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DANIEL LANDON, Executive Director
 MICHAEL WOODMAN, Deputy Executive Director


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MEMORANDUM

TO: Nevada County Transportation Commission

FROM: Daniel B. Landon, Executive Director 

SUBJECT: Executive Director's Report for the July 2019 Meeting

DATE: July 17, 2019

NCTC 2019 ANNUAL SALARY COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENT

In March 2016, NCTC adopted a Compensation Policy which included the provision that annually, NCTC will adjust its salary ranges, as budget allows, by the average cost of living increase provided by the local labor market to the journey level planner.

Last month staff received the final cost of living adjustments (COLA) for the local labor market:

- County of Nevada: 2.0%
- City of Grass Valley: Increased Salary Range, no COLA
- Town of Truckee: 2.5%
- City of Nevada City: 2.5%

The average of the labor market increases for 2019 is 2.33%. On July 1, 2019, the cost of living adjustment went into effect for NCTC employees. The NCTC Compensation Policy provides that NCTC will compare its compensation to other Regional Transportation Planning Agencies approximately every five years.

ZERO TRAFFIC FATALITIES TASK FORCE

In 2018, the Governor signed Assembly Bill 2363 (Friedman), which establishes the Zero Traffic Fatalities Task Force with membership from transportation infrastructure and safety departments and stakeholder institutions.

I have been appointed to the Zero Traffic Fatalities Task Force as a representative of the Rural Counties Task Force. The first meeting of the Zero Traffic Fatalities Task Force was held on June 25, 2019 in Sacramento. It is anticipated that the Task Force will meet four times before the end of the year.

The statutory goal of the Task Force is to develop a structured, coordinated process for early engagement of all parties to develop policies to reduce traffic fatalities. The Task Force will also report on alternatives

to the 85th percentile as a methodology of setting speed limits in the State of California. A report of findings will be presented to the legislature by January 1, 2020.

NEVADA CITY STATE ROUTE 49 MULTIMODAL CORRIDOR PLAN

Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC), in coordination with Caltrans, Nevada County and the City of Nevada City, is preparing a corridor plan to guide resource investment toward creation of a safe and efficient transportation corridor. The area that is the focus of this study is State Route 49 from the SR 20/Uren Street Intersection to the Nevada County Juvenile Detention Facility.

On July 23rd, NCTC will host a project "Open House" from 5:00 to 7:30 PM, in the Marian E. Gallaher Amphitheater at the Madelyn Helling Library, 980 Helling Way, Nevada City, to inform the public about the study and to receive public input regarding pedestrian and bicycle travel in the corridor. (See attached flyer)

The initial impetus for this study came from citizen comments at the May 2018 NCTC meeting. These comments led to the recognition that there is demand for pedestrian and bicycle crossings at four consecutive intersections: Coyote Street, North Bloomfield Road, Maidu Avenue, and Cement Hill Road. Three of those intersections are two-way stop controlled; only North Bloomfield Road is signalized and has crosswalks.

The work of this project will include analyzing the safety and operational characteristics of the following intersections on SR 49 in Nevada City and Nevada County:

1. SR 20/SR 49/Uren Street
2. Coyote Street/SR 49 (adjacent to Forest Service driveway)
3. North Bloomfield Road/East Broad Street/SR 49
4. Maidu Avenue/Orchard Street/SR 49
5. Cement Hill Road/West Broad Street/SR 49
6. Elks Lodge driveway/SR 49
7. Nevada County Juvenile Hall driveway/SR 49

The analysis of the corridor will include recommendations that will improve safety, maintain operational efficiency and accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians. The goal is to identify improvements that will be aesthetically appropriate for historic Nevada City, accommodate vehicular traffic (including heavy trucks), and be friendly to bicyclists and pedestrians, both along the corridor and when crossing an intersection. Traffic calming measures along the highway will be needed to meet the goals of this project.

During the second Open House, preliminary improvement recommendations, as well as the phasing of proposed improvements, will be presented. Graphics showing roadways and trails within the study limits, and illustrations of possible improvements and strategies for the corridor, will be available for review.

