



**Regional Transportation Plan & Sustainable  
Communities Strategy**

**Public Participation Plan**

**September 17, 2015**



## **Table of Contents**

I.	Introduction.....	1
II.	Phases of the Public Participation Process.....	2
III.	Process Participants .....	6
	a. Member Agency and Committee Involvement.....	6
	b. Government Agency Involvement.....	6
	c. Stakeholder Group Involvement .....	7
	d. General Public Involvement.....	7
IV.	Participation Tools .....	8
	a. Contact List.....	8
	b. Internet .....	8
	c. Local and Regional Media .....	9
	Appendix A: List of Stakeholder Groups .....	10
	Appendix B: List of Government Agencies .....	12
	Appendix C: Media List .....	14



## I. Introduction

The purpose of this Regional Transportation Plan & Sustainable Communities Strategy Public Participation Plan is to provide opportunity for meaningful input and involvement in development of the region's Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) by the general public, stakeholders, and member agency officials and staff, as well as interested State and federal agencies, while satisfying the requirements of California Senate Bill (SB) 375. Public participation and engagement throughout the process is critical to the success of the SCS. SBCAG encourages all interested parties to be involved in shaping the future of the region.

The purpose of this Public Participation Plan is to provide opportunity for meaningful input and involvement.

SB 375 requires each metropolitan planning organization (MPO) to adopt an SCS as one of the elements in its Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The SCS must, among other things, "set forth a forecasted development pattern for the region, which, when integrated with the transportation network, and other transportation measures and policies, will reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from automobiles and light trucks to achieve, if there is a feasible way to do so, the greenhouse gas emission reduction targets approved by the state board." If the SCS cannot achieve the greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction targets, the MPO must also prepare an alternative planning strategy (APS) "showing how the targets would be achieved through alternative development patterns, infrastructure, or additional transportation measures or policies."

SB 375 requires that each MPO adopt a public participation plan for the development of the SCS and, if one is developed, the APS, that includes all of the following:

- (i) Outreach efforts to encourage the active participation of a broad range of stakeholder groups in the planning process, consistent with the agency's adopted Federal Public Participation Plan, including, but not limited to, affordable housing advocates, transportation advocates, neighborhood and community groups, environmental advocates, home builder representatives, broad-based business organizations, landowners, commercial property interests, and homeowner associations.
- (ii) Consultation with congestion management agencies, transportation agencies, and transportation commissions.
- (iii) Workshops throughout the region to provide the public with the information and tools necessary to provide a clear understanding of the issues and policy choices. At least one workshop shall be held in each county in the region. For counties with a population greater than 500,000, at least three workshops shall be held. Each workshop, to the extent practicable, shall include urban simulation computer modeling to create visual representations of the sustainable communities strategy and the alternative planning strategy.

- (iv) Preparation and circulation of a draft sustainable communities strategy and an alternative planning strategy, if one is prepared, not less than 55 days before adoption of a final regional transportation plan.
- (v) At least three public hearings on the draft sustainable communities strategy in the regional transportation plan and alternative planning strategy, if one is prepared. If the metropolitan transportation organization consists of a single county, at least two public hearings shall be held. To the maximum extent feasible, the hearings shall be in different parts of the region to maximize the opportunity for participation by members of the public throughout the region.
- (vi) A process for enabling members of the public to provide a single request to receive notices, information, and updates. (California Government Code §65080(b)(2)(F))

This RTP & SCS Public Participation Plan complements SBCAG’s federal Public Participation Plan 2015 (draft until August), which fulfills the federal requirements for public participation in the metropolitan planning process. The federal Public Participation Plan 2015, when adopted, will be available on the SBCAG website, [www.sbcag.org](http://www.sbcag.org), and this RTP & SCS Public Participation Plan will also be made available on the SBCAG website.

Numerous abbreviated names, acronyms or initials, are used throughout this document. The following table summarizes these abbreviated names.

