

**Air Quality Conformity Task Force  
Summary Meeting Notes  
October 24, 2013**

Participants:

Dick Fahey – Caltrans	Phillip Halley – City of San Jose
Stew Sonnenberg – FHWA	Rodney Tavitas – Caltrans
Andrea Gordon – BAAQMD	Sam Kauer – VTA
Amir Fanai – BAAQMD	Ginger Vagenas – EPA
Jason Crow – CARB	Rene Baile – City of Menlo Park
Michael Sallaberry – SFMTA	Rana Ahmadi – SFMTA
Laura Stonehill – SFMTA	Sri Srinivasan – MTC
Lynn McIntyre – URS	Carolyn Clevenger – MTC
Gary Sidhu – ACTC	Harold Brazil – MTC
Ted Mately – FTA	Adam Crenshaw – MTC

**1. Welcome and Self Introductions:** Carolyn Clevenger (MTC) called the meeting to order at 9:34 am.

**2. PM<sub>2.5</sub> Interagency Consultations**

**a. Consultation to Determine Project of Air Quality Concern Status**

**i. Mansell Corridor Complete Streets**

Laura Stonehill (SFMTA) described Mansell Street as a highway like street with two lanes in each direction with no sidewalks or bike lanes that runs through McLaren Park in San Francisco. The project is a road diet and will implement a complete streets design, reducing Mansell to one travel lane in each direction, providing a sidewalk and cycling facilities along the length of Mansell/Persia, adding marked crosswalks with pedestrian activated beacons, and increasing the lighting along Mansell/Persia.

Harold Brazil (MTC) asked how the conversion from AADT numbers to daily numbers was done and Laura Stonehill replied by saying a number less than 365 was used. Stew Sonnenberg (FHWA) asked how the truck traffic was estimated and Laura Stonehill indicated that the data was gathered through observations with manual counters for two hours at a time and different times of the day.

Ginger Vagenas (EPA) commented that the information included in the assessment form seemed reasonable, but went on to say that there is no standard methodology that project sponsors can use estimate truck traffic and how much documentation the task force would like to see regarding how project sponsors are deriving these numbers.

Carolyn Clevenger (MTC) suggested putting the issue of truck traffic estimation methodology on the agenda for the December 2013 Task Force meeting. Ginger Vagenas added that having

this type of data would assist in documenting the Task Force's decisions (on projects). Andrea Gordon (BAAQMD) went on to suggest that the Task Force identify a required truck traffic estimation methodology for future project level conformity review. Rana Ahmadi (SFMTA) commented on developing a truck traffic estimation methodology, by saying it was a good idea (to establish a methodology) and many of the streets where these types of projects are located definitely are not truck routes and some type of screening approach should be applied. Ginger Vagenas indicated that peak period truck traffic data could be sufficient for Task Force review purposes.

***Final Determination:*** With input from FHWA, FTA, EPA and Caltrans, the Task Force concluded that the Mansell Corridor Complete Streets project was not of air quality concern. Via email, Mike Brady (Caltrans) also indicated that the Mansell Corridor Complete Streets project was not of air quality concern.

## **ii. Masonic Avenue Complete Streets**

Michael Sallaberry (SFMTA) stated that Masonic Avenue currently allows for parking on both sides of the street and the AADT is 32,000 vehicles per day. The project will construct bus stop bulb-outs, corner bulb-outs curb ramps, a planted median, a wider sidewalk, landscaping and a raised cycle track on Masonic Avenue from Geary to Fell Streets. These improvements will improve the travel experience and safety for pedestrian, cyclists, and transit riders that use Masonic Avenue from Geary to Fell Streets.

Ginger Vagenas asked for documentation of the observed low truck count estimates and she asked about missing build/no-build scenario comparisons in the project assessment form. Ginger Vagenas also asked about what the impact of traffic redistribution might be in this project and what the daily traffic numbers might be (the numbers included in the report appear to all be annual numbers). Michael Sallaberry responded by indicating that traffic in the project area is evenly distributed in each directions.

Specifically, Ginger Vagenas asked what observations were used to estimate the 3% truck traffic stated in the project assessment form. Michael Sallaberry responded by saying the 3% truck traffic estimate was a default value and most of the traffic was made up of crosstown commuters. Dick Fahey (Caltrans) also asked for documentation of the 3% truck traffic estimate and Michael Sallaberry indicated that he would provide this information. Stew Sonnenberg (FHWA) indicated that he would feel more comfortable reviewing this project with the truck traffic estimate documentation because of the higher ADT levels on Masonic Avenue.

