

**Air Quality Conformity Task Force
Summary Meeting Notes
January 23, 2013**

Participants:

Mike Brady – Caltrans	Sajeeni DeAlwis-Mima – VTA
Marilee Mortenson – Caltrans	Amir Douraghy – Santa Clara County
Stew Sonnenberg – FHWA	Dawn Cameron – Santa Clara County
John Hesler – David Powers & Assoc.	Ted Mately – FTA
Andrea Gordon – BAAQMD	Lauren Bobadilla – VTA
Amir Fanai – BAAQMD	Carolyn Clevenger – MTC
Ginger Vagenas – EPA	Harold Brazil – MTC
David Kobayashi – VTA	Adam Crenshaw – MTC
Josh Channell – VTA	Sri Srinivasan – MTC

1. Welcome and Self Introductions: Harold Brazil (MTC) called the meeting to order at 9:35 am.

2. PM_{2.5} Interagency Consultations

a. Consultation to Determine Project of Air Quality Concern Status

i. SR 237 Express Lanes Phase 2 Project

Lauren Bobadilla (VTA) described the SR 237 Express Lanes Phase 2 project as an extension of the existing express lane that is at the SR 237 interchange and I-880. VTA will be converting existing HOV lanes to express lanes (one lane in each direction). The conversion will have the effect of extending the express lanes that are currently in operation on SR 237 east of Zanker Road. Ms. Bobadilla mentioned that the project construction will entail restriping of the existing lanes, as well as the addition of signs and electronic tolling equipment. The project will not construct new lanes of traffic or move traffic closer to adjacent land uses.

Mike Brady (Caltrans) asked if SR 237 Express Lanes Phase 2 project was listed as a Transportation Control Measure (TCM) in the Bay Area's SIP and Carolyn Clevenger (MTC) and Harold Brazil (MTC) indicated that the project was not included in the SIP.

Dick Fahey (Caltrans) was unable to attend the meeting and his submitted comments for this project indicated that he did not believe that the SR 237 Express Lanes Phase 2 project was of air quality concern mainly because the project does not add capacity nor does it result in any change in truck volumes (between the no-build and build scenarios).

Final Determination: With input from FHWA, FTA, EPA and Caltrans, the Task Force concluded that the SR 237 Express Lanes Phase 2 project was not of air quality concern.

ii. Loyola Bridge Channelization Project

Dawn Cameron (Santa Clara County) gave an overview of the Loyola Bridge Channelization project by describing that the Loyola Bridge is a short narrow bridge over Foothill Expressway in the Los Altos area and the bridge is currently rated as functionally obsolete (by Caltrans standards). For this reason, the bridge will be rehabilitated which will include: traffic channelization by providing left turn lanes, shoulders for bicycle use, and ADA-compliant sidewalks for pedestrian use.

Ms. Cameron went on to say that the current bridge has two through lanes, has no shoulders, it has sidewalks, but no pedestrian ramps. The bridge is located in a low density residential with neighborhood commercial development on one side. Ms. Cameron also noted that on both sides of the bridge there are multiple roads converging towards the access of the bridge leading high turning movement conflict and confusion for vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians. The added two left turn lanes included in this project will organize and channelize the traffic on the bridge. Ms. Cameron said that the bridge is part a very popular bicycle route.

Dick Fahey submitted comments for this project indicated that he did not believe that the Loyola Bridge Channelization project was of air quality concern because the project does not change in truck volumes nor is there any degradation in LOS (as a result of the project implementation). In addition, Mr. Fahey noted that the truck volumes associated with the project are extremely low to begin with.

Ginger Vagenas (EPA) agreed with Dick Fahey's comments and also did not believe that the Loyola Bridge Channelization project was of air quality concern. Mike Brady mentioned that the AADTs in the project area are barely over 4,000 and, therefore, the volumes are not high enough to be of concern. Mike Brady also said that no through lanes will be added with this channelization project.