<b>Abbreviated Name</b>	<b>Full Name</b>
<b>APS</b>	Alternative Planning Strategy
<b>CARB</b>	California Air Resources Board
<b>GHG</b>	Greenhouse Gas
<b>JTAC</b>	Joint Technical Advisory Committee
<b>LAFCO</b>	Local Agency Formation Commission
<b>MPO</b>	Metropolitan Planning Organization
<b>RTP</b>	Regional Transportation Plan
<b>RTPA</b>	Regional Transportation Planning Agency
<b>SBCAG</b>	Santa Barbara County Association of Governments
<b>SBCTAC</b>	Santa Barbara County Transit Advisory Committee
<b>SBMTD</b>	Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District
<b>SCS</b>	Sustainable Communities Strategy
<b>TPAC</b>	Technical Planning Advisory Committee
<b>TTAC</b>	Technical Transportation Advisory Committee

## **II. Phases of the Public Participation Process**

SBCAG sought to satisfy several objectives when developing this RTP & SCS Public Participation Plan.

- Fulfill the requirements of SB 375
- Be effective in obtaining useful input and achieving full public and decision-maker participation
- Incorporate lessons learned from the previous RTP/SCS cycle

With consideration of these objectives, the SBCAG public participation process for the RTP/SCS is structured around three phases:

- 1. RTP/SCS Scoping**
- 2. Alternative Transportation/Land Use Scenarios**
- 3. Draft RTP/SCS and Preferred Transportation/Land Use Scenario**

### **RTP/SCS Scoping Phase**

During the scoping phase, SBCAG will describe the planning process, explain the significance of SB 375, and outline the general task (meet the targets for reduction of GHGs, while planning to meet the transportation needs and accommodate forecast growth of the region). SBCAG will explain the types of land use and transportation methods the region could use to meet the targets, and provide example scenarios with rough estimates of how much GHG reduction such examples would provide. The scenarios will be 20+ year visions of transportation infrastructure and operations, land use development patterns, and transportation measures and policies.

SBCAG will seek input into the range of land use and transportation alternative scenarios and information the RTP/SCS should consider. In addition, SBCAG will seek input on the goals, objectives, and performance measures to be used in the development of the RTP/SCS, as well as the project priorities, project selection criteria, and funding alternatives. During this first phase, public participation will include the following actions:

- Scoping meeting with the ad hoc RTP/SCS Joint Technical Advisory Committee (JTAC), which consists of the members of SBCAG's Technical Transportation Advisory Committee (TTAC) and Technical Planning Advisory Committee (TPAC).
- Scoping meetings with stakeholder groups and interested parties, such as those listed in Appendix A, to discuss the development of the RTP/SCS.
- Participation at community events and festivals to provide information and seek community input.

This phase focuses on direct stakeholder outreach as past experience has shown it to be an effective method for encouraging meaningful participation and input. Although direct outreach at all three phases is not feasible given staff time constraints, direct outreach at the beginning of the process will increase the likelihood for active stakeholder participation throughout the process.

To implement the direct outreach to stakeholders, SBCAG will first develop a list of 20-25 of the most relevant stakeholder groups (i.e., groups with which consultation/coordination is mandated, groups most directly affected by the RTP/SCS, etc.). SBCAG will contact these stakeholder groups to schedule scoping meetings. At the scoping meetings, SBCAG will not only provide information about the RTP/SCS and seek stakeholder input, but will also explain the entire public participation process and how stakeholders can remain involved. At the meetings, SBCAG will confirm contact persons for the groups and then keep them informed of input opportunities via the contact list described in Section IV: Participation Tools below.

