

**MEMORANDUM**

**Date:** October 5, 2010  
**To:** ACTAC  
**From:** Beth Walukas, Manager of Planning  
**Subject:** **Approval of a Countywide Approach for Seeking Input on the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS)**

**Recommendations:**

It is recommended that the Alameda CTC Board approve a countywide approach for seeking input on and educating our elected bodies about the Sustainable Communities Strategy being developed by ABAG and MTC for the 2013 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

**Summary:**

As follow up to the August 26, 2010 Alameda County Leadership Roundtable Forum, staff was directed to develop presentation materials to convey why the SCS is important to Alameda County and establish meetings with elected bodies and other participants to present the information. Staff recommends that the Board approve the following countywide approach and schedule for seeking input on and educating our elected bodies about the Sustainable Communities Strategy: develop Alameda County focused outreach materials to present to the Commission (November/December 2010) and outreach to Council, Board of Supervisors, transit operators and other participants (January 2011 through April 2011).

**Discussion:**

Background

On August 26, 2010, Alameda CTC elected members who hold positions on one of the four regional agencies (MTC, ABAG, BAAQMD, BCDC) and staff hosted a SCS Leadership Roundtable Forum with MTC and ABAG. The purpose of the SCS Roundtable was to define a process for obtaining input on the development of the SCS in Alameda County between now and when the SCS and the RTP are adopted in spring 2013.

At that meeting, staff was directed to:

- Develop a presentation that summarizes in layman's terms what the SCS is, why it is important to Alameda County jurisdictions and transit operators, and why they need to be engaged in the process;
- Establish Council, Board of Supervisor and transit operator meetings to present the SCS to full elected bodies;
- Establish meetings with city managers, planning and public works staff, and other existing countywide bodies, such as but not limited to Alameda CTC, ACTAC,

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Technical Advisory Working Group, Community Advisory Working Group, East Bay Economic Development Alliance, and East Bay Regional Alliance.

This item summarizes what the SCS is, how Alameda County jurisdictions and agency staff have been providing input to date and recommends an approach and schedule for expanding the scope and reach of current participation, developing a presentation, and meeting with the bodies identified above.

*What is the SCS and why is it important?*

The SCS integrates planning land use and housing with transportation investment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Required by SB 375, a state law approved in 2008, the SCS will be developed in close collaboration with local elected officials and community leaders and is being led by MTC and ABAG in partnership with BAAQMD and BCDC, residents, stakeholders and community groups. MTC must adopt the SCS as part of its next RTP for the Bay Area, which is due in 2013. State and federal law require that everything in the plan must be consistent with the SCS, including local land use plans. State law requires that the SCS must also be consistent with the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), which will be adopted by ABAG at the same time that MTC adopts the RTP. Local governments then have another 18 months to update their housing elements; related zoning changes must follow within in three years.

*What Has Been Done To Date*

MTC and ABAG began the SCS and the RTP planning process in late 2009. Local and county agency staff have been participating in a number of regional and countywide forums since then to partner in the SCS discussion, including:

- MTC's Partnership Technical Advisory Committee (PTAC),
- the recently created SCS Regional Advisory Working Group (RAWG),
- the Alameda County Climate Transportation Working Group (hosted by Alameda CTC and Supervisor Haggerty's Office)
- ABAG's Assessment of Expected Growth and Infrastructure Needs in Planned Alameda County Priority Development Areas
- Working with ABAG staff to develop the 2020 and 2035 base case land use scenarios from which the SCS will be developed
- CMA Association's Climate Working Group

In addition, two other Alameda County venues that include representatives from all jurisdictions in Alameda County have been or will be providing input into the development of the SCS:

- The Alameda Countywide Planning Director's Forum, which meets approximately monthly to ensure local government participation in the regional SCS discussion, has appointed representatives to the RAWG who regularly attend the RAWG and report back to the Forum.
- The Countywide Transportation Plan-Transportation Expenditure Plan (CWTP-TEP) Technical Advisory Working Group will meet for the first time on October 5, 2010. Through the CWTP update process, this group will be kept informed of the SCS and RTP activities and key dates.

