

**Air Quality Conformity Task Force  
Summary Meeting Notes  
February 26, 2015**

Participants:

Andrea Gordon – BAAQMD

Ted Mately – FTA

Dick Fahey – Caltrans

Amir Fanai – BAAQMD

Rob Sprinkle – City of Santa Rosa

Danny Chen – City of Santa Rosa

Joseph Vaughn – FHWA

Stew Sonnenberg – FHWA

Mallory Atkinson – MTC

Ross McKeown – MTC

Adam Crenshaw – MTC

Harold Brazil – MTC

Ginger Vagenas\* – EPA (*Ms. Vagenas did not attend the February 26<sup>th</sup> meeting, but did provide her comments/input prior to the meeting*)

**1. Welcome and Self Introductions:** Harold Brazil (MTC) called the meeting to order at 9:33 am.

**2. Projects with Regional Air Quality Conformity Concerns**

**a. Proposed Method for the Review of the Regional Conformity Status of New TIP Projects**

Adam Crenshaw (MTC) began his discussion by explaining the mechanics of the region's conformity protocol noting that the Task Force has multiple opportunities to review and consult on the regional conformity status of projects included in the RTP and TIP. Mr. Crenshaw indicated that this consultation regularly occurs through the following processes:

- During an update or amendment to the RTP, the Task Force reviews the draft and final conformity analyses, which include lists of projects in the RTP and their regional conformity status.
- During a TIP update or an amendment to the TIP that requires an update to the regional conformity analysis the Task Force reviews the draft and final conformity analyses or redeterminations, which include lists of new and revised projects in the TIP and their regional conformity status.
- When projects that are not exempt from regional conformity analysis are added to the TIP or are altered in a substantial way - through memoranda presented at the monthly Task Force meetings as needed; and
- When the Task Force reviews the project-level conformity status of projects at the monthly meetings. Although this is not a review of the regional conformity status of these projects, there is overlap between the categories of projects that are exempt from regional analysis and those exempt from project-level conformity analysis. As such this review process does allow the Task Force to raise issues with projects that may impact their regional conformity status.

Mr. Crenshaw went on to say that while MTC often consults with the Task Force about the regional conformity status of projects through the processes above before approving their addition to the TIP, this is not currently true for projects that MTC believes are exempt from regional conformity analysis and are being added through an amendment between TIP updates. Therefore, Mr. Crenshaw stated that MTC staff is proposing to implement a new, supplemental regional conformity status review process to facilitate this consultation.

With the proposed supplemental review process, Mr. Crenshaw said that MTC staff will compile a list of new projects included in an amendment and present it at meetings held the month before the Commission is to take an action on a TIP amendment and will allow the Task Force to review most of these projects before they are presented to the Commission.

Mr. Crenshaw concluded by notifying the Task for Force that some projects added late in the TIP amendment development process, may not be presented to the Task Force in advance of the Commission action. Mr. Crenshaw stated that Caltrans, FTA, FHWA, and EPA staff will be notified as to which projects have not been presented to the Task Force before being included in an amendment (MTC will update the Phase and Fund Source Report included in the materials distributed for review of MTC's TIP amendments to include a field that will indicate whether or not the Task Force has previously reviewed the regional conformity status of a project through the processes above).

Dick Fahey (Caltrans) and Ted Mately (FTA) stated that they were both comfortable with the proposed supplemental review process. Via email, Ginger Vagenas (EPA) indicated she had some minor clarification questions about the proposed process.

***Final Determination:*** Final agreement by the Task Force on the proposed supplemental review process was deferred until follow-up discussion occurs with EPA and FHWA.

### **3. PM<sub>2.5</sub> Interagency Consultations**

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

##### **i. Santa Rosa Complete Streets Road Diet on Transit Corridor Project**

Rob Sprinkle (City of Santa Rosa) started his presentation on the Santa Rosa Complete Streets Road Diet on Transit Corridor project by stating that the project will address multiple concerns; pavement rehabilitation, elimination of gaps in bicycle network and provide adequate pedestrian accessibility (with curb ramps upgrades) in Santa Rosa. Mr. Sprinkle also indicated that intersection striping will be retained to current capacity levels with the construction of the project and a bicycle detector will be provided within the project limits.

Mr. Sprinkle noted that the City of Santa Rosa approach to road diet projects is to apply them to roads that carry less than 25,000 ADT per day and that West 3<sup>rd</sup> Street existing and projected ADT (Sonoma County Transportation Authority's travel model was source for projected ADT volumes) had well below that level (about 10,000 ADT existing and about 12,000 projected).

Mr. Sprinkle also mentioned that with the inclusion of the left turning lane removal with the construction of the road diet component of the project, no longer having left turn movements at

the intersection also removes traffic blocks and increases average speed through the West 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.

Dick Fahey (Caltrans) thanked Mr. Sprinkle for the presentation and did not think the project was of air quality concern because of the low truck volumes and Ted Matley (FTA) agreed. Joseph Vaughn (FHWA) deferred FHWA's determination on this project to Caltrans.

***Final Determination:*** With input from FTA, EPA (via email prior to the meeting), Caltrans and FHWA, the Task Force concluded that the Santa Rosa Complete Streets Road Diet on Transit Corridor project was not of air quality concern.

#### **b. Confirm Projects Are Exempt from PM<sub>2.5</sub> Conformity**

Adam Crenshaw (MTC) referred to the January 2015 Task Force meeting when the air quality exemption status of a number of car sharing expansion projects that were presented as part of the "Confirm Projects Are Exempt from PM<sub>2.5</sub> Conformity" item. Mr. Crenshaw said that the task force determined that these projects could not be classified under any of the project categories available under 40 CFR §93.126 and, as such, were not exempt from air quality conformity analysis. Mr. Crenshaw went on to say that given the small scale of the projects, the Task Force also indicated that the projects were likely not projects of air quality concern for project-level conformity and were not regionally significant for regional conformity.

In response to this issue, Mr. Crenshaw requested the Task Force's concurrence that six ridesharing projects from around the region are not projects of air quality concern for project-level conformity and were not regionally significant for regional conformity.

Joseph Vaughn (FHWA) commented that it is difficult to classify this project due to the lack of basic data (such as truck ADT) and/or criteria to review these types of projects with and suggested sponsors of car sharing projects simply provide documentation that there are no truck traffic impacts. Mr. Crenshaw, Ted Matley (FTA) and Dick Fahey (Caltrans) agreed with this approach and recommended follow-up discussion with Ginger Vagenas (EPA) on this matter for her concurrence.

***Final Determination:*** With input from FHWA, FTA, EPA (via email prior to the meeting), Caltrans and MTC, the Task Force agreed that the projects on the exempt list (**3b\_Exempt List 21215.pdf**) is exempt from PM<sub>2.5</sub> project level analysis.

### **4. Consent Calendar**

#### **a. January 22, 2015 Air Quality Conformity Task Force Meeting Summary**

***Final Determination:*** With input from all members, the Task Force concluded that the consent calendar was approved.

### **5. Other Items**

Joseph Vaughn (FHWA) explained some role and responsibility changes related to conformity assignments at FHWA. Mr. Vaughn indicated that Stew Sonnenberg will be responsible for

regional conformity issues and he would be the FHWA staff primarily responsible for project level conformity consultation. Mr. Vaughn also stated that these changes would be permanent and that he would be responsible for project level conformity consultation and review for FHWA for the entire State.