



Land Use & Natural Resources Committee

Meeting Date: December 6, 2018

Agenda Item No.: 2018-December-11

Blueprint Implementation Activities

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 and discussion.

3. Background/Analysis:

The purpose of this item is to regularly inform the Committee 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 MTP/SCS; and 3) educational presentations on the Blueprint.

4. Discussion/Analysis:

In November, SACOG staff conducted the following Blueprint Implementation land use activities:

- Supported the City of Sacramento's Proposed Transit Oriented Development Ordinance (Attachment A).
- Hosted a discussion with regional managers on the Senate Bill 2 Planning Grant Program and the upcoming Regional Housing Needs Allocation process with Ben Metcalf, the Director of California Housing and Community Development Department.
- Participated in a panel discussion for the Sacramento Appraisers Association on regional planning and housing issues.
- Planned and participated in a panel discussion for the Sacramento Metro Chamber Foundation's Leadership Sacramento program on regional growth and transportation issues.
- Coordinated and provided initial consultation with potential applicants for the fourth round of the Affordable Housing Sustainable Communities (AHSC) grant program. Staff will provide technical assistance to applicants as requested. Applications are due February 11, 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 Local Economic Development Strategies



November 7, 2018

City of Sacramento
Law and Legislative Committee
City Hall
915 I Street
Sacramento, Ca 95814

Re: Proposed Transit Oriented Development Ordinance

Dear City of Sacramento Law and Legislative Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Transit Oriented Development Ordinance. As part of an ongoing effort to monitor land use development activity in the region, track the implementation of shared goals for mobility, air quality, and quality of life, and offer constructive support to member agencies, SACOG began a dialogue with the City of Sacramento in January 2017 expressing concern about an increasing number of auto-oriented projects being proposed near the City's light rail stations. The conversation centered around a disconnect between the goals and policies of the City's General Plan that support transit oriented development and the zoning near the stations that is allowing auto-oriented uses in these areas. The proposed Transit Oriented Development Ordinance is a very positive and critical step towards addressing this issue. This ordinance is an important foundational piece for catalyzing TOD around the city's light rail stations and we would like to express support for the proposal.

The Proposed Transit Oriented Development Ordinance incentivizes transit supportive uses near light rail stations and preserves transit areas for appropriate development opportunities. Under this proposal, the auto-oriented uses that SACOG expressed concern about are prohibited within ¼ mile of transit stations and require a conditional use permit within ½ mile of transit stations. This type of specificity provides the clarity that is needed to support future development that conforms to the transit supportive policies in the general plan and provides the flexibility and time for market conditions to change by allowing existing uses to remain in place. In addition, the proposal incentivizes transit supportive uses by offering building review incentives for multifamily housing projects at least 25 units and removes parking requirements within ¼ mile and reduced by 50 percent within ½ mile, for housing or job intensive projects. By removing and reducing parking requirements near transit, this proposal reduces the development cost and increases the likelihood that development around stations will truly be transit oriented.

This ordinance is an important first step, but will not by itself guarantee transit oriented development around all the City's light rail stations. Realization of the region's TOD efforts will require many more steps and SACOG is committed to working with the City and other partners to achieve the public policy goals shared by both the City and the region. SACOG is currently working with the Air Resources Board on an infill pilot program aimed at incentivizing infill development, including around light rail station areas. In further support, SACOG sponsored a national ULI advisory services panel to examine the Florin and Meadowview light rail stations and recommend steps for catalyzing equitable TOD in those neighborhoods. Adopting this ordinance also furthers the City's leadership in SB 375 implementation and builds on the City's Carbon Zero vision, supporting the governor's executive order for carbon neutrality.

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Rancho Cordova
Rocklin
Roseville
Sacramento
Sacramento County
Sutter County
West Sacramento
Wheatland
Winters
Woodland
Yolo County
Yuba City
Yuba County

On February 18, 2016, SACOG adopted the Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS). This is the region's second MTP to include a Sustainable Communities Strategy as required by SB 375. However, it is the third MTP adopted since the SACOG Board adopted the Blueprint in 2004 and, therefore, is the third MTP to proactively link land use, air quality, and transportation needs in the region. The MTP/SCS must be based on an ambitious but feasible land use pattern to be built over a 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, specific plans, and local policies and regulations. Other market and regulatory/policy variables are also considered.

The Blueprint vision is a complimentary regional planning effort. The Blueprint is based on the principles of smart growth and is intended to give a general direction for how the region should develop to reap the benefits of the Blueprint Preferred Scenario. The Blueprint's benefits of reduced vehicle miles traveled, housing to meet the needs of all residents, increased access to jobs and services, more transportation choices, and improved air quality and overall quality of life are the same as the performance goals the MTP/SCS strives to achieve. As you know, SACOG has no land use authority. As such, implementation of the SCS and the Blueprint depends greatly on the efforts of cities and counties to implement that vision through local plans and projects.

The City of Sacramento's General Plan is a great example of a plan that is aligned well with the Blueprint and MTP/SCS. Implementation of the General Plan will help the City and the region achieve the goals noted above. Specifically, because the City houses the majority of the light rail stations in the region, it has the opportunity to make a significant impact on our shared goals of reducing vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions (GHG), and increasing transportation choice by supporting alternative modes of transportation. The General Plan includes policies to support and facilitate transit oriented development at all existing and future light rail stations and the MTP/SCS assumes that the City will actively implement these policies.

As you know, there is a strong connection between land use patterns, travel behavior, and air quality. Today, people who live or work within ¼ mile of light rail use transit at a rate four to six times higher than the balance of the region. Higher density housing and employment are one of the touchstones for making a transit oriented community work. Walkability is another key factor in encouraging transit use and creating successful transit oriented developments. Auto-oriented uses (such as auto sales and drive-through restaurants) near light rail stations contradict both the density and walkability needed to support transit use.

Given the superior transportation and air quality performance of these neighborhoods, land use and design decisions in these areas are critical for the region to meet federal and state air quality and GHG requirements, and to achieve the many benefits of the MTP/SCS outlined above. Vacant and underutilized land near light rail stations is limited, making the land use decisions there even more strategically important to these goals. Building transit oriented uses in these areas also facilitates the ability of Regional Transit to achieve greater fare box revenues that would facilitate better maintenance of the current system and expansion for more riders in the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input and for your hard work to further the shared goals of the City and SACOG.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'JAC', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

James Corless
Executive Director