



### November 5, 2013 Meeting Minutes **DRAFT**

Council Members Present: Chair Ken Alex, Director, Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR); Vice-Chair Bob Fisher, Public Member; Secretary John Laird, California Natural Resources Agency (CRNA); Secretary Matt Rodriguez, California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA); Secretary Diana Dooley, California Health and Human Services Agency (CHHS); Undersecretary Brian Annis, California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA); Secretary Anna Caballero, California Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency (BSCH).

#### **Agenda Item #1: Call to Order**

Chair Alex called the meeting to order.

#### **Agenda Item #2: ACTION: Approval of September 16 Meeting Minutes**

Council Member Laird moved to approve the minutes. Chair Alex seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **Agenda Item #3: Executive Director's Report: Mike McCoy**

Executive Director McCoy addressed the following topics:

1. Regional Advanced Mitigation Program (RAMP): SGC is about to execute an agreement with the High-Speed Rail Authority (HSRA) to hire someone to administer a statewide program and bring the effort to scale beyond the successful pilot programs into a true statewide effort. HSRA is also funding a position for planning assistance primarily in the San Joaquin Valley. There is a recognized need for planning beyond the areas around the station stops into surrounding communities and cities who are not receiving a lot of planning assistance but are in the commute shed of the HSR-stop cities.
2. Infrastructure Planning: We have begun to understand how agencies are complying with the Five-Year Infrastructure Plan through programmatic reviews and specific project reviews, which vary by each agency and department. We are trying to get a good handle of what that looks like in one place, then proceed to evaluate the consistency of infrastructure plans with the State's Planning Priorities. SGC Key Staff have been very helpful and hopefully by the March 2014 Council Meeting, we will have a very comprehensive review for you and will be able to take action on the next five-year plan.
3. Geospatial Data Coordination: The state's Chief Geographic Information Officer Scott Gregory is working with SGC Key Staff to identify major statewide data sets that are currently not in GeoPortal collection. Our estimate is that about 60-65 percent of major

data sets that can be addressed through the portal. I will report back in December on the progress.

4. Parcel Data Set: We are very pleased with this. The data encompasses all parcels in California, for the first time.
5. Other Data Efforts: Later this week, the Sacramento Council of Governments (SACOG) will install version 2.1 of UrbanFootprint on its servers in Sacramento and take control of the tool locally. They are one of three Metropolitan Planning Organizations in the state using this tool, and later UC Davis will hosting the public access to this tool and will be providing training on its use.

Chair Alex: Would you like to comment on the public health module of UrbanFootprint?

McCoy: Planners across the state have shared that public health is an issue that consistently resonates with the populations they serve. We are still working on gathering data in partnership with funders such as the Resources Legacy Fund and The California Endowment to build a tool that everyone has confidence in.

Chair Alex: Would you like to provide an update on the Fresno-Madera mediation process?

McCoy: Having jurisdictions sue each other with public money is not the best way to address issues facing them, which primarily have to do with the effects on transportation of growth, distribution of tax funds, and regional housing needs. I think we are making some good progress and we really appreciate Secretary Caballero and the Department of Housing and Community Development for offering assistance as we try and broker an agreement. At this point, the parties have agreed to settle and now we have started a series of meetings that will hopefully achieve a resolution.

Council Member Laird: The public health module is on the December meeting agenda, correct?

Chair Alex: Yes, at the next meeting, we will have more specific information on the public health module.

Council Member Fisher: Would you please share more information on the Fresno Infill Taskforce?

McCoy: Allison (Joe) would you like to comment on that?

Joe: In October, the Fresno General Plan Infill Task Force met, and they are really focused on infill financing. OPR and SGC helped convene this group in partnership with the Fresno Strong Cities, Strong Communities federal team. In your packet (under Agenda Item #3) you have a letter that summarizes some of the recommendations from that task force. It was a very productive three sessions, with a lot of honest and open dialogue among a diverse group of experts to help the city of Fresno to implement its General Plan. A consultant will be putting

together the recommendations from the task force into a report that will be published early next year. SGC will be leveraging that report and see what is applicable to communities in other parts of the state.

Council Member Fisher: Once the report is done, the staff will come up with recommendations for the Council to either adopt or move along through the agencies or some other way?

Joe: In February, the Council approved a contract for the development of infill finance solutions and recommendations at the state-level for financing specifically. We have selected a consultant, and hope to have our consultant work with Fresno's consultant to come up with a good report to bridge those efforts.

