

State of California Air Resources Board

Board Item Summary

Item # 21-1-3: Public Meeting to Consider Proposed Research Contract with the University of California, Davis, Titled "Post-COVID Transportation Scenarios" Evaluating the Impact of Policies"

Staff Recommendation:

The California Air Resources Board (CARB or Board) staff recommends that the Board approve the proposed contract with the University of California, Davis titled "Post-COVID Transportation Scenarios: Evaluating the Impact of Policies." The execution of this contract will inform post-COVID transportation and land-use policies.

Discussion:

The COVID pandemic has thoroughly disrupted our society, including the transportation sector. Based on lessons learned from the pandemic, this project proposes to examine a variety of scenarios to identify the opportunities and barriers to post-pandemic transportation and land-use policies that CARB and the State could institute to help meet California's air quality, climate, and equity goals.

Summary and Impacts:

The information that will be gained through this contract will support the Board's decision-making and effective program implementation. Approval by the Board will authorize staff to put this contract in place to undertake the activities described in this proposal.

The first question this research project will help to address is: What impacts will a range of transportation behaviors and land use preferences observed during the pandemic have on climate, air quality, and equity through 2050? Example pandemic-induced transportation behaviors and land use preferences this study will examine include:

- relying on single-occupancy vehicles over pooling and transit
- continuing high-levels of telecommuting
- shifting away from air travel toward land travel
- rapid growth of on-demand deliveries
- preference to moving away from urban areas

A second question this project will help to address concerns what policy tools could help nudge these transportation and land use preferences in the right direction to help meet short- and long-range emission reduction goals. Example policies that will be studied include:

- free transit fare programs
- incentivizing equitable work-from-home policies
- incentivizing safe pooling