### **Alternative Transportation/Land Use Scenarios Phase**

In the alternative transportation/land use scenarios phase, SBCAG will involve the interested parties in evaluating various possible future development patterns and alternative transportation/land use scenarios for the region. SBCAG will provide a description of the scenarios it developed after incorporating the input received in the RTP/SCS scoping phase. SBCAG will explain the results of the travel and land use model analysis of each scenario, and how well the scenarios achieve the GHG targets, as well as other performance measures. SBCAG will provide visuals to assist in explaining the scenarios.

During this second phase, public participation will include the following actions:

- Public workshops throughout the County to be held, at each SBCAG member jurisdiction's discretion, either:
  - A) conjointly with a regular or special meeting of the City Council or Board of Supervisors. When possible, these workshops will be held jointly with planning commissions. Neighboring local agencies will be invited to all workshops. Ideally, workshops will be held during regularly-scheduled meetings at which the RTP/SCS is the only agenda item. Such an arrangement would help ensure the proper amount of deliberation and public interaction. Workshops will be informal such that the public feels comfortable participating. The councils, boards, or commissions will not take any action at the workshops.

or

  - B) as stand-alone workshops. Members of the City Councils and Board of Supervisors, as well as the planning commissions and the Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District (SBMTD) Board of Directors, will be invited to attend. Neighboring local agencies will also be invited.

Structure A recognizes that stand-alone public workshops are often not well-attended and, to that degree, can be of limited effectiveness. It takes advantage of the fact that council/board meetings are an existing, known forum for public input. It also provides for direct input by local elected officials. Structure B recognizes that council/board agendas are often crowded and may not allow for the proper amount of deliberation and public interaction. It also recognizes that creating an informal setting at a council/board meeting in which the public feels comfortable participating could be challenging. To allow flexibility that best meets the needs of each

community, the choice of public workshop structure will be left to the discretion of each SBCAG member jurisdiction. A minimum of three workshops will be held to provide workshop access across the region.

**Draft RTP/SCS and Preferred Transportation/Land Use Scenario Phase**

During the draft RTP/SCS and preferred transportation/land use scenario phase, SBCAG will provide the draft RTP, including the SCS and, if applicable, APS, for review and comment. The draft document(s) will identify the preferred alternative, based on and taking into account information received as part of the previous phases. During this third phase, public participation will include the following actions:

- Preparation and circulation of the draft RTP/SCS and, if applicable, APS not less than 55 days before adoption of the final RTP
- At least two public hearings on the draft SCS in the RTP and, if applicable, the APS

SBCAG will make the draft document(s) available on the SBCAG website, [www.sbcaq.org](http://www.sbcaq.org), and will hold the public hearings at accessible locations.

During each of the three phases, SBCAG staff will report on progress to the SBCAG Board, offering an additional opportunity for public involvement. SBCAG will also provide regular updates to its advisory committees: TTAC, TPAC, and SBCTAC. Together TTAC and TPAC will serve as an ad hoc technical advisory committee—JTAC—for the RTP/SCS. Stakeholders will be informed of advisory committee meetings at which the RTP/SCS will be discussed.

The chart below exhibits the phases of the public participation process.

**Public Outreach Meetings, Workshops, and Hearings**

<b>Phase 1. RTP/SCS Scoping</b>		<b>Phase 2. Alternative Transportation/Land Use Scenarios</b>			<b>Phase 3. Draft RTP/SCS and Preferred Transportation/Land Use Scenario</b>	
<b>Fall 2015</b>	<b>Winter 2016</b>	<b>Spring 2016</b>	<b>Summer 2016</b>	<b>Fall 2016</b>	<b>Winter 2017</b>	<b>Spring 2017</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– SBCAG Advisory Committees</li> <li>– SBCAG Board</li> <li>– Stakeholder Groups</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– SBCAG Advisory Committees</li> <li>– SBCAG Board</li> <li>– City Councils/Board of Supervisors</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– SBCAG Advisory Committees</li> <li>– SBCAG Board</li> </ul>	

