

SCOPE OF WORK:

The Ventura County Transportation Commission Transportation Emergency Preparedness Plan

INTRODUCTION:

The Transportation Emergency Preparedness Plan will enable the Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC) and Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) in partnership with Caltrans and in coordination with transit operators, to better prepare the region for future natural disasters which are likely to occur increasingly due to impacts from climate change. These agencies do not currently have emergency preparedness plans.

The plan will define roles and responsibilities, coordinate with existing emergency plans, outline communication strategies and create an implementation plan that will specify training, evacuations and handling of service provision for all of Ventura and Santa Barbara counties.

The recent fire and mudslide highlighted how important transportation is in emergencies and identified areas where we are well prepared, lessons learned and areas to improve. Not having a transportation emergency preparedness plan in place would continue to allow governmental jurisdictions, residents and businesses to remain vulnerable to disasters without the benefit of changes that could be put in place through an analysis of lessons learned in earlier emergencies and advance planning for the inevitable future disasters. Planning has the potential to save lives and reduce the economic impact of future emergencies.

This plan will benefit the nine disadvantaged communities in the region, three of which are in the 96-100% percentile. These and a number of other census tracts have high poverty and minority populations. This plan will significantly benefit these communities and especially households without cars.

It is the joint hope of the responsible parties that the transportation emergency preparedness plan that will be funded by this grant will serve as a resource for other areas of the state.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

Ventura County Transportation Commission
Santa Barbara County Association of Governments
Caltrans

VCTC in partnership with the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments and Caltrans and with the assistance of a consulting firm will perform this work. VCTC has not yet selected a consulting firm and the proper procurement procedures will be used through a competitive RFP process. VCTC staff anticipates these figures will not differ substantially and will not exceed the grant request amount.

OVERALL PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

- Understand current emergency preparedness plans and how transportation organizations, assets and services are included in them
- Create and adopt emergency preparedness plans in each county for transportation facilities and services

- Work to ensure cooperation and coordination between these plans and other emergency plans

1. Project Initiation

Task 1.1 Project Kick-off Meeting

VCTC will hold a kick-off meeting with Caltrans staff to discuss grant procedures and project expectations including invoicing, quarterly reporting, and all other relevant project information. Meeting summary will be documented.

- **Responsible Party: VCTC**

Task 1.2 Staff Coordination

Monthly face-to-face project team meetings with consultants and more frequent communication by email and telephone to ensure good communication on upcoming tasks and to make sure the project remains on time and within budget. Caltrans staff will be invited to the project team meetings.

- **Responsible Party: VCTC**

Task 1.3 Advisory Committee

Organize an advisory committee with representatives of affected agencies in Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties including cities, transit organizations and law enforcement agencies. Consider adding people from social service agencies, hospitals and business groups and the media.

Advisory Committee will meet throughout the project.

- **Responsible Party: VCTC**

Task 1.4 Consultant Services

Complete an RFP process for selection of a consultant using the proper procurement procedures

- **Responsible Party: VCTC**

Task	Deliverable
1.1	Meeting notes
1.2	Monthly meeting notes
1.3	List of Advisory Group members
1.4	Copy of procurement procedures and executed consultant contract

2. Public Participation Plan

Task 2.1 Develop a Public Participation Strategy

Select a set of strategies to engage the public during the development of the transportation emergency preparedness plan that will solicit advice, comments and suggestions from the public. With the recent fires and mudslides fresh in the public's mind, seek input on what worked well and where improvements are needed.

Many institutional stakeholders will be included in the advisory committee. For others and for individuals or other groups, develop a multifaceted strategy to identify and engage them in the planning process. Highlight which strategies have proven effective in other areas or situations and suggest innovative ways to encourage people to participate. Also point out methods that have fallen short in the past and should not be employed in this effort.

Determine how and when to include the public in the planning and implementation process.

- **Responsible Party: VCTC / Consultant**

Task 2.2 Implement the Public Participation Plan

Based on the work conducted in Task 2.1, reach out to agencies, organizations, businesses and individuals through a combination of meetings, events, announcements and social media in accordance with the Public Participation Plan.

- **Responsible Party: VCTC / Consultant**

Task	Deliverable
2.1	Public Participation Plan
2.2	Announcements, press releases, social media posts and other materials

3. Transportation Emergency Preparedness Plan

Task 3.1 Current Situation

Determine which agencies in Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties have emergency preparedness plans. Gather copies of these plans from jurisdictions by searching online and contacting them directly.

Review the plans to determine:

What types of emergencies they cover

If transportation issues are included

How often the plans are updated

If there are additional types of emergencies that should be covered

Document findings.

- **Responsible Party: Consultant**

Task 3.2 Local Experience with Emergencies

Contact appropriate local jurisdictions, agencies and organizations to learn about their experience with the recent emergencies. Review press and other reports on the emergencies. Document problems that arose during the recent fires and mudslides in Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties, and determine how well the different agencies coordinated and cooperated.

Create a list of transportation facilities or services that were affected. Determine which transportation facilities are considered to be most vulnerable to harm or disruption from emergencies.

Document any transportation emergency services that were provided. Compile what data is available on usage, cost, and other aspects of those transportation services.

Document what would people do differently or like to have in place in preparation for next time.