UPDATE: SENATE BILL 152 – ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM REFORM

At the May 15, 2019 NCTC meeting the Commission adopted Resolution 19-17 taking a formal position to oppose Senate Bill 152 (Beall) - Active Transportation Program Reform Act. The proposed legislation would have significantly changed the program component funding percentages to California's Active Transportation Program (ATP) and would have reduced the total amount of ATP funding that is available to rural and small urban communities statewide.

Subsequently, NCTC staff submitted a letter of opposition to Senator Beall and to the Senate Appropriations Committee where the bill was being heard for consideration at that point in time. In response to the coordinated input received in opposition to Senate Bill 152, it was not voted to progress out of the Senate Appropriations Committee and therefore was killed for this legislative cycle. NCTC staff followed up with Senator Beall's legislative staffer who indicated that the senator does not intend to revisit the bill. Senator Beall's legislative staffer thanked NCTC for their input and stated that the Senator heard our concerns loud and clear.

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY AGENCY AND U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY PROPOSED SAFER AFFORDABLE FUEL EFFICIENT VEHICLE RULE

In August 2018, the National Highway Traffic Safety Agency (NHTSA) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) proposed the Safer Affordable Fuel Efficient (SAFE) Vehicle Rule. The proposed rule would hold the national fuel efficiency standard at the 2020 levels. The rule also proposes a "50 state solution" that repeals California's higher fuel efficiency standards, which were originally allowed to address California's unique air quality challenges. If finalized, the rule would revoke California's existing authority to implement the Advanced Clean Cars (I and II) and Zero Emission Vehicle mandates.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS?

Finalization of the proposed rule invalidates California's air quality emissions model (EMFAC 2014), which is used to make transportation conformity determinations. As a result, non-attainment Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO), and rural areas like Nevada County, would be required to wait for a new federally-approved emissions model before completing the required transportation conformity analysis and determination.

Isolated Rural Non-Attainment areas such as western Nevada County depend on the EMFAC model to perform required conformity analysis on federally funded regional transportation projects. It is estimated that a minimum three-year transition period would be needed to update the EMFAC emission model and get it federally approved for use. If the final rule does not include a sufficient transition period, projects subject to transportation conformity, like the State Route 49 Widening Project from La Barr Meadows Road to the McKnight Way Interchange, may be unable to complete the National Environmental Protection Act process, resulting in project delays and increased costs.

It is estimated that just under 2,000 transportation projects in California, totaling over \$130 billion, may face project delivery delays or loss of funding. Of that, roughly \$22 billion may be at risk of being impacted in the first six months should this action be finalized by late Summer 2019.

The California Association of Councils of Governments (CALCOG) has taken the lead on this issue on behalf of the regional agencies, and is working in coordination with Caltrans and California Air Resources Board (CARB) to request that the U.S. Department of Transportation coordinate with the U.S. EPA and CARB to reconsider the proposed rule, in light of the impacts to California. (See attached CALCOG letter.)



Join us by attending a Community Open House for the Highway 49 Multimodal Corridor Plan. The Plan is needed to provide recommendations for the improvement of roadway and traffic conditions in order to make it safer and easier for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers to cross and travel along Highway 49. This requires a focus on intersections and innovative ways to reduce motor vehicle speeds prior to and throughout the corridor.

The Open House will present preliminary improvement recommendations as well as the phasing of the proposed improvements. Graphics showing roadways and trails within the study limits, and photos or illustrations of possible improvement concepts and strategies for the corridor will be available.