### **III. Process Participants**

#### **a. Member Agency and Committee Involvement**

As mentioned above, during the Alternative Transportation/Land Use Scenarios Phase, SBCAG staff will host public workshops either: 1) at city council and County Board of Supervisors meetings, or 2) as stand-alone public workshops, at the discretion of each member jurisdiction. SBCAG staff will also hold a workshop with the SBMTD Board of Directors, and will try to involve planning commissions and neighboring local agencies in the workshops. Ideally the workshops will engage local decision makers and allow SBCAG to initiate policy-level discussions early in the planning process. The advantage of engagement with local decision makers is that they will have the opportunity for direct influence in this regional planning process. Direct engagement will impart important information and has the potential to cultivate a sense of ownership.

SBCAG will also give regular updates to, and seek guidance from the project's advisory committee, JTAC, and the Santa Barbara County Transit Advisory Committee (SBCTAC). The JTAC is comprised of the membership of TTAC and TPAC. TTAC members include staff representatives from

SBCAG Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public. Meeting materials are available online at [www.sbcaq.org/adcm meetings.html](http://www.sbcaq.org/adcm meetings.html).

the County of Santa Barbara, each incorporated city within the county, Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District, Air Pollution Control District, and Caltrans; ex-officio members include the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, U.S. Air Force, and University of California Santa Barbara. TPAC members include staff representatives from the County of Santa Barbara, each incorporated city within the county, and the Air Pollution Control District; ex-officio members include the U.S. Air Force, University of California Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara County Local Agency Formation Commission Executive Officer, and the County's Housing Program Manager. SBCTAC members include, among others, transit agency staff, representatives of the local consolidated transportation service agencies, representatives of local social service providers for seniors, local social service providers for persons with disabilities, and a local social service provider for persons of limited means.

#### **b. Government Agency Involvement**

SBCAG will involve government agencies beyond SBCAG's member agencies throughout the public participation process. SBCAG will engage both the elected officials and the staff of these agencies, as appropriate. In particular, SBCAG will work with staff of the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to develop its technical methodology for estimating GHG emissions. SBCAG will also work closely with its neighboring MPOs and county transportation commissions (San Luis Obispo Council of Governments, Kern Council of Governments, Ventura County Transportation Commission, and Southern California Association of Governments) since levels of inter-regional commuting are high. Staff members of these agencies already communicate

regularly regarding the modeling of inter-regional travel and will continue to do so throughout the RTP/SCS process.

Some of the other agencies with which SBCAG will coordinate and consult are listed in Appendix B.

### **c. Stakeholder Group Involvement**

SBCAG will reach out to a broad range of stakeholder groups, including, but not limited to, affordable housing advocates, transportation advocates, neighborhood and community groups, environmental advocates, home builder representatives, broad-based business organizations, landowners, commercial property interests, and homeowner associations, early in the process. (See also the list of stakeholder groups in Appendix A.) During the scoping phase, to encourage meaningful participation, SBCAG will meet with or attend regular meetings of selected individual stakeholder groups to (1) get their initial input, (2) help them understand the planning process and opportunities for their involvement, and (3) recruit their assistance with communicating with their constituents.

The list of stakeholders from the previous RTP/SCS cycle will be used as a base for identifying potential stakeholders. The project advisory committee, JTAC, will be tasked with suggesting additional potential stakeholders. SBCAG will make efforts to engage potential stakeholder groups. However, a group's participation in the process will depend chiefly on its interest in being involved.

SBCAG will create a contact list of interested parties, including stakeholder groups, and provide advance notice of all RTP/SCS-related planning activities, workshops, and public hearings.

### **d. General Public Involvement**

As mentioned above, SBCAG staff will host public workshops to provide members of the public, as well as representatives of the County Board of Supervisors and the City Councils with the information and tools necessary for a clear understanding of the issues and policy choices. Staff will outline the basic State-mandated requirements of the RTP/SCS as well as the required performance measures that any transportation/land use scenario must include.