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*Recommended Approach and Schedule for SCS Participation*

The schedule for developing the SCS and RTP is shown in Attachment A. Attachment B shows the CWTP-TEP process along with key SCS and RTP milestones. These schedules show that the most efficient opportunity for presenting information to elected bodies and other key participants in Alameda County will be between December 2010 and May 2011 when ABAG and MTC will be conducting Round One of the Vision Scenarios Assessment and Alameda CTC will be conducting our outreach efforts for the CWTP-TEP. Staff will develop information materials that convey answers to the following questions:

- What is the SCS
- Why should community leaders participate
- What does it mean for Alameda County communities
- Who should be involved
- What is the timing

These materials will be consistent with regional materials already developed by One Bay Area (Attachment C)

In summary, staff recommends that the Board approve the following countywide approach to provide input on and educate our elected bodies about the Sustainable Communities Strategy being developed by ABAG and MTC for the 2013 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP):

- Develop Alameda County focused outreach materials to present to the Commission – November/December 2010
- Outreach to Council, Board of Supervisors, transit operators and other participants – January 2011 through April 2011.

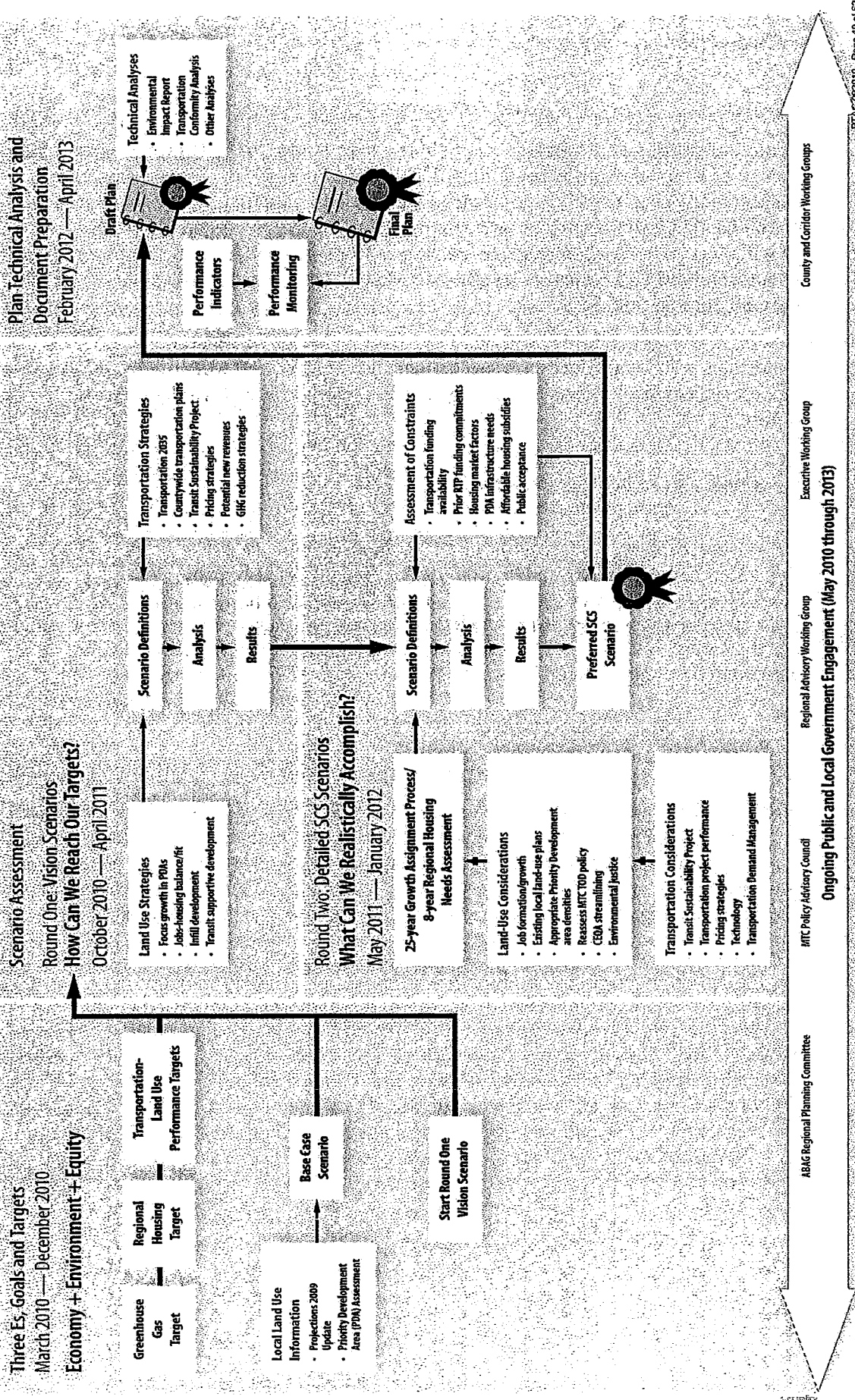
**Fiscal Impacts**

The resources associated are included in currently adopted budgets.

**Attachments**

- A. Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS): Planning Process
- B. Countywide Transportation Plan and Transportation Expenditure Plan Preliminary Development Implementation Schedule
- C. One Bay Area Sustainable Communities Strategy Fact Sheet and Frequently Asked Questions

# Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS): Planning Process



Countywide Transportation Plan and Transportation Expenditure Plan  