#### **Agenda Item #4: Council Communications and Updates**

Council Member Laird: The Resources Agency and the Governor's Office have launched the Parks Forward process to address how we get to a sustainable parks system in California. This is a multi-million dollar effort with town hall meetings across the state, a blue-ribbon commission established to head it, and we are looking for feedback and involvement on how to address long-standing parks issues that are both organizational and financial. We have been clear in this process that if we come up with some solutions, it would be hard to present them as parks solutions and not incorporate them into other areas. We have the Williamson Act dangling by a thread, we have wetlands that are handled by the Department of Fish and Wildlife, whose management is not funded very well. We have offers to dedicate land from the California Coastal Commission that are hard to take and manage. We have a general land stewardship issue, where we are good at acquiring land through bonds but we have no way to steward it once we have it. We are focusing this process on parks, but inevitably other land stewardship issues are going to come up with it. I wanted to call everyone's attention to it and ask them to participate in the process. Secretary Rodriguez, Secretary Ross and I recently released a draft of a short-term water plan with actions for the next five years. We will take comments for roughly a month and finalize it on behalf of the Governor. While there has been a lot of focus on planning in the delta, and the state legislative package restricted that management plan into a tight area around the delta, diverse stakeholders from across the state have said that you can't talk about that without talking about conservation, storage, recycling, water management and a whole host of other things. There are a lot of agencies and entities that do discreet parts of water planning and the idea is to get them all in one place and talk about priorities and short-term actions. One of the lead ones, is making conservation a way of life in California. It's hard to talk about more water when we might not be conserving what we have well. We are looking for feedback on that process as well.

Council Member Fisher: Are there representatives from the agencies on the dais represented in those processes?

Council Member Laird: On the water plan, almost every entity working on water falls under EPA, Resources or Agriculture. We did consult the Department of Public Health as well. The Governor asked us to take the lead, but we are really working with anyone that does have responsibility in this area so that nothing is left out. On parks, it is the goal to work with everyone, but it is really being run out of Resources and the Parks Department.

Council Member Rodriguez: We have been having a number of discussions over the past couple of years involving the Department of Water Resources, Natural Resources Agency, Cal/EPA, State Water Quality Control Board, the Delta Stewardship Council on water issues. This report will provide a more formal structure of informal discussions we have been having over the last couple of years. Now it is important for us to reach out and get input from stakeholders as we draw up a plan to deal with water issues throughout the state. Comments would be appreciated.

Undersecretary Annis: As part of the agency reorganization that was implemented July 1, 2013, there was a charge to transportation and housing to continue to work together. One piece of legislation, SB 1039, that explicitly required on-going work among Housing and Community Development, CalTrans, and California Transportation Commission. Subsequently, Business, Consumer Services and Housing, has been added to the SGC, and through this forum and through the key staff of the SGC, we have been able to continue this work. In addition to that, we decided we wanted to formally establish a work group to meet the mandate of SB 1039. A charter was signed by Secretary Caballero and Secretary Kelly to establish a process for on-going work and supplement and drill down on a few specific areas of what's going on with the SGC. There is a working group from all the affected departments that is going to meet monthly, and the Secretaries are going to meet at least quarterly to set the priorities of the group. We would like the SGC to be the reporting mechanism for that group when we come up with new initiatives and new information to report. Also, funding is always a struggle and more and more I think there are opportunities to combine grants from different areas such as housing, transit and transportation to better integrate to meet infill development challenges. Related to this area, the Governor signed SB 142 that bill allows the governing board of a transit district to levy a special benefit assessment that will assist in financing transit stations and rail facilities. That is a tool we hope local transit agencies will be able to use to expand transit. Also, SB 694, which was recently signed by the Governor, allows advertising displays for transit stations.

Council Member Fisher: I would like to update everyone on a couple of contracts that we have awarded. The first one, Allison mentioned, the Infill Finance Options contract: It took us a long time to get this one through, but the contract has been awarded to Economic and Planning Systems, better known as EPS. We received four well-done proposals, and the work on that will begin next week and we hope to have an interim report to Council on the final product by the end of April 2014. The other contract we awarded was the MPO Self-Assessment contract. All four regional workshops have been completed and were well-attended. California Council of Governments (CALCOG) hosted a statewide meeting here on October 18, where the outcomes from the regional workshops were discussed, which will lead to a final report. All 18 MPOs are

participating and hopefully we will improve the overall Sustainable Communities Strategy process. The consultants, Mintier Harnish, and the program manager, Ted Holzem, are doing a great job. Many of the MPOs have asked for more time to work with their boards on the final report, and we are expected to receive preliminary findings at the December 11 Council Meeting and a final report soon after. It's a good sign that state agencies are contacting SGC to ask for the findings. I think we are getting really good information and am looking forward to the results. I think this is good government in action.

