APPENDIX G

Non-Metropolitan Local Official Consultation Process

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
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January 28, 2004

Ms. Sue Kiser
Federal Highway Administration
650 Capitol Mall, Suite 4-100
Sacramento, CA 95814

Mr. Ray Sukys
201 Mission Street, Room 2210
San Francisco, CA 94105-1839

Dear Ms. Kiser and Mr. Sukys:

The California Department of Transportation (Department) has developed a formal process for consulting with nonmetropolitan local officials as required by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) as a Final Rule and issued in the Federal Register on January 23, 2003, and a correction issued on February 14, 2003. The Department coordinated with Wade Hobbs of the FHWA and Ted Matley of the FTA to determine the scope of the process and the following Departmental units were selected to be included: Regional Planning, System Planning, Statewide Planning, Programming, Rail, Aeronautics and Mass Transportation. The consultation process will have an effective date of February 24, 2004.

The Draft consultation process was distributed statewide to all 26 Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs) and was presented to the Rural Counties Task Force on November 21, 2003, followed by a 30-day comment period and again to the group on January 16, 2004 for final comments. The Department received generally positive feedback. Comments were received from one of the Department's Districts and two RTPAs. Please see enclosure for comments.

Enclosed is the final consultation process. We would like to thank both FHWA and FTA for their helpful guidance and assistance throughout the development of this process. If there are any questions or concerns please feel free to contact Sharon Scherzinger at (916) 653-3362.

Sincerely,

Joan Sollenberger

JOAN SOLLENBERGER
Chief
Division of Transportation Planning

Enclosures

c: Brian Smith
Wade Hobbs, FHWA
Ted Matley, FTA

California Department of Transportation
Nonmetropolitan Local Official Consultation Process

Introduction

The California Department of Transportation (Department) has developed these procedures in compliance with 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 450 which implement provisions of Section 1204 of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) regarding State consultation with nonmetropolitan local officials in the statewide transportation planning and programming process.

The Regulations require that the Department develop a consultation process for nonmetropolitan local officials that is a separate and distinct consultation process from the State's general public involvement process " . . . *while preserving the statewide planning requirement for a continuing, comprehensive and cooperative planning process. The TEA-21 required States to consult with nonmetropolitan local officials in transportation planning and programming.*" The Regulations further require that nonmetropolitan local officials review the documented process on or before February 24, 2004.

The Department uses the following consultation processes in statewide transportation planning and programming.

Regional Planning

- California has Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs) in nonmetropolitan areas described under State statute that are similar in structure and responsibility to federally recognized Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs).
- Twenty-seven are considered rural RTPAs that generally cover single counties and are charged with preparing regional transportation plans and improvement programs.
- The purpose of these agencies is to coordinate planning and programming to ensure cooperative development of the transportation system. The Department works with local officials and RTPA Boards to program State highway projects in the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RIP) and Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP).
- The annual Overall Work Program (OWP) includes work elements directly related to Regional, System and Mass Transportation Planning efforts. The OWP sets forth the planning activities that each RTPA will conduct during the year. In conjunction with the Overall Work Program Agreement (OWPA), the OWP constitutes the annual funding contract between the State and the RTPA for State planning funds. The Department works with the RTPA staff to develop the OWP work elements and budget. All OWPs in our rural counties are reviewed and approved by each RTPA's governing board. Development of the OWP is a vehicle for coordination with the RTPAs.
- The significant planning product of the RTPAs is the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). These documents are directed at the achievement of a coordinated and

balanced regional transportation system, including mass transportation, highway, railroad, maritime, and aviation facilities. The plans are action oriented and pragmatic, considering both the ten and twenty-year planning horizon.

- The Department's Headquarters regional planning primarily consults with local officials statewide through the Rural Counties Task Force (RCTF) and works cooperatively with RTPAs through the twelve Districts statewide. The Districts consult with local officials on a daily basis statewide through the RTPAs, planning advisory committees and board meetings.

System Planning

- The Department is responsible under State statutes for carrying out long-term State Highway System planning to identify future highway improvements in consultation with transportation planning agencies, county transportation commissions, counties and cities.
- The system planning consultation process for the counties that are not within the area of a MPO is addressed similar to that of the MPOs but on a scale applicable to the complexity of the area and issues unique to the region. The basic components of the nonmetropolitan consultation process and primary system planning documents related to it are described below.
- System Planning is comprised of three primary documents, 1) Route or Transportation Corridor Reports (RCR/TCR), 2) Transportation System Development Programs (TSDP), and 3) District System Management Plans (DSMP). Corridor studies provide in depth analyses of specific mobility problems in a corridor or route segment and recommend solutions.

