



ACTION ITEM

San Joaquin Council of Governments 2022 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

Summary: Staff will provide an overview of the Council's comment letter on the San Joaquin Council of Governments' (SJCOG) 2022 Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) and Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR). The overview will describe Delta Reform Act requirements for the Council to provide review and advice regarding regional transportation plans and sustainable communities strategies pursuant to Water Code section 85212, and provisions within the Delta Reform Act that would exempt actions consistent with 2022 RTP/SCS from the Council's covered action authority. SJCOG's Deputy Director of Planning Kim Anderson and Senior Environmental Planner Timothy Kohaya will present the 2022 RTP/SCS Plan and its relationship to the Delta. Because this represents a formal Council advisory function under Water Code section 85212, staff is seeking Council approval of the comment letter containing the preliminary findings and submittal of the letter to SJCOG.

REQUESTED ACTION

The Council's authority pertaining to review of regional plans and sustainable communities strategies is set forth in Water Code section 85212 ("Section 85212"). Pursuant to this section, the Council is required to review and provide advice on the SJCOG 2022 RTP/SCS. Today, staff is recommending that the Council approve the preliminary findings in the draft comment letter on the Draft 2022 RTP/SCS and Draft EIR for submittal to SJCOG (**Attachment 1** to this staff report).

REGIONAL PLANNING AUTHORITY UNDER THE DELTA REFORM ACT

Section 85212 of the Delta Reform Act grants the Council specific authority to review and advise planning agencies regarding the consistency of local and regional planning documents (including sustainable communities strategies and alternative planning strategies) with the Delta Plan. The Council's review and advice may include, but is not limited to, the consistency of the local or regional planning document with the ecosystem restoration needs of the Delta, and whether lands set aside for natural protection are sufficient to meet the Delta's ecosystem needs.

It also requires a metropolitan planning organization preparing a regional transportation plan that includes land within the Primary Zone or Secondary Zone of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta) to consult with the Council early in the planning process regarding the issues and policy choices relating to the Council's

advice. The Council's advice on the 2022 RTP/SCS provides benefits for future projects similar to early consultation. This is important because the Delta Reform Act exempts actions within the Secondary Zone of the Delta that a metropolitan planning organization (MPO) determines are consistent with a sustainable communities strategy or alternative planning strategy that the California Air Resources Board has determined would, if implemented, achieve regional greenhouse gas emission reduction targets, from the Council's covered action authority (Wat. Code § 85057.5(b)(4)).

There are three MPOs with jurisdiction in the legal Delta and Suisun Marsh: SJCOG, the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG), and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission/Association of Bay Area Governments (MTC/ABAG). Federal and state law require these agencies to prepare a regional transportation plan (RTP) and a sustainable communities strategy (SCS) that must be updated every four years in coordination with each local government and cover at least a 20-year planning horizon. SACOG last updated its RTP/SCS in 2019. Council staff submitted a comment letter regarding SACOG's 2019 plan and its consistency with the Delta Plan, which the Council approved in October 2019. MTC/ABAG's Plan Bay Area 2050 was last updated in 2021. The Council submitted a comment letter regarding MTC/ABAG's Plan Bay Area 2050 in September 2021. Council staff has been meeting with SJCOG staff to discuss Delta Plan consistency requirements. SJCOG's 2022 RTP/SCS is discussed in more detail below.

2022 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES STRATEGY

SJCOG is a joint-powers authority comprised of the County of San Joaquin and the cities of Stockton, Lodi, Manteca, Tracy, Ripon, Escalon, and Lathrop, which includes portions of the Delta Primary Zone and the Delta Secondary Zone. As an MPO, SJCOG is charged with preparing a regional transportation plan that must be updated every four years in coordination with neighboring jurisdictions, regional agencies, the state of California, and various Federal agencies.

The SJCOG RTP/SCS was first adopted in 2014 and later updated in 2018. The 2022 RTP/SCS represents the second update to the SJCOG RTP/SCS and is proposed for adoption in August 2022.

The proposed 2022 RTP/SCS is a long-range regional transportation plan that outlines housing, economic, transportation, environmental, and public health strategies for growth in a financially and environmentally responsible way while also contributing to California's goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and miles driven on the road. The Draft RTP/SCS and supporting documents are available at: <https://www.sjcog.org/608/Access-the-Draft-2022-RTPSCS-Plan>

CONSULTATION WITH COUNCIL STAFF

As noted above, pursuant to Section 85212, the Council is required to review and provide timely advice regarding the consistency of the 2022 RTP/SCS with the Delta Plan, and SJCOG is required to consult with the Council early in the planning process regarding the issues and policy choices relating to the Council's advice. Council staff met with SJCOG staff on January 13, 2021, September 16, 2021, and April 25, 2022, to offer timely advice on the consistency of the 2022 RTP/SCS with the Delta Plan. Council staff submitted a comment letter on the Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the 2022 RTP/SCS Draft EIR on January 27, 2021, and has prepared a draft letter containing preliminary findings regarding the Council's review and input on the 2022 RTP/SCS for the Council's consideration.

SUMMARY OF PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Based on the review of the Draft 2022 RTP/SCS and the Draft EIR pursuant to Section 85212:

- the Council has not identified any inconsistency of the Draft 2022 RTP/SCS with Delta Plan Policy DP P1 (see **Attachment 1**, pg.); and
- the Council has not identified that lands set aside for conservation and restoration in the Draft 2022 RTP/SCS are inconsistent with the ecosystem restoration needs of the Delta (see **Attachment 1**, pg.).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL ACTION

Today, staff is recommending that the Council approve the preliminary findings provided in the draft comment letter (**Attachment 1**) and authorize staff to finalize and submit the letter to SJCOG. Should the Council approve the findings, staff will transmit the letter to SJCOG inclusive of any revisions approved by councilmembers and attesting to the Council's action.

FISCAL INFORMATION

Not applicable.

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Draft comment letter regarding Draft 2022 RTP/SCS and Draft EIR

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