Chair Alex: OPR is finishing up its update to the General Plan Guidelines. This is a major update for local jurisdictions. The idea is to move the guidelines to an online format that is very tied to sources of data, which will hopefully be easily accessible. We hope to release the guidelines in the first quarter of 2014. Second, we just started a major update process to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines as well. We will be publishing our scope of the review and will have a very public process to including workshops. Finally, there was a fair amount of CEQA reform in the legislature this year, namely SB 743, which made two important changes to CEQA: 1) Level of Service (LOS), the metric is gauge transportation impacts, and mainly highlighted traffic delays generated by a project. LOS tends to favor greenfield development over infill because any project built in an urban environment tends to create delay, when a greenfield project may not. OPR is looking at a number of metrics to replace LOS, likely trips generated by a project and vehicle miles travelled produced by a project as a way to evaluate the impacts of that project. We are already working closely with CalTrans and will be having workshops on this. I think this will have a significant impact on infill and how we think about developing in urban areas.

Council Member Rodriguez: In October, Cal/EPA and Health and Human Services Agency released a report on how to deal with extreme heat events in California. In addition, in an effort to forestall such events, the Air Resources Board is working on the update to the scoping plan for the implementation for AB 32. This plan is supposed to be updated every five years. A hearing was held in October on the most recent draft of the plan and another hearing will be held in December, with the hope of a final plan being adopted early next year. I encourage all of you to comment on that plan. Also, in furthering the development of CalEnviroScreen, we did form an Environmental Justice working group, and we are focusing that work on Fresno. The goal of the working group is to see what we can do to work collaboratively with local government in that area and bring together all the boards, departments and offices within Cal/EPA to promote compliance with environmental laws and improve conditions in that area. Portions of Fresno have been identified by EnviroScreen as disadvantaged communities. We hope to have a report on our activities for the first quarter of next year so we can have a model for how we can do environmental compliance programs in other areas of the state that have been identified as being overburdened by environmental circumstances.

Chair Alex: Reminded attendees about how to submit comment. OPR is also working on the update to the Environmental Goals and Policy Report for the state. A draft of that report is on the OPR website if anyone would like to review it and make comments.

Council Member Fisher: Any update on Cap-and-Trade funds?

Chair Alex: Cap-and-Trade funds are part of the budget discussion with the Department of Finance and pretty much all of the agencies in the state. That is an on-going discussion and Cap-and-Trade is high among the issues being discussed.

**Agenda Item #5: SGC Data Initiatives**

Nancy McKeever, SGC: Today I am going to give an update on Data and Information Initiatives funded by the Council and an overview of future high-priority data initiatives going forward. In 2012, the Council allocated \$4.4 million in Planning and Monitoring funds to meet the needs for the successful design, selection and implementation of planning grants. This allocation was divided into Data and Information (\$2.3 million) and Outreach (\$1.9 million) projects. Today, I am going to talk about Data and Information projects, and in December, the Council will get an update on the Outreach projects.

There are four project updates:

1. Vegetation mapping: This project is complete. We got one and a half million acres covering five counties in the Northern Sacramento County in fine-scale vegetation mapping. That is available through the GeoPortal.
2. California Protected Lands and Protocol: Funded in 2010 for \$350,000 and roughly half complete. The project was funded to pool many data sets into one location and these data sets are both parks and protected lands, owned in fee and conservation easements. Completed to date are the California Protected Lands database available through the GeoPortal, which contains about 90 percent of parks and protected lands. They are still working on the conservation easement data and working on the permissions to publish that data. They are also working with our parcel data contractor to make sure that the CPAD data works with the parcel data layer. They are also informing our grantees at the local level that that data exists and how to use it. They are also creating a plan on how to maintain the database. This contract will be completed in April 2014.

Council Member Fisher: Was vegetation mapping done only in five counties?

McKeever: Yes, that was done for five counties in Northern California. There is quite a lot more land that could be mapped. Vegetation mapping is a really big project and we have our eyes on a next step, such as High-Speed Rail project areas in the southern San Joaquin Valley.

Council Member Fisher: Unless the whole state is done, I suspect these maps are less than useful.

McKeever: In the case of vegetation mapping, there are certain habitats that are less important than others and that has to do with long-term mitigation and lands you want to set aside for large projects like High-Speed Rail.