SBCAG staff will hold the workshops either: 1) at City Council and County Board of Supervisors meetings, or 2) as stand-alone public workshops, at the discretion of each member jurisdiction.

SBCAG will employ visualization techniques at these workshops to help the public understand the SCS and the RTP. The workshops will prepare members of the public to participate throughout the planning process. SBCAG will specifically solicit the input of populations traditionally underserved by transportation systems, including low-income and minority households.

Staff will also seek to inform residents of neighboring San Luis Obispo and Ventura Counties as well as the staff of neighboring MPOs of these meetings, as many people commute from these

counties to work in Santa Barbara County. SBCAG will notify residents through major Santa Barbara County employers, inter-county transit buses, newspaper notices, and various email lists.

As mentioned above, SBCAG will also give regular updates to SBCTAC. SBCTAC members include, among others, a representative of potential transit users who is 60 years of age or older and a representative of potential transit users who has a disability.

Also as mentioned above, during the draft phase SBCAG will hold at least two public hearings on the draft SCS in the RTP and, if applicable, the APS.

## **IV. Participation Tools**

### **a. Contact List**

SBCAG will develop a contact list of all interested parties, including stakeholder groups, which it will maintain and augment throughout the RTP/SCS process. Using this contact list, SBCAG will provide advance notice of all RTP/SCS-related planning activities, workshops, and public hearings to interested parties. SBCAG promote all input opportunities as they come before the SBCAG Board, SBCAG advisory committees, local member jurisdiction governing bodies, etc.

To request to be placed on the contact list, email [info@sbcag.org](mailto:info@sbcag.org) or call 805-961-8900.

The contact list will allow members of the public to provide a single request to SBCAG and thereafter receive all notices, information, and updates about the RTP/SCS. To request to be placed on the contact list, email [info@sbcag.org](mailto:info@sbcag.org) or call 805-961-8900.

### **b. Internet**

The main SBCAG website is [www.sbcag.org](http://www.sbcag.org). SBCAG will utilize its website to create easy access to all RTP/SCS information. Some of the items SBCAG will post on its website include the following:

- materials such as fact sheets to help educate the public about SB 375, the RTP /SCS, and how they relate to one another
- information about how to get involved in the planning process
- meeting, workshop, and public hearing schedules
- documents such as this RTP & SCS Public Participation Plan, the RTP including the SCS, and the RTP Environmental Impact Report

The intention is that internet-based tools will reach members of the public that standard public notices would not, and to provide access to various project documents.

### **c. Local and Regional Media**

SBCAG will also utilize local media outlets, including community television, to keep interested parties informed of RTP/SCS-related activities. To promote awareness among the media and to foster accurate news coverage, SBCAG will distribute press releases to local and regional media outlets. See Appendix C for a list of media outlets.

## **Appendix A: List of Stakeholder Groups**

Examples of the types of stakeholders, including private sector stakeholders, with which SBCAG may consult, coordinate, and/or communicate during the development of the RTP/SCS, include the following:

- Santa Barbara Community Action Network
- Peoples Self Help Housing
- Community Environmental Council
- Santa Barbara Bicycle Coalition
- Coalition for Sustainable Transportation
- Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians
- League of Women Voters of Santa Barbara
- Los Olivos Business Origination
- Preservation of Los Olivos
- Preservation of Santa Ynez
- Santa Barbara Chamber of Commerce
- Goleta Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Carpinteria Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District
- Santa Ynez Valley Alliance
- The Trust for Public Land
- Citizens Planning Association
- Carpinteria Valley Association
- Lompoc Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Home Builders Association of the Central Coast
- Santa Maria Valley Association of Realtors
- COLAB
- Sierra Club, Los Padres Chapter
- Santa Barbara Association of Realtors
- American Institute of Architects
- County of Santa Barbara Agriculture Advisory Committee
- Women's Environmental Watch
- Sierra Club Santa Barbara
- Solvang Chamber of Commerce
- Surfrider Foundation, Santa Barbara Chapter
- Santa Barbara Contractors Association
- Vandenberg Air Force Base
- Guadalupe Chamber of Commerce
- Santa Barbara County Community Housing Corporation
- Santa Barbara Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- California Rural Legal Assistance

