

# South Bay Cities Council of Governments

October 26, 2017

TO: SBCCOG Board of Directors

FROM: Jacki Bacharach, SBCCOG Executive Director  
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RE: Subregional Climate Action Plan Land Use and Transportation Chapter

## Adherence to Strategic Plan

*Goal A: Environment, Transportation and Economic Development:* Facilitate, implement and/or educate members and others about environmental, transportation and economic development programs that benefit the South Bay.

## Background

Metro and the California Strategic Growth Council (SGC) contracted with the SBCCOG in December 2014 to produce a sub-regional Climate Action Plan (CAP) and CAPs for 15 member cities. The Energy Efficiency chapters of both the sub-regional and city CAPs have been previously adopted by the respective jurisdictions. The final chapters on waste, greening and energy generation and storage along with land use and transportation (LUT) strategies for the Subregional CAPs will be presented in January 2018 after all of the city CAPs have been approved. This staff report addresses only the land use – transportation chapter of the sub-regional CAP.

A CAP consists of a set of initiatives and policies that, once implemented, will reduce GHG emissions. A critical part of a CAP is calculating the tons of emissions expected to be reduced through the adopted initiatives and policies.

A sub-regional CAP is different from city CAPs since COGs have no implementation powers that will directly impact GHG emissions. Many of those powers belong exclusively to cities. The role of the SBCCOG is to support the cities with strategies, resources and education. The Subregional CAP provides a ‘framework’ for city CAPs; essentially a catalogue of strategies chosen from the basic CAP resource, the CAPCOA Manual as well as strategies from the Sustainable South Bay Strategy (SSBS). The SBCCOG is the only sub-regional organization in Southern California to have independently developed a “home grown” strategy from the SSBS with experts in the field to validate the assumptions.

The primary purpose of the Metro/SGC grant was to translate the SBCCOG’s previously adopted land use – transportation strategy (known as the Sustainable South Bay Strategy - SSBS) for use both “up” and “down.” “Up” informs state policies and programs about how better to pursue carbon reduction. “Down” provides a different strategic option for cities to consider in their LUTCAPs (the Strategy Catalogue).

Previous Board presentations and workshops have described the SBSS and its implications for city policy. This staff report and Board presentation will focus on the “up” part of the LUTCAP,

the recommendations to the various state agencies concerned with sustainability; and on the program going forward that will allow the SBCCOG to continue to support the cities with strategies, resources, and education.

#### SSBS Summary (Sustainable Neighborhoods Strategy)

The SSBS (adopted by the SBCCOG Board in 2010), has been re-branded for the LUTCAP as the Sustainable Neighborhoods Strategy (SNS). The SNS is based on the findings of a 15-year research and development program. It will help South Bay cities preserve their suburban quality of life while reducing GHG emissions.

SNS uses neighborhoods as the basic unit of sustainability. It provides cities with the tools to redevelop or remodel existing commercial clusters into dense, destination-rich neighborhood centers. The anchor mobility strategy involves privately owned local use vehicles (LUV) specialized for use in the 90% of trips that are less than 10 miles, and which account for 70% of the vehicle miles traveled (VMT) generated by South Bay households. Parking and other supportive policies can be used to accelerate the market for full speed zero emission vehicles (ZEV). Additional pieces to the “strategy puzzle” include broadband networks, LUV infrastructure, smart city technology applications, and institutional innovations.

The SNS Strategy Catalogue is built around the core idea of creating walking neighborhoods connected by LUVs into a network of walking neighborhoods. Should the entire vision be implemented, three square miles of the South Bay could have 49 neighborhood centers which should be able to absorb 90% of the trips taken by household members. Carbon emissions, criteria pollutants, traffic congestion and parking infrastructure are expected to decline as a result.

#### Recommendations

The Board is requested to approve the following recommendations for:

- A. State Agencies – Strategic Growth Council, Air Resources Board, California Energy Commission - as part of the SB LUTCAP. The following technical examples provide a sense of what will be recommended:
- The CAPCOA Manual should be updated (published in 2010 and not revised since) and expanded (provide strategies for suburban regions). This update should include new land use options; mobility options beyond transit, walking and bicycling; and the likely spatial impacts of digital technologies.
  - In order for cities to more effectively plan and evaluate GHG emissions reduction strategies, new-vehicle registration data should be available to every interested city. Measuring progress toward the goal should be an essential component of every sustainability strategy.
  - Regulating the built environment is too coarse a level to actually reduce GHG emissions. The SBCCOG research has shown that the key to sustainability is the location of destinations within the built environment; data on the building envelope is not particularly helpful. Business density measured as businesses per acre is the key predictor of the ability to attract trips and the walking rate to get there. The SBCCOG used the Dunn and Bradstreet data base of businesses by North America Industrial Classification in a GIS layer.

- The focus on VMT reduction is too coarse a target as it fails to recognize the core issue – transitioning the fleet from internal combustion engine vehicles to ZEVs. VMT reduction is consistent with the mono-culture of mobility restricted to transit and various forms of active transportation. It is important to distinguish between carbon VMT (cVMT) and zero emission VMT (zeVMT).
- Definition of high quality transit corridors is too loose to effectively serve as a guide for locating residential density. Most of the major South Bay arterials are considered high quality because of frequent service during the peak AM and PM periods for the journey to work. Yet these same bus routes often lack adequate off-peak service including zero weekend service in some cases. Also, the journey to work makes up only about 25% of total demand mobility so defining high quality in terms of that particular trip of type will increase congestion when residential density is developed.

#### B. South Bay LUTCAP: SBCCOG Initiatives

The South Bay LUTCAP mandates the SBCCOG to continue in its role of supporting the cities with strategies, resources and education. The specifics will continue to evolve in relation to grant opportunities as well as changing conditions and needs.

The following is a summary of sustainability initiatives currently underway or being planned:

- South Bay Fiber Backbone Network – Feasibility study complete, RFP under development.
- South Bay Slow Speed Network Feasibility Study – Proposal submitted to Caltrans on October 20, 2017
- Sustainable Neighborhoods Working Group – New working group to help cities implement the Sustainable Neighborhoods Strategy.
- EV Resource Center – as part of the SBESC, staff would have information to support cities support with the adoption of ZEVs
- Full LUV Deployment Pilot – Planned to include the following components:
  - South Bay Clean Vehicle Rebate Program (CVRP) -- A sub-regional subsidy program for slow speed vehicles of all types from electric bikes to NEVs.
  - LUV-Exhibition -- LUVs of any type, outside of the GEM NEV, are virtually unknown to most households. This activity would consist of at least one large ride and drive event featuring as many zero emission LUVs as can be found.
  - Right Ranging Tool -- Very few households are aware of their actual mobility needs. Ideally this would be accessed online and will analyze the driving patterns input of prospective vehicle purchasers in order to provide various zero emission scenarios, including LUVs specifically.