Council Member Fisher: We only did certain counties in the state, right?

McCoy: In 2002, California Fish and Wildlife created a standard for vegetation mapping that actually became the standard nationally. We had high hopes that the state would be mapped then. So far, we have about one-third of the state mapped. This is one of the priorities we hope to chip away at. This is one of the data priorities we will discuss with key staff before we come to our December meeting. We hope we are able to piecemeal away until we have the same wall-to-wall coverage as the county assessor's data.

Council Member Fisher: So we will do county by county as we get funding allocated?

McCoy: Yes. It is not the kind of thing that changes every year. Natural disasters and urbanization are the two big changers. Once we do have it mapped, it's a matter of maintenance costs that are substantially lower.

Council Member Fisher: What about the parcel data? What is the scope of what has been completed?

McKeever: Parcel data is done (has been gathered) for the state. For the first time, we have a statewide parcel data layer.

3. Healthy Community Data and Indicators Project: This work is about half complete. The purpose of this project was to create a standard set of indicators that address the relationship between the physical, economic, and social environment and that community's progress toward health. The indicators are done and documented and the second half of the contract will create case studies about how the indicators can be applied, creating training materials and creating a mock-up website to see how communities might access these indicators and use them. These are outreach tools related to using that data. The indicators will also be accessible through the GeoPortal.
4. Parcel Data and Protocols: Funded in 2010 to create a common land-use parcel data layer and the attributes that go along with it. That was important to reduce costs and improve the quality of multi-county assessments—anything that crosses county boundaries for SCSs and economic analysis for example. This was identified as the highest priority back then. They are not quite done, it is about 70 percent complete (Data has been gathered for the entire state and being fine-tuned). Some important factors for creating a statewide parcel database include reconciling how counties collect data and creating uniform classifications of land use. That is what we asked our contractors to compile into a uniform database connecting all the 58 counties parcel boundaries. The contractor also working on the standardized parcel coding system. To do this, the contractor set up a series of teleconferences with federal, state, local, regional and private stakeholders to negotiate a common language, which has been created. The products of this contract will be very helpful for the state and regions in

aggregating data across boundaries that is uniform. It would be good for state agencies to start to think about ways to use this data. There is a remaining balance of \$350,000 because the contractor was able to complete the projects for less than expected.

We are working on a set of future data priorities and will be coming back with more information in December including expanding existing data sets, developing new data sets, making existing data more accessible, expand decision support tools such as scenario planning and barriers to infill development, and support for the GIS Council to collaborate on data initiatives.

Chair Alex: Just to clarify, this data will be available through the General Plan Guidelines.

Council Member Fisher: How do we know people are using this data? Do we track it through hits to the website? If we don't get a lot of users, no one knows that we did it or no one cares. If we spend a lot of money on it, we should communicate that it is there, and the Council should get regular feedback on how it is being used otherwise we are wasting money.

McKeever: Through the MPO SCS Self-Assessment, we were getting feedback on what kind of data they needed and we can do more of those kind of queries.

McCoy: We can track the website (GeoPortal) for visits and downloads and Scott Gregory will assist us on that.

Council Member Fisher: Do we have expectations? What would be good usage? What would be way under what we had expected?

McCoy: Unlike popular sites like Amazon, we are talking about a fairly minuscule number. But in terms of jurisdictions in California, I think downloads in the hundreds would be a success because it would represent an economic value to very expensive plans. A General Plan update can be \$500,000 enterprise, the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) might be \$300,000 more and benefit from that data made available here. This can result in savings of \$100,000s to millions.

Council Member Fisher: I don't have an opinion of what the numbers should be, but I think it would be useful, before we allocate more money to data projects, to learn how it is being used. It's hard to vote on additional money going to data without knowing how it is being used.

McCoy: One anecdotal story early in my career at UC Davis, when we put natural resource maps on the internet in 1993. We tracked the usage and we found this odd trend. The site was getting overloaded on Monday afternoon to Tuesday afternoon. Tuesday night were city council meetings. People were downloading the maps before these meetings. Anecdotally, we have evidence that these pieces of data are being used, but we can do a better job of tracking it.

Chair Alex: Different data sets have wildly different ranges of uses. Right now, an OPR/SGC project is an effort by University of California Los Angeles about energy usage in the Los Angeles basin. That information has massive implications for business to target customers, how you site distribution elements, and importantly, decision-makers at the California Public Utilities Commission and the local utilities district can make far better decisions on how to spend money on things like energy efficiency. That may or may not be something that the public is interested in downloading, but that is still extremely valuable in having publicly available for decision-makers and interested parties. Yes, we want the public to use it and we want it to be valuable, but there may be different ways to measure value that does not have to do with individual usage.