Stew Sonnenberg (FHWA) agreed with Mike Brady's comments by saying the project provided improvements to the traffic flow and did not believe the project was of air quality concern. Ted Mately (FTA) also did not believe the project was of air quality concern.

Final Determination: With input from FHWA, FTA, EPA and Caltrans, the Task Force concluded that the Loyola Bridge Channelization project was not of air quality concern.

b. Confirmation of the list of exempt projects from PM_{2.5} conformity (2b_Exempt List 10914.pdf)

Dick Fahey submitted comments on the list of exempt projects and agreed that all the projects listed are exempt. But, Mr. Fahey questioned whether the correct category was used for Project # SON110024, saying that it seemed that this project is similar to the two projects listed above and below it, and should possibly use the same exemption category (Safety - Widening narrow pavements or reconstructing bridges (no additional travel lanes)). Stew Sonnenberg had the same comment as Mr. Fahey and asked what the difference was among these three bridge projects.

Mike Brady interjected by mentioning saying that all the air quality codes for these bridge projects should be the same. Harold Brazil indicated that these edits will be done and it was concluded that all three bridge projects are not included in the non-attainment area and, therefore, conformity does not apply.

Final Determination: FHWA, FTA, EPA, Caltrans, and MTC agreed that the rest of the projects on the exempt list are exempt from PM_{2.5} project level analysis.

3. Draft Approach to Projecting 3-Axle Truck Counts to All Diesel Truck Volumes

Harold Brazil discussed the background on developing an approach for project sponsors to estimate diesel truck counts. Ginger Vagenas had two discussion items about the draft approach:

- 1) Whether it is reasonable to use data from the southern California goods movement study (VRPA Technologies, 2002) to convert the axle categories into weight classes (so they can be further refined into % diesel using EMFAC numbers); and
- 2) Whether it is reasonable to apply those conversion factors state-wide.

Ms. Vagenas indicated that she has been in touch with EPA's Office of Transportation and Air Quality (OTAQ) about this issue, but before they weigh in, they would like to know more about what the Task Force think and/or recommends.

Mike Brady indicated that if the Task Force decided that this approach was applicable for the Bay Area, then potentially this approach could be applied statewide.

Harold Brazil asked Mike Brady if he had experience dealing with this issue in other parts of California and Mr. Brady indicated that other project level analyses conducted around the state are based on total truck counts. (i.e., other areas do not split out truck counts by weight class and/or number of axles)

Ginger Vagenas stated that she was in favor of counting all two-axle trucks as diesel trucks. Mike Brady added that this approach could come into play with projects that are on the borderline of being of air quality concern.

Carolyn Clevenger and Ginger Vagenas both asked if data from the VRPA, southern California goods movement study should be applied to projects occurring in the Bay Area. Ms. Vagenas requested documentation on how the VRPA study can be applied statewide.

Amir Fanai explained that the approach is a hybrid approach using EMFAC Bay Area vehicle classification data and the VRPA southern California axle versus weight data, but axle/weight data does not change and stays uniform statewide. Mr. Fanai also mentioned that CARB provided information on classifying trucks by fuel and weight and he said he would pass this information onto the Task Force.

Stew Sonnenberg looks at this approach to be used as a tool for borderline projects and Mike Brady feels that the approach should not be used on every project with Ms. Vagenas agreeing.

Ms. Clevenger concluded the discussion by indicating that truck classification information and comments will be gathered from CARB and MTC and BAAQMD will further develop documentation (in particular for the VRPA study) and application examples for this approach.

4. Consent Calendar

5a. December 5, 2013 Air Quality Conformity Task Force Meeting Summary

Ginger Vagenas noted that the meeting summary should be edited to show that EPA also concurred with **2b_Exempt List 112113.pdf** exempt list of projects from the December 5, 2013 Task Force meeting.

Final Determination: With input from all members and with the one edit mentioned by Ginger Vagenas, the Task Force concluded that the consent calendar was approved.