



BOARD OF DIRECTORS
APRIL 24, 2009

AGENDA ITEM NO. 09-04-6
ACTION REQUESTED – INFORMATION

LONG-RANGE REGIONAL PLANS AND FORECASTS:
A WORK PLAN TO COMPLY WITH SENATE BILL 375 File Numbers 3000200 & 3000400

Introduction

The passage of Senate Bill (SB) 375 (Steinberg, 2008) and provisions included in the 2008 RTP Settlement Agreement (Settlement Agreement) regarding the 2030 Regional Transportation Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR) significantly change how SANDAG will prepare the next Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). Both also set the stage for a future update of the Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP). SANDAG staff has responded to these new requirements in the draft FY 2010 Budget and Overall Work Program. The purpose of this informational report is to provide an overview of the proposed work plan and its key elements to the SANDAG Board of Directors. This report was presented to the Regional Planning and Transportation Committees on April 3, 2009.

Discussion

Compliance with SB 375 significantly changes how we will prepare the next RTP and RHNA. Provisions of the law require that:

- the California Air Resources Board (CARB) establish regional greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets;
- the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) create a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS)—a new element of the RTP—to strive to meet established GHG reduction targets or, if unable to meet the target, it must prepare an Alternative Planning Strategy (APS);
- the MPO conduct extensive outreach and adopt a public participation plan for the SCS;
- the RHNA be synchronized with the RTP process and that the RHNA allocations be consistent with the SCS; and
- more extensive environmental review is conducted to ensure that local jurisdictions can benefit from the California Environmental Quality Act streamlining provisions included in the law.

The RTP Settlement Agreement further requires that SANDAG develop an Urban Core Transit Strategy and complete a study regarding the impediments to public transit as part of the 2050 RTP, scheduled to be adopted in July 2011. Other provisions of the Settlement Agreement have an indirect relationship to the RTP and are not specifically discussed in this report.

The proposed work plan includes several key efforts, which are summarized below. Attached is a generalized work plan timeline.

2050 Regional Growth Forecast

A regional growth forecast is produced every four years to reflect the most current economic, demographic, land use and transportation data, and to keep pace with ongoing regional planning efforts such as the RTP and RCP. The last forecast provided growth projections and estimates to 2030. The upcoming forecast will provide growth projections and estimates to 2050.

Work is already underway to produce the 2050 Regional Growth Forecast, which will be used in the preparation of the 2050 RTP, San Diego County Water Authority's Urban Water Management Plan, and future RCP update. In October 2008, SANDAG staff initiated the local land use data collection process with the Regional Planning Technical Working Group (TWG) in order to prepare the "existing plans and policies" phase of the forecast. The TWG assists with local land use inputs, including existing land uses, planned land uses, and potential redevelopment and infill areas, all of which are important to the forecasting process and build upon the RCP smart growth principles. SANDAG has received input from all the jurisdictions in the region, and staff is now inputting and verifying the information in coordination with local planning staffs.

The second phase involves preparing alternative growth scenarios that can be applied to forecast years after 2025, beyond the horizon year of local general plans. Around the year 2025, the region also runs out of housing capacity based on current plans and future growth. SANDAG staff has started discussions with the TWG on the range of alternative scenarios to consider. The Regional Planning Committee (RPC) and Board of Directors will be asked to weigh in on the alternative scenarios, which also will be discussed in future public workshops this summer. The draft 2050 Regional Growth Forecast is anticipated in September/October 2009. The Board of Directors will be asked to adopt the 2050 Regional Growth Forecast for planning purposes in early 2010.

In addition to the TWG, SANDAG staff has assembled a peer review group, composed of experts in demography, housing, economics, and other disciplines from state and local agencies, local universities, and the private sector. This group is providing input to SANDAG staff on the regional model structure, data inputs and assumptions, and evaluating the forecast results from a technical perspective.

Urban Core Transit Strategy

The RTP Settlement Agreement calls for SANDAG to develop an Urban Core Transit Strategy that evaluates possible regional transit strategies that maximize peak-period transit mode share in the urban core. The strategy will result in three to four long-range strategic transit network alternatives that will be considered in the development of the 2050 RTP. The transit network alternatives will be structured to significantly increase the attractiveness and use of transit, walking, and biking to make transit time-competitive with the private car and thereby to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in the greater San Diego region. It is anticipated that SANDAG will release the Request for Proposals for this work in May and select a consultant this summer.

Airport Multimodal Accessibility Plan (AMAP)

SANDAG is working with the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority (Authority) on the development of a Regional Aviation Strategic Plan (RASP) and an Airport Multimodal Accessibility Plan (AMAP). The Authority is lead for the RASP, which will identify workable strategies to improve

the performance of the regional airport system. SANDAG is the lead for the AMAP, which will develop a multimodal strategy to improve surface transportation access to airports. The development of the RASP and AMAP will be a coordinated process between the Authority and SANDAG. The overall schedule is designed to allow the RASP and AMAP to be incorporated into the 2050 RTP.

Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) / Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA)

The SCS will be a new element of the RTP, as required by SB 375, to show how regional GHG targets would be achieved through development patterns, infrastructure investments, and/or transportation measures or policies that are *determined to be feasible*. Additionally, the SCS must be consistent with the RHNA and must address protection of sensitive resource areas, including areas protected under Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs). If the SCS does not meet regional GHG targets, an APS must be developed, which demonstrates what alternative and additional measures would need to be taken in order for the region to meet its GHG target.

The adopted Smart Growth Concept Map, which identifies existing, planned smart growth areas linked to existing and planned public transit, along with the identified habitat planning areas, will serve as a basis for the SCS. Additionally, the results of the Regional Climate Action Plan (RCAP) will provide ideas for additional measures that could reduce GHG emissions.

SB 375 changed previous housing element law by aligning regional housing planning with regional transportation planning. As a result of this change, the RHNA is on an eight-year cycle and will be conducted as part of every other RTP process (the RTP is updated every four years). Currently, SB 375 requires the San Diego region to adopt two housing elements within a 2-1/2 year period (June 2010 and January 2013). SANDAG staff is pursuing legislation to merge and clarify the deadlines.

2050 RTP

Federal law requires that an RTP be prepared every four years. In accordance with state and federal guidelines, the 2050 RTP is slated for adoption by the Board of Directors in July 2011. The planning efforts described in this report are key inputs or components for the development of a 2050 RTP that complies with SB 375, requirements of the Settlement Agreement, and air quality conformity. As part of the RTP development, goals and objectives from the 2030 RTP (adopted in 2007) will be revised and updated. The results of related work efforts such as the RCAP, Regional Energy Strategy Update, Regional Bicycle Master Plan, Comprehensive Freight Gateway Forecast, high-speed rail planning, corridor and subregional studies, collaborative projects with Tribal Nations, as well as interregional and binational strategies will be incorporated. Other major tasks include updates to the project evaluation criteria and RTP performance measures, economic analysis of investment strategies, new revenue projections, and updated project cost estimates. Additionally, the 2050 RTP will be subject to any new requirements established in the federal surface transportation reauthorization, which is anticipated to be passed in 2010.

The TWG and a new Regional Planning Stakeholder Working Group (SWG) will play an integral role in the development of the RTP along with the region's public works directors and traffic engineers, who are represented in the Cities/County Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC) and San Diego Traffic Engineers Council (SANTEC), respectively. The San Diego Region Conformity Working Group (CWG) will be consulted on the development of the air quality conformity analysis.

2050 RTP Environmental Impact Report (EIR)

The EIR for the 2050 RTP will require analysis that has not been included in previous RTP EIRs. The RTP environmental analysis will include GHG baseline measurements and projections as well as potential mitigation measures that could reduce emissions. The EIR also will include analysis of the additional work products required by SB 375 and the Settlement Agreement.

In addition, as part of the environmental review process for the RTP, SB 375 includes California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) streamlining provisions as an incentive to encourage certain types of projects that help achieve the GHG reduction target and are consistent with the SCS. Cities and counties that find the CEQA streamlining provisions useful have the opportunity to align their planning decisions with the decisions of the region. It should be noted, however, that the CEQA streamlining provisions are not mandatory and are intended to be a tool that local jurisdictions may use, if desired.

RTP / SCS Public Participation Plan

SANDAG regularly involves the public in regional planning efforts. A public participation plan is being prepared to involve the public in every step along the way to develop the 2050 RTP and set the stage for a future RCP update. The plan will include the establishment of the new (SWG) to provide input on the development of key work elements in the planning process, including the public participation plan. Additionally, there will be a series of public workshops and other means for involving the public and receiving input on the work products and draft 2050 RTP. SANDAG staff is making a special effort to consider alternative methodologies for engaging a wider diversity of citizens in the planning process, taking advantage of existing community networks.

Next Steps

In order to implement the proposed work plan, SANDAG will benefit from substantial work that has already been done toward meeting the requirements of SB 375 and the Settlement Agreement. The adopted Smart Growth Concept Map together with regional habitat planning areas will serve as a basis for the SCS. Additionally, the results of the RCAP will provide new tools toward reducing VMT and GHG emissions. A number of planning efforts that will be incorporated in the 2050 RTP development have been initiated, such as the Interstate 5 South Multimodal Corridor Study, and Freight Gateway Forecast.

SANDAG staff will provide a more detailed 2050 RTP work plan to the Regional Planning Committee, Transportation Committee, and Board of Directors in June.

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Attachment: 1. *Draft* Long-Range Plans and Forecasts Integrated Work Plan Summary

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