  - Route Concept Reports – the route concept report identifies the concept for improving the State highway route to address current and future traffic, nonmotorized, modal and other transportation aspects on or adjacent to the route. The local elected officials of cities, counties and the regional transportation planning agencies are consulted in development of the reports from the initial stages of preliminary information gathering to the final document. Depending upon the nature of the route the report updates are initiated through town hall meetings or briefings to the various local governmental entities of which the elected officials are council and board members.
  - Transportation System Development Programs – the TSDPs identify the projects and related strategies and actions needed by a route and corridor to improve mobility. This "listing" is the Department's "owner/operator" opinion of route and corridor needs that is used in discussions with regional and local partners for priority setting for concepts that are recommended to go into more refined studies, into regional transportation plans and onto project scoping and commitment of funding for projects. For strategies and actions, the listing is the Department's recommendations for collaborative work with regional and local agencies primarily in the area of voluntary access control, growth management and other local development issues.

- District System Management Plans – the DSMPs present the Department's vision, goals and objectives for the district's comprehensive transportation system as both the "owner/operator" of the State Highway System and as a partner with other regional, local and modal agencies in planning and operating transportation systems for improved mobility and quality of life. The Plans communicate to regional agencies, local elected officials and the larger public the Department's overall and integrated plans for transportation. Plans are developed in consultation with regional and local agencies and modal operators and serve as a strategic document for continuing collaboration in sustained transportation improvement.
- Corridor Studies - the studies are done either through the Department itself or by the RTPAs. In either case the studies are coordinated across agencies and are guided by a policy and technical committee of which the State, transportation planning agency and members of the cities and counties staff are members. The study alternatives and recommendations are provided to the local elected officials in development stages for comment, potential redirection, and for final acceptance during the study process. Most corridor studies also have a public participation component for which the elected officials may take an active role for their representative area and concerns of constituents.

Statewide Planning

- Periodically, California adopts a long-range, statewide, multi-modal California Transportation Plan (CTP) in accordance with State and Federal requirements. The CTP is developed in cooperation with nonmetropolitan RTPAs by:
  - Promoting early and continuous consultation with nonmetropolitan local officials primarily through the RCTF, which is comprised of representatives from each of California's nonmetropolitan RTPAs.
  - Inviting representatives from the RCTF, League of California Cities and California State Association of Counties to participate on technical and policy advisory committees.
  - Consulting with local officials when planning public meetings and workshops, and when conducting focus groups and surveys within their jurisdiction.
  - Seeking guidance from nonmetropolitan local officials on transportation issues specific to nonmetropolitan areas.

Programming

- In California, the State and Federal requirements for transportation programming have been integrated into a sequential process as shown in Appendix A.
- The seven types of documents which serve as the primary building blocks for the Federal Transportation Improvement Programs (FTIPs) and the Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (FSTIP) are: the CTP, the Ten-Year State Highway Operation and Protection Plan (SHOPP), the State Highway Operation Protection Program (SHOPP), the Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan, the

RTPs, the RTIPs, and the ITIP. Note the ITIP and the RTIPs together form the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

- For the FSTIP, consultation with local governments and public involvement occurs early in the process during the development and adoption of the documents, which serve as the building blocks of the FSTIP.
- The policy decisions on transportation planning and programming by State, regional, and local government officials are made during the development and adoption of these seven basic planning and programming documents. Consultation with local governments and opportunity for public comment also occurs during the development and adoption of these documents.
- As these documents are developed, draft documents are formally circulated and comments are solicited, proposed final documents are circulated and public hearings or meetings are conducted prior to adoption or approval.
- Development and adoption of the State rural non MPO FTIP is based on incorporation of the projects from the above documents into the FSTIP.

Rail

- Every other year, the Division of Rail, pursuant to Section 14036 of the California Government Code prepares, a ten-year California State Rail Plan. The California Transportation Commission, RTPAs, the Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor Agency (LOSSAN), the San Joaquin Valley Rail Committee, the Capital Corridor Joint Powers Authority, and the North Coast Rail Coordinating Council review the plan. These boards include local officials.
- Pursuant to Supplemental Report Language contained in the State Budget Act of 2000, the Division of Rail prepares a Corridor Business Plan. Prior to its release, the Business Plans are made available for review by the RTPAs, the LOSSAN and the San Joaquin Valley Rail Committee. The membership of these agencies includes nonmetropolitan local officials.
- Intercity rail projects are incorporated in the biennial STIP and RTPs and are subject to the same planning and programming processes related to involvement of local officials.
- The Division of Rail works with affected local agencies, both metropolitan and nonmetropolitan agencies when conducting workshops, public meetings, and surveys within their jurisdictions.