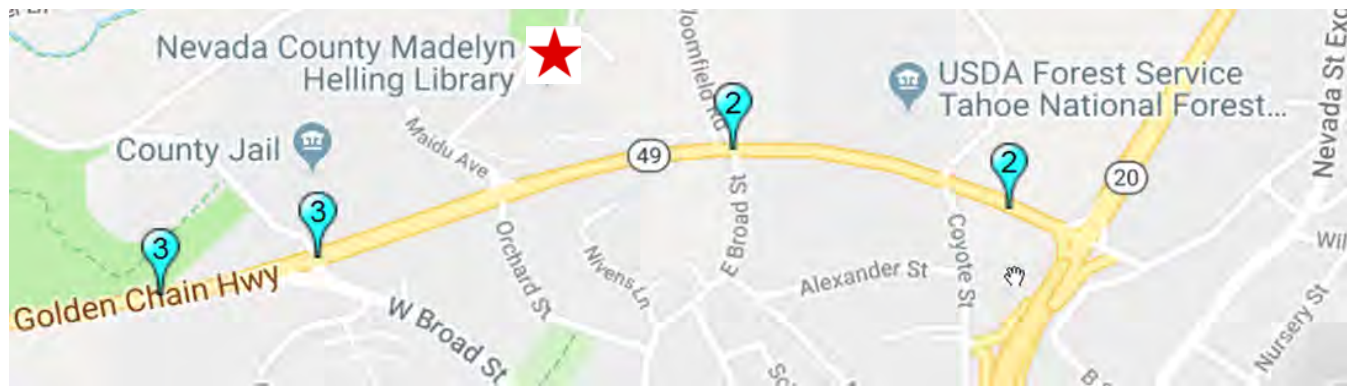
Between 5-6pm, please use overflow parking below the Madelyn Helling Library

Tuesday, July 23rd
5:00 - 7:30 p.m.

Marian E. Gallaher Amphitheater
at the Madelyn Helling Library
980 Helling Way, Nevada City, CA



Study Limits: Highway 49 between Highway 20 and about one-half mile west of Juvenile Hall





California Association of
Councils of Governments
Effective Regions Through Partnership

June 14, 2019

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
United States Secretary of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

The Honorable Andrew Wheeler
Administrator
United States Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20460

RE: Significant concern regarding potential transportation impacts resulting from the Proposed NHTSA/U.S. EPA's Safer Affordable Fuel Efficient (SAFE) Vehicles Rule for Model Years 2021-2026

Dear Secretary Chao and Administrator Wheeler:

CALCOG is an association of Councils of Governments (COGs), Congestion Management Agencies (CMAs) and Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs) and includes all eighteen Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) that are responsible for the development and implementation of the regional transportation plan and transportation conformity. The California Air Resources Board previously provided comments on the environmental, public health, and equity concerns raised by the rule. This letter highlights potential transportation impacts identified since the close of the rulemaking comment period.

The proposed SAFE Vehicles Rule, which would roll back national fuel-efficiency standards, hampers the ability of California's transportation agencies to deliver approximately 2,000 projects totaling more than \$130 billion. These projects support a robust state economy and create important middle-class jobs. In addition, the proposed rule would interfere with California's ability to deliver improved goods movement infrastructure that serves the entire nation. Other important goals—such as congestion relief, transportation system reliability, public health, housing, environmental sustainability, and equity—also would be significantly compromised for as much as 93 percent of the state's population.

A list of potential projects affected by the Rule by Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and rural non-attainment region is attached to this letter.

To prevent these impacts, we request U.S. DOT in coordination with U.S. EPA reconsider the proposed rule to account for impacts it would have on critical infrastructure project delivery. In particular, we ask that appropriate measures be taken to ensure that, consistent with the federal transportation conformity rule, current planning and programming documents and those under development using EMFAC2014 (California's air quality emissions model), remain valid irrespective of the final rule.

How does the proposed rule impact non-attainment MPO and non-attainment rural areas' ability to complete conformity determinations?

Finalization of the proposed rule invalidates California's air quality emissions model (EMFAC2014), which is used to make transportation conformity determinations. As a result, non-attainment MPOs and rural areas would be required to wait for a new, federally-approved model before completing the required transportation conformity determination. This puts strict limitations on the completion of transportation projects throughout the state. We anticipate updating the air quality emissions model and associated air quality planning work may take three years to complete. In the meantime, it is important that existing programming and planning documents continue to be considered valid.

