



## Land Use & Natural Resources Committee

**Item #16-12-7  
Information**

November 23, 2016

### **Blueprint Implementation Activities**

**Issue:** Update on SACOG's Blueprint Implementation land use activities.

**Recommendation:** None. This item is for information and discussion.

**Discussion:** 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.

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

- At the request of the City of West Sacramento submitted a letter of SCS consistency for its General Plan (letter attached).
- Responded to a Notice of Availability of the Draft General Plan for the City of Woodland (letter attached).
- At the request of El Dorado County provided a letter regarding planning assumptions for the Village of Marble Valley in the MTP/SCS (letter attached).

Per Board policy, this list of activities will also be reported in the CEO report that goes to the SACOG Board.

Approved by:

Mike McKeever  
Chief Executive Officer

MM:KL:ts  
Attachments

Key Staff: Kacey Lizon, Planning Manager, (916) 340-6265



November 3, 2016

City of West Sacramento  
Community Development Department  
David Tilley, Principle Planner  
1110 West Capitol Ave.  
West Sacramento, CA 95691

Re: SCS Consistency Determination for City of West Sacramento's General  
Plan 2035

Dear Mr. Tilley:

You requested SACOG's confirmation that the General Plan 2035 is consistent with the 2016 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS). SACOG provides a consistency determination at the request of the lead agency. As you know, the City of West Sacramento is located in the "secondary zone" of the Delta and subject to the Delta Reform Act. The Act expressly provides that "covered actions" do not include plans, programs, projects, activities (and any infrastructure necessary to support those plans, programs, projects, or activities) within the secondary zone of the Delta that SACOG has determined to be consistent with the SCS. (Cal. Water Code, § 85057.5.).

SACOG believes the Draft 2035 General Plan is consistent with land uses, densities, intensities, and policies of the SCS. In September of this year, we commented on the draft General Plan 2035 and Draft Environmental Impact Review. At the time, we noted that the draft plan appeared consistent, but we requested confirmation from the City that there is no growth in the Riverpark and Yarborough areas. As a response to our comment in the Final Environmental Impact Report, the City provided a table of household and employment growth assumed in the General Plan by neighborhood. The table provided shows 193 new households in Riverpark and 296 new households in Yarborough by 2035. These households are allowed by right today under the current rural land use designations and are not growth associated with the Riverpark and Yarborough Master Plans. These two areas are designated in the MTP/SCS as "Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS by 2036", which as noted in the 2016 MTP/SCS Chapter 3 on page 16, are areas that

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Galt  
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Live Oak  
Loomis  
Marysville  
Placer County  
Placerville  
Rancho Cordova  
Rocklin  
Roseville  
Sacramento  
Sacramento County  
Sutter County  
West Sacramento  
Wheatland  
Winters  
Woodland  
Yolo County  
Yuba City  
Yuba County

although the MTP/SCS does not forecast development in these areas by 2036, it is likely that some housing and employment growth associated with agriculture, forestry, mining, and other rural uses will occur in these areas within that timeframe. The amount of growth and the type of growth assumed for these two areas in the General Plan 2035 is consistent with the MTP/SCS assumptions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike McKeever", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Mike McKeever

MM:JH:pm

cc: Jeff Juarez, Delta Stewardship Council



November 8, 2016

City of Woodland  
Cindy Norris, Community Development Department  
300 First Street  
Woodland, CA 95695

Re: Draft General Plan

Dear Ms. Norris:

SACOG received notification of the Draft General Plan and would like to offer the following comments. From the materials we have reviewed, it is clear that the City process is examining a full range of opportunities and issues that will be important to the future quality of life for Woodland citizens and the entire region. We appreciate the city including SACOG in this regionally important planning process.

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.

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Many of the goals in the Draft General Plan align with and support the goals of the MTP/SCS and Blueprint. A few of these goals are highlighted here:

- Goal 2.C: Promote Woodland as a leader in sustainable development and support statewide and regional efforts to encourage smart growth, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, fund transportation improvements, conserve resources, and maintain fiscal sustainability.
- Goal 3.A: Develop and maintain a multi-modal transportation system that provides for the efficient movement of people and goods, supports vibrant neighborhoods and districts, and reduces air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Goal 3.B: Provide complete streets that accommodate driving, walking, bicycling, and public transit and that are designed to enable safe, attractive, comfortable access and travel for users of all ages.
- Goal 3.G: Promote a transit system that serves as a viable alternative to the automobile for those without access to a vehicle and those that choose to live and work in areas where land use density and intensity are supportive of transit.