Preliminary Development Implementation Schedule

ACTAC Meeting 10/05/10  
Attachment B

Calendar Year 2010

Task	2010						FY2010-2011	2010				
	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Alameda CTC/Committee/Public Process</b>												
Steering Committee			Establish Steering Committee	Working meeting to establish roles/responsibilities, community working group	RFP feedback, tech working group	Update on Transportation/Finance Issues	Approval of Community working group and steering committee next steps	No Meetings		Feedback from Tech, comm working groups	No Meetings	Expand vision and goals for County
Technical Working Group								No Meetings		Roles, resp, schedule, vision discussion/feedback	No Meetings	Education: Trans statistics, issues, financials overview
Community Working Group								No Meetings		Roles, resp, schedule, vision discussion/feedback	No Meetings	Education: Transportation statistics, issues, financials overview
Public Workshops								No Meetings				No Meetings
Agency Public Education and Outreach	Information about upcoming CWTP Update and reauthorization											
<b>Alameda CTC Technical Work</b>												
Technical Studies/RFP/Work timelines: All this work will be done in relation to SCS work at the regional level						Board authorization for release of RFPs	Pre-Bid meetings	Proposals reviewed	ALF/ALC approves shortlist and interview; Board approves top ranked, auth. to negotiate or NTP	Technical Work		
Polling											Baseline Poll Conducted	
<b>Sustainable Communities Strategy/Regional Transportation Plan</b>												
Regional Sustainable Community Strategy Development Process - Final RTP in April 2013			Local Land Use Update P2009 begins & PDA Assessment begins						Green House Gas Target approved by CARB.	Start Round 1 Vision Scenario Assessment (How can we reach our Targets?) Establish Best Case Housing Target Establish Performance Targets		



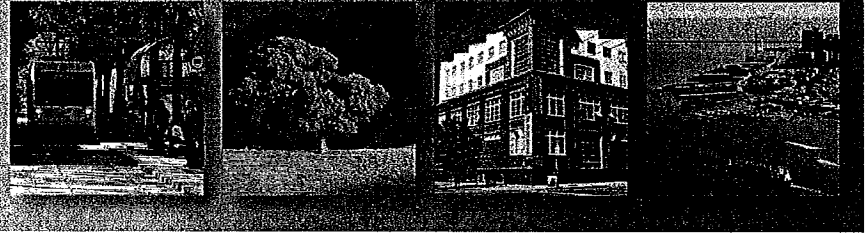
Countywide Transportation Plan and Transportation Expenditure Plan  
Preliminary Development Implementation Schedule

