

# Western Riverside Council of Governments Technical Advisory Committee

## Minutes

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### 1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee was called to order by Vice-Chair Jeff Van Wagenen at 9:31 a.m. on July 15, 2021, in-person at the WRCOG office and virtually on the Zoom platform.

### 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice-Chair Van Wagenen led members and guests in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### 3. ROLL CALL

- City of Canyon Lake - Chris Mann
- City of Corona - Jacob Ellis
- City of Eastvale - Bryan Jones\*
- City of Hemet - Chris Lopez
- City of Jurupa Valley - Rod Butler
- City of Menifee - Rochelle Clayton\*
- City of Moreno Valley - Mike Lee
- City of Murrieta - Louie Lacasella
- City of Norco - Andy Okoro
- City of Perris - Clara Miramontes
- City of Riverside - Al Zelinka
- City of San Jacinto - Travis Randel
- City of Temecula - Betsy Lowrey
- County of Riverside - Jeff Van Wagenen (Vice-Chair)
- Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD) - Danielle Coats\*
- March Joint Powers Authority - Lori Stone

\*Arrived after roll call

### 4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

### 5. SELECTION OF TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHAIR, VICE-CHAIR, AND 2ND VICE-CHAIR FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021/2022

#### **Action:**

1. The Technical Advisory Committee selected Jeff Van Wagenen, County of Riverside, as Chair;

Rob Johnson, City of San Jacinto, as Vice-Chair; and Rod Butler, City of Jurupa Valley, as 2nd Vice-Chair.

(Canyon Lake / San Jacinto) 15 yes; 0 no; 0 abstain; Item 5 was approved.

**6. CONSENT CALENDAR** – (Corona / Jurupa Valley) 15 yes; 0 no; 0 abstention. Items 6.A and 6.B were approved.

**A. Summary Minutes from the May 20, 2021, Technical Advisory Committee Meeting**

**Action:**

1. Approved the Summary Minutes from the May 20, 2021, Technical Advisory Committee meeting.

**B. Finance Department Activities Update**

**Action:**

1. Received and filed.

**7. REPORTS / DISCUSSION**

**A. Cal Cities Activities Update**

Erin Sasse, Regional Public Affairs Manager with Cal Cities, provided an update on current legislation Cal Cities is following. SB 555 (McGuire) Local Agencies: Transient Occupancy Taxes: Short-Term Rental Facilitator: Collection. This measure would authorize a local agency to delegate its authority to collect their locally imposed transient occupancy tax (TOT) on short-term rentals to the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration (CDTFA). SB 555 is a problematic measure for cities because it could unfortunately result in less effective and less transparent TOT collection in addition to the swift termination of existing and future voluntary collection agreements. Cal Cities wants amendments that would require platforms to provide CDTFA and contracting cities simple rental transaction information to ensure proper collection, protect existing arrangements, and protect local tax rates and charges as adopted by contracting agencies. Cal Cities staff has drafted amendments and has been engaged in negotiations with multiple stakeholders. Additionally, Cal Cities has provided lead opposition testimony, submitted written opposition, and is forming an opposition coalition with other interested stakeholders including the Hotel and Lodging Association. Cal Cities opposes SB 555, unless amended.

SB 15 (Portantino) Housing Development: Incentives: Rezoning of Idle Retail Sites. This measure would require the Department of Housing and Community Development to administer a program to provide incentives in the form of grants allocated to local governments that rezone idle sites used for a big box retailer or a commercial shopping center to instead allow the development of workforce housing. Cal Cities joined forces with Senator Portantino and other stakeholders to support this measure. It is important to note that the adopted state budget includes \$10 million in new funding to support the redevelopment of idle retail sites into housing.

Another bill Cal Cities is opposing is AB 215 (Chiu) Pro-Housing Designations. This measure would require cities to have a mid-cycle housing element consultation with the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) if housing production is below the regional average; require cities to

amend their laws so as to attain HCD's "pro-housing designation" if housing production is substantially below the regional average; and allow the Attorney General to enforce violations of the Housing Crisis Act of 2019 (SB 330, Skinner). Cal Cities issued an action alert requesting cities immediately oppose AB 215, which would transform the incentive-based pro-housing designation program into a new mandate for cities experiencing lower than average housing production though it may be no fault of their own.

**Action:**

1. Received and filed.

**B. Update on Early Childhood Education Challenges and Opportunities in the WRCOG Subregion**

Tammi Graham, Executive Director with First Five Riverside, provided an overview on early childhood education challenges and opportunities Riverside County is currently facing. One key regional issue which has received limited attention is Early Childhood Education in Western Riverside County. Having access to affordable childcare is a significant issue for many working families. In some instances, lack of access to childcare or the cost of childcare is a barrier to someone working outside of their home.