Aeronautics

- The Division of Aeronautics develops the California Aviation System Plan (CASP) in compliance with California Public Utilities Code 21701, which directs the Department to develop a plan in conjunction with the RTPAs.
- The CASP shall include, but not be limited to, every California Airport designated in the Federal National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS).
- One of the mandated elements of the CASP is the development of a 10-year capital improvement program, which is divided into two five-year phases for each airport, based on the airport's adopted master plan.

- The projects included in the Aeronautics Program's Capitol Improvement Program (CIP) come from the regional planning agencies based on the region's RTP. The CIP is not incorporated into the STIP, but is approved by the California Transportation Commission (CTC).

Mass Transportation

- Division of Mass Transportation (DMT) staff work directly with metropolitan and nonmetropolitan transportation planning agencies to develop and program STIP and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5311 Program transit projects.
- District Mass Transportation staff maintain an open and on-going consultative relationship with nonmetropolitan transportation agencies.
- In accordance with State law and as documented in the STIP guidelines, rural as well as the urban planning agencies make the Regional Improvement Program programming and funding decisions for local STIP projects. However, consultation with Caltrans occurs during development of the RTIPs.
- The Division of Programming considers DMT comments on transit projects before compiling the RTIPs into the STIP and presenting it to the California Transportation Commission for approval.
- The same process applies to the FTA 5311 Program.

Conclusion

The Department will evaluate the consultation process within two years of implementing the process and thereafter at least once every five years as mandated by the Federal Regulations followed by a review and comment period of 60 days. The Department intends to work closely with the Rural Counties Task Force to ensure that consultation between the State and nonmetropolitan local officials remains an efficient and flexible process that meets the needs of both local and state officials.

Appendices

Appendix A – Programming Process

Appendix B – The Departments' Organization Chart

Appendix C –The Departments' Contact Information for Nonmetropolitan Local Official Consultation

APPENDIX C

Contact Information for Nonmetropolitan Local Official Consultation

Division of Aeronautics

R. Austin Wiswell, Division Chief
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Division of Mass Transportation

Debbie Mah, Division Chief
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Division of Programming

Jim Nicholas, Division Chief
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Division of Transportation Planning

