



**Item #06-3-4
Action**

Land Use & Housing Committee

February 27, 2006

Blueprint Project: 2006 Blueprint Implementation Tasks

Issue: Staff has compiled a list of tasks to be completed or initiated in 2006 as part of Blueprint implementation. This is an update of the 2005 Blueprint Implementation Tasks.

Recommendation: That the Land Use & Housing Committee recommend that the SACOG Board of Directors approve the 2006 Blueprint Implementation Tasks.

Discussion: After the SACOG Board adopted the Blueprint concept map and guiding principles, staff compiled a list of Blueprint implementation tasks for calendar year 2005. These tasks are based on the "Next Steps" section of the Blueprint guiding principles, which outlines activities that are expected to occur related to using the data, analysis and growth concepts that have been developed through the Blueprint process.

It is now time to update the task list for 2006. The attached document summarizes the proposed implementation tasks for 2006, including estimates on staff time and budget. All of the tasks listed in the document are carried over from the 2005 list, as many of them are ongoing activities.

Approved by:

Mike McKeever
Executive Director

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Attachment

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BLUEPRINT IMPLEMENTATION TASKS FOR 2006

1. PLANNERS SEMINAR SERIES

Brief Description: SACOG will continue to conduct its Planners Committee 2-hour seminars and its trimester (every four months) half-day seminars for Planning Commissioners and Elected Officials. The Planners Committee workshops will take place approximately bi-monthly (as opposed to 2005 when workshops took place every month). Staff believes a less frequent schedule would allow for development of richer seminar topics and sustained high attendance for both event-types. Staff will develop the schedule of topics and identify panel members for each program. Presentations from each seminar would be posted on the Blueprint website and summarized in a write-up for the Regional Report. A longer (2-4 page summary) will be incorporated into a Best Practices tool-box (see Task 2. "Tool-box of Best Planning & Development Practices".)

Timeline and Level of Effort/Budget: Both the bi-monthly planning staff workshops and the Planning Commissioners seminars will begin again in summer, 2006 (after the MTP workshops). SACOG staff effort would include seminar preparation, attendance, and summary writing. Total staff time estimated at 0.1 FTE.

2. TOOL-BOX OF BEST PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES

Brief description: Two "tools" will be developed in 2006. The first is a publication of summaries from the Planners Seminar series. The series presents valuable best practices and Blueprint implementation experiences from the public and private sectors. The presentations will be summarized as topical briefs and posted on the Blueprint website.

The second tool will be a form-based code workbook. Form-based codes have started to attract a good deal of interest in California and this region. The simplest explanation of the concept is that the code uses graphics and standards to define the scale, or form, of new development, while at the same time makes the uses allowed in any given area much more flexible than a typical zoning code. The specific standards vary in different areas of a city/county. Form-based codes also typically provide for significant public input during their creation, but then allow more projects to proceed through the entitlement process "by right" rather than through discretionary actions that include public hearings and often appeals to the elected body.

Three stages of work are currently conceived. Stage 1, which is currently being conducted, is the scoping phase. A consultant team has met with several jurisdictions within the region to understand the realities of implementing smart growth, and identifying ways that form-based codes could remove obstacles. This stage will result in a specific scope of work for the next two stages. Pending the consultant team's final report to the Planners Committee, Stages 2 and 3 are envisioned as follows: Stage 2 will provide for educational workshops on form-based codes and seek a wider level of feedback from throughout the region; Stage 3 will develop model form based codes for 3 to 4 prototype communities in the region. The result of this work will be a workbook that local governments may use as a template for further location-specific form-based code development.

Timeline and Level of Effort/Budget: Stage 1 already had \$25,000 budgeted from 2005 for consultant assistance for conducting interviews and developing a scope of work for Stages 2 and 3. SACOG staff has assisted them in arranging interviews and presenting the consultant team's findings. Stage 2 is projected to cost \$30,000, of which a tentatively awarded National Endowment for the Arts grant will cover \$20,000. Staff will also assist in setting up education workshops and consultant selection. The Stage 3 scope of work and budget is currently being developed (as part of Stage 1). Total staff time estimated at 0.1 FTE.

3. ELECTRONIC PORTAL

Brief description: This SACOG-hosted website, www.regionalgateway.org, will link users to news articles, newsletters, other websites, discussion boards, local development and planning activities, and data related to smart growth and Blueprint. The target audience includes planners, elected officials, planning commissioners, media and the public. A periodic electronic newsletter would alert subscribers to new implementation efforts in the region, linking subscribers to more information through the portal website.

Timeline and Level of Effort/Budget: The website is fully operational, and the official launch is scheduled for March 2006. Staff time includes initial website set-up and design, review/editing of website, and weekly maintenance. Total staff time estimated at 0.1 FTE.

4. ASSISTANCE TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN MAKING 2030 MAPS AND DEVELOPING IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Brief Description: SACOG staff will continue to provide technical assistance to help local governments develop a 2030 map and a strategy for implementing Blueprint. This will involve work with local government staff, but also the elected bodies and possibly Planning Commissions. Some local governments may also decide to involve stakeholders or the public in some manner in this process, and SACOG would need to support this outreach if it is desired. The countywide planners subcommittee meetings may be reconvened to coordinate the maps between local governments.