The Draft General Plan contemplates two alternative ways in which growth and development through 2035 could occur within the planning area: the South Alternative and the East Alternative. The general location of growth contemplated in the South Alternative mirrors the growth areas envisioned in the Blueprint and the current MTP/SCS. The location of growth in the East Alternative, specifically the area labeled SP-2 on “Figure 2-5: Land Use Diagram” in the draft plan is not an area contemplated for growth in the Blueprint or the MTP/SCS. The total growth assumed in both alternatives of approximately 7,000 new homes and 18,000-19,000 new jobs, resulting in approximately 27,000 total homes and 45,000 total jobs in the City, is in alignment with the 2016 MTP/SCS build out estimate for the City of approximately 28,000 homes and 49,000 jobs.

The Blueprint principle of Transportation Choice means that people have viable options for traveling beyond driving in a car. There is a strong connection between land use patterns, travel behavior and air quality. Higher density housing and employment, locating housing near jobs, and providing strong connectivity in the design of the street and bicycle and pedestrian networks, all lead to increased walking, biking, and transit use and shorten the length of auto trips.

The MTP/SCS is measured by a number of performance outcomes. Specific to transportation outcomes, the MTP/SCS increases travel efficiency and multi-modal travel, and reduces congestion and vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Together these outcomes lead to improved air quality. The Draft General Plan Goals 3.A, 3.B, and 3.G (noted above) clearly support the Blueprint principle of travel choice.

Mix of Uses and Using Existing Assets are two Blueprint Principles that directly support transportation choice and the transportation performance outcomes of the MTP/SCS. The MTP/SCS performance outcomes noted above are a direct result of the relationship between land use and transportation and are in part dependent on the balance between infill and greenfield development that the MTP/SCS forecasts. Today, as well as in the 2036 MTP/SCS forecast, the City has lower than average VMT when compared to the region. This is largely due to jobs/housing balance and the balance between infill development and new growth areas.

The South Alternative, due to the location of the planned new growth being directly adjacent to existing development, supports these two Blueprint principles because there is existing infrastructure directly adjacent to the new growth areas. It contributes to the mix of uses in the existing city and places housing near jobs and services as more of the new homes planned in this alternative are infill. The East Alternative is less infill focused with 51 percent of the new homes in infill areas and 49 percent in new growth areas. However, the new growth areas, specifically area SP-2, is encouraged to be a “sustainable complete neighborhood with a town center so that most daily needs can be met within the area” (Draft General Plan Policy 2.L.5). We are encouraged to see that the Draft General Plan includes phasing requirements and timing assumptions for new growth areas under both alternatives in Policy 2.L.1, but particularly if the East Alternative is selected, that Policy 2.L.5 requires flood protection before land use approvals can be made, requires phased growth and encourages a complete neighborhood. Implementation of this policy will be essential to keep VMT low and support the Draft General Plan goals. As federal standards on criteria air pollutants are getting stricter and we face a strong possibility of stricter state greenhouse gas reduction targets for the next MTP/SCS, well-performing local plans and projects are critical to our region’s ability to meet these targets. The worst outcome for the East Alternative would be if area SP-2 developed as an island of residential uses that requires mostly car trips to get to jobs and services. It’s clear that is not the intention or desire of the City, but we encourage you to use even stronger policies related to phasing and performance requirements when planning for area SP-2, if the East Alternative is selected.

As a new non-contiguous growth area, the East Alternative also requires more new infrastructure, including the addition of a new interchange. Our research indicates that for the entire region, the more compact Blueprint land use pattern will reduce infrastructure costs compared to the Base Case pattern by approximately \$16 billion through 2050, or almost \$20,000 per new housing unit. Infrastructure costs spread over a relatively small number of homes, either the result of low-density development or poor phasing of development, can increase the price of housing. Additionally, as you

contemplate this alternative, keep in mind that state and federal sources of transportation funding are becoming more performance-based and that the MTP/SCS transportation investment strategy strives to invest first in existing transportation maintenance needs before investing in new capacity projects.

Compact Development and Natural Resources Conservation are two important Blueprint Principles that align well with the goals of the Draft General Plan. These two principles work together at both the neighborhood scale and the larger citywide scale. At a neighborhood level, environments that are more compactly built can encourage more walking, biking, and public transit use and shorter auto trips. Incorporating public-use open space (such as parks, town squares, trails, greenbelts) is an important contribution to the aesthetics and sense of community that also helps lead to these outcomes.

At a larger scale, the combination of these two principles supports urban growth expansion that is adjacent to existing developed lands, well planned, and conserves natural resources. Less urbanized land means more open space including, wildlife and plant habitat preservation, agricultural preservation, and open recreation areas. Preserving the City's Urban Limit Line and evaluating two growth alternatives that both are within that area clearly supports these principles. As noted early, the phasing and development requirements included for both alternatives in the Draft General Plan is a good strategy for managing growth and demonstrates support for these two Blueprint Principles. We commend the City's forward-thinking and commitment to being good regional partners.