The Western Riverside County subregion has long struggled with childcare. In some communities, quality childcare is simply not available and if it is available, there are significant cost issues. COVID-19 has significantly worsened the situation because a number of centers, both large and small in-home facilities, were forced to close during the pandemic. With fewer facilities open, some workers are not able to find childcare for their children.

Ms. Graham provided five recommendations for Riverside County: provide childcare vouchers to essential and low-income workers, provide childcare stabilization grants and technical assistance, expand early care and education facilities, improve compensation and qualifications of the workforce, and reduce barriers to professional development.

First 5 Riverside continues to advocate and support decision makers across the region to leverage resources and support the early childhood education industry.

**Action:**

1. Received and filed.

**C. UCR Presentation on OASIS Park**

Rodolfo Torres, Vice-Chancellor at University of California, Riverside (UCR), provided an update on the UCR Opportunities to Advance Sustainability Innovation and Social Inclusion (OASIS) Park, a cleantech and sustainability hub in the heart of the Inland Empire. OASIS is uniquely positioned to create an impactful momentum to address major challenges in sustainability facing the state and the nation while building on a legacy of promoting innovation in air quality research, agriculture, natural resources, clean logistics, and climate change.

OASIS is entering Phase I of its efforts and has already taken its first steps with a preliminary study led by external consultants, Brailsford and Dunlavey. The consultants will help identify locations and potential funding for the project. UCR's Offices of Research and Economic Development and Government Relations have also been pursuing state and federal funding to support the project. A main goal of the program is to create skilled jobs for the Inland Empire. WRCOG seeks to support the OASIS

development through its vast network and promote the project to its members, as it aligns with a number of economic development and job creation opportunities relative to the subregion. Member agencies can learn more about OASIS by connecting directly with UCR to get involved in the effort. WRCOG staff would also be happy to facilitate and amplify any potential partnerships to enhance job creation, capital investment, and industry relations between OASIS and WRCOG members.

**Action:**

1. Received and filed.

**D. Energy Department Activities Update**

Daniel Soltero, WRCOG Program Manager, provided an update on various activities taking place in the Energy Department. WRCOG's Energy Department administers multiple, regionally beneficial programs to support member agencies, including the Regional Streetlight Program and the Western Riverside County Energy Resiliency Plan.

WRCOG commenced with the Smart Streetlights Implementation Plan, which will provide a framework for each member agency to leverage streetlights as smart city assets. At the request of the City of Jurupa Valley, the Smart Streetlights Implementation Plan will also include a broadband assessment. Since February 2021, staff have completed a community assessment and are nearly complete with peer agency interviews. The Community Assessment surveyed WRCOG members and Streetlight Program participants for information on "smart city prerequisites." Staff hosted a workshop on July 20, 2021, to discuss member preferences on smart streetlight technologies and smart city solutions.

The Western Riverside County Energy Resiliency Plan is assessing critical facilities and will identify the feasibility of implementing energy resilience solutions and/or microgrids to help maintain power supply during outage events. Staff have held two workshops for members to discuss findings of the literature review, identify community resilience issues, and to finalize goals and objectives of the Plan.

**Action:**

1. Received and filed.

**E. SAWPA OWOW Grant Funding Opportunity**

Ian Achimore, Senior Watershed Manager with Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority (SAWPA), provided information surrounding SAWPA's One Water One Watershed (OWOW) grant opportunity. California Proposition 1, passed in 2014, provides grant funding to 12 Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) "funding areas," and 48 sub-areas, known as IRWM regions, across the state. The OWOW Program represents one of those funding areas and regions — the Santa Ana River Watershed. Through Proposition 1, Round 2 IRWM funding includes \$25.7 million in grant funding for projects through the OWOW Program.

There is also a specific funding designation, a total of approximately \$4.1 million of the \$25.7 million, for areas within the Santa Ana River Watershed that are deemed "disadvantaged." Projects are eligible for this funding if they directly benefit areas that meet the definition described in California Water Code Section 79505.5(a): "A community with an annual median household income that is less than 80% of the statewide annual median household income."

Further information about the OWOW process is available at <https://sawpa.org/owow/future-funding-opportunities/>. The call for Projects will begin fall 2021.

**Action:**

1. Received and filed.

**7. REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Dr. Kurt Wilson shared that he is in the process of meeting with all of WRCOG member agencies' City Managers and elected officials.

**8. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS**

Committee member Al Zelinka requested information regarding the American Rescue Plan Act funding.

**9. GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no general announcements.

**10. NEXT MEETING**

The next Technical Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 19, 2021, at 9:30 a.m., in-person at the WRCOG office at 3390 University Avenue, Suite 200, Riverside, and on the Zoom platform.

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee adjourned at 11:05 a.m.