Council Member Fisher: I just want to know, since we spent money on it, has that been communicated and used, and is there a way of knowing how much value it delivered? There should be something.

McCoy: No, I like the concept, both judging the economic value of it and the overall traffic. I think that will help us get to know the value of it.

#### **Agenda Item #6: Round 1 Urban Greening and Sustainable Communities Planning Grantee Updates**

Natalie Garcia, SGC: Grantee presentations are intended to share more with the Council about the on-the-ground progress and results of Urban Greening and Sustainable Communities Planning Grantees from Round 1 and 2. We will be organizing more of these types of presentations for upcoming Council meetings. (Introduces Polly Escovedo from Natural Resources Agency, who manages the Urban Greening grant program.)

Polly Escovedo, CNRA: It is my pleasure to introduce Eileen Alduenda, from the Council for Watershed Health. This group completed the Elmer Paseo Project in southern California. This was a round one grant, for just under \$300,000. It is my opinion that this project really embodies the spirit of the program with its community access and community space components, as well as the direct purpose of the program to provide multiple benefits. After this presentation, I am certain you will be pleased to have your name associated with this effort.

Mike Antos, Council for Watershed Health: We have been in LA for about 17 years and are a hub for regional applied research, monitoring, and education issues on watershed health to lead to a more sustainable Los Angeles region. I am joined here by Eileen Alduenda and Kristy Morris who are going to present on the Elmer Paseo Project.

To view the Elmer Paseo presentation, please visit the November Council Meeting Materials page here: <http://sgc.ca.gov/meetings/20131105/> or watch the meeting webcast here: [http://sgc.ca.gov/meetings/20131105/meeting\\_20131105\\_video.html](http://sgc.ca.gov/meetings/20131105/meeting_20131105_video.html) (starting at 1:02).

Council Member Fisher: What was the size of the grant and were we the only funders?

Alduenda: SGC provided the majority of the funding with \$294,000 and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, Los Angeles Proposition O Clean Water Funds.

Council Member Fisher: Can you describe the community in the surrounding area a little bit?

Alduenda: The demographic is middle to lower income, mainly Spanish-speaking, very diverse and very typical for the Sun Valley area.

Chair Alex: Have you calculated the value of the water for the 59 residents?

Antos: They are in a gentleman's agreement to not pump their full allocation from that basin because it is in overdraft. Any bit we can add in, gets us out of overdraft.

Natalie Garcia, SGC: Thanks Elmer Paseo for presenting and Introduces Shawn Rich, from the Department of Conservation, who program manager for the City of Calimesa Sustainable Communities Planning grant.

Shawn Rich, DOC: In our past experience it is always best to come forth with good news first. During the course of the grant, they came to us with a bit of a change, and I will let them share more about that.

Shannon Andrews, the City of Calimesa: Thank you for the invitation, we are very please to present our project.

To view the City of Calimesa presentation, please visit the November Council Meeting Materials page here: <http://sgc.ca.gov/meetings/20131105/> or watch the meeting webcast here: [http://sgc.ca.gov/meetings/20131105/meeting\\_20131105\\_video.html](http://sgc.ca.gov/meetings/20131105/meeting_20131105_video.html).

Chair Alex: Often we hear from smaller jurisdictions that they lack the capacity to even apply for grants. How was Calimesa able to do it?

Andrews: We have a very small staff, and I am the grant writer and administrator. I came in and took the courses to learn how to do this. We have been very fortunate to receive what we have received and we are going to continue to apply for those funds.

Chair Alex: Congratulations, and OPR may get in touch with you to do some trainings, because jurisdictions of your size have had a hard time succeeding the way that you have and it would be nice to have them share in that success.

Andrews: We have been fortunate because we genuinely care about Calimesa and how we move forward from here. Thank you.

Council Member Fisher: For Ken or Mike, how do you feel about the outsourcing of the planning function and is that something we can help other jurisdictions know what is available to them?

Chair Alex: My understanding of the General Plan Update is moving to a formation that has templates, is available online, and is a lot easier to do for smaller jurisdictions.

