

# Strategic Growth Council (SGC) Meeting Minutes

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## January 24, 2012 Meeting Minutes

Council Members present: Chair Ken Alex, Director, OPR; Vice-Chair Bob Fisher, Public Member; Secretary John Laird, California Natural Resources Agency; Secretary Matt Rodriguez, California Environmental Protection Agency; Secretary Diana Dooley, Health and Human Services Agency (partial meeting); Carol Farris (representing Acting Secretary Traci Stevens), Business, Transportation and Housing Agency

### **Call to Order**

Chair Alex called the meeting to order.

### **Approve November 2, 2011 Minutes (Action Item)**

Secretary Laird moved to approve the minutes. Council Member Designee Farris seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Agenda Item: Executive Report**

Executive Director (ED) Heather Fargo updated the Council on the status of the grants. A few of the applicants for both the Urban Greening and Planning Grants have put their projects on hold due to the loss of Redevelopment Agencies. If the applicants are unable to move forward with the projects, the Council may roll the funding over to a future round. The outreach and technical assistance process for the Planning Grants has been going well. Approximately 200 people participated in several workshops and webinars across the state. The deadline to apply for the Planning Grants is February 15, 2012 and recommendations will go to the Council at the May meeting. Modeling Grants are moving forward. Approximately 40% of the funds have been reimbursed, and a few of the contracts will need to be extended beyond the February 2012 deadline. SGC staff are working on data contracts and outreach efforts. The Sustainable Communities Learning Network (SCLN) was launched and will be presented at an upcoming Council meeting.

ED Fargo introduced new staff to the Council, including an intern from UC Davis, Kristin Donovan, and a data manager, Nancy McKeever, who should begin in the next month.

ED Fargo also mentioned that she will be attending the Funders' Network meeting to discuss how the foundations can assist with sustainability in California.

### **Action Item: SGC Strategic Plan**

ED Fargo reviewed the process for drafting the Strategic Plan. SGC staff worked with the state agencies and the public to create the Strategic Plan, which involved hosting over 20 hours of focus group sessions, and reviewing 120 pages of comments from over 60 individuals and organizations. ED Fargo also explained the sections of the Strategic Plan.

Chair Alex asked for clarification on the action requested of the Council for this agenda item. ED Fargo asked for the Council's approval of the Strategic Plan, implementation planning process, and strategic focus on infill.

Vice-Chair Fisher provided comments on the implementation plan template, including moving up the timeline so more work would be completed in 2012 to maintain momentum, and aligning the planning with Council

meeting dates. He offered to work with staff to convene meetings on infill, and suggested focusing on infill development and financing. He also requested a copy of the timeline in advance of the next Council meeting.

Secretary Laird suggested syncing the Action 4 schedule with an update of the 5-Year Infrastructure Plan. He also suggested determining action items that could be completed in the short-term that will also involve stakeholders to maintain interest in the Council.

Chair Alex suggested combining initiation and planning into one quarter.

*Chair Alex opened the floor for public comment.*

Carey Knecht spoke on behalf of Climate Plan and Transform. She complimented the plan, specifically with the inclusion of the SCLN. She encouraged a robust review of Sustainable Communities Strategies (SCS), and to be more detailed on how the Council will receive public input.

Silvio Ferrari, California Building Industry Association, reminded the Council that SB 375 requires the identification of sites for a full-range of housing and economic incomes, and to zone those sites. He offered to partner with the Council and provide comment and suggestions as needed.

Huasha Liu, SCAG, supported the Strategic Plan and the incorporation of SCAG's comments.

Esmeralda Soria, California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation, encouraged SGC staff to work on known barriers in Tier 1. She also requested that outreach to disadvantaged communities begin earlier than identified in the Strategic Plan.

Chair Alex requested suggestions for additional outreach. Secretary Rodriguez also encouraged suggestions on how to make the process more transparent.

Liz O'Donoghue, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), supported the focus on infill. She suggested being more clear about public participation and would like the creation of an advisory group. She encouraged the Council to endure and pursue in the long-term, and offered support in determining a stable funding strategy.

