



**Land Use and Natural Resources
Committee**
Meeting Date: 10/4/2018
Agenda Item No.: 2018-October-10.

Subject: Blueprint Implementation Activities (Est. time: 0 minutes)

Receive and File

Prepared by: Jennifer Hargrove

Approved by: Kacey Lizon

Attachments: Yes

1. Issue:

Update on SACOG's Blueprint implementation land use activities.

2. Recommendation:

None, this item is for information only.

3. Background/Analysis:

The purpose of this item is to regularly inform the board of SACOG land use related activities in support of local implementation of the Blueprint principles. SACOG conducts the following Blueprint Implementation Land Use Activities in response to requests from member agencies and/or developers or non-governmental organizations: (1) provision of data and/or technical support to member agencies implementing the Blueprint; (2) review and comment on development proposals regarding their consistency with the Blueprint principles or the Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS); and (3) educational presentations on the Blueprint.

4. Discussion/Analysis:

In August and September, SACOG staff conducted the following Blueprint Implementation land use activities:

- At the request of the City of Sacramento, provided public testimony at the Planning and Design Commission supporting the draft Transit-Oriented Development Ordinance.
- Provided consultation to the City of Sacramento on their fiscal impact analysis project, which is examining the financial impact of various development types in the city.
- Completed the application review process for the Community Design Funding Program.
- Worked with recipients of \$100,000 non-competitive Community Design Grants to wrap up remaining grant activities.

- Assisted City of Isleton with background data and mapping for General Plan Update.
- Provided comments on the City of Elk Grove's Draft General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR). A copy of the comments is provided in Attachment A.
- Continued monitoring Round 4 of the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) grant program. The Notice of Funding Availability is expected to be released soon with applications due in early 2019.

5. Fiscal Impact/Grant Information:

This program is budgeted in SACOG's adopted Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Overall Work Plan (OWP) and budget.

6. This staff report aligns with the following SACOG Work Plan Goals:

3. Assist Economic Development Strategies

ATTACHMENTS:

Description

Attachment A



September 26, 2018

City of Elk Grove
Attn: Christopher Jordan, AICP, Director of Strategic Planning and Innovation
8401 Laguna Palms Way
Elk Grove, CA 95758

Re: Comments on the Draft General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report

Dear Mr. Jordan,

Thank you for inviting SACOG's comments on the Draft General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). The basis for our comments is the Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS) and Blueprint. SACOG's primary responsibility is developing and implementing the MTP/SCS, a document that establishes transportation spending priorities throughout the region. The MTP/SCS must be based on the most likely land use pattern to be built over the 20+ year planning period, and it must conform with federal and state air quality regulations. The foundation for the MTP/SCS land use forecast is local government general plans, community plans, specific plans, and other local policies and regulations. Other market and regulatory/policy variables that are considered help refine the sum of the local plans in order to determine the most likely future development pattern for a specific period of time. The Blueprint vision is based on the principles of smart growth and is intended to give general direction on how the region should develop to reap the benefits of the Blueprint Preferred Scenario (and related MTP/SCS). Implementation of the Blueprint vision depends greatly on the efforts of cities and counties to implement that vision through local plans and projects. The MTP/SCS and Blueprint are in alignment with each other because of these local efforts.

The current Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (2016 MTP/SCS) was adopted in February 2016. The 2016 MTP/SCS includes a transportation project list and forecast of housing and employment expected through 2036. The Draft General Plan Land Use Diagram and Transportation Network Diagram includes potential growth areas and proposed transportation projects that are not included in the MTP/SCS. In general, it is not uncommon that a General Plan will include more growth and transportation projects than what is in the MTP/SCS. General Plans typically envision the ultimate build out of the jurisdiction whereas the MTP/SCS is a financially constrained plan for a particular period of time, is updated every four years, and is subject to a transportation conformity requirement under the federal Clean Air Act. As you know, SACOG is midway through its quadrennial update of the MTP/SCS and will continue

Auburn
Citrus Heights
Colfax
Davis
El Dorado County
Elk Grove
Folsom
Galt
Isleton
Live Oak
Lincoln
Loomis
Marysville
Placer County
Placerville
Rancho Cordova
Rocklin
Roseville
Sacramento
Sacramento County
Sutter County
West Sacramento
Wheatland
Winters

to work with City of Elk Grove to determine if there is a need to update the project list and/or projections for the City in the 2020 MTP/SCS.

