

REPORT TO SHASTA COUNTY RTPA

SUBJECT		MEETING DATE	ITEM NUMBER
SB 375 Implementation Work Plan		12/8/09	8

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board:

1. Receive an update on Senate Bill 375 (SB 375) implementation;
2. Accept public testimony to solicit input on the Draft SB 375/SCS Work Plan; and
3. Provide feedback and direction to staff regarding the Draft SB 375/SCS Work Plan.

SUMMARY

SB 375 adds new planning requirements to metropolitan planning organizations (MPO) regions, including the addition of a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) element to the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The SCS process is designed to help regions meet greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction targets for cars and light trucks being set by the California Air Resource Board (CARB). Development of an SCS requires new and enhanced technical tools, local agency coordination, and public outreach. An SB 375/SCS implementation work plan is provided. As funding permits, professional support services will be procured to develop technical tools and capabilities in support of the regional target setting and SCS processes.

DISCUSSION

SB 375 Requirements – Under SB 375, MPOs and local jurisdictions are required to develop an SCS. An SCS is a forecast development plan for the region that, when integrated with the regional transportation network, would reduce regional GHG emissions from cars and light trucks sufficient to meet regional targets being set by CARB.

An SCS must be included in the RTPA's next RTP update in 2014, and be internally consistent with policy, action, and financial elements therein. The SCS must also be consistent with local general plans. Within these confines, the SCS will identify priority areas for coordinated land use/transportation strategies shown to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

Without an SCS, Shasta County's RTP will be found non-conforming, resulting in unacceptable implications for the region, including:

- No state and federal funding for transportation projects;
- No state and federal funding for transportation planning;
- No CEQA 'tiering' – e.g. the broad-based evaluation of environmental matters via the RTP environmental impact report (EIR); and
- An open door to litigation over any growth and development activity occurring within the region, including transportation projects.

SB 375 Implementation Work Plan – In order to assure a meaningful and achievable outcome, it is important that the region's four jurisdictions work jointly in co-developing a set of realistic land use assumptions and related transportation demand management strategies. The following work plan – including anticipated key tasks, milestones, and deliverables occurring between now and adoption of the 2014 RTP update – is presented for Board discussion and comment.

DRAFT SB 375/SCS WORK PLAN

Timing	Task/Milestone/Deliverable
Ongoing	Public hearings - Advertise RTPA meetings as public hearings soliciting comment on the regional target setting and SCS processes.
Ongoing	CARB consultation - Staff level discussion and data exchange with CARB.
Dec 2009	Request local agency participation - RTPA Board Chair to sign letters to all local agencies outlining the SCS work plan and requesting participation.
Now to March 30, 2010	Formulate proposed regional target - To be based on Regional Blueprint findings, near-term data and modeling enhancements, and possible 'best management practices' (BMPs) being developed by CARB. Note: Expect active discussion and exchange with CARB through the 6/30/10 draft target deadline.
Early March, 2010	Host regional workshop - Present information re: the basic schedule, requirements, and expectations of SB 375. Solicit comments, feedback, and suggestions for moving forward. Invite CARB representatives to participate.
March 30, 2010	Proposed regional targets requested - MPO may propose regional target and the basis thereof for CARB consideration.
Late May, 2010	Host regional workshop - Present all data and relevant information to local agencies for discussion and comment. Invite CARB representatives to participate.
June 30, 2010	Deadline for draft regional targets - CARB to provide draft regional targets for discussion and comment.
Sept 30, 2010	Deadline for final regional targets - CARB to provide final regional targets.
2010-2012	SCS development - Expand technical capabilities, facilitate regional participation, and perform public and stakeholder outreach as funding allows.
2012	SCS to CARB (and APS, if needed) - Early submission of SCS to CARB for review and comment. Begin development of Alternative Planning Strategy (APS) if SCS does not meet regional target.
2012	RTP update process - RTPA compiles all relevant data, performs public and stakeholder outreach, and runs models based on SCS inputs and assumptions.
2012-2013	RTP update continued - Local agency/stakeholder consultation, transportation project prioritization, and preparation of EIR.
2014	RTP update completed - Board approves final document.

SB 375 Local Agency & Public Involvement – All local agencies are requested to participate in the SCS process. Should one or more agencies not participate, key decisions and assumptions will have to be made for them, based on the best available information and public input that the RTPA has gathered. Without a local agency's input and participation, the RTPA is more likely to miss the mark when communicating that agency's priorities to CARB via the SCS process. Transportation projects within that jurisdiction may in turn be less apt to qualify for State and Federal funds and CEQA safeguards.

Key public outreach efforts during the SCS process will include contact with all interested parties identified via the regional blueprint process and prior RTP cycles, as well as all outreach efforts concurrent with the 2014 RTP update and EIR process.

Next Steps – The SCS process is technically demanding, requiring new and enhanced geographic information systems (GIS) data, computer-based modeling of future land use patterns, and secondary travel demand and air quality modeling.

Available funding for such activities has thus far been limited to the application of previously awarded Regional Blueprint Program planning grants. As previously reported to the Board, the Governor’s Strategic Growth Council awarded the RTPA a \$400,000 grant through Proposition 84 funds. State bonds could make Proposition 84 grant funds available as early as spring 2010. Additional ongoing funding sources have been promised by the State, but have yet to materialize.

As funding permits, the RTPA will continue required steps toward SCS compliance. Several requests for proposals (RFPs) are either active or in development at the present time, including the following:

Grant-funded RFP Projects

RFP	Project	Key Sub-Tasks/Deliverables	Funding Source & Budget	Status
1	Regional GIS Platform Feasibility Study	• Develop recommendations, phasing, and funding strategy	Regional Blueprint Program (Up to \$65,000)	Proposals due 1/8/10
		• Regional data standards		
		• Data Status/Needs Assessment		
2	Consolidated Sub-area Modeling & GIS Data Development	• Transportation and infrastructure assessment in select high-growth areas	Regional Blueprint Program (Up to \$75,000)	RFP to be distributed pending funding availability
		• Sub-area modeling and visualizations	Regional Blueprint Program (Up to \$75,000)	
		• Region-wide, merged GIS parcel geography, parcel attribute data, road centerlines, and general plans	Proposition 84 (Up to \$200,000)	
3	Travel Demand Model Enhancements	• Improve Travel Demand Model capabilities and sensitivities to indirect factors affecting VMT	Proposition 84 (Up to \$200,000)	RFP to be distributed pending funding availability
		• Update Shasta Travel Demand Model public transit layer	Regional Blueprint Program (Up to \$25,000)	

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

Planning department management and GIS staff from all three cities have been engaged in early discussions of technical and planning aspects related to the SCS process.

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) concurs with the staff recommendation.

FINANCING

Development of the SCS will be funded primarily through a Proposition 84 grant (pending State bond sales) in the amount of \$400,000. No local match is required. Long-term funding for implementation and/or updates has yet to materialize. Indirectly, deliverables acquired through California Regional Blueprint Planning grants continue to lay the groundwork for the technical abilities needed for SCS development.

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