state of California. Not every county has an MPO and several MPOs include multiple counties (map attached).

Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs)

RTPAs are a California designation (GC section 29532). They are mandated by California state law and charged with the preparation of regional transportation plans and transportation improvement programs. There are 43 RTPAs in the state of California. Every county is represented by an RTPA. Some RTPAs include multiple counties (map attached).

Transportation Authorities

Transportation Authorities exist in "self-help counties". Self-help counties are counties which have passed a regional sales tax measure for transportation purposes. Transportation Authorities are responsible for the planning and funding of the transportation projects included in their voter approved sales tax measure. There are 19 self-help counties in the state of California. Each of these 19 counties is individually represented by a Transportation Authority. In some counties, the COG acts as the Transportation Authority. For most counties, the Transportation Authority is a separate entity.
Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

RTPs are a federally required transportation planning document (23 CFR 450.322). RTPs must be at least a 20 year document and are updated at least every 4 to 5 years (depending on air quality attainment). In California, there are additional state mandates (GC section 65080) for the contents of an RTP. This includes requirements as set forth in SB 375 (Steinberg).

Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS)

The Air Resources Board (ARB) is required to provide each region in California with greenhouse gas emission reduction targets by September 30, 2010. These targets will be used in the development of the region's SCS (the SCS will be a required component of the region's RTP after September 30, 2010. The SCS shall do the following:

(i) identify the general location of uses, residential densities, and building intensities within the region; (ii) identify areas within the region sufficient to house all the population of the region, including all economic segments of the population, over the course of the planning period of the regional transportation plan taking into account net migration into the region, population growth, household formation and employment growth; (iii) identify areas within the region sufficient to house an eight-year projection of the regional housing need for the region pursuant to Section 65584; (iv) identify a transportation network to service the transportation needs of the region; (v) gather and consider the best practically available scientific information regarding resource areas and farmland in the region as defined in subdivisions (a) and (b) of Section 65080.01; (vi) consider the state housing goals specified in Sections 65580 and 65581; (vii) set forth a forecasted development pattern for the region, which, when integrated with the transportation network, and other transportation measures and policies, will reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from automobiles and light trucks to achieve, if there is a feasible way to do so, the greenhouse gas emission reduction targets approved by the state board; and (viii) allow the regional transportation plan to comply with Section 176 of the federal Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 7506).

Alternative Planning Strategy (APS)

If the SCS is unable to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to achieve the greenhouse gas emission reduction targets established by ARB, the MPO shall prepare an alternative planning strategy to the sustainable communities strategy showing how those greenhouse gas emission targets would be achieved through alternative development patterns, infrastructure, or additional transportation measures or policies. The alternative planning strategy shall be a separate document from the regional transportation plan, but it may be adopted concurrently with the regional transportation plan. The APS includes the following:

(i) Shall identify the principal impediments to achieving the targets within the sustainable communities strategy.
(ii) May include an alternative development pattern for the region.
(iii) Shall describe how the greenhouse gas emission reduction targets would be achieved by the alternative planning strategy, and why the development pattern, measures, and policies in the alternative planning strategy are the most practicable choices for achievement of the greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.
(iv) An alternative development pattern set forth in the alternative planning strategy shall comply with Part 450 of Title 23 of, and Part 93 of Title 40 of, the Code of Federal Regulations, except to the extent that compliance will prevent achievement of the greenhouse gas emission reduction targets approved by the state board.
(v) For purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (Division 13 (commencing with Section 21000) of the Public Resources Code), an alternative planning strategy shall not constitute a land use plan, policy, or regulation, and the inconsistency of a project with an alternative planning strategy shall not be a consideration in determining whether a project may have an environmental effect.
Helpful websites
California Association of Councils of Governments:
http://www.calcoq.org/
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Metropolitan Planning:
Caltrans Office of Regional and Interagency Planning:
http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/offices/orip/
Self-Help Counties Coalition:
http://selfhelpcounties.org/

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COUNCILS OF GOVERNMENT MAP

1. San Diego Assn. of Govts. (SANDAG)
2. Southern California Assn. of Govts. (SCAG)
   Sub-COGs of SCAG:
   a. Coachella Valley Assn. of Govts. (CVAG)
   b. Imperial Valley Assn. of Govts. (IVAG)
   c. San Bernardino Assn. of Govts. (SANBAG)
   d. Ventura Council of Govts.
   e. Western Riverside Council of Govts. (WRCOG)
   f. South Bay Cities Council of Govts. (SBCOG)
3. Santa Barbara County Assn. of Govts.
4. Kern Council of Govts. (KernCOG)
5. Council of Fresno County Govts.
6. Assn. of Monterey Bay Area Govts. (AMBAG)
7. Stanislaus Council of Govts. (StanCOG)
8. San Joaquin Council of Govts. (SJCOC)
9. Assn. of Bay Area Govts. (ABAG)
10. Sacramento Area Council of Govts. (SACOG)
11. Sierra Planning Organization and Economic Development District
12. Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA)
13. Merced County Assn. of Govts. (MCAG)
14. Kings County Assn. of Govts. (KCAG)
15. Tulare County Assn. of Govts. (TCAG)
16. Butte County Assn. of Govts. (BCAG)
17. Central Sierra Planning Council and Economic Development District
18. Humboldt County Assn. of Govts. (HCAG)
20. Lake County City Areawide Planning Council
21. Mendocino Council of Govts. (MCOG)
22. San Luis Obispo Council of Govts. (SLOCOG)
23. Siskiyou Assn. of Governmental Entities (SAGE)
24. Tri-County Area Planning Council
25. San Benito County Council of Govts.
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CALCOG Functional Responsibilities Chart

