



2025 Blueprint Land Use Assumptions: Prioritizing Build Out and More Complete Communities

Information

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Attachments: Yes

Referring Committee: Not Applicable

Issue:

Following board direction from April, staff has developed an alternative to the Discussion Scenario land use assumptions that can still achieve the policy goals outlined in the board's Blueprint policy framework, including keeping the plan within striking distance of the regional greenhouse gas reduction target.

Request:

Approve

Recommendation for Board:

None; this is for information only. Staff is requesting that the board provide direction on the Option 3: Prioritizing Build out and More Complete Communities, including what additional information the board wants to weigh before considering final adoption of land use assumptions in June and final adoption of transportation investments by November.

Recommendation for Committee:

Not applicable

Background:

SACOG is undertaking an update to the region's Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS), known as the 2025 Blueprint. Ultimately, this plan will outline a set of transportation and land use strategies that achieve various federal, state, regional, and local policy objectives while accounting for real world financial, growth, and regulatory constraints. In 2022 the board adopted a Policy Framework (see Attachment B [which was also included in the April board packet](#)) focused on the Triple Bottom Line goals of equity, economy, and environment. This framework has shaped the analysis, board discussions, public and stakeholder engagement, and development of the 2025 Blueprint. Additional details on the 2025 Blueprint process and engagement efforts undertaken to-date are provided in Attachment C [which was also included in the April board staff report](#).

A critical component of building the regional plan is balancing the many state and federal requirements governing the plan with goals that reflect our region's vision and values. The Triple Bottom Line policy framework is a useful way of understanding and dissecting the complex and interrelated nature of the many

topics addressed in a comprehensive land use and transportation plan like the Blueprint. These topics include health standards for clean air under the federal Clean Air Act; identifying strategies for addressing ongoing shortages in the production of affordable or attainable housing, addressing statewide climate goals; keeping transportation infrastructure in a state of good repair; and quantifying, monitoring, and working to reduce congestion and improve reliability of the transportation system.

In June, as part of the plan development process, the SACOG board will consider taking action to adopt a set of land use assumptions that will serve as the foundation of the 2025 Blueprint. Ahead of this important decision, the board directed staff to create an alternative land use scenario for consideration that concentrates growth in fewer new growth areas, referred to as developing communities, to better understand how more fully built out plans might impact the plan's performance. The following section describes this option in more detail.

Discussion/Analysis:

Following the presentation of the Discussion Scenario to the board in April, the board directed staff to further develop and analyze Option 3: Prioritizing Build Out and More Complete Communities. Option 3 looks at the subset of the Discussion Scenario that comprises developing and potentially developing communities. This scenario was based around the desire of the board to see an option that consolidates the 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.

As described at the April board meeting, Option 3 assumes more complete buildout of developing and potential developing communities but in fewer places. It prioritizes those developing communities that have the strongest likelihood of lower vehicle miles traveled (VMT) based on the Pathways analysis and other factors like adjacency to existing development and jobs/housing balance. The assumption is that this alternative would be comparable to the greenhouse gas (GHG) performance of the Discussion Scenario since the total amount of growth in developing community areas would stay the same (roughly one-third of the total growth forecast through 2050).

Based on direction from the Land Use and Natural Resources Committee that anticipated board interest in studying additional land use scenarios, staff requested local agencies provide any additional information about their jurisdiction that could be used to help create a land use scenario that meets the guidelines of the scenario options presented to the board in April.

Staff analyzed the input and feedback from local agencies, reviewed the analysis of the Pathways and Discussion Scenario, and then developed an alternative land use option for developing and potential developing communities that maintains the policy goals outlined by the board in the [policy framework](#), keeps the overall scenario within striking distance of our GHG emissions target, and is consistent with locally adopted land use and transportation plans. The May 2024, Option 3 land use assumptions are detailed in Attachment A.

This month's staff presentation to the board will dive deeper into the assumptions and performance of Option 3. Staff seeks board direction on what additional information the board wants to weigh before considering adopting final land use assumptions in June and transportation assumptions by November of this year.

Overview of Option 3: Prioritizing Build Out and More Complete Communities

Option 3 was developed using the following guideposts per the direction offered by the board in April:

- Housing and Jobs were kept net neutral, relative to the Discussion Scenario, at the county level in both years 2035 and 2050.
- Reasonableness considerations were maintained for scenario development; thus, ensuring that projects that have already been completed, are under construction, or have started grading were not shifted.

