



CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: November 17, 2009
To: Honorable Mayor & City Council
From: Peter Noonan, AICP, Associate Planner *PN*
Jonathan Lait, AICP, City Planner *JL*
Subject: WESTSIDE CITIES COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS –
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY.
Attachments: 1. Fact Sheet for Senate Bill 375: Redesigning Communities
to Reduce Greenhouse Gases.

INTRODUCTION

The single-largest source of greenhouse gases in California is emissions from passenger vehicles. Senate Bill 375 was signed into law in 2008 to specifically address tail-pipe emissions from a land use perspective. Additional information on SB 375 is provided in Attachment 1.

Senate Bill 375 requires each region in the State to develop a strategy that integrates land use, housing and transportation plans, this strategy has been termed the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS). The focus of the SCS is to reduce automotive dependency by redesigning communities to better link land use and transportation options.

The City of Beverly Hills is in the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) region. SCAG is the largest planning region in the nation and includes six counties (Los Angeles, Riverside, Orange, Imperial, San Bernardino and Ventura Counties), and 187 member cities. The SCAG planning region is divided into several sub-regions to facilitate local participation in the regional planning process. The City is a member of the SCAG Westside Sub-Region whose members include the cities of Beverly Hills, Culver City, Santa Monica and West Hollywood.

When the Westside Sub-Region member cities meet, they do so through the Westside Cities Council of Governments (WSCCOG). The WSCCOG is a local multi-jurisdictional governing body that is composed of the four Westside cities along with the City of Los Angeles, and the County of Los Angeles. Delegates from each of these cities and county meet regularly to address regional planning initiatives. Additionally, staff from each of the member jurisdictions meet regularly to share information, collaborate on sub-

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regional and regional planning processes, and provide information to their respective WSCCOG delegates. -

DISCUSSION

SCAG is responsible for developing the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) for the six-county region. To create an opportunity for the sub-regions to be involved in the process, SCAG has developed three participation options for developing the SCS (Figure 1). In order to proceed, SCAG has asked each sub-region to indicate the level of involvement that the sub-region will commit to. In regards to the SCS, only the sub-regional members of the WSCCOG – Beverly Hills, Culver City, Santa Monica and West Hollywood – will be involved in this discussion as both the City of Los Angeles and the County of Los Angeles will be participating in the SCS process as separate sub-regions.

The three potential levels of involvement are summarized in Figure 1. The Westside Sub-Region will make a decision regarding its level of involvement at the upcoming WSCCOG meeting on November 19, 2009.

Figure 1. Options for Westside Cities Sub-Regional Involvement with the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) to Develop the Region's Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS).

OPTION 1) Westside Cities Sub-Region Collaborates in Regional Process:	
Collaboration would provide SCAG with accurate data for the Sub-Region assuring that the SCS is representative of planning processes currently underway while not overburdening the member Cities.	
<i>Pro's</i>	<i>Con's</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in the regional land use and transportation planning process. • Greater assurance that regional plans include realistic local land use and transportation patterns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires some City staff time and resources (It is anticipated that existing staffing levels are adequate to support this option, though the timing on some priority projects may be slightly impacted).
OPTION 2) Westside Cities Sub-Region Develops its own SCS:	
Developing a SCS for the Westside Cities Sub-Region would be costly and may not provide the best options for reduced vehicle trips since the Sub-Region is disconnected physically, with the City and County of Los Angeles separating member cities from one another. Although both the City and the County of Los Angeles are members of the Westside Cities Council of Governments (WSCCOG), each is an independent sub-region for regional planning purposes. Both the City and the County of Los Angeles will most likely collaborate with SCAG, therefore, developing a local SCS for the Westside Cities would enhance collaboration with other members of WSCCOG.	
<i>Pro's</i>	<i>Con's</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows for greatest amount of autonomy in the land use planning process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-cost alternative. • Requires significant City staff time and resources • Sub-Region would take on legal

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Figure 1. Options for Westside Cities Sub-Regional Involvement with the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) to Develop the Region’s Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS).