Functional Responsibilities of California Councils of Governments Keys and Notes

A-Officially Designated  B-Lead  C-Co-lead  D-Just Involved

KEY: Functional Responsibilities

MPO............. Metropolitan Planning Organization
RTPA............. Regional Transportation Planning Agency
CMPA............. Congestion Management Planning Agency
RHA............. Regional Housing Allocation
PPR............. Plan and Project Review (Regional Clearinghouse)
ALUC............. Airport Land Use Commission
RHWMPC........ Preparation of Regional Hazardous Waste Management Plan
RAQMP........... Preparation of Regional Air Quality Management Plan
RWQCP........... Preparation of Regional Water Quality Control Plan
RSWMP........... Preparation of Regional Solid Waste Management Plan
ED............. Economic Development
FS............. Financial Services
               (e.g. workers compensation, pooled insurance)

GIS............. Data and Information Services
CDC............. Census Data Center
SHS............. Social/Health Services
CMR............. Conflict Mediation/Resolution
RA............. Rideshare Agency
STA............. Sales Tax Authority

KEY: Acronyms

ABAG............. Association of Bay Area Governments
AMBAG............. Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments
BCAG............. Butte County Association of Governments
Central Sierra........ Central Sierra Planning Council.
CVAG............. Coachella Valley Association of Governments
EDCTC............. EL Dorado County Transportation
Fresno COG........ Council of Fresno County Governments
Humboldt CAG........ Humboldt County of Association of Governments
KCAG............. Kern Council of Governments
KCAG............. Kings County Association of Governments
MCOG............. Mendocino Council of Governments
MCAG............. Merced
MTC............. Metropolitan Transportation Commission
LACMTA........ Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
Lake APC........ Lake County/City Planning Agency
LCC............. League of California Cities
OCTA............. Orange County Transportation Authority
SACOG............. Sacramento Area Council of Governments
San Benito COG.... San Benito County Council of Governments
SANBAG........... San Bernardino Associated Governments
SANDAG........... San Diego Association of Governments
San Joaquin COG.... San Joaquin Council of Governments
SLOCOG........... San Luis Obispo Council of Governments
SBCAG............. Santa Barbara County Association of Governments
SCCRTC........... Santa Cruz County Commission Regional Transportation Commission
Shasta County RPA..... Shasta County Regional Transportation Planning Agency
SCAG............. Southern California Association of Governments
SAAG............. Stanislaus Area Association of Governments
CALCOG Functional Responsibilities Chart

TCAG..................Tulare County Association of Governments
TAMCM................Transportation Agency for Monterey County
TCTC..................Tuolumne County Transportation Council
VCTC..................Ventura County Transportation Commission
WRCOG..................Western Riverside Council of Governments

Functional Responsibilities of California Councils of Governments Keys and Notes and Keys

1 Co-lead for Federal plan and cooperates in preparation of State plan
2 Active involvement in Bay Area Economic Forum, co-founded by ABAG
3 State funded anti-tobacco program
4 Pooled financing for projects, 30% of staff are involved in these services
5 Provides transportation planning services under contract to some LTC's in area
6 Not officially designated but provides some services under contract to member jurisdictions
7 Human relations commission; Water quality (NPDES); Valleywide Emergency Preparedness; Energy Conservation Program
8 Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE), local clearinghouse, home mortgage disclosure depository, rideshare agency
9 Joint housing element development
10 Manages Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS) for 3 county JPA
11 Regional Transit Joint Powers
12 Regional Criminal Justice Clearing House
13 SAFE, sales tax authority, administer TDM programs for city and county, rideshare agency
14 Grant writing, small business finance
15 Coordination and joint use of GIS data
16 Abandoned vehicle abatement service authority
17 SAFE and Bay Area Toll Authority
18 Proposes regional housing needs assessment
19 Develops countywide air quality strategies and program for consideration by local jurisdictions
20 Approves countywide growth projections
21 Subregional outreach to private sector
22 OCTAP
23 Inter-Regional Partnership Member
24 Rail/Trail Authority and/or Freeway Service Patrol (FSP)
25 Supports Kern County in “Federal Emergency Management-Hazard Mitigation Planning”
26 For Monterey County only
27 Member of Southern California Regional Rail Authority (Metrolink) Joint Powers Agreement (JPA), Owner/Operator of the Santa Paula Branch Line Railroad in Ventura County, Responsible for operating the county-wide “Go Ventura” Smartcard fare program, Operator of the Ventura County VISTA intercity transit system, Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE) for Ventura County