

Submitted by: Ken Kirkey, Planning Director

To: Executive Board

Subject: County/Corridor Partnership Process for the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS)

Date: July 7, 2010

Executive Summary

Elected officials representing the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), and Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) will convene County/Corridor meetings in each county with local elected officials; staff from respective Congestion Management Agencies (CMAs), transit agencies, and local jurisdictions. The initial meeting is designed as a leadership roundtable discussion to create appropriate engagement methods that will foster the participation of local governments and their elected officials to achieve the missions of the SCS. The meetings are targeted for the late July-September 2010 time frame and will be organized by the regional agencies and the CMAs. The meetings will additionally identify key public transit corridors that run through the counties and help establish the geography and engagement for inter-County transportation and land use planning.

Recommended Action

Staff requests that Executive Board members provide input regarding the proposed structure of the County/Corridor engagement process.

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Overview

One of the principal objectives of the SB 375 and the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) is for the regional agencies to engage transportation planners at the CMAs, transit agencies, and city planners who are actively managing growth in their jurisdictions to better integrate land use, transportation, air quality, and shoreline (LUTAQS) planning. One of the key methods identified for engagement is to convene meetings at the County/Corridor level to create dialogue that will guide the process of a) identifying how much growth PDAs will reasonably be able to carry over the SCS time period; b) what types of incentives/policies/reforms PDAs will need to be successful; c) how the SCS growth allocations will be spread among the PDA and non-PDA jurisdictions within the County and identified Corridors; d) how regional transportation dollars will be programmed along Corridors to support land use and public transit strategies; and e) how to ensure planning consistency with air quality concerns and the development of a new and adaptive Bay Plan.

The County/Corridor meetings are the initial engagement strategy to meet the challenge of administering and implementing the vision and mandates of SB 375. Elected officials who serve on regional agencies have said on numerous occasions that without local government buy-in, the SCS will not be meaningful. The proposed process is designed to



allow each County/Corridor to tailor their own engagement strategy to best serve the variety of interests within their own County/Corridor.

One of the advantages of the County/Corridor approach is to leverage jurisdictional knowledge within the County structure while also recognizing PDA/transit corridors across County lines. The defined Corridors will benefit from dialogue with transit providers and local governments who may want to trade allocations within the Corridor in exchange for PDA block grants or transit improvements.

Objectives

The objectives of the C/C meetings are:

- Strengthen the linkage between transportation investment and housing/employment growth.
- Confirm the PDA framework as the central strategy to manage growth in the region.
- Share information from existing ongoing work about what incentives, policies and investments are needed for the PDAs to be successful.
- Introduce regional investment strategies designed to achieve the Sustainable Communities Strategy while respecting other key regional objectives.
- Lay the groundwork for local governments' partnership in developing and assigning housing and employment allocations.
- Ensure planning consistency with air quality concerns and regulation, Bay adaptation planning, and transit sustainability.

Building the Partnership Process

Working with Local Leadership

Under the auspices of the Joint Policy Committee (JPC), elected officials representing ABAG, MTC, BAAQMD, and BCDC will convene and facilitate a leadership roundtable in each county with the following participants who already are vested with an interest in land use and transportation planning:

- Elected Officials from local jurisdictions
- CMA Board members and staff
- City Managers and Planning Directors from cities with and without PDAs
- Transit Agency representatives who are already involved in planning and operating corridor transit services, including multi-county corridors.

The first leadership roundtable meetings are targeted for the August-September 2010 time frame and will be planned and scheduled with staff from the regional agencies, CMAs, and local jurisdictions. At these meetings elected officials and staff will discuss the principles, schedules, and guidelines required by SB 375, the relationship between development of the SCS and the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) process,

the identification of key public transit corridors, including those that cross county lines, and the future partnership process for inter-County transportation and land-use planning. The partnership will also discuss the process for ongoing partnership with local elected officials through the development and adoption of the SCS.

Working at the Staff Level – (County/Corridor Working Group)

The leadership roundtable will identify the leaders of the staff planning and technical process and structure to take on the responsibilities for the key milestones leading to the adoption of the SCS. It is anticipated that in most counties this process will utilize the CMA or county-level planning director groups that are already in place, and supplemented as necessary. The regional agencies have already been working with the CMAs to engage local government staff and will continue to coordinate with them to shape the agenda and structure of the County/Corridor Working Group meetings.

In addition to meetings held at the county level, the regional agencies will hold meetings of the Regional Advisory Working Group (RAWG) and the Executive Working Group and engage public interest stakeholders throughout the SCS process.

Defining the Content

Corridors

One of the advantages of the County/Corridor approach is to leverage jurisdictional knowledge within the county structure while also recognizing the challenge of planning across County lines. MTC and ABAG will draft preliminary Corridors maps based on major transit and transportation corridors, commute sheds, clusters of PDAs, and places with high levels of interaction. These draft maps will be presented to open or continue conversations on the specific corridor opportunities and challenges, and as a visual foundation for discussing the allocation of growth. Each Corridor will include a mix of place types (i.e. regional center, compact neighborhood center, town center, etc.) with different qualities to absorb various levels of population and employment growth.

The C/C Working group will design a process to define the Corridor boundaries and to distribute growth within each corridor. ABAG and MTC staff will provide the regional data and criteria for growth across place type.

ABAG and MTC will provide baseline regional, county and corridor information such as economic and demographic information, jobs-housing forecast, employment center and commute patterns, transit corridor information, transit sustainability information, PDA assessment findings, and T-2035 investments. Information will be presented at the C/C meetings in phases, as there is much relevant information that exists at the regional level. In addition to the baseline information for the County and Corridor, the SCS process will determine key metrics relevant to SB 375 including emission reduction and housing targets as well as indicators related to economic, environmental and equity issues.

We anticipate that at additional meetings the principles, schedules, and guidelines required under the SB 375 mandates would be discussed. The C/C engagement will have an opportunity to undertake this work effort themselves and are expected to work with regional agencies to refine the growth the SCS allocates in their areas. As mentioned above, it is expected that CMAs or other sub groups would agree to convene the necessary meetings/communications.

Inter-Regional Travel

One of the key issues for the region is to provide sufficient housing closer to the job base in the Bay Area and stem a trend toward in-commuting from the Central Valley where housing and land costs are much lower. These long commutes, if unabated, could result in extreme congestion on major highways that the Bay Area depends on both for goods movement and internal circulation. Planning to reduce mega-regional sprawl will require a deeper understanding of how inter-regional economies work as well as the incentives for persons to engage in long commutes into the Bay Area. While this requires attention from the regional agencies, this issue will be raised in the counties that are most impacted.

Next Steps

The following actions will be taken to advance the C/C Engagement process:

1. Letter from ABAG and MTC to local elected officials announcing the time and meeting of the C/C leadership meeting;
2. Regional agency staff work with CMA staff in each County to handle meeting logistics;
3. Regional agency and CMA staffs coordinate the preparation and distribution of agenda and materials for each Leadership roundtable meeting.