Joan Sollenberger, Division Chief
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Sharon Scherzinger, Office Chief of Regional and Interagency Planning
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Nathan Smith, Office Chief of Statewide Planning
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Pat Weston, Office Chief of System and Advanced Planning
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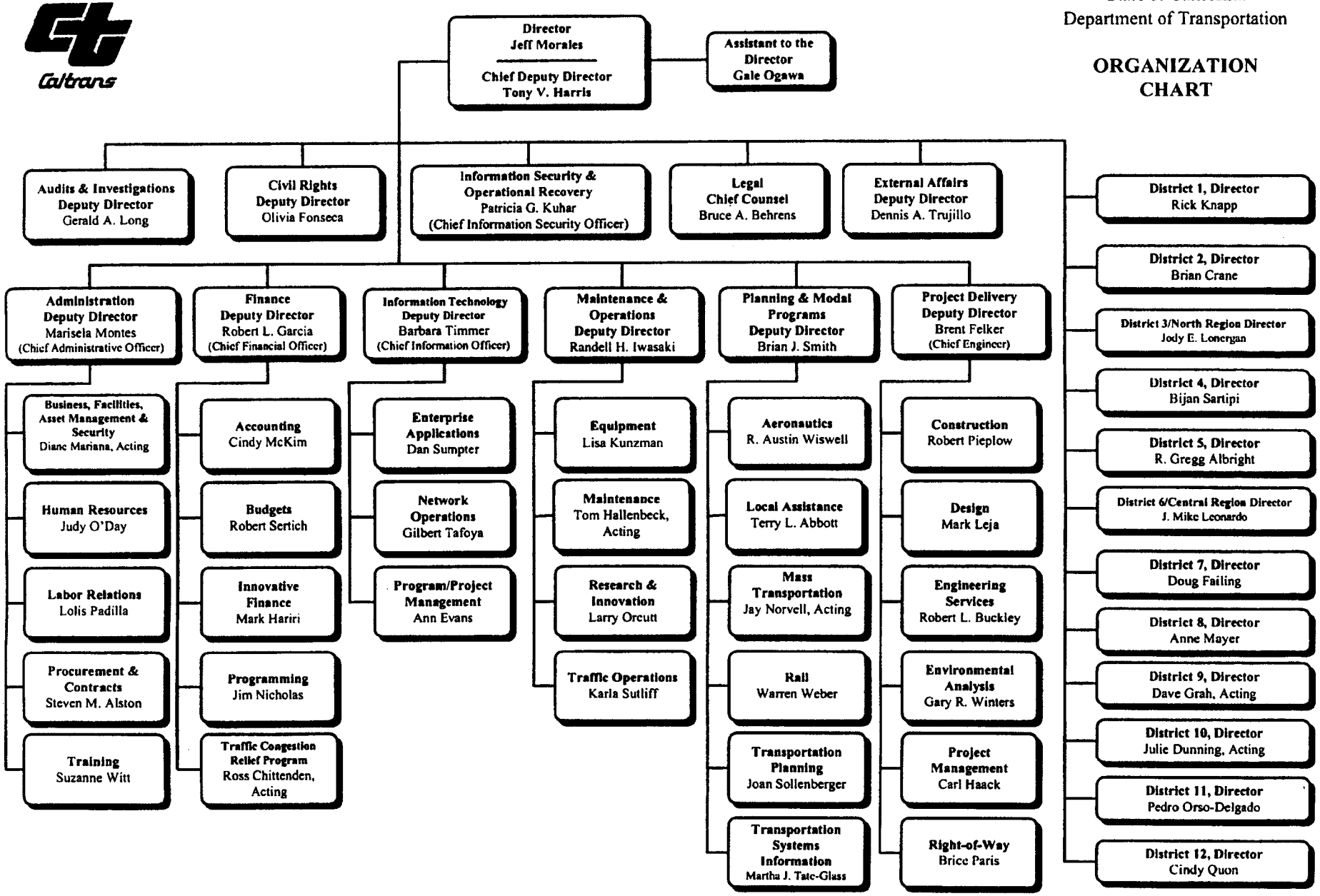
Division of Rail

Warren Weber, Division Chief
(916) 654-2944

State of California
Department of Transportation

ORGANIZATION CHART



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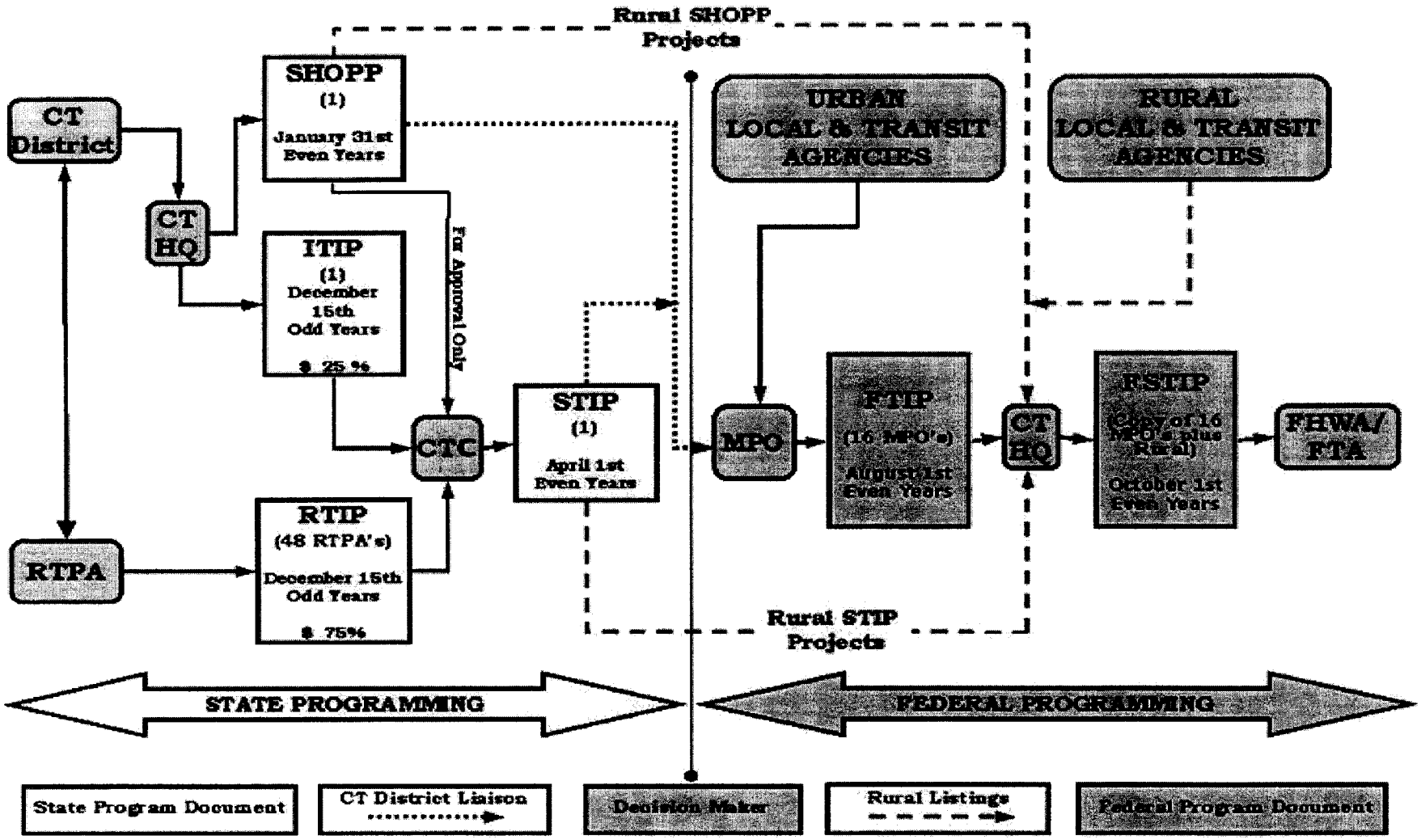

