



ECOS Transportation, Air Quality & Climate Change Committee
Thursday, January 2, 2020, 5:45 p.m.
Mogavero Architects, 1331 T St., Sacramento

Meeting Notes

5:45 p.m. – Social time -- meet and greet -- with refreshments

6:00 p.m. – Welcome, Introductions, Check-Ins, and Changes to Agenda

Attendance: Jon Ellison (ECOS), Jeffery Tardaguila (CARA), Melinda Kelley, Josh Maddox, Patrick Guild (Breathe CA), David O'Donnell, Bill Magavern (Coalition for Clean Air), May Lin Chang (HGA, 350 Sac), Susan Herre (ECOS), Lauren Pulido (Asm. McCarty), Nora Jang (Keramida Inc), Brandon Findling (Vandertoolen Assoc.), Chris Brown (Sac Climate Coalition), Byron Weaver (Geo Wash Carver School), Trevor Sladen (GWC), Mike Garabedian (Placer Co. Tomorrow), Justin Williams (GWC), Ralph Propper (ECOS Pres.), Lynne Goldsmith (co-chair), John Deeter (co-chair).

Guest: Kim Alexander (Mow Better)

6:15 p.m. – Policy Framework for Transportation Funding by SacMoves/SMART Coalition

- Ralph Propper and John Deeter (ECOS)
- STA is planning to put a transportation sales tax measure on the Nov. 2020 ballot. A draft expenditure plan will be discussed at the upcoming Board meeting on Jan. 9, and the SacMoves/SMART will present its Policy Framework to persuade STA to adopt a progressive, sustainable package

Propper: The draft expenditure plan has been developed by a consultant team headed by David Townsend, and is an improvement over the plan rejected in 2016. Transit funding has been increased from 25% to about 38% but the SacMoves/SMART coalition would like to see more for transit and less for roads. There should be an emphasis on "fix it first." Last time the expenditure plan was developed by STA's Professional Advisory Group (PAG) consisting of public works representatives from the local jurisdictions plus SacRT. This time there has been an attempt for more public input, but the breadth of this effort has been deficient, focusing on stakeholder groups rather than meetings open to the general public. The polling effort was also deficient, relying primarily on telephone interviews of pre-selected individuals.

Discussion: Transportation funding should be tied to climate change, and the climate emergency. Caltrans districts are largely autonomous and operate independently from Caltrans HQ. **California** Transportation Commission (CTC) is strongly biased toward funding road projects. **Q:** Does the plan consider car pooling? **A:** Only within the framework of toll roads and managed lanes.

SacRT is soon taking over the responsibility of providing ADA services from Paratransit. SacRT is about to start service to Sac International Airport (Route 142) to augment existing YoloBus service (42A/B). Initially there will be a problem with construction at the Convention Center which eliminates some bus stops. Steve Hansen (Sac City Council) in the SaRT Board chair this year.

ECOS should be concerned about the Placer Parkway across southern Placer Co. connecting SR 65 to new developments in Sutter Co., and the Gateway Project to expand I-80 and SR 65.

7:00 p.m. – Campaign to restrict the use of Small Off-Road Engines (leaf blowers, etc)

- Kim Alexander (MOW Better)

***Alexander:** Widespread concern about the impacts of gas-powered leaf blowers, particularly due to their emissions and noise. Immediate goal is not outright ban, but a phase out of leaf blowers and other gas-powered garden equipment. Homeowners are adopting electric leaf blowers, but still rely on gas-powered mowers. Commercial lawn care providers are even slower to change.*

Promote alternatives. Offer buy-back of gas-powered equipment, and eventually stop selling them. Promote commercial conversion to electric, and enforce existing laws such as noise limits. Educate the public about the issue. Pollution from small off-road engines (SOREs) worse than that from autos. Not just engine emissions, but dust kicked up by blowers as well.

Mow Better has a vision statement, and urges ECOS to endorse it. [ECOS wrote a letter to CARB in December endorsing a transition to zero emission equipment and requesting alternative strategies to reduce emissions from SOREs.] Coalition stakeholders include four members of the SMUD Board, as well as CARB and SMAQMD.

***Comment:** CARB is working on banning sales of SOREs.*

***Q:** What are the important pollutants from SOREs? **A:** Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and particulate matter. Sacramento has the fifth worst air quality in the U.S.*

***Discussion:** Size of electrical equipment is an issue, batteries are heavy, Cords are a nuisance and can be run over by mowers. Hospitals should adopt electric equipment because of impacts of SOREs on patients. SMUD is still using gas-powered lawn equipment. Commercial leaf blowers are powerful, with air speed up to 200 mph. Lawns are insane, essentially the largest "crop" in the U.S., three times the area of corn fields.*

Mow Better should be invited to have a demonstration at next Earth Day.

7:30 p.m. – Updates, reports and discussion of other current topics

- Mayors' Commission on Climate Change
- Elk Grove City and Sacramento County Climate Action Plans

7:40 p.m. – Other business and announcements / Topics for future meetings

- Date for future TAQCC meetings

7:45 p.m. (approx.) – Adjourn

Next TAQCC meeting: Thurs., Feb. 6, 5:45 p.m., subject to change

Other upcoming events of interest:

Jan. 9, 1:30 pm -- Sacramento Transportation Authority Board meeting, 800 H St.

Jan.11, 1 pm -- [Sacramento Transit Riders Union](#) (Sac TRU), 1714 Broadway

Jan. 28, 6 pm -- ECOS Board meeting, 909 12th St. (reception at 5:30)

Feb. 3, 4 pm -- Mayors' Commission on Climate Change, CalSTRS, West Sacramento

Printable TAQCC agendas and minutes are available on the ECOS [Web site](#).