



BLUEPRINT

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES STRATEGY

Factors Considered in the Development of Land Use Assumptions



Regulatory Factors

Per statute, the Sustainable Communities Strategy must consider local general plans as a part of the land use assumptions. As such, the locally adopted general plan land use designations as well as the land use standards included in local zoning codes, specific plans, and master plans form the foundation of SACOG's land use assumptions. With the help of a competitive Caltrans planning grant, SACOG has been working with a consultant over the last two years to develop a comprehensive "buildout inventory," or a spatial land use database of all 28 local general plans and over 70 specific/master plans across the region. This parcel-level dataset allows SACOG to better understand the over 400 unique land use classifications in terms of density, floor area ratio, allowed uses, and other land use controls. A critical takeaway from this work is that, regardless of how it is measured, the region has orders of magnitude more existing regulatory capacity than the growth that SACOG is projecting between now and 2050. As such, all pathway land use assumptions inherently will have some planned growth that does not occur by the plan horizon of 2050.

Market Factors

Given the reality that not all planned growth will be included in the land use assumptions by 2050, SACOG considers a variety of market factors in an effort to connect financial feasibility and growth. This includes a series of proxies for demand, like proximity to job centers, market area saturation, adjacency to existing development, developer/land owner history, transportation infrastructure, and the status of infrastructure (sewer, water, flood control, etc) and infrastructure financing. As a part of the buildout inventory project described above, SACOG also worked with the consultant to use the above factors and actual price signals to better understand how theoretical planned capacity is altered when market factors are considered. One key takeaway from this work is that, absent policy and infrastructure change, the theoretical planned capacity can be reduced by more than half when accounting for current financial feasibility.

Policy (Triple Bottom Line) Factors

Finally, there are a number of policy factors that SACOG considers in the development of the pathway land use assumptions. In February, the board approved a Triple Bottom Line Policy Framework, establishing the policy imperatives that SACOG will be focused on as a part of the 2024 Blueprint. While the pathway land use assumptions are only part of the 2024 Blueprint, the three legs of the triple bottom line are meaningfully considered in their development. In addition to considering these factors in the development of the pathways, they will also be the framing by which SACOG presents the performance of the pathways with quantifiable metrics associated with each leg.

Equity.

- The proportion of new homes that are small lot single family or multifamily dramatically impacts regional affordability and the ability of lower income and minority households to remain in their homes and achieve social mobility. The extent to which those homes are located near jobs, services, great schools, amenities, and neighborhoods with low pollution burden has significant implications for life outcomes.

Environment.

- Land use is the single largest determinant of whether the region is able to reduce vehicle miles traveled and achieve our GHG reduction target. SACOG has consistently found that environmental performance metrics are maximized through growth is focused in existing communities where jobs and services already exist and at densities that support shorter vehicle trips, transit, walking, and biking.

Economy.

The type and location of growth has an impact on the economic prosperity of the region through the opportunity cost of travel times, fiscal health via roadway investment and maintenance costs, the connection between disposable income and transportation/housing costs, and the costs imposed on society of differing public health outcomes.