Connie Gallippi spoke on behalf of California ReLeaf and California Urban Forest Council. She supported the implementation plan, staff report, focus and priorities, HiAP and a sustainable funding plan. She encouraged staff to work on infrastructure planning and barriers, and for the Council to engage in SCS review.

Amanda Eaken, Natural Resources Defense Council, encouraged the Council to release a draft implementation plan soon. She also recommended that the Council work on policy and investment strategies for infill. She also encouraged the Council to review SCS's because of the limitations of ARB's review.

ED Fargo clarified that SGC staff is currently working on Tier 2 and 3 items, as well.

Secretary Rodriguez asked for clarification on the status of the planning process for outreach programs. ED Fargo responded that the Council has an interagency agreement with UC Davis and their Information Center for the Environment. SGC staff have been working with the Sustainable Communities Learning Network (SCLN), and completed a significant amount of outreach for both grant programs. Secretary Rodriguez asked when to expect a product from UC Davis. ED Fargo responded that the first two products from UC Davis will be the SCLN and a database called the California Resources for Sustainability (CARES). They are currently in the information gathering stage.

Vice-Chair Fisher asked whether Action Item 8 should be moved up, and if the draft implementation plans could be done by the next Council meeting. Chair Alex responded that OPR is working on SB 375 and coordinating with stakeholders.

*Secretary Laird moved to approve the SGC Strategic Plan, with amendments based on comments, including expediting the implementation plans and focusing on infill. Secretary Rodriguez seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

**Discussion: Regional Advance Mitigation Planning (RAMP)**

Julie Alvis, California Natural Resources Agency, introduced Liz O'Donoghue, The Nature Conservancy (TNC). O'Donoghue introduced Marty Tuttle, Caltrans, Sandy Maury, Department of Fish and Game, and Dale Hoffman-Floerke, Department of Water Resources. The presentation provided the need/benefits of RAMP, the progress and challenges of the planning, and how the Council can help RAMP be successful. Major tasks of RAMP include researching existing models, developing policy analysis, and engaging in a pilot project. The role of the Council would include giving access to experts, supporting financing strategies and policy issues, and providing a forum for reporting, visibility, and strategic direction of the program.

Vice-Chair Fisher asked how the presentation differed from previous presentations to the Council, and what they wanted to achieve with the presentation. O'Donoghue responded that she had discussions with ED Fargo, and the Council's support would help move the proposals forward and create more visibility for statewide programs.

Secretary Rodriguez asked about the expectations of the Council for RAMP. O'Donoghue responded that the Council would support the program by allowing staff assistance and providing support of the program. ED Fargo explained that the program is identified in Action 1 of the Strategic Plan – coordinating to achieve better outcomes. The program would create a regional advanced mitigation, rather than small scale projects mitigated individually.

Chair Alex suggested forming a technical advisory committee. He also recommended O'Donoghue follow-up with SGC staff and develop a plan on how to move forward and to determine who would be best to coordinate the program.

Council Member Designee Farris asked when it could be determined if the pilot project was a success, and if there was a timeline. O'Donoghue responded that the pilot has to be completed by 2016. She expects mitigation actions occurring in one year, so the success of the program could be determined at that point.

Secretary Rodriguez questioned how the program would reach the targeted best mitigation. O'Donoghue responded that the document mostly targets species and habitat mitigation of a specific region.

**Action: Endorse Health in All Policies Implementation Plan: Crime Prevention through Environmental Design**

Dr. Linda Rudolph, California Department of Public Health (CDPH) provided an overview of the status of Health in All Policies' (HiAP) implementation plans. Dr. Rudolph explained that the implementation plan is a strategy designed to deal with violence and perceptions/fear of violence in order to encourage people to walk and bike in the community. The implementation plan includes effective strategies to reduce violent crime and to enhance people's feelings of being safe, through placement of lighting, bushes, trees, and creating separation between private and public space. Work focuses on reviewing available guidelines, identifying best practices, developing California-specific guidelines, and developing and disseminating a plan to local communities and providing trainings for communities interested in learning about crime prevention through environmental design.

Chair Alex and Secretary Dooley commended the work of the HiAP Task Force.

