



S A C O G

SACOG Board of Directors

Item #08-8-23
Workshop

August 12, 2008

Presentation of Regional Form-Based Codes Handbook

Issue: Work on the SACOG Form-Based Codes Handbook is complete. Unless there are changes suggested by the Committee or the Board, the attached Handbook will be the final product.

Recommendation: None. This item is for information only.

Committee Action/Discussion: The final internal draft of the SACOG Form-Based Codes Handbook is ready for the Board to review. (The draft the Board is asked to review may be slightly modified for typographical errors, an updated bibliography section, copyright information, etc., before it is publicly distributed.) At the beginning of 2007 after an RFP selection process, the SACOG Board approved the contract of David Evans Associates, along with SERA Architects and Parsons Brinckerhoff, to develop a form-based code handbook. The contract was for \$100,000 of SACOG funds, plus another \$20,000 from a National Endowment of the Arts grant. The purpose of the Handbook is to provide guidance to local government planners and interested parties on how to develop and implement a form-based code for appropriate project areas in their communities.

Form-based codes are an alternative to “conventional zoning” as a means to regulate the physical development of communities. Conventional zoning relies on narrative descriptions and lists of prohibited and allowed uses, and has led to many different – sometimes conflicting – interpretations of what was intended. Form-based coding is a more graphic-oriented approach that focuses on physical dimensions, form, massing, appearance and relationship to the street; it is less concerned with the actual use of the building. Form-based codes require that public and stakeholder participation take place early in the development of the code so that all parties have the same understanding of what is desired from conception through construction.

The draft Handbook contains three chapters: (1) an introduction to what is a form-based code, when to use them and what to do; (2) the steps in developing a form-based code; and (3) four prototype case studies in the Sacramento region and the thought process behind addressing real-life planning issues. The four case studies are urban infill (Akali Flat in downtown Sacramento), suburban infill (Auburn Blvd. in Citrus Heights), greenfield development (Creekview in Roseville), and small rural downtown (Downtown and Old Town Auburn). Two rounds of public meetings were held in each of the four case study areas for input. Also, two workshops with the SACOG Planners Committee were held to provide instruction on the Handbook contents. A dozen senior-level planners from throughout the region reviewed the earlier drafts of the Handbook. As soon as two relatively minor copyright issues are resolved, the final version of the Handbook will be publicly released.

Marcy McInelly of SERA Architects, one of the Handbook consultants, will make an introductory presentation on form-based codes to the Board.

Approved by:

Mike McKeever
Executive Director

MM:GC:ts
Attachment

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Attachment A

The Form-Based Codes Handbook
is available on the attached CD
or you may request a paper copy.

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information is
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for public distribution
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