California Department of Transportation
Nonmetropolitan Local Officials Consultation Process
Comments Received and Responses

Department Comment: Please consider additional discussion pertaining to the Overall Work Programs (OWPs) in the section regarding Regional Planning. As you know, the yearly OWP includes work elements directly related to Regional, System and Mass Transportation Planning efforts. All OWPs in our rural counties are reviewed and approved by each RTPAs governing board. Discussion and approval of the OWP and subsequent amendments are formal agenda items at their monthly meetings, and input is solicited from the public in attendance.

Response: *This comment was incorporated into the Final Nonmetropolitan Local Officials Consultation Process document.*

Department Comment: There are two additional primary System Planning documents that you may want to include in the section regarding System Planning. They are the District System Management Plan (DSMP) and the Transportation System Development Program (TSDP). We will be soliciting input from our RTPAs regarding the DSMP, as well as providing interested parties and the general public the opportunity to review and comment on our draft report. We will also be providing our RTPAs an opportunity to review and comment on our draft TSDP.

Response: *This comment was incorporated into the Final Nonmetropolitan Local Officials Consultation Process document.*

RTPA Comment: It is our belief that the Department's system and statewide planning efforts, including Route Concept Reports (RCR), Corridor Studies, the California State Rail Plan, the Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan, the California Aviation System Plan and the California Transportation Plan, etc. need to be consolidated and better coordinated with development of Regional Transportation Plans. In general, it is very confusing to the public that there are so many, seemingly unconnected transportation plans. Rather than developing each of these planning documents independently, we believe that the Department should coordinate with the RTPAs' public outreach efforts conducted through the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) development. It is often confusing to the public when the Department attempts to initiate independent public outreach, through public meetings. Especially confusing are Route Concept Report meetings related to routes that are already scheduled for several construction projects. Also, it has often been our experience that the public is frustrated when the Department only seeks input on the single state route currently being studied. SCCRTC would welcome the Department's involvement in public outreach efforts for the RTP instead.

In summary, we suggest that the Department use the projects listed in the RTPs to develop projects for its statewide plans.

Response: *This comment was not incorporated into the Final NonMetropolitan Local Officials Consultation Process document. Improved coordination of plans and planning processes at State and regional levels is a continuous goal of the Department. The Department has a broad statewide responsibility for the development of the State's transportation system. Many of the plans mentioned help the Department plan for the State system and provide many opportunities for the Department to consult with local officials to ensure that State and interregional needs are addressed and are well integrated with regional and local needs. Also, it is the Department's goal to consult with the local agencies and the public when the various documents are being developed. If the Department were to only consult with the local agencies during the RTP process there would be significantly less consultation since it is updated every four years. Furthermore, this comment is more oriented toward public outreach rather than consultation with local agencies, the intent of the "Nonmetropolitan Local Officials Consultation Process."*

RTPA Comment: We don't have any concerns with the draft procedures.