

Regional Forum To Explore Visions for Future

April 30 Event Expected to Attract 1,400 People from Six-County Region

THE FIRST REGIONAL-SCALE BLUEPRINT WORKSHOP is set to unfold at the SACOG/Valley Vision 2004 Regional Forum on Friday, April 30, in Sacramento. The daylong forum, themed "Tall Order: Choices for Our Future," will explore preferred land use and transportation scenarios for the future of the six-county Sacramento region.

Building on the momentum from 37 neighborhood and countywide workshops, the Forum will mark the next step in the Sacramento Blueprint project. More than 1,400 business leaders, local government officials and community members are expected to attend.

"The neighborhood and county workshops showed there is a tremendous level of interest in planning for our region's future," said Christopher Cabaldon, chair of the SACOG Board of Directors.

Forum participants will examine input from

the earlier workshops and hear the latest thinking on planning, growth and other key issues.

"We see the Forum as a great opportunity to take a global look at what we've learned so far and begin crafting a cohesive, thoughtful vision for our region's future," Cabaldon said. "to arrive at a clearer picture of what land use and transportation should look like for our region."

The Forum will feature keynote speaker Malcolm Gladwell, author of the New York Times best seller *"The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference."*

The 2004 Forum will be held Friday, April 30, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom of the Sacramento Convention Center. Registration information is available at www.sacog.org or by contacting Liz Baidoo at (916) 340-6237 or ebaidoo@sacog.org.

TALL
REGIONAL FORUM
2 0 0 4
ORDER
CHOICES FOR
OUR FUTURE

Valley Vision Honored

The Board of Directors acknowledged Valley Vision's outstanding contribution to public outreach for the Blueprint neighborhood and countywide workshops during its February Board Meeting. Pictured are Valley Vision staff Katie Hoffmann, Susan Frazier, Karen Baker and Valley Vision Board Member Tom Stallard.



Legislative Update

Community Outreach Program

SACOG HAS CONTRACTED WITH GONZALEZ PUBLIC AFFAIRS and the Inter-Tribal Council of California to develop a Community Outreach Plan for the agency, and to conduct other community outreach activities.

The purpose of this project is to increase and encourage the participation of the region's disadvantaged, minority, disabled and elderly communities in the transportation planning process.

The timeline for completion of these efforts is as follows:

March 17, 2004

- First Draft Community Outreach Plan presented to SACOG Board

April 15, 2004

- Final Draft Community Outreach Plan presented to SACOG Board

June 17, 2004

- SACOG Board Adopts Final Community Outreach Plan

July 1, 2004

- Updated Community Outreach Plan Implemented

Working with Gonzalez Public Affairs and the



Inter-Tribal Council to develop the Community Outreach Plan, and to encourage attendance at SACOG's Annual Forum are: Asian Resources, Inc., the Gray Panthers of Sacramento, Burruss Associates, La Familia, and Resources for Independent Living.

The Inter-Tribal Council will also coordinate and facilitate a government-to-government meeting of tribal leaders and the SACOG Board.

Community members within the SACOG region are encouraged to participate in this project. To get involved, please contact Joan Medeiros at www.sacog.org, jmedeiros@sacog.org, or at (916) 340-6207.

MESSAGE FROM THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Coming Full Circle

EXACTLY ONE YEAR AGO THIS MARCH, under the leadership of former Chair Bill Hughes, SACOG launched the Blueprint Workshop series at Citrus Heights City Hall. More than 150 people, brought to the table by our civic partner Valley Vision, packed the Citrus Heights' City Council Chambers, and we were off. Between the Citrus Heights workshop last year and the workshop in early February, there were 37 well-attended dynamic workshops with participants spanning the spectrum of the region's residents. How can you possibly follow an act like the Blueprint Workshops? With the 2004 Regional Forum, "TALL Order: Choices for Our Future," to be held April 30 at the Sacramento Convention Center. The daylong workshop will tie together the diverse perspectives expressed during the neighborhood and countywide workshops into a discussion of a preferred growth scenario for the entire Sacramento Region. Fourteen hundred people will be working together to craft a preferred regional future – aided by the most advanced electronic polling technology available. For inspiration, the thought-provoking Malcolm Gladwell, author of "The Tipping Point," will be the featured guest speaker. The Forum promises to be a sell-out event.