- Santa Maria Valley Chamber of Commerce
- PUEBLO
- Area Agency on Aging/Central Coast Commission for Senior Citizens
- Buellton Chamber of Commerce
- League of Women Voters of Santa Maria Valley

*Ensure you and/or your group receives all SBCAG RTP and SCS outreach information by emailing [info@sbcag.org](mailto:info@sbcag.org) or calling 805-961-8900.*

## **Appendix B: List of Government Agencies**

Examples of the types of agencies with which SBCAG may consult, coordinate, and/or communicate during the development of the RTP/SCS include

- State and local agencies responsible for land use, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation
- Agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the MPA that are affected by transportation (including State and local planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, or freight movements)
- Regional Air Quality Management Districts
- Adjacent MPOs and RTPAs with which SBCAG shares a significant amount of interregional travel
- Affected public agencies
- Airports
- Special districts within the region that provide property-related services such as water or wastewater services
- School districts

Some of the specific agencies SBCAG will contact include the following:

- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
- NOAA Fisheries Services
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Bureau of Land Management
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- U.S. Forest Service
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. National Marine and Fishery Service
- U.S. National Park Service
- California Air Resources Board (ARB)
- California Coastal Commission
- California Department of Conservation
- California Department of Fish and Game
- California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)
- California Department of Parks and Recreation
- California Department of Resources, Recycling, and Recovery
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- California Energy Commission
- California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA)
- California Natural Resources Agency
- California Office of Planning and Research

- California Public Utilities Commission
- California Public Services Commission
- California Regional Water Quality Control Board
- California State Mining and Geology Board
- California Water Resources Control Board
- Santa Barbara Air Pollution Control District (APCD)
- San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG)
- Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC)
- Kern Council of Governments (KCOG)
- City of Buellton
- City of Carpinteria
- City of Goleta
- City of Guadalupe, including Guadalupe Transit
- City of Lompoc, including City of Lompoc Transit (COLT)
- City of Santa Barbara
- City of Santa Maria, including Santa Maria Area Transit (SMAT)
- City of Solvang, including Santa Ynez Valley Transit (SYVT)
- County of Santa Barbara, including the Santa Barbara Airport
- Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District
- San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Agency (RTA)
- Ventura Intercity Service Transit Authority (VISTA)
- Vandenberg Air Force Base (VAFB)
- Santa Barbara Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)
- Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians
- Santa Barbara City College
- Hancock College
- University of California, Santa Barbara

*Ensure you and/or your agency receives all SBCAG RTP and SCS outreach information by emailing [info@sbcag.org](mailto:info@sbcag.org) or calling 805-961-8900.*

## **Appendix C: Media List**

MPOs and RTPAs are also encouraged to involve the media, including ethnic media as appropriate, as a tool to promote public participation in the RTP development, review and commenting process. SBCAG regularly uses a variety of media outlets, including, for example, the following:

- Newspapers
  - Lompoc Record
  - Noozhawk
  - Santa Maria Sun
  - Santa Maria Times
  - Santa Barbara News-Press
  - Santa Ynez Valley News
  - Vandenberg Air Force Base edition of the Santa Maria Times
- Radio Stations
- Television Stations
  - County of Santa Barbara Television (CSBTV) Channel 20
  - Santa Barbara City TV Channel 18
  - Lompoc Community Television
  - Goleta Channel 19
  - Telemundo

*Ensure your media outlet has the opportunity to share all SBCAG RTP and SCS outreach information by emailing [info@sbcaq.org](mailto:info@sbcaq.org) or calling 805-961-8900.*