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TRANSPORTATION  
COMMISSION

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## *Memorandum*

TO: Planning Committee

DATE: June 4, 2010

FR: Executive Director

W. I.

RE: County/Corridor Partnership Process for the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS)

Successful development and implementation of the Bay Area's Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) requires an active partnership between the regional agencies and local jurisdictions. The partnership process proposed in this memorandum is designed to (1) allow each County/Corridor to help tailor the regional-local partnership strategy to best serve the variety of interests of the region and their own County/Corridor, and (2) allow the regional agencies to work effectively with transportation planners at the CMAs, transit agencies, and city planners who are actively managing growth in their jurisdictions to better integrate land use, transportation, air quality, and shoreline planning.

The proposal includes an engagement of local elected officials and key staff at the county and corridor level. If we are successful, this process will:

- Strengthen the linkage between transportation investment and housing/employment growth.
- Confirm the PDA framework as the central strategy to manage growth in the region.
- Share information from existing ongoing work about what incentives, policies and investments are needed for PDA's to be successful.
- Lay the groundwork for local governments' partnership in developing and assigning housing and employment allocations.
- Ensure planning consistency with air quality concerns, Bay adaptation planning, and transit sustainability.

### **Working with Local Leadership**

Under the auspices of the Joint Policy Committee (JPC), elected officials representing ABAG, MTC, BAAQMD and BCDC will convene and facilitate a leadership roundtable in each county with other elected officials, CMA board members, City Managers and transit agency general managers.

The leadership roundtable meetings are targeted for the June-August 2010 time frame and will be planned and scheduled with staff from the regional agencies, CMAs, and local jurisdictions. At these meetings elected officials and staff will discuss the principles, schedules, and guidelines required by SB 375, the relationship between development of the SCS and the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) process, the identification of key public transit corridors, including those that cross county lines, and the future partnership process for inter-County transportation and land use planning. The participants will also discuss the process for ongoing partnership with local elected officials through the development and adoption of the SCS.

### **Working at the Staff Level – (County/Corridor Working Group)**

We anticipated that in most counties this process will utilize the CMA or county-level planning director groups that are already in place, and supplemented as necessary. It is expected that the CMA's will have an important organizing role in developing the structure of these meetings. The regional agencies have already

begun working with the CMAs to engage local government staff and will continue to coordinate with them to shape the agenda and structure of the County/Corridor Working Group meetings.

In addition to meetings held at the county level, the regional agencies will hold meetings of the Regional Advisory Working Group (RAWG) and the Executive Working Group, and engage public interest stakeholders throughout the SCS process.

### **Defining the Corridors**

One of the advantages of the County/Corridor approach is to leverage jurisdictional knowledge with the County structure while also recognizing the challenge of planning across County lines. MTC and ABAG will draft preliminary corridor maps based on major transit and transportation corridors, commute sheds, clusters of PDAs, and places with high levels of interaction. These draft maps will be presented to open or continue conversations on the specific corridor opportunities and challenges, and as a visual foundation for discussing the allocation of growth. Each Corridor likely will include a mix of place types (i.e. regional center, neighborhood center, rural center, etc.) with different capabilities to absorb population and employment growth. The County/Corridor Working groups will design a process to define their respective corridor boundaries and process for determining how to distribute growth within each corridor.

ABAG and MTC will provide baseline regional, county and corridor information such as the jobs-housing forecast, economic and demographic information, employment center and commute patterns, trip generations, transit corridor information, transit sustainability issues, PDA Assessments, and T 2035 investments. In addition to the baseline information for the County and Corridor, the SCS process will determine key metrics relevant to SB 375 (e.g., emission reduction and housing targets and the RTP (economic, environmental and equity targets).

### **Inter-Regional Travel**

One of the key issues for the region is to provide sufficient housing closer to the job base in the Bay Area and stem a trend toward in-commuting from the Central Valley where housing and land costs are much lower. These long commutes, if unabated, could result in extreme congestion on major highways that the Bay Area depends on both for goods movement and for internal circulation. Planning to reduce mega-regional sprawl will require a deeper understanding of how the inter-regional economies work as well as the incentives for persons to engage in long commutes into the Bay Area. While this requires attention from the regional agencies, this issue also will be raised in the counties within and adjacent to the region that are most affected.

### **Next Steps**

1. Confirm or modify this proposed approach based on discussion at the Executive Working Group meeting on June 7.
2. Letter from ABAG President and MTC Chair to members of the ABAG Executive Board, MTC Commission, BAAQMD Board, and BCDC Board announcing the partnership process and requesting the members' participation as conveners of Leadership roundtables;
3. Regional agency staff work with CMA staff in each County to handle meeting logistics and content.

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Steve Heminger