We estimate a minimum three-year transition period would be needed in order to avoid any project delays. If the final rule does not include a sufficient transition period, projects subject to transportation conformity, like the State Route (SR) 49 Widening project in Nevada county, SR 55 Congestion Relief Project from I-5 to SR 91 in Orange County, I-5/SR 91 Express Lanes Connector in Riverside County, San Bernardino's West Valley Connector, and three projects in San Diego County, (1) Carlsbad Village Double Track in San Diego County, (2) Del Mar Bluffs Design and Installation of Bluff Stabilization Measures, and (3) Palomar Grade Separation (all currently in project delivery), will be unable to complete the NEPA process until a new emissions model is approved by U.S. EPA. For these projects, project delivery delays may occur immediately. In addition, without a transition period, adoption of regional transportation plans in the following areas would be at risk: San Diego Association of Governments (2020), Sacramento Area Council of Governments (2020), Southern California Association of Governments (2020), Butte County Association of Governments (2020), and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (2021). For these MPO regions, the absence of a three-year transition period may force them to enter the 12-month lapse grace-period, putting strict limitations on the delivery of transportation projects within these regions.

What types of action does the Rule affect?

The proposed rule threatens the ability of 14¹ of the state's 18 MPOs and eight² rural non-attainment counties' to obtain federal approval for any of the following actions: (1) adoption of a new Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), (2) adoption of a new Federal State Transportation Improvement Program (FSTIP); (3) amendments to projects listed in the RTP or FSTIP not exempt from transportation conformity; and, (4) NEPA approval for projects not exempt from transportation conformity. California's rural non-attainment areas may also face project delivery delays. Under federal law, each federal approval for the actions listed above requires a new transportation conformity determination.

A map of the impacted regions is included with this letter.

To prevent delays in the delivery of California's transportation system that will be felt nationwide, we request U.S. DOT coordinate with U.S. EPA and the California Air Resources Board to reconsider the proposed rule. Should you have any questions please contact Tanisha Taylor. She can be reached by email at taylor@calcog.org.

