

Project Performance Assessment Working Group Meeting Summary

Thursday, July 20, 2017 | 9:00-11:00 a.m.

Meeting Attendees:

California Bike Coalition	Placer County Transportation Planning Agency (PCTPA)
DKS Associates	Sacramento Metropolitan AQMD
Environmental Council of Sacramento (ECOS)	Walk Sacramento
El Dorado County	Yolo County

Meeting Agenda:

Introduction
 Review of other BCA Approaches (John Long, DKS)
 Application of SACOG BCA Approach
 Example of Performance Outcomes
 Meeting Evaluation

Meeting Summary:

Staff from DKS provided a memorandum and gave a summary presentation of the findings of Benefit Cost Analysis (BCA) approaches. The memo presented an overview of BCA approaches that other MPOs/Agencies have across the country, and if they have performance measures not covered by SACOG's process. SACOG staff then presented a 4th round of BCA test project results and showed how a Performance Outcomes methodology would cover the same test projects. The working group provided feedback on the working tool, and discussed feasibility of new measures.

THEME: Review of other BCA Approaches

- The working group discussed how an activity based model such as SACOG's allows for more detailed analysis in a Benefit Cost Analysis (BCA), including a triple bottom line approach.
- The working group discussed briefly several of the benefit measures employed in other BCA approaches. Notably, what does a reliability measure mean in more precise terms?
- The working group discussed how SACOG's BCA fits within the state of the practice. The presentation noted that SACOG's approach is among best practice nationally, being just one of five MPOs nationally that uses a triple bottom line approach in a BCA.
- Of these five top approaches, the only benefit measure that SACOG does not include is a technical accessibility measure based on log sums, a model output.
- In prior meetings, the working group asked for additional material and research in four areas: growth inducement, agriculture and ecosystem services, equity, and rural issues. The group discussed each of these areas in turn.
- The group heard a presentation on the link between transportation investments and growth inducement, which concluded that this topic—while well studied—is complex, with no consensus in literature or practice. Members of the working group noted that

- there should be a way to get this research into a model or methodology. The project technical consultant suggested this type of measure is better suited in a target or outcomes based approach, as there is no successful implementation in a BCA.
- For the next meeting, SACOG staff will develop a table that lists indicators by the two different performance methods: BCA and Performance Outcomes.
 - Similar to the exploration of the link between project-level transportation infrastructure and growth inducement, the working group also heard research on agriculture and ecosystem services. The review found no examples of a method employing these indicators, save those for air quality.
 - Like for issues around induced growth, the research suggests agriculture and ecosystem service indicators be covered in a Performance Outcomes approach initially, until there is sufficient data. The working group did discuss how a project's environmental document would contain much of this data, but that projects are at various stages of the environmental process, so could not rely on a consistent review.
 - The working group heard how other BCAs incorporate equity. The group discussed how to treat the value of time in a BCA, suggesting a constant valuation. The group raised how the physical activity measure also has an equity component. Finally, the group encouraged SACOG's methodology to further build out equity indicators in project performance assessment.
 - For rural measures, the group discussed rural accidents and rural seasonality, and how these should be incorporated in the BCA. In the next agenda item staff explained how SACOG has incorporated the rural specific safety data, and possible ways to account for seasonality on different transportation facilities.

THEME: SACOG's BCA Approach

- The working group went through three test projects using SACOG's draft BCA methodology. Two of the three project sponsors were present (the third was unable to attend this working group meeting but had communicated via email in advance of the meeting).
- The group discussed how the BCA methodology prescribed benefits and costs by each of these three transportation investments, and if these benefits and costs made sense given the project context. The project sponsors noted how the methodology replicated the benefits seen since the projects have been built. The group noted how this tool could be used in the context of SB743 analysis.
- The group discussed the various benefit measures and costs, and who realized each (individual, regional, or societal). Members of the working group raised particular interest in the public health measure, and asked for a future time to talk about this measure.
- The group also raised a question about how the various costs and benefits were summed. Working group staff determined to look into the question and have a response for the working group at the subsequent meeting.

- Finally, the group discussed how the tool incorporated the recommendations of the first agenda item, including safety and seasonality.

THEME: Performance Outcomes Analysis

- The group had less time to engage this topic due to the robust discussion on the earlier items. The group suggested staff keep moving forward on this part of the overall performance methodology.
- Members of the group questioned how to use the tool to put together a fuller story on project performance; only seeing parts of the tool could lead to a counter interpretation compared to the full assessment.
- As such, the group encouraged staff to build out how the tool can help in performance assessment, not simply as a data drop but also how the data is interpreted to reach a conclusion.

Project Performance Working Group Meeting Evaluation

July 20, 2017

RANKING: 1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree
This meeting was well organized.
Average:
4.43
The length of the meeting was appropriate to get through the material.
Average:
4.14
The review from DHS on approaches to Benefit Cost Analysis was informative and useful.
Average:
4.43
I better understand the Benefit Cost Analysis method after the presentation today.
Average:
4.43
The review of test regional projects was a useful use of working group time.
Average:
4.71
I understand the next major steps in SACOG's Project Performance Assessment.
Average:
4.14
What should be done next time to make the working group session more effective?
Additional comments or questions not captured in the meeting: