

Attachment A: 2025 Blueprint Land Use Assumptions and Evaluation

The pathway land use assumptions outline diverging futures for the spatial distribution and the type of growth the region will experience between now and 2050. The board will ultimately use these pathways to inform a Final Preferred Pathway that will balance the region's mobility needs with the realities of limited future dollars. The land use assumptions of the pathways are summarized below:

Pathway 1: Outward Expansion and Limited Infill explores a future where the majority of future growth occurs via expansion outward in greenfield developing communities. It will provide the most large lot single-family and rural residential housing and the least amount of infill growth.

Pathway 2: Balanced Infill and Phased Expansion explores a future where some growth is accommodated via outward expansion, but balances that growth with robust infill and revitalization of existing communities. The spatial distribution and product types will resemble the adopted 2020 MTP/SCS, updated per current conditions.

Pathway 3: Focused Infill and Limited Expansion explores a future where the vast majority of growth occurs in infill areas with expansion only occurring in greenfield developing communities that are already under construction. Compared to the other two pathways, this pathway provides the most new small lot and attached housing and the most amount of growth through infill and redevelopment.

The land use assumptions for each pathway are, at their core, a decision about how much, where, and what kind of housing and job growth will occur between 2020 and 2050. The sections below explore the pathway land use assumptions for these topics as well as metrics related to resilience, the rural-urban connection, and access to opportunity.

How Much?

The land use assumptions start with a [regional growth projection](#) for how much the region will grow in the next 20 to 30 years in terms of population, employment, and households. These projections, which were adopted by the SACOG board in February 2022 as part of the Blueprint Framework, establish regional control totals for new housing units and jobs that are then held constant across all three pathways. The projections have the region growing by 278,000 jobs and 263,000 units between 2020 and 2050. This represents a slight reduction in annualized housing growth relative to the adopted 2020 MTP/SCS. Table 1 below shows historical annual housing unit growth for select time periods since 2001 compared against the regional growth projections from the adopted 2020 Plan and the 2025 Blueprint. While the 2020-2050 growth rate is still higher than the rest of California, the slight reduction relative to the adopted plan means less growth is available to turn the ship on performance outcomes dependent on changes to urban form.

Table 1: Annualized Housing Growth Comparison				
Historical Annualized Housing Growth for Select Time Periods			Projected Annualized Housing Growth	
2001-2007	2008-2015	2016-2021	2016-2040 Regional Growth Projection from Adopted 2020 Plan (for reference)	2020-2050 Regional Growth Projection for 2025 Blueprint
17,698	3,956	7,081	10,839	9,267

Where?

Perhaps the biggest land use question of the 2025 Blueprint is where those 278,000 new jobs and 263,000 new units will go. In the February 2025 Blueprint Update item, this committee discussed how this update will focus on advancing the triple bottom line through a series of goal statements. One of those goal statements was to “support mobility options with land use and transportation strategies that reduce passenger vehicle carbon emissions by creating a region where access to daily needs and destinations does not require use of a personal vehicle, or requires less time spent in a personal vehicle.” This statement and many others are predicated on reducing the distance between destinations through more spatially efficient land use. In fact, the spatial distribution of new growth is a driver of many of the performance metrics across all three legs of the triple bottom line.

SACOG uses a framework for dividing the region into “Community Types.” Local land use plans such as general plans, specific plans, master plans, corridor plans, and more were categorized into one of six Community Types based on the location of the plans. SACOG uses the Community Types framework to describe the 2025 Blueprint land use pattern. More information on the community types as well as an interactive map [can be found here](#).

Historically speaking, job growth typically occurs in centrally located parts of the region to maximize access to the regional labor market. As such, the vast majority of job growth usually occurs in Centers and Corridors and Established Communities (infill areas). In the 2016 to 2020 period, 45% of new jobs were created in Centers and Corridors and 44% in Established Communities. Following this trend, the pathways do not see dramatic variation in job growth location, ranging from 76% in infill areas in *Pathway 1: Outward Expansion and Limited Infill* to 89% in infill areas in *Pathway 3: Focused Infill and Limited Expansion*.

Housing growth in the SACOG region has historically been more dispersive than jobs. In the 2016 to 2020 period, 18% of new housing units were built in Centers and Corridors and 53% in Established Communities (infill areas). The remaining 29% of units occurred in either developing communities on the edges of the region or rural residential communities. As shown in Table 2 below, the spatial distribution of housing differs significantly between the pathways ranging from 43% in infill areas in Pathway 1 to 88% in infill areas in Pathway 3.

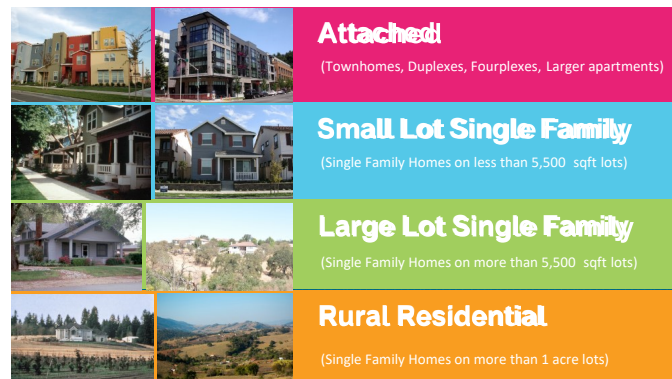
Table 2: Pathway Spatial Distribution								
Community Type	2020 Baseyear		2020-2050 Growth					
	Jobs	Housing Units	Pathway 1		Pathway 2		Pathway 3	
			Jobs	Housing Units	Jobs	Housing Units	Jobs	Housing Units
Center and Corridor Communities	44%	13%	36%	21%	42%	38%	46%	52%
Established Communities	52%	76%	40%	21%	40%	27%	43%	36%
Developing Communities (already under construction)	1%	2%	10%	27%	9%	22%	7%	11%
Potential Developing Communities (not yet under construction)	1%	0%	14%	27%	8%	12%	3%	0%
Rural Residential Communities	2%	7%	1%	4%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Agricultural and Natural Lands	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Another key metric to consider in the spatial distribution of growth between the pathways is the proportion of growth occurring in SACOG’s Green Zones. Green Means Go is a multi-year pilot that aims to lower greenhouse gas emissions in the six-county Sacramento region by accelerating infill development, and reducing and electrifying vehicle trips. It allocates state funding to projects that create more infill housing, increases mobility, and reduces vehicle emissions. Green Means Go funding will be directed to locally-nominated Green Zones, areas that cities and counties have identified for infill development. All 28 local jurisdictions support this program and 23 have already adopted Green Zones. Table 3 below shows that *Pathway 1: Outward Expansion and Limited Infill* has the least growth occurring in Green Zones while pathway *Pathway 3: Focused Infill and Limited Expansion* has the most.

Table 3: Pathway Growth in Green Zones								
	2020 Baseyear		2020-2050 Growth					
	Jobs	Housing Units	Pathway 1		Pathway 2		Pathway 3	
			Jobs	Housing Units	Jobs	Housing Units	Jobs	Housing Units
Growth in Green Zones	44%	10%	36%	19%	42%	36%	46%	49%

What Kind?

Another critical land use decision in the 2025 Blueprint is what the 263,000 new housing units built between 2020 and 2050 will look like. Housing product type ranges in the SACOG region from rural residential homes to attached products like fourplexes and larger apartment buildings (see SACOG’s product type categories to the right). The mix of this housing matters for a variety of reasons.



First and foremost, household composition in the SACOG region has changed in the last 60 years. In 1960, the most common household type was the nuclear family, representing about half of all households with adults living alone or with roommates making up only 23%. Since then, those groups have flipped with nuclear families now making up 24% of households and adults living alone or with roommates making up 37%. This flip has had a tremendous impact on the product types that the region’s residents need, want, and critically, can afford. It has also created a mismatch between household demand and the housing stock, which is much slower to change since homes often remain part of the housing stock for over a century.

The affordability of housing has increasingly become a significant challenge in the SACOG region as housing supply of more attainable housing types has not kept pace with demand. Product type matters for affordability because smaller lot and attached products typically have lower price points due to lower per unit land and construction costs and smaller unit sizes. This general rule is reflected in the average household income in the SACOG region for those living in single family homes vs attached

housing products. In 2019, the average income for households living in single family houses was \$124,910, for townhomes was \$83,586, and for larger multifamily was \$55,384. Due to the changing household composition and the relative affordability of different housing products, it's critical to ensure the region has a variety of housing options. It's why the triple bottom line goal statements include an objective to "identify strategies to address housing affordability by increasing the diversity of housing options available in areas with good access to quality jobs, schools, outdoor space, and with lower exposure to harmful pollutants."

As shown in Table 4 below, the housing products built in the SACOG region over the last two decades have trended away from large lot single family homes towards small lot and attached housing products, reflecting the changing needs of households and relative affordability of different product types. What's more, using area-specific rental and construction costs, the market feasibility of housing allowed under existing general plans favors more attached products than what is currently being built with 79% of market feasible allowed units being small lot or attached housing products.

Table 4: Historical Housing Product Type Construction					
Product Type Split	2001-2007	2008-2015	2016-2019	2020-2021	Market Feasible Units ¹
Rural Residential	6%	7%	6%	6%	2%
Large Lot Single Family	61%	45%	42%	38%	19%
Small Lot Single Family	16%	24%	35%	30%	21%
Attached	18%	24%	17%	26%	58%

¹Based on an SACOG Buildout Inventory, which analyzed market feasibility of product types and locations using location specific rent and building cost data

Product types vary between the pathways, with *Pathway 1: Outward Expansion and Limited Infill* focusing much of new growth on large lot single family homes with little attached units. Extending the emphasis on large lot units over the next 30 years results in a reduction in the proportion of total units that are attached from 31% today to 22% by 2050. *Pathway 3: Focused Infill and Limited Expansion* includes the most new attached units and results in an increase in the proportion of total units that are attached from 31% today to 37% by 2050. This product type divergence is largely the product of allowed uses in the areas of the region that experience significant growth in each of the pathways. Outlying areas, which Pathway 1 is more likely to see growth in, both do not allow as much and do not have a market for attached products. Conversely, infill area, which Pathway 3 focuses growth, allow for more dense product types and typically have a better market for these products as well.

Table 5: Changes to 2050 Housing Splits in Each Pathway				
Product Type Split	2020	Pathway 1 (End State 2050)	Pathway 2 (End State 2050)	Pathway 3 (End State 2050)
Rural Residential	7%	7%	6%	6%
Large Lot Single Family	32%	32%	29%	27%
Small Lot Single Family	31%	39%	31%	30%

Attached	31%	22%	34%	37%
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Resilience and the Rural-Urban Connection

Inextricably linked to the spatial distribution of housing is the consumption of non-urban land for urban uses. The expansion of the existing urban footprint has tradeoffs as some of that land may have climate resiliency risks or may be engaged in something else like farming. As part of the pathways, staff has explored the extent to which each pathway consumes new acres of land in fire risk areas, floodplains, and farmland (see Table 6 below). *Pathway 1: Outward Expansion and Limited Infill* expands the existing urban footprint the most and, as a result, includes the most new growth in these sensitive areas. *Pathway 3: Focused Infill and Limited Expansion* accommodates the vast majority of growth within the existing urban footprint and, as a result, has less growth in these areas.

Relative to Pathway 3, Pathway 1 has over 4 times the acres of growth in fire risk areas, 1.7 times the acres of growth in floodplains, and 2.5 times the consumption of farmland. This has significant implications for disaster risk, economic prosperity, affordability (as home insurance gets more expensive in these areas), and for the agricultural economy of the region. The food and agricultural economy of the SACOG region is valued at \$12 billion, with over 7,200 farms and \$2 billion in farm gate output value. Expanding the urban footprint into these areas poses risks to this economic activity.

Table 6: Pathway Resilience			
Acres of New Growth Located In:	Pathway 1	Pathway 2	Pathway 3
Fire Risk Areas ¹	37,222	11,608	8,890
100-Year Floodplains ²	8,323	5,842	4,891
Farmland ³	20,967	11,305	8,259

¹High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones from the California Office of the State Fire Marshall

²FEMA 100-Year Flood Maps

³Prime farmland, farmland of statewide importance, or farmland of local importance from the [Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program](#).

Access to Opportunity

As part of SACOG's objective to "identify strategies to address housing affordability by increasing the diversity of housing options available in areas with good access to quality jobs, schools, outdoor space, and with lower exposure to harmful pollutants," SACOG evaluated the relationship between growth and high opportunity areas in each pathway. High opportunity areas can be thought of as neighborhoods that maximize the chances of life success if you grow up in them. They have great schools, low pollution burden, and ample access to jobs and services. The California Tax Credit Allocation Committee (TCAC) in conjunction with the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) produces statewide opportunity maps every year that divide the State's census tracts up by how high opportunity they are based on educational, economic, and environmental metrics. The high opportunity census tracts in the SACOG region are overwhelmingly made up of single family neighborhoods. In fact, 75% of existing units, 90% of residential land, and 97% of residential parcels in SACOG's high opportunity census tracts are single family. This has the effect of restricting access to opportunity for households who cannot afford the downpayment on a single family home and indirectly reinforces racial disparities due to the racial wealth gap.

Increasing access to opportunity for lower-income and non-white households is, in part, contingent on increasing the number of attainable housing types created in these areas. Small lot single family and attached housing products, as discussed above, tend to be more affordable due to lower per unit construction and land costs as well as smaller unit sizes. Table 7 shows the number of new small lot single family and attached housing units in each pathway. While *Pathway 1: Outward Expansion and Limited Infill* may include robust growth in high opportunity areas, the sheer number of small lot and attached units in *Pathway 3: Focused Infill and Limited Expansion* results in Pathway 3 having the most new attainable housing units of the pathways. Pathway 3 has over 15,000 more of these units than Pathway 1, which creates more access to opportunity for households with more modest incomes. This also helps to satisfy the triple bottom line goal statement to “better connect the region’s workforce, in particular lower income residents, to jobs and opportunities.”

Table 7: Access to Opportunity			
	Pathway 1	Pathway 2	Pathway 3
New small lot or attached housing units in High Opportunity Areas	85,909	94,440	101,395

¹High Opportunity areas are defined as high or highest resource census tracts from the [2022 Opportunity Maps](#) produced by the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee in conjunction with the State Department of Housing and Community Development and the Fair Housing Task Force.