

**Air Quality Conformity Task Force
Summary Meeting Notes
September 24, 2015**

Participants:

Amir Fanai – BAAQMD

Shalanda Christian – Caltrans

Rodney Tavitas – Caltrans

Yoojoong Choi – Caltrans

Andrew Lee – Parisi

Ryan O’Kane – Harrison Engineering

Don Irby – City of Berkeley

Ginger Vagenas – EPA

Ted Mately – FTA

Stew Sonnenberg – FHWA

Dick Fahey – Caltrans

Adam Crenshaw – MTC

Harold Brazil – MTC

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

2. PM_{2.5} Project Conformity Interagency Consultations

a. Consultation to Determine Project of Air Quality Concern Status

i. Hearst Avenue Complete Streets Project

Mr. Don Irby (City of Berkeley) began his description of the Hearst Avenue Complete Streets project by stating that the project would improve bicycle and pedestrian access safety by:

- Closing an existing 350 foot long sidewalk gap
- Reducing pedestrian crossing distances
- Reducing travel lanes to eliminate multiple-threat conditions
- Creating safer facilities for bicyclists including buffered and shared bike lanes
- Managing traffic speeds and improve safety with flashing beacons, speed feedback signs, and traffic signalization
- Creating left turn pockets, lane reconfiguration, and pavement repair will support motor vehicle traffic
- Improving existing transit stop facilities

Mr. Irby mentioned that the road diet project will implement a complete street/road diet reducing lanes from 4 to 2 lanes between Shattuck Avenue and Le Conte Avenue with center turn lane pockets and medians. The project will add Class II bike lanes between Shattuck Avenue and Le Conte Avenue. A Class II bike lane will continue eastbound from Le Conte Avenue to Euclid Avenue. In addition, Mr. Irby stated that shared bike lanes (Class III) will be designated to the westbound direction from Le Conte Avenue to La Loma Avenue/Gayley Road and in the eastbound direction between Euclid and La Loma Avenue/Gayley Road.

Mr. Irby also mentioned that based on a traffic assessment of the Hearst Avenue Complete Street project, the results of the study indicated that the project accomplishes its goal of improving the conditions for bicyclists, pedestrians, and public transit riders, without significantly affecting motor vehicle traffic flow. Mr. Irby went on to say that after the project is completed, the City of

Berkeley anticipates a significant increase in bicycle users and a slight decrease for average daily vehicle trips within the project corridor. The City of Berkeley based this expectation on two recent studies that discuss the impact of protected bike lanes:

- National Institute for Transportation and Communities, “Lessons from the Green Lanes: Evaluating Protected Bike Lanes in the U.S.” June 2014
- FHWA, “Separated Bikeway Design Guide”, May 2015

Ginger Vagenas (EPA), Dick Fahey (Caltrans), Rodney Taviton (Caltrans) and Ted Matley (FTA) all thought the Hearst Avenue Complete Streets project was a good project and they did not think the project was of air quality concern. Harold Brazil (MTC) asked if there was any coordination being done with AC Transit on this project and Mr. Irby said yes and AC Transit suggested two locations (in the project corridor) where they wanted to see transit islands and the City of Berkeley worked with them to incorporate them into the project. Mr. Irby also stated they were able to include the protected bike lane behind the transit islands to reduce the conflicts at those locations.

Final Determination: With input from FTA, EPA, Caltrans and FHWA, the Task Force concluded that the Hearst Avenue Complete Streets project was not of air quality concern.

b. Confirm Projects Are Exempt from PM_{2.5} Conformity

Harold Brazil (MTC) heard no comments from the Task Force on the **2b_Exempt List 091115.pdf** list of projects.

Final Determination: With input from FHWA, FTA, EPA, Caltrans and MTC, the Task Force agreed that the project on the exempt list (**2b_Exempt List 091115.pdf**) is exempt from PM_{2.5} project level analysis.

3. Projects with Regional Air Quality Conformity Concerns

a. Review of the Regional Conformity Status for New and Revised Projects

Adam Crenshaw (MTC) discussed information to assist Task Force review of regional conformity status for new and revised projects:

New Project Staff is Proposing to Include in the 2015 TIP

Mr. Crenshaw indicated that Staff has received requests from a sponsor to add one of new project to the 2015 TIP. Mr. Crenshaw provided a listing of this project along with the regional air quality category that staff believes best describes the projects.

Projects Amended into the 2015 TIP Prior to the Current AQCTF Review Procedures

Mr. Crenshaw also indicated that a number of projects were amended into the 2015 TIP through revisions prior to the implementation of the current AQCTF review procedures on February 26, 2015. Mr. Crenshaw went on to say that while these projects were reviewed by some members of the Task Force as part of the TIP amendment review process, they were not brought to the Task Force as a whole for review and consultation. Staff believes that all of these projects are exempt

from regional air quality conformity analysis under 40 CFR 93.126 or 40 CFR 93.127. In an effort to allow all Task Force members to raise any questions or concerns, these projects are now being presented.

Mr. Crenshaw received no other questions or comments on the above mentioned agenda item.

4. Consent Calendar

a. August 27, 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

Harold Brazil (MTC) followed-up on the email on HSIP Sonoma Boulevard (SR 29) Road Diet project from the August 27th Task Force meeting indicating that the City of Vallejo (via consultation with Tom Holstein of Caltrans) indicated that the project should be NEPA section 6004 project type delegation. The City of Vallejo was also only able to provide build/no build truck ADTs for the quarter mile section of the HSIP Sonoma Boulevard project and did not have traffic data for the full 3 mile section of Sonoma Boulevard (from State Route 37 to Curtola Parkway) and said it would cost a few thousand dollars for the City to have a study such as this performed. The Task Force members then made a final determination that the on HSIP Sonoma Boulevard (SR 29) Road Diet project was not of air quality concern.