Additionally, the Draft General Plan includes an economic development policy to develop Woodland into a premier food and agriculture industry cluster. We see the potential for this already starting with recent agricultural related businesses locating in and near the city. This is a great example of the Rural-Urban Connections Strategy.

Housing Choice and Diversity, another Blueprint Principle, is about providing a range of housing choices to serve the needs of all the residents. The Draft General Plan includes residential and mixed land uses at a range of densities that is appropriate for the city and supports this principle. We are happy to see the City promoting higher densities and mixed-use development in the Downtown area and along key multi-modal transportation corridors in both alternatives, as this provides more housing choice in the areas with the most transportation choice.

Design for Quality is the Blueprint Principle that relates not only to the attractiveness of buildings but also to street pattern and urban design of a development. A walkable street pattern, or urban design, is one of the most significant factors in reducing VMT for an

area. A pedestrian-friendly street pattern and urban design encourages not only walking but also biking and transit use. The Draft General Plan includes a lot of attention to the design details of streets and land uses as well as overall neighborhoods, which is supportive of this principle.

In summary, the Draft General Plan demonstrates good local planning and is in alignment with the Blueprint and MTP/SCS. As the City deliberates its choice of general plan alternatives, we ask you to consider how the implementation, or timing, of each alternative, affects transportation and air quality related performance in terms of VMT, mode choice, GHG emissions, and air quality.

If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact me or Kacey Lizon, Planning Manager, at [klizon@sacog.org](mailto:klizon@sacog.org) or 916-340-6265.

Sincerely,



Mike McKeever  
Chief Executive Officer

MM:JH:pm





November 7, 2016

Rommel Pabalinas  
El Dorado County  
Community Development Agency  
2850 Fairlane Court  
Placerville, CA 95667

Re: Proposed Village of Marble Valley Specific Plan Relationship with  
2016 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities  
Strategy (MTP/SCS)

Dear Mr. Pabalinas:

You requested SACOG's confirmation that, if approved, the proposed Village of Marble Valley Specific Plan would not alter the 2016 MTP/SCS forecast. This is correct with respect to the 2016 MTP/SCS. The Village of Marble Valley Specific Plan is not assumed in the 2016 MTP/SCS. However, the MTP/SCS, including the land use forecast, is updated every four years and has the potential to include changes to the location, type and timing of development throughout the region.

As part of the MTP/SCS, SACOG must allocate the growth forecast to project the land use pattern that is most likely to occur over the planning horizon of the plan. The growth forecast, and the process for allocating it within the region are affected by federal and state requirements related to regional transportation plans and the Clean Air Act. In general, these laws and regulations require SACOG to develop a forecasted land use pattern, based upon the best available information, in order to, among other things, design specific transportation improvements to serve that land use, and to perform travel modeling to determine the performance of the transportation system and determine whether the plan, including its land use and transportation components, meets federal air quality conformity requirements. The foundation of the land use forecasting process is adopted local government general plans, community plans, specific plans, and other policies and regulations. However, other market, policy and regulatory variables are considered to help refine the sum and timing of the local plans in order to create the most likely future development pattern. SACOG creates a set of "build out", or capacity, assumptions for the region. This includes creating an inventory of unbuilt capacity for housing and employment

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

within existing adopted plans. In addition to these plans, the housing and employment capacity within projects that are proposed and not yet adopted are also inventoried. Because of this, we are continuously tracking projects and plans around the region and have been aware of and tracking the proposed Village of Marble Valley project for the last two MTP/SCS cycles. If the Village of Marble Valley Specific Plan is approved, that would be one piece of new information that we would consider when updating the MTP/SCS land use forecast in 2020. Whether a project or plan is proposed or approved is an important factor considered in the MTP/SCS land use forecast, but it is just one factor and the approval of a project or plan at the local level does not mean the project will be automatically included in the MTP/SCS. Similarly, a proposed project or plan that is not yet approved is not automatically excluded from the MTP/SCS. As noted above, the methodology for creating the MTP/SCS land use forecast uses a number of policy, regulatory, and market factors to create the most likely development pattern based on the information we have at the time the forecast is created. More details on the land use forecast methodology can be found in the 2016 MTP/SCS Chapter 3 and Appendix E-3.

Our confirmation that the proposed Village of Marble Valley project is not assumed in the MTP/SCS and that approval of it would not alter our current MTP/SCS land use forecast is not intended to express any opinion on the project. If you have further questions or need further assistance, please contact Kacey Lizon at [klizon@sacog.org](mailto:klizon@sacog.org) or (916) 340-6265.

Sincerely,



Mike McKeever  
Chief Executive Officer