Amir Fanai (BAAQMD) asked, for the purposes of review at the project level, what is definition of a truck vehicle type. Michael Sallaberry answered by saying a truck was any type of vehicle with more than six wheels. Amir Fanai, followed up by saying that (through his own experience) one would be hard pressed to find greater than 3% truck traffic in this area of San Francisco and he is comfortable with the 3% truck traffic estimate.

Ginger Vagenas stated that the definition of truck vehicle type is not limited to the number of wheels on the vehicle, but more so, trucks that are diesel powered and Stew Sonnenberg agreed with Ginger and said the number of wheels on the vehicle is immaterial with the focus

truck impacts being on diesel truck traffic. Amir Fanai described the Air District's diesel truck count estimation methodology and Jason Crow (CARB) described how EMFAC distinguishes truck types.

Rana Ahmadi asked the Task Force for truck traffic estimation methodology guidelines and Harold Brazil (MTC) and Amir Fanai agreed to work on this truck estimation guidance as an agenda item for next month's meeting.

***Final Determination:*** While Task Force does not believe that the Masonic Avenue Complete Streets project is of air quality concern, the group will wait to make a final determination on this project once documentation of the truck traffic estimation methodology is received.

### **iii. Menlo Park - Willow Road Traffic Signal Modification**

Rene Baile (City of Menlo Park) discussed the Willow Road Traffic Signal Modification project and stated that the project will modify nine traffic signals on Willow Road between Middlefield Road and Hamilton Avenue by upgrading the traffic signal controllers and cabinets and upgrading the vehicle and pedestrian signal heads. Project will also purchase and deploy traffic signal adaptive software modules to establish a traffic signal coordinated adaptive system along the Willow Road corridor. Rene Baile also stated that the project will make use of the new traffic signal communication (fiber optics) infrastructure that C/CAG is currently installing in conjunction with its SMART Corridor project and that no channelization is anticipated with the construction of the project.

Dick Fahey commented by saying that Mike Brady's pre-meeting submitted comments stated that if a project does not include new signals or new channelization then the project is exempt under 40 CFR 93.128 and Stew Sonnenberg and Ginger Vagenas agreed.

***Final Determination:*** With input from all members, the Task Force concluded that the Willow Road Traffic Signal Modification Project was not of air quality concern.

### **iv. San Jose Pedestrian Oriented Traffic Signals**

Phillip Halley (City of San Jose Department of Transportation) discussed the San Jose Pedestrian Oriented Traffic Signals project and stated that the project involves new installation or the modification of existing traffic signals in San Jose at the following intersections: At South King Road & Virginia Place, South King Road & Everglade Avenue, South Bascom Avenue & Pamlar Avenue, Hyland Avenue & North White Road, Henry Avenue & Stevenson Creek Boulevard and Story Road & South Sunset Avenue.

Traffic signal controlled crossings will be implemented at six key intersections to promote the use of transit, walking and biking as a primary transportation mode. The installation of traffic control signals is a proven method to ensure safe interaction of all who use and share the transportation system.

Phillip Halley went onto say that the City of San Jose AADT data does not distinguish between vehicle types but they do not anticipate any significant impacts due to the project construction. Ginger Vagenas asked if the City of San Jose had any sense as to what the volume of truck

traffic is in the project area and Phillip responded by say no. Ginger also asked if this project could create PM2.5 hotspots due to idling occurring at the intersections. Phillip responded by saying the six intersections included in this project are not located on any City of San Jose truck routes.

Ginger Vagenas, Stew Sonnenberg and Mike Brady (via his pre-meeting comments) all felt there was a need to document the diesel truck effect on this project.

**Final Determination:** The Task Force at its meeting decided to final determination on this project until documentation of the truck traffic estimation documentation was received. Truck AADT for the San Jose Pedestrian Oriented Traffic Signals project was submitted by the City of San Jose and the Task Force determined that the project was not of air quality concern on November 7, 2013.

**v. State Route 84 Expressway Widening Project**

Gary Sidhu (ACTC) described the State Route 84 Expressway Widening project as being five miles in length and is composed of two segments of SR 84, referred to as North and South, in the City of Livermore. Gary Sidhu also stated that the combined segments will widen SR 84 from two lanes to six lanes between Jack London Boulevard and Stanley Boulevard and to four lanes between Stanley Boulevard and Ruby Hill Drive.

Lynn McIntyre (URS) indicated that Fehr and Peers developed the traffic analysis and this analysis showed that the implementation of the project would not result in an increase in diesel traffic in both the years 2015 and 2025.