McCoy: Following our meeting in the San Joaquin Valley with High-Speed Rail, we did a survey of planning capacity in the San Joaquin Valley and other areas. We discovered there has been a dramatic loss in planning capacity, which is largely funded by developer fees, and development has significantly slowed down. There is an opportunity before the market picks up again to streamline planning and reinvent planning. The General Plan templates are a good idea, the data portal, GeoPortal, is another. UrbanFootprint will allow local jurisdictions to run several modeling scenarios that will lead to a different form of planning. Planning education also needs to catch up to the contemporary practice, which is much more automated and streamlined.

Fisher: It sounds also like outsourcing is a viable option.

McCoy: It is becoming more common.

Joe: The majority of our grantees outsource because they don't have the in-house capacity and the expertise for financial, engineering and public outreach, for example. In terms of contract planning, a lot of the newer jurisdictions, ones that have incorporated recently, find that the most effective way. Not just for planning, but for other services as well.

Council Member Fisher: Should we get additional funds, have you all thought about survey the grantees we have? What sort of feedback system do you have? What was the value we got out of it for the money that we paid, and how that can help inform the next round of grants. Do we have a plan?

Joe: Specifically for Urban Greening, we have more set goals and deliverables expected from that, whether or not we have identified a particular economic value. As these projects are wrapping up, we are hoping to gather more detailed feedback from the grantees. On the planning grant side, we are planning to get more feedback on what their experiences were and how that will inform possible future rounds of funding.

Council Member Fisher: I think about the MPO Self-Assessment we just did. Do you see any value in doing an Urban Greening and Planning self-assessment before we went into another round of grants?

Joe: Yes, as we have gotten some experience under our belt, we have enough experience to conduct an assessment like that.

McCoy: As Nancy mentioned, we will be bringing data needs to the Council in December, we will also subsequently be bring outreach needs to the Council. It has occurred to us to get a cluster of grantees together to learn from their awards, which we think will be very valuable.

**Agenda Item #7: ACTION: Approval of Round 3 Sustainable Communities Planning Grant and Incentives Guidelines**

Joe: This item is to discuss Round 3 of the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant and Incentive Program guidelines and hopefully get them adopted. SB 732 established the SGC and the program itself. We have about \$16 million for this round to award local and regional governments.

Some changes from Round 2 include:

- Greater emphasis on plans leading to greenhouse gas reductions
- Focus on indicators to measure progress and performance
- Recognizes focused, locally-identified priorities and implementation needs
- Leverages CalEnviroScreen tool to identify 25% EJ set-aside of Round 3 funds

General Eligibility Requirements

- Who is Eligible: Cities, Counties, MPOs, JPAs, RTPAs, COGs
- Limits: Minimum: \$50,000/Maximum: \$500,000 for a single award; Joint proposals can be awarded up to \$1,000,000; One project proposal per agency/jurisdiction
- Exception: Two project proposals may be submitted if one is applying for the Environmental Justice set aside.

Joe: We think that a lot can be done with a little. It's about the value of the work to the local government. We are also encouraging collaboration and joint applications are eligible for up to \$1,000,000.

Threshold Requirements

- Consistency with State Planning Priorities
- Reduction of GHG emissions
- Regional and local planning collaboration toward project implementation
- Responsiveness to the state's guidance and best practices on climate change adaptation

- Minimum 10% local match, including 5% cash match (Waived for proposals qualifying for Environmental Justice set-aside).

#### Focus Areas

Joe: In the past, we separated the categories geographically: local government had a category, MPOs had a category, and there was a category for regional collaboration. This year the focus is topical and really focused on getting the maximum GHG reduction. There are no pre-determined allocations for each area. It will depend on the number and quality of applications received.

#### Focus Area #1: Innovative Incentives for Sustainable Development Implementation

- Supports the implementation of a regional plan and local general plans.
- Should reflect innovative approaches that go beyond the normal scope of planning activities
- Activities should be a replicable example for other jurisdictions
- Implementation must lead to a reduction in GHG emissions

#### Focus Area #2: Sustainable Community Planning for Transit Priority Areas

- Available to “transit priority areas” (As identified by a Regional Transportation Plan or Sustainable Communities Strategy).
- A proposed or adopted long-term transportation or sustainable development plan developed by a Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Funds broad-based community planning efforts

#### Focus Area #3: Collaborative Community Planning in Preparation for High Speed Rail

- Funds multi-jurisdictional collaborative planning activities
- Recognizes efforts of station area and neighboring communities
- Prioritizes Initial Operating Segment (Merced to San Fernando Valley)

