

REPORT

DATE: April 13, 2011

TO: Plans and Programs Technical Advisory Committee

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SUBJECT: 2012 RTP/SCS Alternatives and Performance Measures

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Staff will present and prompt discussion on the development of plan alternatives and performance measures for the 2012 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)/Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS). This is a follow-up to a preliminary discussion held at the March PPTAC meeting, and proceeds the anticipated presentation of a staff proposal at the May meeting.

BACKGROUND:

Objectives – SCAG is developing alternatives and performance measures for the purpose of narrowing down/refining options and promoting public dialogue and discussion leading to decision making on the 2012 RTP/SCS. The alternative scenarios should bound the set of reasonable or realistic choices facing the region for this plan update, and performance measures should capture the anticipated performance such that each alternative can be compared across a range of policy outcomes of interest to the region.

Past Practice – In past plan cycles, SCAG has used various types of alternatives, generally reflecting the emphasis area of the plan. For example, the 2001 RTP alternatives were built around various aviation scenarios, and the 2004 RTP featured alternatives built around growth and land use variations. SCAG has generally varied only one component of the plan. In other words, alternative have not, in prior cycles, varied both land use and transportation components. Further, performance measures in the RTP have generally focused on transportation-specific issues such as congestion and mobility.

Rationale for New Approaches – Regional planning practice has evolved over the past several years such that a focus on multiple policy objectives, over and above traditional transportation measures, is now commonplace. This trend is underscored in California by the inclusion of the Sustainable Communities Strategy which codifies the integration of transportation and land use components of the RTP. Further, guidance from statewide sources including the California Transportation Commission and the Regional Targets Advisory Committee urge a more inclusive view of performance measures for regional transportation planning. Finally, and most notably, it is incumbent on SCAG to develop plan alternatives and performance measures that reflect the range of choices and policy concerns for the Regional Council and for participants in the RTP process.

Range of Transportation Investment Options – Our fundamental premise in developing transportation alternatives is that we are not starting from scratch. The adopted 2008 RTP with its most recent amendment (#4) is our launching point for developing alternative transportation scenarios. Key elements of transportation alternatives that may influence outcomes (benefits and impacts) are capital projects (such as

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highway and transit expansion projects), policy considerations (eg. transit fare rates, toll rates, carpool lane occupancy requirements etc.), and planning assumptions (such as auto operating costs etc.). We will consider all of these elements in developing alternative transportation scenarios. Broad investment categories we will consider in developing alternatives include Roadway improvements, Transit and High Speed Rail, Goods Movement System, Bicycle and Pedestrian Network, Congestion Pricing Strategies, Transportation Demand Management (TDM), Transportation System Management (TSM), Transportation System Preservation. We envision developing alternative scenarios with a varying range of investment levels for each of these investment categories respecting local commitments as well as limitations placed by ‘color of money’ issue and fund transfer limitations between counties.

Land Use Scenario Options - The passage of SB 375 will place a greater emphasis on land use policy than was required in previous RTP cycles. Similar to transportation investment options, we envision developing alternative land use scenarios with a varying range of policy emphasis. The foundation of any scenario will be based on the local input that has been collected over the past 18 to 24 months. Additional scenarios will test land use policy assumptions expected to vary in effect on per capita VMT and GHG emissions.

Discussions and Feedback to Date – Staff has had preliminary discussions with both the Subregional Coordinators group and with the PPTAC as a prelude to this item. Feedback at those prior meetings was generally favorable regarding the use of “blended” alternatives and a broader range of performance measures. Members of the groups suggested various performance measures that staff is currently considering.

Likely components of proposed alternatives – As discussed with the PPTAC at the March meeting, staff envisions the following key concepts being integral to the alternatives and performance measures for the 2012 RTP.

- **Blended Alternatives** – Alternatives will vary both the land use and transportation inputs.
- **Themes** – Alternatives will be built around different emphasis areas such as integrating transportation and land use
- **Similar goals to prior cycles**- Past RTPs have included broadly framed goals around mobility, safety, preservation, sustainability and land use integration. Pending feedback from the Regional Council, we do not anticipate major changes to the goals from past cycles.
- **Categories of Performance Measures** – Performance measures will be used to quantify progress toward the goals, and to differentiate performance among alternatives. These measures will likely be broader than in past cycles, and are likely to include mobility, location efficiency, productivity, health and safety, environmental stewardship, social equity, economic prosperity, and investment efficiency. The precise measures to be used within each of these categories is still under development, but staff will be prepared to discuss some examples as part of the meeting discussion on April 13.
- **Similar structure to SB 375 target scenarios** – The alternatives will be assembled using the same or similar structure to the scenarios used for SB 375 target setting input to ARB. In other words, each alternative will include inputs from each of the components (land use, network, TDM, etc) that were used in the target setting exercise. The target scenario matrix is attached here as an illustration and reminder.

Scenarios and public dialogue – SCAG is currently in the process of procuring a consultant to assist in developing high level, schematic scenarios that will be featured in public workshops in the summer of 2011 leading up to the release of the draft RTP/SCS in November.

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Process and timeline– Subsequent to this discussion with the PPTAC, staff will finalize a proposed set of alternatives and performance measures for the 2012 RTP/SCS. This process could last through the end of June. Our goal is to present final alternatives for full evaluation to the PPTAC at their May meeting, and subsequently will be presented to the policy committees and Regional Council for approval. We will perform full evaluation of the alternatives and conduct required outreach between the months of July, August and September leading to refinement of alternatives towards selection of a preferred alternative (financially constrained as well as strategic portions of the 2012 RTP) by September in time to release a Draft 2012 RTP/SCS in November 2011.

ATTACHMENT:

2012 RTP/SCS Goals and Performance Categories Matrix
SB 375 Target Scenarios Matrix