



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

CALIFORNIA DIVISION

980 Ninth Street, Suite 400

Sacramento, CA. 95814-2724

December 23, 2011

IN REPLY REFER TO  
HDA-CA

Steve Heminger, Executive Director  
Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)  
101 Eighth Street  
Oakland, California 94607

Dear Executive Director Heminger:

**SUBJECT: USE OF THE LATEST PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS IN CONFORMITY  
DETERMINATIONS**

In December 2008, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) issued joint guidance on the use of the latest planning assumptions in conformity determinations (See *Guidance for the Use of Latest Planning Assumptions in Transportation Conformity Determinations*

[http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air\\_quality/conformity/policy\\_and\\_guidance/lpa\\_guid08.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/conformity/policy_and_guidance/lpa_guid08.cfm)) This joint guidance encourages state and local agencies to review and update their planning assumptions regularly and strongly encourages areas to review and update planning assumptions at least every five years. If it is determined through interagency consultation that certain planning assumptions need to be updated, state and local transportation and air quality agencies should commit to a schedule to update those assumptions for future conformity determinations.

The MPOs are currently making conformity determinations using vehicle age and fleet mix data that is approximately 5 years old. Through interagency consultation, it has been determined that the vehicle age and fleet mix data needs to be updated and the agencies are in the process of doing so.

Since more recent vehicle registration data should be available in early 2012, the USDOT (FHWA and FTA) will not make conformity determinations, which require a new regional emissions analysis, beyond December 31, 2012, unless the new regional analysis incorporates more recent vehicle data. This gives the MPOs over one year to update their vehicle age and fleet mix planning assumptions.

We will continue to work with Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), as well as ARB, EPA, Caltrans and other local agencies, over the next year as MTC updates the vehicle age and fleet mix data for its region. If you have any questions, please contact Stew Sonnenberg at (916) 498- 5889.

Sincerely,

For

Vincent P. Mammano

Division Administrator

cc:

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