



Land Use & Air Quality Committee

July 26, 2012

Update on MTP/SCS Implementation

Issue: Staff will provide a status report on various implementation activities for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS).

Recommendation: This item is for information and discussion.

Discussion: Since the Board's adoption of the MTP/SCS for 2035 in April of this year, staff has taken steps to aid the implementation of the SCS portion of the plan. These activities are focused on the creation of tools to assist member agencies in using the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) streamlining benefits that are available now that the SCS is adopted and has been accepted by the California Air Resources Board. Development of these tools is funded through a combination of the first-round Strategic Growth Council grant and HUD Sustainable Communities grant.

The first tool is a worksheet for local governments to use in determining a project's consistency with the SCS. Pursuant to Public Resources Code §§ 21155(a) and 21159.28(a), a project seeking to use SCS CEQA streamlining, whether a transit priority project or residential/mixed-use project, must be found consistent with the general land use designation, density, building intensity, and applicable policies specified for the project area in the adopted SCS. SACOG has solicited input from local agency staff on the need for, and utility of, a worksheet that might assist them in making a consistency determination and has received affirmative feedback that such a worksheet would be helpful.

The second tool under development is a model Sustainable Communities Environmental Assessment (SCEA). This is a new document created by SB375 to streamline environmental review. As part of SACOG's Sustainable Communities grant, SACOG staff and its EIR consultant team are creating SCEAs for case study projects in Transit Priority Areas. The objectives of this work are to: demonstrate how SB375 CEQA streamlining provisions can be used to implement the MTP/SCS, demonstrate how an SCEA can be used to review a transit priority project, and create an SCEA template to encourage future use of this streamlining option.

Staff will be reaching out to local agency staff and the development community to inform them of the availability of these tools, solicit questions, and gather feedback on their effectiveness. In the coming months, staff will also compare CEQA streamlining efforts with the other MPOs that have adopted SCSs (SANDAG and SCAG) to learn what other strategies are being used to activate CEQA streamlining and tiering.

Approved by:

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