Finally, the workshops would not have been such a resounding success without the efforts of our partners at Valley Vision. To honor the outstanding efforts on behalf of Blueprint, the Board of Directors presented Valley Vision with a special recognition award at its February Board meeting. I would like to echo the Board's kudos and thank Valley Vision for its leadership during the workshops series and look forward to their continued contribution to the Regional Forum. I look forward to seeing you at the Forum as well. I can assure you it will truly be another class act.



Martin Tuttle

MARTIN TUTTLE

BULLETIN BOARD

Hughes to Be Honored

Former SACOG Board Chair and Citrus Heights Mayor Bill Hughes will be memorialized by the City of Citrus Heights on May 8, when the city will rename its Police Service Center in his honor. Hughes, who was key to the founding of the Blueprint Project and to the expansion of the SACOG Board, died unexpectedly last fall. For more information please call the Citrus Heights Public Information Office, at 916-727-4703

Morales Expresses Thanks

Outgoing Caltrans Director Jeff Morales visited the February Transit Coordinating Committee to thank area transit managers for participating in the Transit Pass Payroll Deduction Program that provides pre-tax transit passes to Caltrans employees. It is a local success that will soon be expanded statewide.



Matt Carpenter, SACOG; Mindy Jackson, El Dorado County Transit Agency; Keith Martin, Yuba/Sutter Transit; Peter Steinert, Caltrans; Christian Kent, City of Elk Grove; Barbara Bechtold, SACOG. Not pictured: Anne Novotny, SACOG; Mike Wiley, Sacramento Regional Transit; June Gilmore, South County Transit; Toni Claybourne, Caltrans; Jeff Morales Caltrans; and Terry Bassett, Yolo County Transit District.

BOARD ACTIONS

In its January meeting the Board of Directors took the following actions:

- Approved the release of the fiscal year 2004/05 Draft Overall Work Program (OWP) for public review by SACOG members, planning partners, and funding agencies. The public review period begins on February 27 and ends March 29.
- Approved the milestones for the Blueprint Project for 2004.

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City of Wheatland
City of Winters
City of Woodland
City of Yuba City

SACOG Board Eyes Housing “Compact” To Improve Affordability

WITH HOUSING COSTS IN THE SACRAMENTO REGION SKYROCKETING, SACOG is exploring ways to encourage more affordable housing in area cities and counties. One concept gaining momentum is a voluntary housing compact for the region that would commit local jurisdictions to making a greater share of new housing affordable.

The compact, formally known as the Sacramento Regional Compact for Production of Affordable Housing, is part of a draft affordable housing policy the SACOG Board of Directors will consider adopting in March, pending a recommendation by the Board’s Housing and Land Use and Legislation Public Affairs Committees. It would establish a voluntary minimum production standard for affordable housing and provide financial incentives for local cities and counties that exceed the standard.

“For decades, SACOG has prepared a regional housing needs plan every five years to assign fair shares of affordable housing to cities and counties. It was then up to them to zone land sufficient to accommodate their fair share,” SACOG Planning Director, Ken Hough said. “The exercise didn’t often result in affordable housing being built. This compact is designed to achieve actual production of affordable housing.”

Recent figures from the California Association of Realtors show the median home price in the Sacramento region

increased 16 percent over the previous 12 months. That increase—together with past years of double-digit increases in home prices—is putting housing out of reach for a growing number of households in the region.

The higher prices mean that only 38 percent of households in the Sacramento area can afford to purchase the median-



priced home today. Twelve months ago, 43 percent of the Sacramento region’s households could afford the median-priced home at that time.

Home purchase prices also affect the cost of renting a home. The Fair-Market Housing Rate of the Sacramento region has risen to \$950 for a two-bedroom apartment. The Fair-Market Rate, as defined by the federal Housing and Urban Development Department, is the level at which 50 percent of standard-quality housing units are rented. To afford that rent in the Sacramento region, a house-

hold needs to earn \$38,000 a year. A person earning minimum wage would have to work 108 hours a week to meet the rent at that level.

Under the proposed housing compact, jurisdictions that sign on would agree to make 10 percent of all new housing construction qualify as affordable. At least 4 percent of new housing would have to be affordable to very low-income families, or those earning less than 50 percent of the region’s median annual household income of about \$59,800 for a family of four. Another 4 percent would have to be affordable to families that earn up to 80 percent of the median family income. If necessary up to 2 percent of the 10 percent goal could be met by housing affordable to families earning 80 percent to 120 percent of the same figure.