	<p>liability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not facilitate cooperative planning with other member jurisdictions of WSCCOG. • End result may not vary significantly from option 1. • Some department work and policy projects would be deferred indefinitely.
OPTION 3) Westside Cities Sub-Region does not Participate:	
<p>Allowing SCAG to develop the SCS without City involvement would limit the Sub-Region’s engagement in regional land use and traffic decisions. This may lead to disconnects between future regional transportation projects and local land use patterns.</p>	
<i>Pro's</i>	<i>Con's</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowest-cost alternative. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires some staff time and resources • Sub-Region would not be participating in a regional planning process. • The member cities would review drafts of the strategy but would not actively participate in the development. • The resulting SCS would lack specificity for the Westside Cities.

Figure 2. Tasks Associated with Developing the SCS. Staff responsibilities are summarized for each of the three options below.

Potential Sub-Regional Tasks for Each Option	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain a consultant to develop a local Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS). 		X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in the development of the SCS. 	X	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead the development of the SCS. 		X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide City data and information. 	X	X	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze City data and information. 		X	

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Potential Sub-Regional Tasks for Each Option	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review document drafts for consistency with City documents. 	X	X	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create community outreach materials, provide meeting space and facilitate public events. 		X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribute community outreach materials and provide meeting space for SCAG scheduled public events. 	X	X	X

ANALYSIS

Staff recommends that the City Council authorize their delegate to vote in favor of collaborating in the regional planning process (Option 1). Justification for collaborating in the process includes three key points.

- Assurance that the SCS reflects Local Planning and Transportation Patterns.**
 Collaborating in the planning process will provide greater assurance that the resulting SCS reflects realistic local land use and transportation patterns.

- Balance City and Regional Resources.**
 Collaboration in the planning process is expected to yield the greatest benefit to the City. A comparison of "Collaboration" (Option 1) with "not participating" (Option 3) indicates that collaborating in the process would require only slightly more effort than not participating (Figure 2), however collaborating in the process would yield greater potential benefit than choosing not to participate. Alternatively, developing a separate SCS for the sub-region (Option 2) would cost the most in terms of consultant costs, staff time and City resources yet would not yield any additional benefit. Additionally, Option 2 would require the Sub-Region to retain consultants to assist in the process as this is a new planning process for which the Sub-Region lacks expertise.

- WSCCOG Representatives Support Collaboration.**
 Other WSCCOG members have indicated a preference towards participating in the collaborative process (Option 1). Collaboration would maintain the City's position as a participant in regional planning processes and allow the greatest amount of sharing amongst jurisdictions within WSCCOG further assuring that regional plans reflect local land use and transportation patterns.

FISCAL IMPACT

The recommendation requires a fiscal impact of City staff time and City resources particularly because there are no State funds available to sub-regions or member cities for developing the SCS. The SCS planning process is expected to last for three years. Once the SCS is adopted, SCAG would continue to revise the SCS once every seven years in conjunction with other regional planning processes which the City currently participates in such as the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) and the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Therefore participation in this planning process at any level will have an impact on the City's work load and may result in the need to reprioritize planning activities; however it is anticipated that participation at the collaborative level (Option 1) can be accommodated with existing staffing.

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RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council authorize its designee (Mayor Krasne) to the Westside Cities Council of Governments (WSCCOG) to indicate support for a collaborative process (Option 1) for developing the regional Sustainable Community Strategy at the upcoming WSCCOG meeting on November 19, 2009.

 For Susan Healy Keene, AICP,
Community Development Director

Approved By

Senate Bill 375: Redesigning Communities to Reduce Greenhouse Gases

<http://gov.ca.gov/fact-sheet/10707/>
10/1/2008

The single-largest source of greenhouse gases in California is emissions from passenger vehicles, and in order to reduce those emissions, we must work to reduce Californians' vehicle-miles traveled (VMTs). That means helping people spend less time in their cars to get to work and to the grocery store. In order to reach California's greenhouse gas reductions goals set out in the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32), we must rethink how we design our communities.

