



Land Use & Natural Resources Committee

Meeting Date: March 6, 2025

[[!Agenda Item No. {{item.number}}!]]

Land Use Implementation Activities for March 2025

Receive and File

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Attachments: Yes

Referring Committee: Not Applicable

Issue:

The purpose of this item is to provide an overview of the land use implementation activities staff participates in on an on-going basis.

Request:

Receive & File

Recommendation for Board:

None; this item is for information only.

Recommendation for Committee:

None; this item is for information only.

Background:

The Sacramento Region Blueprint Project

In 2002, the Sacramento region faced the prospect of worsening congestion—a projected increase of over 50 percent by the year 2025—and increasing air pollution based on then-projected land use patterns, transportation funding levels, and transportation investment priorities. To solve these challenges, the SACOG Board of Directors initiated the Sacramento Region Blueprint project, an extensive study of the linkages between transportation, land use, and air quality. As its core goal, the Blueprint project aimed to support local governments with high quality data and modeling tools so that decisions regarding future growth and its effects on quality of life issues, such as traffic congestion and air pollution, could be made with the best information available. In addition to developing detailed land-use and travel data, an extensive community outreach effort was conducted to develop and assess guiding principles for the region's long-term growth. The adopted Blueprint is a regional growth map that is illustrative of how the region can grow according to the seven Blueprint principles that were developed collaboratively with member agencies, elected officials, stakeholders, and the public throughout the two-year Blueprint process. These seven Blueprint principles include: housing choice and diversity, transportation options, mixed use, compact development, use existing assets, quality design, and conserving natural resources.

The Blueprint's Relationship with the SACOG's Long Range Planning

After the adoption of these Blueprint principles in 2005, SACOG changed the way we do our long-range transportation plan, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), by adding a land use forecast that embodies the Blueprint principles and meaningfully integrates land use and transportation strategies into the plan. As a result, the 2008 MTP was the first in our region to show a future where the region would see reduced congestion, reduced air pollution, increases in housing types, increases in transportation options—including walk, bike, and transit—and more natural resources and agricultural land conserved.

Although commonplace now, the Blueprint and the 2008 MTP were among the first in the nation to integrate transportation and land use and changed the way we do regional transportation planning. Following the adoption of our 2008 MTP, the state passed Senate Bill (SB) 375. This law, heavily inspired by SACOG's work, requires that all regional planning organizations must consider land use and transportation together in the MTP as a means for achieving our statewide goals for reducing vehicles miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions. This SB 375 requirement is called the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), which brings with it an increased emphasis on land use and housing considerations as part of the long range planning process as well as specific requirements for public outreach. Because the SCS is intended to be a part of the MTP, SACOG now creates one regional transportation plan that is reflective of future transportation projects and funding, a land use forecast, and policies that all aim towards meeting the goals and requirements of SB 375. The technical term for this plan is the MTP/SCS. The 2025 update to the MTP/SCS, which this committee will be recommending for adoption in the latter part of 2025, is being called the 2025 Blueprint.

Implementing the Blueprint

As with all planning efforts, implementation of the plan is critical to achieving the regional transportation, air quality, quality of life and prosperity goals that the plan sets forth. Successful implementation requires the work and support of regional partners and local cities and counties. Supporting local efforts around MTP/SCS and Blueprint implementation is therefore a critical part of SACOG's work. SACOG conducts several Blueprint and MTP/SCS implementation land use activities in response to requests from member agencies, developers, and non-governmental organizations including: (1) provision of data and/or technical support to member agencies implementing the Blueprint; (2) review and comment on development proposals regarding their consistency with the Blueprint principles or the MTP/SCS; and (3) educational presentations on the Blueprint and the MTP/SCS.

Many of the Blueprint and MTP/SCS land use implementation activities conducted and coordinated by SACOG come through the Land Use and Natural Resources committee. Every month, staff will prepare a receive and file item for the committee and the board with a summary of land use activities SACOG has participated in to support local implementation of the MTP/SCS and the Blueprint principles.

Discussion/Analysis:

In February, SACOG staff conducted the following Blueprint and MTP/SCS implementation activities related to land use:

- Provided MTP/SCS consistency letters to the Central Sacramento Studios project and the 2020 U Street Apartments in the City of Sacramento for the purposes of SB 375/SB 743 CEQA Streamlining benefits. These letters are included as attachments to this staff report.
- Contacted each SACOG member agency planning director to discuss upcoming 2025 regional housing activities
- Coordinated with the California Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) to discuss technical assistance to local agencies for the next housing element cycle

- Conducted an online webinar with over 80 participants from throughout the region to discuss basics of the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) process, and, in conduction with HCD, the state requirements for Annual Progress Reports (APRs)
- Provided Technical Assistance to the Town of Loomis for a Caltrans planning grant with economic development components
- Met with Placer County to discuss housing affordability issues and how community-based organizations can participate in future outreach efforts
- Green Means Go: Developed eight subrecipient agreements for local agencies in the Reconnecting Communities grant program
- Met with Yuba City staff to discuss mobility solution in the growing Tierra Buena neighborhood
- Submitted a comment letter to the City of Citrus Heights on the proposed amendments to the Sunrise Tomorrow Specific Plan
- Participated in ad hoc and ongoing working groups on various topics related to blueprint implementation, including:
 - Land Use, Transportation, and Climate (LUTRAC) monthly meetings between SACOG, Sacramento Regional Transit District, SMUD, and the Air District to coordinate comments on projects and plans related to shared goals amongst the agencies
 - Statewide working group to discuss the mapping of existing and planned major transit stops, which have implications for various state statute around parking mandates, density bonus law, and CEQA streamlining.

Fiscal Impact/Grant Information:

Included in the Overall Work Program (OWP)/Budget

List of Attachments:

Central_Sacramento_Studios_II_Project_SACOG Letter
 2020_U_Street_Apartments_SACOG Letter
 Sunrise Tomorrow_SACOG Comment Letter