Calendar Year 2012

2012											FY2011-2012
Task	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	November
<b>Alameda CTC Committee/Public Pro</b>											
Steering Committee	2nd Draft Exp Plan and Final CWTP	Finalize Plans				Adopt Draft Plans	Adopt Final Plans	Expenditure Plan on Ballot			VOTE: November 6, 2012
Technical Working Group	2nd Draft Exp Plan and Final CWTP	Finalize Plans									VOTE: November 6, 2012
Community Working Group	2nd Draft Exp Plan and Final CWTP	Finalize Plans									VOTE: November 6, 2012
Public Workshops			Expenditure Plan City Council/BOS Adoption								VOTE: November 6, 2012
Agency Public Education and Outreach	Ongoing Education and Outreach Through November 2012 on this process and final plans						Ongoing Education and Outreach through November 2012 on this process and final plans				
<b>Alameda CTC Technical Work</b>											
Technical Studies/RFP/Work timelines: All this work will be done in relation to SCS work at the regional level	Finalize Plans										
Polling					Go/No Go Poll for Expenditure Plan						
<b>Sustainable Communities Strategy/</b>											
Regional Sustainable Community Strategy Development Process - Final RTP in April 2013	Preferred SCS Scenario, Draft Financial Projections Released		Begin RTP Technical Analysis & Document Preparation								Draft RTP Released

# OneBayArea

## Sustainable Community Strategy FACT SHEET



## Sustainable Communities Strategy

### Overview

The Sustainable Communities Strategy aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by integrating planning for transportation and land use and housing. Required by SB 375, a state law approved in 2008, the Sustainable Communities Strategy will be developed in close collaboration with local elected officials and community leaders.

### Sustainable Communities Strategy Basics

- Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in 18 regions across California need to develop a Sustainable Communities Strategy.
- The Strategy must identify specific areas in the nine-county Bay Area to accommodate the entire region's projected population growth, including all income groups, for at least the next 25 years.
- The Strategy must try to achieve targeted reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from cars and light trucks.
- The Strategy will reflect the "Three E" goals of sustainability: Economy, Environment and Equity, by establishing targets or benchmarks for measuring our progress toward achieving these goals.

### Development of the SCS

- MTC, as the Bay Area's MPO, and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), the region's Council of Governments, will develop the SCS in partnership with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission.
- The four regional agencies will team with local governments, county congestion management agencies, public transit agencies, interested

residents, stakeholders and community groups to ensure that all those with a stake in the outcome are actively involved in the Strategy's preparation.

- MTC must adopt the SCS as part of its next Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for the Bay Area, which is due in 2013. State and federal law require that everything in the plan must be consistent with the SCS, including local land use plans.
- State law requires that the SCS must also be consistent with the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). ABAG administers RHNA, which ABAG will adopt at the same time that MTC adopts the RTP. Local governments will then have another 18 months to update their housing elements; related zoning changes must follow within three years.

### SCS Benefits

- Since over 40% of the Bay Area's emissions come from cars and light trucks, integrating land uses (jobs, stores, schools, homes, etc.) and encouraging more complete communities will become an important strategy to reduce the Bay Area's auto trips.
- Clustering more homes, jobs and other activities around transit can make it easier to make trips by foot, bicycle or public transit.
- Planning land uses and transportation together can help improve the vitality and quality of life for our communities, while improving public health.

### How do I get involved?

- Ongoing public and local government engagement has begun and will continue through 2013. For more information on how you can get involved, go to [www.OneBayArea.org](http://www.OneBayArea.org).



# OneBayArea

## Sustainable Communities Strategy

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### *What is the Sustainable Communities Strategy?*

The Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) is an integrated land use and transportation plan that all metropolitan regions in California must complete under Senate Bill 375. In the San Francisco Bay Area this integration includes ABAG's Projections and Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) and MTC's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

#### *What will the SCS do?*

State law requires that the SCS accomplish three principal objectives:

1. Identify areas to accommodate all the region's population associated with Bay Area economic growth, including all income groups, for at least the next twenty-five years;
2. Develop a Regional Transportation Plan that meets the needs of the region; and
3. Reduce greenhouse-gas emissions from automobiles and light trucks.

In responding to these three state mandates, the SCS will also need to be responsive to a host of other regional and local quality-of-life concerns.