Sincerely,

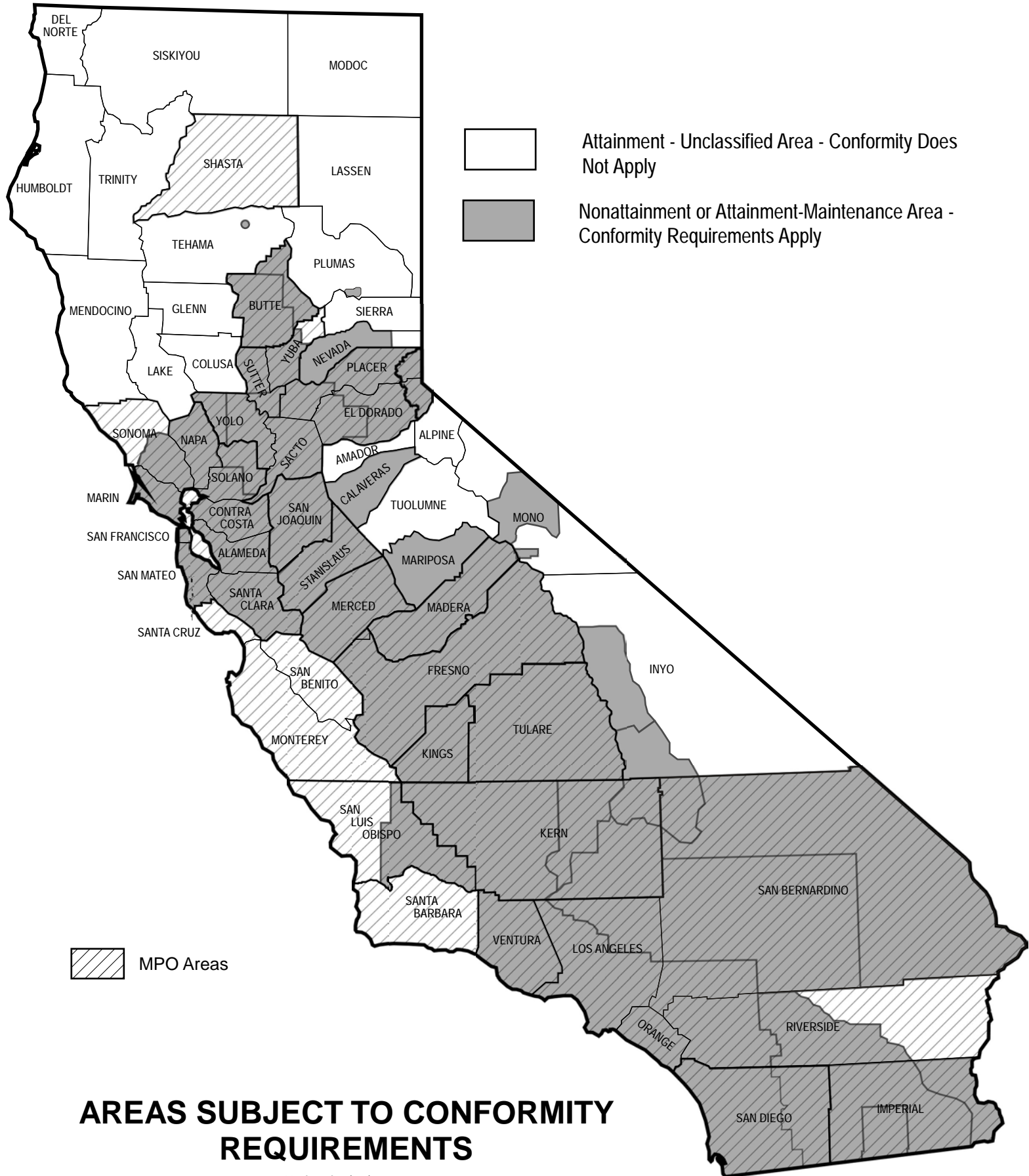


BILL HIGGINS
Executive Director

Attachments (2)

¹ Butte County Association of Governments; Fresno Council of Governments; Kern Council of Governments; Kings County Association of Governments; Madera County Transportation Commission; Merced County Association of Governments; Metropolitan Transportation Commission/Association of Bay Area Governments; Sacramento Area Council of Governments; San Diego Association of Governments; San Luis Obispo Council of Governments; Southern California Association of Governments; Stanislaus Council of Government; San Joaquin Council of Governments; Tulare County Association of Governments

² Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne, Mariposa, Mono, Tehama, Plumas, and Nevada



Attainment - Unclassified Area - Conformity Does Not Apply



Nonattainment or Attainment-Maintenance Area - Conformity Requirements Apply



MPO Areas

AREAS SUBJECT TO CONFORMITY REQUIREMENTS

Updated: 4/20/2016

DISCLAIMER

The State of California (State) and the California Department of Transportation (Department) make no representation or warranty regarding the accuracy of the data shown on this map. Neither the State nor the Department shall be liable under any circumstances for any direct, indirect, special, incidental, or consequential damages with respect to any claim by any user or any third party on account of or arising from the use of this map.



CALIFORNIA

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs)



- AMBAG¹ Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments
- BCAG Butte County Association of Governments
- COFCG Council of Fresno County of Governments
- KCAG Kings County Association of Governments
- KCOG Kern Council of Governments
- MCCAG Merced County Association of Governments
- MCTC Madera County Transportation Commission
- MTC² Metropolitan Transportation Commission
- SACOG³ Sacramento Area Council of Governments
- SANDAG San Diego Association of Governments
- SJCOG San Joaquin Council of Governments
- SLOCOC San Luis Obispo Council of Governments
- SBCAG Santa Barbara County Association of Governments
- SCRTPA Shasta County Regional Transportation Planning Agency
- SCAG⁴ Southern California Association of Governments
- StanCOG Stanislaus Council of Governments
- TCAG Tulare County Association of Governments
- TMPO Tahoe Metropolitan Planning Organization

Tahoe Regional
Planning Agency
(TRPA)
and
Tahoe Metropolitan
Planning Organization
(TMPO)

- ¹AMBAG includes SCRTCA, TAMC, and SBtCOG. All retain RTPA status.
- ²MTC covers a nine county region.
- ³SACOG is the RTPA for Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba Counties. It is the MPO for the federally designated ozone non-attainment area in Sacramento, Yolo, Yuba, Sutter, Placer, and El Dorado Counties. Placer and El Dorado Counties retain RTPA status up to the crest of the Sierras.
- ⁴SCAG covers a six county region. Five of which are County Transportation Commissions: LACMTA, OCTA, RCTC, SBCTC, and VCTC.

 RTPAs within MPOs
 MPO Areas
 Non-MPO Rural RTPA Areas