#### Environmental Justice (EJ) Set-Aside: Priority Consideration of Environmental Justice Communities

- 25% of the total funding in this Round will be set-aside for qualified EJC applications
- Waives the local match threshold requirement
- Waives the “Leveraging additional resources” scoring criterion
- EJC applicants may also submit one additional application in the primary funding pool

#### EJ Set-Aside Eligibility:

- Plan area must include all or part of an Environmental Justice Community (EJC)
- Communities with the top 10% of statewide scores using CalEnviroScreen
- Proposal must specifically target and directly benefit that EJC
- Proposal must select “Promote Equity” as one of its three Priority Objectives

#### Outreach & Update Process

- SGC staff review Round 1 of Grant Awards
- Convened a State Agency Advisory Group to create the initial Round #3 Draft (Workshop Draft)
- SGC & DOC hosted four public workshops in Rohnert Park, Sacramento, Fresno and LA
- Revised Draft released on September 18 for 30 day public comment period
- Final Draft released on October 25
- SGC consideration and approval of Round 3 Guidelines – November 5

Joe: We have also been having on-going conversations with key stakeholders to hear their concerns.

#### Changes to Revised Draft

- Requires letter of support from regional/local government counterpart
- Focus Area #2: Clarifies definition of Transit Priority Areas to reflect legislation
- For EJ set-aside, expanded eligible applicants to regional entities: MPOs, COGs and JPAs recognizing that there is a multitude of ways to assist EJ communities.
- For EJ set-aside, applicants must select "Promoting Equity" as one of their three Primary Objectives

#### Application Process and Timeline

- The Department of Conservation administers the program application process and grant agreements.
- The solicitation for the third round of grants will occur following adoption of the updated guidelines.
- Early December 2013: Solicitation Release
- January: Department of Conservation and SGC will host regional workshops to provide technical assistance on how to apply
- Late February 2014: Applications Due
- March-April 2014: Application Review by State Scoring Panels
- May 19, 2014: Award Recommendations to SGC for Approval

Joe: The last thing I wanted to bring forward is a policy consideration for potential future rounds of funding. We are looking at support for ongoing state/regional partnerships. We have received public comment about increasing state and regional coordination to fund the implementation of SB 375 and AB 32. What we would like to do, in recognition of the value of these programs and how they could be better coordinated, is have an opportunity to see how that might work and review the existing programs out there, including SGC programs and programs run by the MPOs, and think about how an aligned program might work. We think this is an interesting idea we should explore, and the work of the MPOs should be recognized in terms of being on the ground and knowing what the local needs are, and seeing where that

aligns with the state's goals. We wanted to get your approval on this, should we have future rounds of funding.

**Recommended Council Actions:**

1. Approve the Final Draft of Round 3 Sustainable Communities Planning Grant and Incentive Program guidelines
2. Direct SGC Staff to work with regional agencies and other stakeholders to determine the feasibility and desirability of a coordinated sustainable community granting program between the State of California and California's regional entities, pending available resources for such a program.

**Public Comment**

Phoebe Seaton, Leadership Council for Justice and Accountability: The extent to which the SGC staff has reached out and accepted comments has been exemplary and should be commended—I assume directly by Council. I believe the guidelines have come part of the way to addressing issues that affect rural regions and areas of the state. I am in a difficult position now to ask for more resources for areas of the state that have the least capacity to engage in this kind of advanced planning, as the chairman stated. They really need the support, the technical assistance, as well as the “carrots and sticks” to overcome the status quo. Right now I am multi-tasking between this and working on addressing some very bad planning decisions made in Fresno. I think the more that this Council, through the guidelines, can use its authority and privileges and power to cajoling some of the more rural regions of the state to think more strategically about planning, and I will use my powers of persuasion more and more, as much as we can, to ensure that the funding programs are addressing needs in those rural areas. We are still obviously concerned that the emphasis on Transit Priority Areas will still eliminate much of the state, but we are pleased about the direction Focus Area #1 has gone in, which we see as the most flexible area. On CalEnviroScreen, we believe there will be some very disadvantaged communities that will be excluded (from the EJ Set-Aside) and we encourage you to consider using an alternative method for communities that need the support by don't fall into the 10% of the top CalEnviroScreen scores.

Bill Higgins, California Association of Councils of Government: I am here to support the recommended actions. At the last meeting, we had a long discussion about the regional partnerships and I appreciate the staff work on that since then. I see that the recommended action refers regional entities not just MPOs, which captures all the Regional Transportation Planning Agencies, outside of MPOs areas, which are important to us. The thrust of the comments were always aimed at a longer-term partnership with you, so we look forward to have the benefit from the MPO Self-Assessments, and we look forward to working with you in that capacity.

