



Statements of Commitment for the 2025 Blueprint

Action

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Attachments: Yes

Referring Committee: Not Applicable

Issue:

Following direction from the Land Use and Natural Resources (LUNR) Committee in June, staff is requesting the board to consider the statements of commitment that define the relationship between the 2004 Regional Blueprint vision and the 2025 Blueprint plan and the challenges related to implementation.

Recommendation for Board:

The Land Use and Natural Resources (LUNR) Committee recommended by majority vote (Hume opposed) that the SACOG Board of Directors adopt the statements of commitment that define the relationship between the 2004 Regional Blueprint vision and the 2025 Blueprint plan and the challenges related to implementation.

Recommendation for Committee:

That the committee recommend that the board adopt the statements of commitment that define the relationship between the 2004 Regional Blueprint vision and the 2025 Blueprint plan and the challenges related to implementation.

Background:

Following robust discussion at the [April board meeting](#) about the land use assumptions of the Discussion Scenario for the 2025 Blueprint, the SACOG board directed staff to develop and analyze an alternative land use strategy that consolidated growth in developing and potential developing communities (relative to the Discussion Scenario) into fewer of these areas to show more complete buildout of these community types. Further, the board directed staff to maintain the Discussion Scenario as an option in the event the alternative developed by staff was deemed by the board to be infeasible or incompatible with the Policy Framework of the 2025 Blueprint.

Staff presented an alternative scenario, Option 3: Complete Communities, to the board at the [May meeting](#). Following further discussion, the board did not express support for advancing Option 3 any further due to concerns over feasibility and inconsistency with local priorities.

Since the board meeting in May, staff worked with local agencies to analyze potential changes to the Discussion Scenario that would include growth in additional developing communities. However, staff ultimately concluded that such modifications could not be justified given the sum total of the impacts,

inconsistency with the prior methodology to develop the Discussion Scenario, and the potential for erosion in the performance of the entire plan.

As an alternative to continued modifications to the land use assumptions in the Discussion Scenario, and to address concerns from board members and members of the development community about the relationship between the growth strategy of the 2004 Regional Blueprint and the 2025 MTP/SCS, referred to as the 2025 Blueprint, staff proposed to develop a series of statements that explicitly define the important roles these two documents play in guiding regional planning activities along with some of the key challenges related to implementation that the region faces. These statements would then be incorporated into the 2025 Blueprint plan to demonstrate SACOG's ongoing commitment to the original Blueprint vision and how that effort continues to inform the development of SACOG's Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy.

The subsequent section discusses the LUNR Committee's recommendation to adopt the statements of commitment to the 2004 Blueprint and its implementation.

Discussion/Analysis:

Background on the 2004 Sacramento Region Blueprint and its relevance today

The Sacramento Region Blueprint is a smart growth vision for the region that was adopted by the SACOG Board of Directors in 2004 following over two years of extensive outreach and engagement with elected officials, stakeholder groups, local jurisdictions, and residents. The vision of the Blueprint is to integrate land use and transportation planning to slow the loss of open space, farmland, and habitat to urbanization, and cut down on vehicle emissions and congestion, and improve the quality of life for residents of the region. It accomplishes this by implementing smart growth, a.k.a., Blueprint principles, that encourage a variety of housing options close to employment, shopping, entertainment hubs and daily needs, which reduces the distance people must travel and creates more options for people to walk, bike, or take public transportation in place of driving. These Blueprint principles apply equally to development within the existing regional footprint and to new greenfield developments around the urban edge.

The seven principles are:

- Housing Choice and Diversity;
- Provide Transportation Choices;
- Mixed Use Development;
- Compact Development;
- Design for Quality;
- Use Existing Assets; and
- Natural Resource Conservation.

Since the adoption of the Blueprint, SACOG has integrated these principles into each update of the region's long-range plan. And while it's been 20 years since the adoption of the Regional Blueprint, the principles remain relevant today. Attachment A provides a side-by-side comparison of the seven Blueprint principles alongside the themes that emerged from the public input gathered during the public outreach effort for the 2025 MTP/SCS update.

Statements of Commitment to the Blueprint

Staff developed a set of statements that describe the relationship between the [2004 Regional Blueprint](#) and the MTP/SCS. Prior to and at the April and May board and committee meetings there was confusion and concerns from board members, local jurisdictional staff, and stakeholders related to how the 2025 Blueprint relates to the 2004 Blueprint. Staff acknowledge that clear information about the role these two documents play in the region is important and worth incorporating into the MTP/SCS plan update.

Attachment B includes a set of draft statements that the LUNR Committee directed staff to continue to develop in advance of the June board meeting. These statements could be adopted as part of the land use assumptions and serve as a commitment of the board to incorporate the 2004 Blueprint vision into the 2025 Blueprint plan.

Input from Committees

SACOG staff delivered this presentation to the Policy and Innovation (P&I) Committee on June 3, 2024 and to the Transportation Committee and LUNR Committee on June 6, 2024.