Timeline and Level of Effort/Budget: A draft 2030 map and 28 implementation strategies will be completed by September 2006. Travel modeling, map refinements, and Board action will conclude by November 2006. Staff effort includes local visits and technical mapping and modeling. Total staff time estimated at 2.7 FTE.

5. GENERAL AND COMMUNITY PLAN ASSISTANCE

Brief Description: Several jurisdictions are in the process of updating their General Plans and have requested and received assistance from SACOG. The levels and types of assistance requested vary. Staff has already provided PLACE³S training to two local governments and mapping analysis to another. Many Blueprint implementation activities described elsewhere in this document will directly help local governments to update their General Plans, including the software training and documentation and the mapping and analysis SACOG staff will do to support the process of making the 2030 land use map.

Timeline and Level of Effort/Budget: Staff could provide training for technical set-up of a PLACE³S workshop, PLACE³S training, limited on-site technical assistance during workshops, limited public workshop facilitation, and a liaison to a local government to serve as on-going member of its staff oversight team for the planning effort. Total staff time estimated at 0.3 FTE.

6. DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

Brief Description: SACOG continues to receive requests to review individual development proposals for their “consistency” with the Blueprint Map and principles. These developments are in various stages of the development review process. Currently, SACOG only provides this service when a local government requests it. Staff believes that to truly embed the voluntary Blueprint program into the local government process of reviewing development applications, it would be better if SACOG routinely commented on development projects rather than continue a second year with the current ad hoc system. In 2005, staff explored different ideas for an ongoing development review process and the Housing and Land Use Committee generally supported a re-working of the current system. This year, staff will develop a systematic approach to development review in cooperation with our partner air, transportation and transit agencies, which currently conduct their own development review processes. We will continue to review projects under the current system until a new one is developed.

Timeline and Level of Effort/Budget: In most cases SACOG staff examines our modeling data from SACMET and PLACE³S and provides a comment letter summarizing how the idea or site plan compares with Blueprint. Sometimes this service includes meetings with local government staff and/or representatives from the applicant and/or public testimony at the council/board hearing for the project. Total staff time estimated at 0.2 FTE.

7. BENCHMARKING AND REGIONAL DATABASE MAINTENANCE

Brief Description: The benchmarking system to track the region's growth will be developed out of our maintained land use database and residential property tracking systems. Two major enhancements to this program are proposed. First, a web-based mapping service can be developed to show the new construction data alongside GIS maps of local zoning, general plans and Blueprint land uses. This will allow local governments and leaders in the development community to visibly track growth throughout our region. This database could also support SACOG and other agencies in their development review efforts.

A second enhancement would add information from the Hanley-Wood (formerly Meyers Group) database to the web-based service that provides information on the type of units being constructed.

Timeline and Level of Effort/Budget: The budget for the web-based mapping would be a one-time expense for consultant assistance in the range of \$100,000. If internal staff resources could be reallocated, staff could build the system with approximately 15 weeks of combined time and \$10,000 in software expenses. The cost for the second enhancement, the Hanley-Wood (formerly Meyers Group) database, is a \$15,000 annual license agreement. The major effort for SACOG staff involves working with our member building departments that do not currently have electronic reporting abilities. Total staff time estimated at 1 FTE.

8. BLUEPRINT/PLACE³S MANUAL

Brief Description: SACOG needs to provide user documentation for the PLACE³S software that will be used to train member jurisdictions on PLACE³S. Staff will create a written manual that describes the PLACE³S planning method as it was used in Blueprint, software and data for neighborhood through city/community-scale planning efforts.

Timeline and Level of Effort/Budget: The CEC has funding to hire a consultant to write significant portions of the manual under the direction of CEC and SACOG staff. The Data and Analysis portion of the manual will be completed by summer 2006. The other two sections – Planning & Design and Public Outreach –will be completed by the end of the year. Total staff time estimated at 0.1 FTE.

9. MODEL INTEGRATION

Brief description: As part of SACOG's continued enhancement of its modeling tools, a travel model and energy module will be integrated into PLACE³S. Travel model integration is underway and will soon be available in the MTP public workshops. Ecointeractive is adding the energy module using a separate funding source and SACOG has volunteered to pilot test the module. Both models will be available to member jurisdictions as part of the PLACE³S software. SACOG staff will also create a work program for the integration of its infrastructure cost and water demand models into PLACE³S.

Timeline and Level of Effort/Budget: The travel model team includes Ecointeractive, Fehr & Peers, and Citilabs. Ecointeractive will develop the energy module and SACOG staff will pilot test it. This will result in 12 months of free maintenance for SACOG (a \$60,000 benefit) in exchange for ¼ FTE for the duration of the project. Staff will develop a work program for the infrastructure and water demand model integration. The travel model is scheduled for completion in March 2006. All other tasks are scheduled for completion later. Total staff time estimated at 0.6 FTE.