



San Diego's Regional Planning Agency



COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

September 2, 2003

Mr. Rusty Selix
California Assoc. of COGs
1127 11th Street Suite 830
Sacramento CA 95814

Dear Mr. Selix:

As a leader of an organization focused on the future of transportation, much of what you do is motivated by the fact that access and mobility of people and goods are necessary conditions for social and economic vitality. We, the chairs of the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) on each end of the West Coast transportation corridor, are writing to you because the corridor transportation system is failing. Please join us, and hopefully all West Coast MPOs, in addressing this problem and affecting change.

The West Coast corridor is failing to meet challenges and avoid opportunity costs. Transportation-system capacity is not keeping up with concentrated population growth or with increases in trade and passenger travel demand. Transportation infrastructure is aging faster than it is being maintained. If these problems are not addressed with comprehensive, corridor-wide strategies, congestion and unsafe conditions will continue to eat away at our regions' social and economic well-being.

The NAI~ TA and APEC trade transiting our marine, air, rail, and road systems is in no small part produced and consumed by West Coast residents and corporations. Additionally, production of these goods, and development and operation of the systems that carry these goods and people, support huge numbers of jobs-the most basic indicator of economic well-being. Worsening congestion and safety will continue to push transportation costs upward and thus threaten jobs (as firms seek locations with better access) and add costs to consumer goods and to social interaction.

These issues are not new. The corridor-wide scale of them is. Smaller regions can and should focus on system bottlenecks but an effective agenda for the West Coast corridor will require larger and deeper investments in corridor-system optimization. The West Coast Transportation System Coalition (TCSC) has set out to cooperatively identify system solutions and facilitate multi-state and public-private financial partnerships able to advance identified improvements and share commitment and risk.

With this letter, we are asking you and all West Coast MPOs to resolve to participate in and support the West Coast TCSC. Please find enclosed a sample draft resolution. Also enclosed, for background information, is a copy of *The West Coast Corridor System Phase I Report*, completed in January.

We hope this letter finds you well and that you share our eagerness regarding the necessity and appropriateness of the TCSC initiative. Please advise Mr. Jim Miller, Executive Director of the Whatcom Council of Governments, of your receipt of this letter and of your initial thoughts on advancing a resolution with your MPO board. Additionally, please contact Mr. Miller if you have any other questions.

Sincerely,

Ron Morrison
Chair, San Diego Association of Governments

Bob Ryan
Chair, Whatcom Council of Governments