For the development of Option 3, staff utilized several criteria to guide the reallocation of land use assumptions relative to the Discussion Scenario. Staff will provide further description of these criteria during the board presentation, but generally they include:

- VMT for the partial build out of each developing and potentially developing community in the Pathways scenarios
- Jobs/housing balance at buildout for each developing and potentially developing community
- How many existing jobs and destinations are accessible from each developing and potentially developing community
- Adjacency to the existing urban footprint of each developing and potentially developing community

Key Considerations for Option 3

Option 3 is designed to further the same policy-based and performance outcomes as the Discussion Scenario. These outcomes include:

- A land use and transportation strategy that achieves the 19 percent GHG reduction target
- Meets the “reasonableness test” to ensure assumptions are achievable and acceptable by both state and federal government agencies
- Balances policy priorities
- Incorporates local feedback

For additional details on each of these key considerations see the Blueprint Discussion Scenario staff report for the April committee and board meetings.

Assumptions for Option 3

Option 3 represents staff’s effort to present the board with an alternative to the Discussion Scenario while attempting to be responsive to local feedback, outline a path to achieving the GHG reduction target, meet the reasonableness test by being in line with recent trends and planning assumptions, and balance the key Triple Bottom Line objectives of the [adopted Blueprint Policy Framework](#).

Key assumptions of Option 3 include:

- Consistent with the Discussion Scenario, Option 3 includes the same ambitious regional growth projection of nearly 600,000 people, 263,000 jobs, and 278,000 homes between 2020 and 2050. The regional growth projection was formally adopted by the SACOG board in 2022. It is important to note that the assumed housing growth rate for the region of more than 9,000 homes built annually, is higher than 9 out of the last 10 years, based on completed permits.
- Consistent with the Discussion Scenario, Option 3 includes the distribution of housing growth that is in line with recent permitting trends, and a distribution of employment growth that assumes robust job growth outside of the traditional job centers of the region. See Table 1 for

an illustration of the housing and employment assumptions in centers and corridors and established communities from Pathways and Option 3 as compared to recent trends.

- Every attempt was made, where possible, to consolidate growth from developing communities included in the Discussion Scenario into fewer Developing Communities.
- Although further consolidation is possible, it would be at the expense of reasonableness considerations. Option 3 ensures that projects that have already been completed, are under construction, or have started grading were not shifted.

Table 1: Housing and Employment Distribution in Centers and Corridors and Established Communities (from least to most as a proportion of growth)

Housing Distribution (% in centers and corridors and established communities)	Pathway 1 (42%)	Pathway 2 (65%)	Recent Trends (67%)	Option 3 (68%)	Pathway 3 (88%)
Employment Distribution (% in centers and corridors and established communities)	Pathway 1 (76%)	Option 3 (79%)	Pathway 2 (82%)	Pathway 3 (89%)	Recent Trends (89%)

What changed from the Discussion Scenario to Option 3

As described above, Option 3 is an alternative scenario to the Discussion Scenario that is intended to provide a single set of land use and transportation assumptions that meet the “reasonableness test,” is informed by the Triple Bottom Line, achieves the GHG reduction target for the region, and strives to reflect local jurisdictional input and priorities. The following summarizes the land use changes from the Discussion Scenario to Option 3:

- After consideration of potential shifts in all 6 counties, Option 3 shifts Discussion Scenario growth only in Placer, Sacramento, and Yolo counties. Based on the criteria for Option 3, staff found there were not sufficient developing community candidates in the Discussion Scenario to justify shifts in Yuba, Sutter, and El Dorado counties.
- Option 3 includes one developing community (West Jackson) that is not in the Discussion Scenario by 2050. West Jackson was brought into Option 3 due to its performance relative to the criteria used for consolidation of developing communities.
- Option 3 includes the consolidation of developing community growth into the following communities:
 - Placer Ranch (Placer County)
 - Delta Shores (Sacramento County)
 - Florin Vineyard (Sacramento County)
 - West Jackson (Sacramento County)
 - Livable Employment Area (Sacramento County)
 - Research and Technology Park (Yolo County)
 - Liberty (Yolo County)

Additional information and details on the performance of Option 3 and where jobs and units were moved from will be provided in the presentation to the board on May 16, 2024. Staff is seeking board direction on

the land use alternative or alternatives staff should continue to develop for the board's consideration in June. Following an action in June to finalize land use assumptions, the board will move on to consider transportation funding and investment strategies that are based on the adopted land use assumptions. This transportation-focused effort of the board will begin in August. These discussions will culminate in November when the board considers action to adopt the revenue and transportation project listings for the 2025 Blueprint. The full Blueprint development schedule leading to adoption of the plan by the end of 2025 is available on the Blueprint webpage on SACOG's website located here: [Blueprint Timeline](#).

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.