Following the presentation to the P&I and Transportation committees, members of these committees expressed support for the staff recommendations, specifically noting their appreciation and support of the development of the Statements of Commitment. The P&I Committee also recommended that statement of commitment #3 in Attachment B, which describes that “[t]he land use forecast of the MTP/SCS is consistent with and developed from local city and county general plans and policies,” should include the date at which this consistency was determined and valid. This would ensure that the statement would not become obsolete if general plans were updated between the date listed and the next iteration of this plan.

Following the presentation to the LUNR Committee, a robust discussion occurred related to the Statements of Commitment and additional language for two plan implementation ideas proposed by Director Hume included for reference in Attachment C. The committee ultimately elected to advance the staff recommendation to bring the Statements of Commitment as presented in the June 6, LUNR Committee meeting, along with any refinements, to the board for adoption at the June 20, 2024 meeting.

Specific to the ideas presented by Director Hume, the committee opted to bring that discussion to the full board rather than direct staff to incorporate these changes into the statements ahead of a full board discussion. The committee’s discussion of the proposed changes largely revolved around not having sufficient time to fully evaluate the implications to future plan updates of adding the proposed language in Attachment C.

To help facilitate the board’s discussion, staff recommends the board evaluate and refine the ideas presented by Director Hume during the upcoming policy and implementation strategy development process for the 2025 Blueprint that will occur later this year. The policy and strategy development process is where the board will deliberate on and shape all of the policies and programs for Blueprint plan implementation and monitoring. The nature of the ideas proposed by Director Hume relate directly to the drafting of future MTP/SCS updates (the first suggested bullet point) and developing policy and programs to assist with achieving GHG and VMT reductions (the second suggested bullet point). Further conversation about these concepts is well suited to the 2025 Blueprint policy and strategy development schedule outlined below.

2025 Blueprint Policy and Strategy Development

August through October

Over the next three months, as the board digs into the transportation aspects of the plan, including budget and investment priorities, staff will also commit to bringing a Draft Plan Framework for board review and deliberation. The Draft Plan Framework will summarize the major policy interests and assumptions for the 2025 Blueprint, built upon the Triple Bottom Line Policy Framework adopted by the board at the beginning of the planning process. The Draft Plan Framework will describe staff's understanding of the board's policy direction for critical issues that will need to be addressed in the final plan Policy and Action elements, two of the required components of the plan that describe the key assumptions of the plan, challenges and barriers to implementation, and activities required to both implement and monitor how the region is performing in relation to the plan's forecasted outcomes.

Of important relevance, Assembly Bill 350 which granted SACOG a two-year extension for the completion of the 2025 Blueprint, also requires SACOG's monitoring program to provide the following at least on a biennial basis:

- A comparison between the land use and housing development assumptions included in the most recently adopted sustainable communities strategy and housing production activity in the region as measured by the issuance of building permits by local agencies.
- A discussion of the comparison's results, including identification of the principal factors that determine the extent to which the land use and housing development assumptions included in the most recently adopted sustainable communities strategy have or have not been realized and whether those assumptions reflect the requirement to use the most recent planning assumptions considering local general plans and other factors, including by integrating feedback from housing developers, local governments, and other stakeholders.

Staff will incorporate the Statements of Consideration and AB 350 requirements into the Plan Framework along with other direction we receive in August, September, and October related to housing and land use, investment priorities, environmental and economic considerations, and strategies around pricing (both tolling and road user charges), among other topics.

November

In November, staff will ask the board to take final action on the budget and financial assumptions for the 2025 Blueprint. Following that action, staff will add those assumptions, along with the land use assumptions the board is considering this month, into a Final Plan Framework that will be used as an outline for the full 2025 Blueprint plan document. That 2025 Blueprint plan will include the Policy and Action Elements described above.

February-April 2025

Beginning in early 2025, staff and the board will begin to examine more specific strategies and programs that SACOG should engage in as part of 2025 Blueprint implementation including land use monitoring, identifying of implementation barriers, and strategies for overcoming those barriers. The board's work on these strategies and programs will be incorporated into the final content of the plan, including existing and new programs for plan implementation.

May 2025

In May 2025, staff anticipate releasing the draft 2025 Blueprint and accompanying Environmental Impact Report for public review and comment.

Summary of Recommendations

The LUNR Committee recommended by majority vote (Hume opposed) that the SACOG Board of Directors adopt the refined statements of commitment to the Blueprint at this meeting.

As outlined in the policy and strategy development process scheduled above, staff recommends the board use its time between August 2024 and April of 2025 to provide input and direction on policies, strategies, and programs to include in the 2025 Blueprint. Staff also recommends that the ideas presented by Director Hume be explored and deliberated as one of the critical policy issues of Blueprint implementation during that process.

Fiscal Impact/Grant Information:

The 2025 Blueprint is funded by a combination of sources including Federal Metropolitan Planning funds, state Sustainable Communities Formula Program Funds, and Transportation Development Act-Local Transportation Funds. The Placer County Transportation Planning Agency and El Dorado County Transportation Commission also provide some funding to SACOG to support development of the 2025 Blueprint to assist with the planning activities, data development, and analysis that is necessary to ensure coordination and consistency between the regional plan and the county-level Regional Transportation Plans.