- **Responsible Party: Consultant**

Task 3.3 Others' Experience with Emergencies

Select a group of communities in the United States that have experienced emergencies that affected transportation facilities or services.

Gather data on how these communities dealt with natural disasters or other emergency situations. Select some communities that experienced recent emergencies and some that have recovered already.

Ask about experiences, lessons learned, communication issues and changes made based on their experiences. Collect information on MOUs and other contractual or informal arrangements

- **Responsible Party: Consultant**

Task 3.4 Institutional Arrangements

Based on earlier tasks, determine what institutional arrangements are or should be in place to deal with future emergencies. Research how local and other agencies assigned roles and responsibilities. Collect copies of interagency Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and contracts that have been helpful in emergencies.

Suggest what specific MOUs and contracts to have in place ahead of emergencies, particularly those governing interagency arrangements that would be necessary or helpful to use transit vehicles and transportation employees during emergencies.

- **Responsible Party: Consultant**

Task 3.5 Communication Needs

Note plans locally or elsewhere to improve emergency communications to the public before, during and after emergencies regarding evacuations, returning to the area and other information.

Suggest improvements that local agencies should consider. In particular, explore what types of communication worked best and why.

Update agency's web site capability in anticipation of the next emergency. Update social media presence and coordinate with other agencies.

Review best practices on:

- How the public can be notified of cancelled transit service or temporary additional services
- How transportation agencies can most effectively share information on current conditions and plans
- How to assess the need for multi-lingual communication

- How coordinated and consistent messaging can be achieved
- Use of social media in rapidly changing situations

- **Responsible Party: Consultant**

Task 3.6 Inventory of Transportation Assets

Create an inventory of transportation facilities and assets that need to be protected or used in case of emergency.

Determine if there are additional assets that could be utilized if needed.

- **Responsible Party: Consultant**

Task 3.7 Develop Plan for Emergency Transportation Services

Task 3.7.1 Determine Who Might Need Evacuation Assistance

In conjunction with emergency service agencies, identify groups that may require evacuation assistance using transportation agency assets. Determine what preparations are necessary to use transit vehicles to evacuate people during emergencies. Work with Ventura and Santa Barbara County Offices of Emergency Services to complete this task.

Develop a methodology to select and to remove critical transit vehicles and other assets from the danger zone.

- **Responsible Party: Consultant**

Task 3.7.2 Prepare for Emergency Transportation Services

Asses what arrangements are needed to insure and reimburse agencies for the use of their assets and employees.

Recommend options for which agency (or agencies) would control the evacuation services.

Explore ways transportation and transit employees could get to their job assignments.

Based on the results of Task 3.4 suggest what arrangements are needed to insure and reimburse agencies for the use of their assets and employees. Describe what data should be collected to document costs for FEMA or other funding source.

- **Responsible Party: Consultant**

Task 3.7.3 Identify Resources

Identify resources and arrangements that will allow transportation agencies to be prepared for emergencies and not solely reactive when one or more disasters hit their areas. Not having a transportation emergency preparedness plan in place would continue to allow governmental jurisdictions, residents and businesses to remain vulnerable to disasters without the benefit of changes that could be put in place through an analysis of lessons learned in earlier emergencies and advance planning for the inevitable future disasters. Planning has the potential to save lives and reduce the economic impact of future emergencies.

Determine where transit assets can be staged or stored in or in preparation for an emergency.

Recommend options that can be put into place to allow staff to be contacted and assigned during an emergency.

Determine if there is short-term funding available to pay for services needed in or in preparation for an emergency.

- **Responsible Party: Consultant**

Task 3.7.4 Preparing for Emergencies

Review the types of training and drills being employed by local agencies. Based on the work in earlier tasks, particularly on the experiences with other emergencies, recommend changes or additions to current practice.

Also consider the goal of minimizing negative economic impacts on areas from closed businesses, lost wages and decrease in tourism.

Identify possible sources of funding to implement the transportation emergency preparedness plan, including:

- Continuing the advisory committee meetings
- Training and drills
- Improved communication between agencies and with the public

- **Responsible Party: Consultant**

Task	Deliverable
3.1	Report on current situation
3.2	Summary of local experience with recent emergencies
3.3	Summary of other experiences with emergencies
3.4	Suggestions for institutional arrangements that should be in place
3.5	List of communication needs, roles and responsibilities
3.6	Inventory of transportation assets
3.7	Plan for emergency transportation services

4. Adopt Plans

Task 4.1 Adopt Plans

Formally adopt transportation emergency plans. Hold at least two public hearings (one in Ventura and one in SB) in conjunction with adoption.

Work to integrate the Transportation Emergency Preparedness Plans into other local plans.

Create an ongoing committee to continue planning and coordinate implementation of the plans. Consider changing make-up of committee as its purpose changes from planning to implementation.

- **Responsible Party: VCTC and SBCAG**

Task	Deliverable
4.1	Adopted Plans

5. Financial Management

Task 5.1: Invoicing

Submit complete invoice packages to Caltrans district staff based on milestone completion— at least quarterly, but no more frequently than monthly.

- Responsible Party: VCTC

Task 5.2: Quarterly Reports

Submit quarterly reports to Caltrans district staff providing a summary of project progress and grant/local match expenditures.

- Responsible Party: VCTC

Task	Deliverable
5.1	Invoice Packages
5.2	Quarterly Reports