Senate Bill 375 by incoming Senator Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg would be the nation's first law to control greenhouse gas emissions by curbing sprawl. SB 375 provides emissions-reducing goals for which regions can plan, integrates disjointed planning activities, and provides incentives for local governments and developers to follow new conscientiously-planned growth patterns. SB 375 enhances the Air Resources Board's (ARB) ability to reach AB 32 goals.

Just as the railroad transformed California, and decades later our freeway system did the same, SB 375 will be responsible for reshaping the face of California's communities into more sustainable, walkable communities, with alternative transportation options and increased quality of life.

Reducing Harmful Greenhouse Gases Through Better Land-Use Planning

For California to reach its greenhouse gas reduction goals, we must address how the state's communities grow. This law will direct the ARB to set greenhouse gas reduction targets for regions of the state and work with California's 18 metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) to align their transportation, housing, and regional land-use plans with greenhouse gas reductions in mind.

FACT: California's population - now 38 million - is projected to grow to 46 million by 2030, the equivalent of adding eight new San Franciscos to the state. More people means more cars, and more cars means more miles driven, and that growth threatens to erode the progress of all other vehicle-related global warming reduction measures ARB is currently developing.

And that will mean less greenhouse gases emitted. Practically, this will mean envisioning and planning for communities that rely less on automobiles and get Californians out of their cars for routine trips such as to work and the grocery store. Spending less time on the road is the single-most powerful way for California to reduce its carbon footprint.

FACT: Passenger vehicles are the largest single source of greenhouse gas emissions in California, accounting for 30 percent of the total.

It will also mean a higher quality of life. SB 375 provides incentives for creating attractive, walkable, sustainable communities and revitalizing existing ones. It will also encourage the development of more alternative transportation options. By doing so, this law will promote healthy lifestyles and reduce traffic congestion so Californians can spend less time on the road.

A First-In-The-Nation Move

For the state that epitomizes car culture to tackle the global warming problem of long commutes is a historic event. Over much of the past century, California was shaped largely by the automobile - our freeway system, our drive-thru restaurants, our bedroom communities. Starting now, our environmental goals and our focus on healthy lifestyles will give a facelift to California's car culture.

This is another first for California, which continues to lead the nation and the world in its aggressive fight against global warming. No other state in the nation is tackling land-use planning related to greenhouse gases.

The Governor continues to work to boost California's economy while protecting its environment. Governor Schwarzenegger's green initiatives will mean jobs in California and more opportunities in the emerging green-tech and clean-tech industries as innovators work to develop new ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The Legislation

Senate Bill 375 (Darrell Steinberg, D-Sacramento) requires the ARB to develop regional greenhouse gas emission reduction targets to be achieved from the automobile and light truck sectors for 2020 and 2035. The 18 MPOs in California will prepare a "sustainable communities strategy" to reduce the amount of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in their respective regions and demonstrate the ability for the region to attain ARB's targets.

- ARB would later determine if each region is on track to meet their targets.
- Builders also would get relief from certain environmental reviews under California Environmental Quality Act if they build projects consistent with the new sustainable community strategies.
- In addition, cities would get extra time -- eight years instead of five -- to update housing plans required by the state.

The Governor's Record on Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions: With strong policies, laws and innovation, California is leading the fight against climate change.

- Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32): AB32 established a first-in-the-world comprehensive program of regulatory and market mechanisms to achieve real, quantifiable, cost-effective reductions of greenhouse gas emissions. The law will reduce carbon emissions in California to 1990 levels by 2020.
- Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS): California's LCFS requires fuel providers to reduce the carbon intensity of transportation fuels sold in the state, dramatically expanding the market for alternative fuels. By 2020, the LCFS will reduce carbon content in all passenger vehicle fuels sold in California by 10 percent.
- Million Solar Roofs Initiative: The Governor's \$2.9 billion incentive plan for home and building owners who install solar electric systems will lead to one million solar roofs in

California by the year 2018, provide 3,000 megawatts of clean energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 3 million tons.

- Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS): California's RPS calls for more energy to come from clean, renewable sources. In 2003, the Governor called for an acceleration of the RPS, pushing for 20 percent of California's energy to come from renewable energy sources by 2010 rather than 2017, seven years earlier than statute. This accelerated standard became law in 2006, when the Governor signed SB 107.
- California's automobile emissions standards: The Governor has been pursuing every avenue possible to enforce California's 2002 California law, AB 1493 by Assemblymember Fran Pavley, which allows California to enact and enforce emissions standards to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from automobiles, including a lawsuit against the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to overturn its decision denying a waiver to enforce state regulations to limit greenhouse gas emissions from cars.

What They're Saying About Senate Bill 375:

Contra Costa Times: "Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions Is Best Accomplished With A Comprehensive Plan That Includes Land Use." "Technology will play a major role as hybrid and other high-mileage cars replace less efficient vehicles. But more must be done if California is to meet its goals. Less driving as well as greater fuel efficiency is needed. That is where Senate Bill 375 by Darrell Steinberg, D-Sacramento, comes in. The measure's supporters understand that reducing greenhouse gas emissions is best accomplished with a comprehensive plan that includes land use to go along with transportation strategies." (Editorial, "Smart Growth Measure Fights Greenhouse Gas Emissions," *Contra Costa Times*, 8/31/08)

- **Contra Costa Times**: "We are confident that Californians can significantly cut back on their consumption of fossil fuels with new technology and intelligent development that results in less driving. SB 375 is an important part of that strategy and merits bipartisan support in the Legislature and the governor's signature." (Editorial, "Smart Growth Measure Fights Greenhouse Gas Emissions," *Contra Costa Times*, 8/31/08)

Bakersfield Californian: "The Bill Would Create Opportunities For Local Creativity In The Pursuit Of Common, Statewide Benefits." (Editorial, "We Must Change The Way We Think About Growth," *Bakersfield Californian*, 8/30/08)

- **Bakersfield Californian**: "Creatively Applied, Attractively Rendered Urban Density Built Around Mass Transit Lends Itself To Job Growth, Affordable Housing And Protection Of Farmland, Never Mind Cleaner Air." "Steinberg's bill would not eliminate the suburbs or the big, ranch-style homes that some people prefer, but rather create an environment that would give homebuyers more responsible and affordable options. Creatively applied, attractively rendered urban density built around mass transit lends itself to job growth, affordable housing and protection of farmland, never mind cleaner air. The time to take bold strides in that direction is now." (Editorial, "We Must Change The Way We Think About Growth," *Bakersfield Californian*, 8/30/08)

WSCCOG – Sustainable Community Strategy
November 17, 2009

Attachment A

The Fresno Bee: "A Carefully Crafted Effort To Rein In Sprawl, Cut Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Boost Mass Transit." "... The measure, Senate Bill 375, by Sen. Darrell Steinberg, D-Sacramento, is a carefully crafted effort to rein in sprawl, cut greenhouse gas emissions, boost mass transit and increase the amount of affordable housing in the state. It deserves the governor's signature." (Editorial, "Bill To Reward Smart Growth; Bipartisan Effort Addresses Several Of State's Biggest Problems," *The Fresno Bee*, 8/31/08)

- ***The Fresno Bee:*** "SB 375 Is A Real Breakthrough... The Need Is Obvious." (Editorial, "Bill To Reward Smart Growth; Bipartisan Effort Addresses Several Of State's Biggest Problems," *The Fresno Bee*, 8/31/08)