SACOG is supportive of the City's efforts to grow jobs to balance the currently high ratio of housing to jobs. In addition to the quality of life benefits residents get when they have jobs and services close where they live, we know there is a strong connection between land use patterns, travel behavior, and air quality. Specifically, certain land use strategies, such as jobs-housing balance, lead to increased walking, biking, and transit use, shorter automobile trips, and reduced mobile-source air pollution. For the region to realize the vehicle miles travel reduction, congestion reduction, and air pollution reductions that the MTP/SCS achieves, it is important for communities that currently have a low ratio of jobs to housing, such as Elk Grove, to plan for and attract enough job growth over time to minimize the need for long-distance commuting out of the city. To ensure that the City implements the vision of the Draft General Plan, we would like to work with the City on adding strong, measurable, implementation-focused policies. Specifically, we recommend that the City include policies around the timing and phasing of the proposed "Study Areas." Policies that require phased growth encourage a complete neighborhood and can be used to help the City ensure its goal of more employment is being met before a significant number of new homes are added in this area. Examples of this type of policy could include timing and conditions for when development can occur in relation to the build out of the Southeast Policy Area, establishing thresholds for employment and/or neighborhood serving commercial that must be reached before additional housing growth can occur, or roadway usage metrics. We appreciate the discussions that we've had on this to date and would like the opportunity to work with the City in the coming months to incorporate such policies into the General Plan.

Additionally, the "Study Areas" outside the existing limits encompass a larger area than the future urbanized area that the Blueprint Preferred Scenario envisioned post-2050. We encourage the City to implement strong and clear policies around any potential future development of these areas for the reasons stated above, and also because research from our Rural-Urban Connection Strategy (RUCS) project indicates that the more certainty there is about the edge of future urbanization, the lesser the impact will be on neighboring farming operations. A higher percentage of land is more likely to remain in active agriculture if there is some long-term certainty that farming is an economically viable use of the land. As a region, we should do all we can to support agriculture, which is one of our few tradable industries. We also know that development speculation can have a ripple effect on agriculture, so strong policies related to the City's intentions beyond the Study Areas would have multiple benefits.

This MTP/SCS update is connected to a Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) cycle as well. The Draft General Plan shows most of the City's current RHNA being accommodated in a concentration of land in the Laguna Ridge and Southeast Policy Area new growth areas. In light of the legislative changes of the 2017 State Housing Package, concentrating the sites in this way is likely to be problematic for the City because of the new "no net loss" provision. This provision stipulates that if a site identified for lower income units is built at market rate, or even at a lesser number of affordable units, the City must "identify and make available" a new site within 180 days. This would entail rezoning a different site to accommodate the lower-income units that could no longer be accommodated on the original site. We strongly recommend the City use the opportunity of the General Plan Update to add additional by-right multi-family sites in more locations throughout the City.

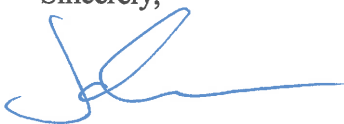
It is evident from the Draft General Plan that the City is committed to, and supportive of, building transit service, including new bus rapid transit, light rail, and commuter rail options. In the draft document, Policy

LU-6-8 is supporting transit-friendly uses and densities to support future light rail. SACOG is supportive of the City's effort to plan for future transit. However, a robust transit system, including funding for it, is dependent on supportive land uses. To support the City's transit goals, we suggest strengthening that policy and making additional changes to help implementation of such policies. Specifically, we recommend increases to the allowed densities near transit, exclusion of auto-oriented uses, and providing objective standards for infill projects. Village Commercial Mixed Use and Residential Mixed Use are the two primary land uses centered around the potential future light rail alignment. These uses have a minimum density of 15 units per acre and a maximum of 40 units per acre. We suggest a minimum of 20 units per acres to be supportive of future transit. Also, we would like to see additional policies around what specific uses are most desired near the future transit areas and what uses are prohibited (such as gas stations, car washes, mini storage, and other auto-oriented uses). This type of specificity is essential to good implementation of Policy LU-6-8. We have examples of these types of policies from other jurisdictions in our region and would be happy to share or discuss further with you. Related, policies like Policy LU-2-4, which "requires new development infill projects to be compatible with the character of surrounding areas and neighborhoods..." can be at odds with increasing densities near transit and make it difficult to implement other policies in the draft plan. Instead, we would suggest providing objective standards and more clarity on what type of uses are and are not allowed and are or are not transit supportive.

Lastly, we commend the City for being one of the first in our region to develop guidelines for implementing SB 743. However, we would like to have a better understanding of the City's Draft Transportation Analysis. Because it is a new law, we would like to have a meeting with you dedicated to this. We believe it is imperative that both SACOG and the City understand how the City's Draft Transportation Analysis Guidelines relate to the regional framework for implementing SB 743.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment and for continuing to engage us in this important process. We look forward to further discussions with the City. Please don't hesitate to contact myself or Kacey Lizon, Planning Manager at klizon@sacog.org or 916-340-6265 if you have further questions.

Sincerely,



James Corless
Chief Executive Officer