#### *What size of population will the SCS need to accommodate?*

The Bay Area currently has 7.3 million people. Over the next twenty-five years it is expected to grow by about another two million; this additional growth is equivalent to approximately five times the current population of the City of Oakland.

#### *What are the greenhouse-gas reduction targets?*

On August 9, 2010, the California Air Resources Board (ARB) staff proposed a seven percent reduction target for 2020 and a fifteen percent reduction target for 2035 for the Bay Area. These targets are based on per capita greenhouse gas emissions from passenger vehicles relative to 2005. Final greenhouse gas (GHG) targets will be adopted by ARB on September 23, 2010.

#### *Who will prepare the SCS?*

Within the Bay Area, the law gives joint responsibility for the SCS to the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). The two agencies will work with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District

(the Air District) and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC). They will also partner with local governments, county congestion management agencies and a wide range of stakeholders to ensure broad public input in the SCS's preparation.

*How will the SCS affect local land-use control?*

SB 375 does not alter the authority of city and county governments to make decisions about local land use and development. However, the law does require that the SCS be consistent with the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) and therefore affects the next iteration of housing elements in local general plans.

*How does the SCS relate to the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and RHNA?*

Regional Transportation Plans include land use projections. The SCS will be the land use allocation in the next RTP, slated for adoption in March 2013. SB 375 stipulates that the SCS will incorporate an 8-year housing projection and allocation pursuant to RHNA.

*Aside from the RHNA requirement, why would local governments want to conform to the SCS?*

1. To benefit from incentives that will be available to conforming localities—for example, Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC) funding, Station Area Planning Grants, investments from the Regional Transportation Plan, and assistance in meeting the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA);
2. To improve the quality of life of our neighborhoods by providing cleaner air, improved public health, better mobility, more walkable streets, and homes closer to transit, jobs, and services.

*Why the emphasis on automobiles and light trucks?*

Transportation is the largest single source of greenhouse gases in California. In the Bay Area, it accounts for 41 percent of our emissions, and over three quarters of these come from personal travel in on-road vehicles. If we are to significantly reduce our contribution to global warming, then we need to reduce the impact of our travel within the region. The SCS aims to reduce emissions by:

- Reducing the separation of land uses (jobs, stores, schools, and homes) and encouraging more complete, mixed-use communities, so people can drive less and increase their walking, biking, and use of transit;
- Clustering more homes, jobs and other activities around transit, so people will be encouraged to take transit rather than drive; and
- Planning land uses and transportation together, so we can manage traffic congestion and vehicle speeds, reducing emissions from excessive idling and other inefficiencies.

*Land use development changes very slowly and many places will not change much. How much difference can the SCS really make?*

We acknowledge that it will likely be decades before changes in the land use pattern make an appreciable difference to the total emissions from personal vehicles. Improvements in vehicle technology and transportation pricing mechanisms (e.g., parking) are likely to have a greater impact, both in the short and longer term. However, the impact of more efficient vehicles could be significantly reduced if the amount we drive and congestion continue to increase because of inefficient land uses. There is a broad consensus that there isn't just one thing that we should do; we will need to move on all fronts. Changes in technology will have to be accompanied by changes in travel behavior if we are have any hope of reducing emissions to the levels required by the middle of this century. If we are to be successful in reconfiguring the region by 2050 or so, we need to start now.

*While we implement the long-term land-use changes, is there anything we can do that will have more immediate impact?*

Yes. The state law which requires a SCS allows us to use transportation measures and policies. These might include road pricing (new and increased tolls), parking regulations, and incentives to accelerate the adoption of alternative vehicles like electric cars, among others.

The extraordinarily high gas prices in 2008 demonstrated that an increase in the cost of driving had an immediate effect on travel patterns: fewer people drove, while more took transit. However, while transportation pricing policies could be powerful and fast-acting measures, the impact on people's pocketbooks will be politically contentious and difficult to implement. In addition, the equity consequences could be particularly challenging: we do not want to make life more unaffordable for those who are already struggling. If we increase the costs of driving, we need to supply land use and transportation choices so people have a genuine ability to avoid or mitigate those costs.

