

PLANNING DESIGNATIONS

MARCH 23, 1977

Thank you for this opportunity to make a ~~brief~~ presentation regarding our desire to see VCAG receive State and Federal designations for regional planning purposes. As you may know, both Mayor Kato and Mayor Pro Tem Maxwell are currently in Japan to obtain first-hand information regarding LNG siting issues. It is for this reason, and because of my previous in-depth involvement in SCAG, that I am making this presentation on behalf of the City of Oxnard.

Oxnard's position favoring these designations for VCAG was set forth in Mayor Kato's letter of January 26, 1977, to VCAG. ~~A~~ copy of this letter has ~~previously been made available to you as~~ part of VCAG's application documentation. I would like to elaborate briefly on the two main points made in that letter:

1. First of all, SCAG is too large to serve effectively the regional planning needs of Ventura County. ~~Any~~ agency which covers 38,000 square miles of territory and includes 11 million people will not give the kind of attention to Ventura County's problems as will an agency whose primary concern is those problems. SCAG's attention must, of necessity, be directed primarily to those other geographical areas where most of the people live and which contain the most serious planning problems. ~~As a result of this~~ obviously necessary prioritization, SCAG has largely treated Ventura County's issues through a delegation of planning responsibility to VCAG. A

1. (Continued)

prime example is in the area of Transportation Planning. ~~It has~~ *stet*
~~been suggested that this willingness of SCAG to delegate~~ proves
~~that separate designations for VCAG are unnecessary.~~ We disagree.
While the delegation of transportation planning responsibility
has allowed VCAG some measure of independence in preparing the
transportation plan, it has been at great cost and with no benefit
beyond what could be achieved if VCAG were doing the planning
under its own authority as the designated regional planning agency.
The unnecessary costs I'm referring to include:

- a. The siphoning off of State and Federal planning funds for
SCAG administration and overhead - funds which would other-
wise be available to enhance VCAG's planning efforts.
- b. The expense of numerous trips and many, many hours involved
in meetings, by both elected officials and staff, with SCAG
officials as part of the planning process. ~~While a signifi-~~
~~cant level of such communication will still be necessary~~
when VCAG is given these designations, it should be substan-
tially reduced from the present level of such commitments.
- the* c. ~~The expense and time required to battle the efforts of SCAG~~
~~to thwart VCAG's regional planning efforts.~~ The history of
the 208 planning designation is a good example *of the expense & time*

*Spring of '75 - fought for approval denied
got
not accepted by SCAG then
In fact had to battle all over again*

These unnecessary costs have yielded no benefits to Ventura County citizens which would not also be available if VCAG were given the planning designations. In fact, they have yielded no benefits to any part of the SCAG region. Any coordination necessary or desired between Ventura County and other portions of SCAG can be effectively handled through cooperative agreements. The most significant result of VCAG's inclusion in the SCAG organization is the addition of an unnecessary and costly bureaucracy superimposed on top of VCAG planning efforts. The designation of VCAG as the regional planning agency for Ventura County will eliminate these costs and bring the planning process closer to our citizens.

This brings me to the second point which I would like to emphasize:

2. Ventura County is of a size and stage of development which produces optimal conditions for effective regional planning. This fact has already been acknowledged by the actions separating Ventura County from the South Coast Air Basin and providing authority for 208 planning. While the problems dealt with by VCAG are regional in scope, they are still of a size that they can be dealt with meaningfully, not only by elected officials but also by citizens at large. By contrast, SCAG is of such a size as to preclude meaningful participation by citizens and even, to a large extent, by public officials.

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In summary, we believe that VCAG can be more effective in dealing with Ventura County problems than can SCAG. Because of its size, SCAG must either give a very low priority to VCAG issues or delegate responsibility to VCAG. If the former occurs, Ventura County problems receive minimal attention. If the latter occurs, we receive no benefit from SCAG but have to live with an expensive and unnecessary superimposed bureaucracy.

Your positive action on VCAG's requests will enhance regional planning in Ventura County, will not adversely affect other portions of SCAG and will result in more effective use of planning funds. Thank you for your attention.