



Final

Contra Costa's Principles for Collaborative Development of the SB 375 Sustainable Communities Strategy

PREAMBLE:

SB 375 (Steinberg) was signed into law by the Governor on September 30th, 2008. The bill changes the regional transportation planning process “to achieve, if there is a feasible way to do so,” greenhouse gas (GHG) emission targets set by the California Air Resources Board (CARB). The intent of the bill is to help forestall climate change through the comprehensive integration of land use and transportation planning.

Responsibilities for SB 375 implementation are assigned to state and regional agencies. In the Bay Area, explicit responsibility is assigned to MTC and ABAG to develop a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) as part of the 2013 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The SCS, in concert with transportation investments included in the RTP, is intended to achieve the GHG reduction targets set by the CARB for 2020 and 2040. The bill specifies that MTC and ABAG shall conduct outreach efforts to a broad range of stakeholders, including the congestion management agencies (CMAs).

While the statute does not mandate a formal role for Bay Area CMAs, the Authority expects to be fully engaged with the process as it relates to Contra Costa. The following principles have been developed to help guide Contra Costa's elected officials, whose roles at the local, regional, and State level will help shape the SCS.

Building upon the foundation of the Authority's Growth Management Program, and the earlier Shaping Our Future effort, the principles are intended to support collaborative decision-making that will result in a feasible SCS that meets GHG reduction targets while supporting the Authority's mission, vision, and core values.

PRINCIPLES:

The following principles are considered as a living document. The Authority may, from time to time, revisit them to make course corrections that will support a collaborative decision-making process among local, regional, and state agencies as the SCS process evolves:

1. **Forge a Positive Relationship with the Regional Agencies.** At both the elected official and staff level, the Authority intends to work with the regional agencies to support development of an SCS by facilitating a dialogue between the regional agencies and local jurisdictions regarding land use plans in Contra Costa.
2. **Consensus-Based Planning.** The Authority will seek to achieve an SCS as it applies to Contra Costa that reflects agreement between local jurisdictions and the regional agencies regarding land use assumptions, along with a Contra Costa-based plan for supportive transportation investments.

3. **Consideration of General Plans.** The long-range (2040) vision for the SCS will specify where new growth is to occur. This vision may conflict with currently adopted General Plans. Local jurisdictions that are in agreement with the land use assumptions in the SCS would undertake subsequent General Plan Amendments to reflect the agreed-upon SCS, and such action may take place subsequent to adoption of the 2013 RTP. Local jurisdictions that are not in agreement with the proposed land use assumptions in the SCS will be given the opportunity to work at the subregional level in collaboration with the regional agencies to develop an alternative land use proposal that contributes towards achievement of the Bay Area's GHG emissions target. Where mutual agreement on the proposed SCS is not achieved, the role of the Authority will be to acknowledge the conflict and to identify other factors or impacts that may be relevant for the protection of the environment, furtherance of GHG goals by alternative means, or the sustainability of a local jurisdiction.
4. **Local Control of General Plans and Zoning Maps.** Each local jurisdiction shall retain full control of local general plans and zoning within its municipal boundary.
5. **Ensure the Participation of all Local Jurisdictions and Partner Agencies.** Beyond a focus on the priority development areas (PDAs) as the core of the SCS, efforts will also be made to ensure that all cities and towns can successfully participate in the process, so that their land use and transportation needs can also be addressed. Furthermore, the Authority welcomes and encourages participation by other agencies, such as the transit operators.
6. **Facilitative Role.** Working in partnership with local jurisdictions and the regional agencies, the Authority, as a transportation agency, should play a facilitative role by providing resources, information and policy insights to cities, towns and Contra Costa County, while recognizing that local jurisdictions have sole discretion with respect to land use decisions. A working group of Contra Costa planning directors will be established to monitor the development of the SCS and any issues raised during that process.
7. **Urban Limit Line.** The SCS needs to respect the Measure J mandated Urban Limit Line (ULL) for Contra Costa, which represents an agreed upon "urban growth boundary," and shall direct all urban development to areas within the ULL.
8. **Sustainable Transit.** Ensure that the SCS includes feasible transit service that is adequately funded to provide reliable and convenient service for Contra Costa, while encouraging walking and bicycling.
9. **Rural Sustainability Component.** Recognizing SB 375's overall goal of achieving more focused growth, the SCS also needs to consider transportation investments for the safety and preservation of roads serving farm to market and interconnectivity transportation needs.
10. **Public Health.** The Authority recognizes that there are multiple public health benefits to transportation policies that both reduce GHG emissions and increase mode share of walking, cycling, and transit, and will consider these health co-benefits in planning decisions.
11. **Reflect Contra Costa's Continuing Commitment to Growth Management and Resource Conservation.** Development of the SCS shall incorporate Contra Costa's existing efforts and programs that would help reduce GHG emissions. These include the Measure J Growth Management Program (GMP), the establishment of PDAs and PCAs,

and the East Contra Costa Habitat Conservancy. The GMP, in particular, has much in common with the objectives of the SCS, including the ULL provision noted above, local jurisdiction compliance with State Housing and Community Development (HCD) Department requirements, 511 Contra Costa Clean Fuel Infrastructure and transportation demand management programs funded by Measures C and J, and a general plan amendment (GPA) review process to address the impacts of growth and promote appropriate mitigation.

12. **Shaping Our Future.** Continue the collaborative process that began with Shaping Our Future, where Contra Costa jurisdictions collectively developed the Shaping Our Future land use plan, and which provided a springboard to the PDAs and PCAs that are now being incorporated into the SCS and which has significant transportation benefits.
13. **Common Voice.** The Authority in collaboration with the cities, towns and Contra Costa County should provide a unified voice and advocate for all Contra Costa jurisdictions in working work with the regional agencies and adjacent CMAs.
14. **Final SCS.** The Authority will support the final SCS provided it is consistent with each local jurisdiction's mission, vision and sustainability goals.