*What are some of the other regional efforts related to the SCS?*

The Air District and BCDC are developing policies and regulations that will affect the region's land use pattern and placement of public infrastructure, including transportation.

In its effort to control local and regional air pollution (smog, particulate matter, and airborne toxins), the Air District is considering an indirect source rule (ISR) that regulates the construction and long-term transportation impacts of land development. The ISR may require mitigation or payments in lieu of development that increases automobile travel and vehicle emissions. The Air District also recently adopted new thresholds for the evaluation of development projects under CEQA.

BCDC will be releasing an adaptation plan to prepare for inevitable sea-level rise and storm surges affecting areas on and near the Bay shoreline. This will have implications for the location of future development and perhaps for the relocation of existing development and infrastructure. The SCS needs to consider this adaptation work.

*What if the SCS is not able to meet its targets?*

If we cannot meet the greenhouse-gas reduction targets in the SCS, then we must prepare an Alternative Planning Strategy (APS) to accompany the SCS. The APS will be structured like the SCS, but it is an unconstrained plan that does not have to be as feasible or achievable as the SCS, since it would not be adopted as part of the RTP. The APS would identify the physical, economic, or political conditions required to meet the regional greenhouse gas targets. The APS may provide some CEQA streamlining to housing or mixed-use development projects which are consistent with certain aspects of its land use pattern.

*What type of CEQA assistance might be provided through the SCS or APS?*

The CEQA relief to be provided through the SCS or APS could include the following:

1. Residential or mixed use projects that comply with the general use designation, density, building intensity and other policies specified for the project area in the SCS will not be required to deal with growth-inducing impacts or transportation-related project-specific or cumulative impacts on global warming or on the regional transportation network required by CEQA.
2. Transit priority projects, which meet a number of land use, density and location criteria as well as including high-quality transit might be totally exempt from CEQA or might qualify for a streamlined review called a sustainable communities environmental assessment.

*The SCS sounds like a big project. Are we starting from scratch?*

Thankfully, we are not. For over a decade, the Bay Area has been encouraging more focused and compact growth to help revitalize older communities, develop complete communities, reduce travel time and expense, make better use of the existing transportation system, control the costs of providing new infrastructure, protect resource land and environmental assets, promote affordability, and generally improve the quality of life for all Bay Area residents. Reducing greenhouse-gas emissions just provides another reason to continue and accelerate these ongoing efforts.

Responding to the regional agencies' FOCUS program, over sixty local governments have voluntarily designated over 120 Priority Development Areas (PDAs). Located within existing urbanized areas and served by high-quality public transit, PDAs consume only about three percent of the region's land area but are being planned by their local jurisdictions to house nearly one-half of the region's projected population growth to the year 2035. FOCUS PDAs and associated incentive programs like TLC – which has reached its 10-year anniversary – provide a solid foundation upon which to build the SCS.

*How much time do we have to complete the Sustainable Communities Strategy?*

According to the State, the Bay Area's SCS is due in March 2013. However, a draft SCS needs to be completed by the beginning of 2012 so it can guide the investments in the transportation plan, to ensure consistency with the eight-year RHNA, and make sure that environmental impact documents are completed in time to allow sufficient public review. We will receive our final greenhouse-gas targets from the California Air Resources Board in September 2010. That leaves less than a year and a half to work with all our partners to actually produce the SCS.

Over the next few months, we will build the necessary analytic tools, strengthen partnerships with local governments and other stakeholders, and work out the information and engagement mechanisms to make the process transparent and worthy of public support.

*Who should we contact with questions?*

- Doug Kimsey, MTC, (510) 817-5790, [dkimsey@mtc.ca.gov](mailto:dkimsey@mtc.ca.gov)
- Ken Kirkey, ABAG, (5410) 464-7955, [kennethk@abag.ca.gov](mailto:kennethk@abag.ca.gov)
- Henry Hilken, BAAQMD, (415) 749-4642, [hhilken@baaqmd.gov](mailto:hhilken@baaqmd.gov)
- Joe LaClair, BCDC, (415) 352-3656, [joel@bcdc.ca.gov](mailto:joel@bcdc.ca.gov)