As a reward for exceeding the standard, participating cities and counties would be eligible for potential state funding dedicated to affordable housing. SACOG would seek legislation allocating \$10 million of the state’s \$75 million Workforce Housing Reward Program funds to the SACOG region for the program. Legislation also would be sought to allow cities and counties to self-certify that their housing elements meet the requirements of state law.

Transportation Study Highlights Needs of Elderly, Disabled

FROM LIMITED TRANSIT OPTIONS TO NON-PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY INTERSECTIONS, the region’s fast-growing elderly and disabled populations face an array of mobility challenges. SACOG is working with local stakeholders to document senior and disabled mobility needs in the region and identify ways to overcome barriers.

SACOG hosted open houses in Auburn, Davis, Marysville and Sacramento in December to gather public input on the Senior and Disabled Transportation Study now underway. Feedback from the outreach period revealed a diversity of chal-

lenges affecting mobility for the elderly and disabled in both urban and rural parts of the region. SACOG Associate Planner Matt Carpenter said transportation options vary significantly within the region. Urban Sacramento struggles to meet growing demands for accessible transportation services, while smaller communities and rural areas lack transit alternatives to driving.

Other challenges include jurisdictional boundaries for some transit services, which do not always align with where people need to go. In some urban areas, busy streets and intimidating intersections

can keep elderly and disabled residents from reaching light rail stations and other transit stops.

“Fortunately, innovative local efforts such as Paratransit, Inc.’s ‘Mobility Training Program’ help elders and disabled persons overcome many challenges with the current transportation system,” Carpenter said. “As the region becomes grayer there is a real need to promote smarter development and alternatives to driving that support the freedom to travel independently where and when you want.”

Regional Report



FEBRUARY 2004

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To comment on items in the Regional Report, you may contact Phyllis Miller at 916.340.6224, or e-mail regionalreport@sacog.org.

Community Design Applications Due April 16

APPLICATIONS ARE DUE APRIL 16 for SACOG's Community Design Program, an innovative transportation funding initiative approved last year by SACOG's Board of Directors.

Aimed at funding planning and infrastructure projects that promote less driving and more walking, biking, transit use and other options, the Community Design Program will award \$12 million over the next two years to support land use projects or plans that lead to livable, balanced and sustainable communities. Public agencies, with or without partnerships with developers and private non-profit groups, are eligible to apply for the funding.

With an additional 1 million people and 600,000 jobs projected for the Sacramento region over the next 20 years, the local landscape will undergo significant economic, social and environmental transformation. To offset potential negatives such as worsening traffic congestion, air pollution and loss of open space, SACOG is seeking strategies that reduce reliance on automobiles and increase the level of bicycling, walking and use of public transit and neighborhood electric vehicles.

The program reflects the growing recognition that land use influences travel behavior. "If it is convenient for people to travel to common destinations by walking, biking,

public transit or with shorter auto trips, we can reap air quality and congestion-relief benefits at the local and regional scale," said Nancy Kays, SACOG Senior Planner.

Examples of projects that could be funded as part of the Community Design Program include sidewalks, plazas, streetscapes, bicycle lanes, transit stops, traffic calming measures, electric vehicle charging stations, and shared-use parking garages.

Applications for Community Design funding must be endorsed by the appropriate county transportation agency in the applicant's county before they are submitted to SACOG. Two committees formed from existing SACOG advisory committees—a Community Design Working Group and a Project Selection Advisory Committee—will make recommendations to the SACOG Board of Directors on grant awards for the program.

Grant awards are expected to be announced in mid June, with grant funding available for use by October. More about the Community Design Program is available at www.sacog.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Wednesday, March 3
10 a.m.
Transportation and Air Quality Committee

Thursday, March 4
1:30 p.m.
Financing Corporation Committee
Administration Committee

Monday, March 8
10 a.m.
Housing and Land Use Committee
Legislation and Public Affairs Committee

Thursday, March 11
9 a.m.
Blueprint Regional Planners Committee

Thursday, March 18
9 a.m.
Board of Directors

Thursday, March 25
1 p.m.
Blueprint Regional Planners Committee

Thursday, March 25
2 p.m.
Regional Planning Partnership

All meetings listed, unless otherwise noted, are located in the SACOG Board Room, 1415 "L" Street, Suite 300, Sacramento.

Note: Dates, times and locations are subject to change. Please call SACOG at 916.321.9000 to confirm, or visit the calendar on our website at www.sacog.org/calendar.