Dick Fahey asked about any possible traffic diversion which might occur with the implementation of the project (which was also brought up in Mike Brady's pre-meeting submitted comments) and Lynn McIntyre responded by saying the main factor is most of the truck traffic in this area is associated with travel between the Port of Oakland and the San Joaquin Valley and therefore would not be traversing State Route 84 in the project location.

Ginger Vagenas commented that the tables in this project's assessment form were in excellent condition.

**Final Determination:** With input from FHWA, FTA, EPA and Caltrans, the Task Force concluded that the State Route 84 Expressway Widening project was not of air quality concern. Again, via email, Mike Brady (Caltrans) also indicated that the State Route 84 Expressway Widening project was not of air quality concern.

**b. Confirmation of the list of exempt projects from PM<sub>2.5</sub> conformity (2b\_Exempt List 112013.pdf)**

After discussion, the following three projects were in need of follow-up information and/or description edits:

NAP130002  
NCTPA

## SRTS Non Infrastructure Program Cycle 2

Napa County: Countywide: Continued Implementation and Expansion of the Regional Safe Routes Program

*More project description detail was provided.*

SCL110126

VTA

SCVTA: Low Income Fare Pilot Project

In Santa Clara County: SCVTA - Pilot project to promote transit ridership among low-income clients not currently eligible for transportation assistance and evaluate the success of pilot program in addressing this need and its applicability region-wide

*It was confirmed that all the project funding is local and there are no federal funds included in the project and therefore, no federal action needed.*

SM-130024

Portola Valley

Alpine Road Bank Protection ER Project

ER project. Install 30' deep stich pier retaining wall along 70 lineal feet of Alpine Road with Caltrans standard guardrail.

*Needed a typographical error corrected.*

**Final Determination:** After updating the projects on the exempt list with documentation provided by the project sponsors, the Task Force determined that the projects on the exempt list are exempt from a conformity determination as per 40 CRF 93.126.

### 3. Projects with Regional Air Quality Conformity Concerns

#### a. Interagency Consultation for Non-Exempt Not Regionally Significant Projects

Adam Crenshaw (MTC) discussed an MTC staff memo requesting the Task Force's concurrence that one project that staff is currently proposing to add to the 2013 TIP in November as part of TIP Amendment 2013-08 will not significantly impact regional transportation air quality and that its addition to the 2013 TIP will not trigger a revision to the Transportation Air Quality Conformity Analysis on the 2013 TIP.

Adam Crenshaw described the project being added (the Santa Rosa Complete Streets Road Diet on Transit Corridors project) by indicating that it includes converting an existing four lane configuration to one travel lane in each direction, a center two-way turn lane and class II bike lanes in each direction. Adam also mentioned that the AADT at the project location is under 20,000.

**Final Determination:** After input from all members, the Task Force considered that the projects identified in the memo above will be deemed Non-Exempt, Not Regionally Significant for regional conformity purposes as these projects will not affect the regional transportation model used in analyzing regional air quality conformity.

#### **4. Consent Calendar**

##### **4a. September 26, 2013 Air Quality Conformity Task Force Meeting Summary**

**No action taken**

##### **b. Missing Projects from 2b\_Exempt List 101013.pdf Exempt List**

When preparing the agenda package for our October meeting, seven projects were accidentally excluded from the likely not to be a POAQC exempt list (2b\_Exempt List 100913.pdf). Some of these projects need to complete a Preliminary Environmental Study (PES) as part of their field review application to Caltrans in order to proceed. The PES makes reference to the project's project level conformity status (whether it is a POAQC or not). Because these projects are not included in the October packet, they would not have another opportunity for determination at a Task Force meeting until our next meeting on December 5th.

We understand that it is too late to have these projects considered at this month's meeting. In an attempt to expedite the conformity documentation process, the task force reviewed these projects (after the October 24<sup>th</sup> meeting) and provided comments and/or POAQC determination via either email or through a separate call before the December 5th meeting.

Comments in the two weeks following the October 24, 2013 Task Force meeting included discussion on the Caltrain South Terminal Phase II and III project. Via email, the Task Force decided to classify this project eligible under the exemption for "Mass Transit - Construction or renovation of power, signal, and communications systems", although the track expansion does not meet that exemption category. However, the Task Force concurred that the track expansion is not a project of air quality concern. The Task Force also commented that the Caltrain South Terminal Phase II and III project is not a POAQC based on the fact that number of trains will increase with or without the additional track.

***Final Determination:*** After review and comment, the Task Force determined that the projects on the exempt list (2b\_Exempt List 102113 (Added Projs Only).pdf) are exempt from a conformity determination as per 40 CRF 93.126.