*Chair Alex opened the floor for public comment. No public comment given.*

*Secretary Dooley moved to endorse the HiAP Implementation Plan for Crime Prevention through Environmental Design. Council Member Designee Farris seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

Dr. Rudolph also mentioned that the Task Force received a small grant from the California Endowment and that they were working with the California Wellness Foundation to obtain supplemental funding.

Vice-Chair Fisher requested an update on HiAP Implementation Plan #9 (to incorporate health and health equity). Dr. Rudolph explained that members of the Task Force were working on creating language that is not perceived as overreaching in terms of where health fits in state guidance. Vice-Chair Fisher asked if the Council could help move it forward, but Dr. Rudolph thought it was on track.

**Action: Endorse Health in All Policies Implementation Plan: Farm-to-Fork**

Dr. Aimee Sisson, CDPH introduced Jim Houston, California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) and Carol Chase, California Department of Education (CDE).

Houston discussed how the CDFA is working toward improving access to food. The work includes bringing farmers and consumers together, and being a member of the Farm to School taskforce. Chase discussed CDE's campaign for healthy kids, which includes a goal to increase healthy foods at school.

Dr. Sisson mentioned that the implementation plan had no outside funds, and that all work would be accomplished with existing state resources. Objectives of the implementation plan include establishing an interagency farm-to-fork office; strengthening ability of schools to grow, purchase, and serve locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables; supporting the development of California's food-related workforce; supporting the creation of regional food hubs; and, promoting land use approaches that support community access to healthy foods.

*Chair Alex opened the floor for public comment. No public comment given.*

*Secretary Dooley moved to endorse the HiAP Implementation Plan for Farm-to Fork. Vice-Chair Fisher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

**Action: Endorse Health in All Policies Implementation Plan: Active Transportation**

Dr. Rudolph introduced the implementation plan on active transportation and explained that active transportation includes walking, biking, wheeling, or taking public transit. The implementation plan encourages healthy behavior and reduces air impacts. Dr. Rudolph introduced Alyssa Begley, Chief, Office of Community Planning at Caltrans.

Begley explained the work that Caltrans is doing on Complete Streets. The Complete Streets policy states that Caltrans "provides for the needs of travelers of all ages and abilities in all planning, programming, design, construction, operations, and maintenance activities and products on the State highway system." The next steps for Caltrans include identifying the barriers, successes, and how to move forward. She also identified the benefits of complete streets policy and successful projects.

Dr. Rudolph discussed the objectives of the implementation plan, which include increasing the capacity of state agencies to promote complete streets; increasing local capacity to implement complete streets; and, supporting increased promotion of active transport through the SCS process.

Vice-Chair Fisher recommended creating specific recommendations for Action 1.2 before scheduling another workshop. Dr. Rudolph will work with the involved agencies to develop specific objectives and outcome measures for the workshop and will include this amendment in the final recommendation.

Secretary Dooley asked for clarification on what it means to "maintain attention on the current Federal Transportation Reauthorization Process" in Objective 1. Dr. Rudolph clarified that there was a California position on the Federal Transportation Reauthorization Process, and the HiAP taskforce and Caltrans will

work to determine if it is timely and appropriate to update the prior document that was adopted by the Council approximately two years ago.

*Chair Alex opened the floor for public comment. No public comment given.*

*Secretary Dooley moved to endorse the HiAP Implementation Plan for Active Transportation, as amended. Secretary Laird seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

### **CLOSED SESSION – Action: Staff Review**

#### **Discussion: Staff Review**

The Council determined that they need to put in process personnel procedures and a review process. They designated a sub-committee of Vice-Chair Fisher and Secretary Rodriguez to formulate a process and a review.

#### **General Public Comments**

*Chair Alex opened the floor for public comment.*

Kory Clift, Freedom Farms (a non-profit working to increase access to healthy foods in California) mentioned that Freedom Farms applied for an Urban Greening grant on a project that they are working on. He recommended that the Council have more community benefit agreements, and offered to work with the Council to provide suggestions on transportation and healthy food issues.

Chair Alex announced that OPR is issuing draft guidelines for SB 226 CEQA Streamlining for Infill Development this week and is requesting comments.

#### **Agenda Item: Meeting Adjourned**

*Chair Alex adjourned the meeting.*