Bonnie Holmes-Gen, American Lung Association California: I am here to support the adoption of the guidelines. As we work on SB 375 implementation around the state, we see how important these grants and other state resources are to local governments and entities. It's so important

to the state's partnership and investment on the ground to make things happen. We support the focus on greenhouse gas reductions to promote AB 32 and the EJ set-aside, which is a good improvement. We see that you have woven in public health throughout the guidelines for these grants and suggest that you could explicitly include the criteria of promoting public health in the proposal criteria through promoting active transportation or other Health in All Policies concepts. Finally, we believe the development of public health analysis tools is important to help local agencies better quantify the benefits of smart growth, and I know there is upcoming discussion at the next meeting, and we are looking forward to that.

Mary Pitto, Rural County Representatives of California: RCRC recognizes and appreciates your support in rounds one and two of this grant program for rural counties and rural cities and we are hoping that you continue to be receptive in this third round. We did appreciate some of the changes that you made to focus on some rural towns and communities. But the one big concern that we still have is the use of CalEnviroScreen because it does limit so much to a small portion of the state. There is nothing in northern or eastern California that could qualify for it. We previously asked in our original letter that you continue to use the economically disadvantaged communities criteria that you used in the round one and two guidelines. We also request that if you do not receive enough applications for the EJ set-aside, to fall back on the disadvantaged community criteria for that category of funding.

Kiana Buss, California State Association of Counties: Thank you to the Council and the staff for the various opportunities to provide feedback and input into the development of the guidelines update. I am here in support of the draft that is before you today. We did submit written comments, so I will keep my comments brief. I did want to reemphasize our appreciation of recognition in the guidelines that rural, urban and suburban communities have an opportunity to achieve greenhouse gas emission reductions and achieve other statewide sustainability goals. CSAC feels very strongly that a variety of counties have the opportunity to help meet the statewide goals. In Focus Area #1 there are some additions in that I wanted to mention that highlight some opportunities in rural communities that include: rural/urban partnerships to preserve and protect natural resources and agricultural land as part of an infill development strategy and the encouragement of collaboration between local government and local educational agencies. I think we have a lot of work to do on that front. (I also support) plans for affordable housing, transit and other critical infrastructure needs to support sustainability in existing rural and agricultural communities.

Council Member Fisher: I was involved with Allison and Bill on regranting prospects and I am happy that it is being explored further. I was a little disappointed that it did not move further for this round, but if we have additional grants, I think it is something we should consider very seriously. It really has the opportunity to bring us closer to regions and local communities. There is not a lot of representation on this dais as one might like for different government entities other than the state, and I think this is an opportunity to partner in a very strong way. I know it is off into the future, and I think this is the best option given the timing of the proposal, and I think it has real merit.

Joe: I think exploring the concept will be helpful in informing future work even if grant funding is not available.

Chair Alex: Did you consider Mary Pitto's suggestion if you do not get enough applications for the EJ set-aside that you would revert to the previous disadvantaged community criteria for the set-aside funds?

Joe: We have received comment on using alternative methods, and ultimately we have come to the conclusion, that one, EnviroScreen is an evolving tool and hope that in the future versions, it can capture those communities that are disadvantaged but not currently covered by the tool, and the fact that EnviroScreen is an important statewide tool that includes population characteristics and environmental concerns. One important thing SGC has to think about is how to support those communities outside of grant funding, and those communities are still eligible for the main pool of funding.

McCoy: One of the things we tried to consider is that some of the things that can be done in rural communities are not as expensive as they would be in urban areas. We try to look at this in scale and look for the biggest bang for the buck. If a rural grantee proposes something that is cost-effective, they will be very competitive with urban communities that are doing something cost-effective as well.

Chair Alex: Do we have a motion to approve the recommended action?

Council Member Rodriguez: We are looking at CalEnviroScreen right now on how to refine it and we will have a newer version coming out soon and will look at this issue of identifying rural communities. I was personally surprised that it identified more rural communities that I thought it would. We continue to work on this and refine it and we will continue to work with some of the folks who had questions about EnviroScreen through workshops, etc. It covers 10 percent of the zip codes in the state, but 20 percent of the population. I look forward to continue to have those discussions as we refine the tool.

Council Member Fisher moved to approve the recommended action. Council Member Rodriguez seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Agenda Item #8: General Public Comment**

No additional public comment.

**Agenda Item #9: Meeting Adjourned**

Chair Alex adjourned the meeting.