



STRATEGIC PLAN

September 2011

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) plays a unique role throughout the region of Santa Barbara County. It was formed to provide a forum for the discussion and study of area-wide problems of mutual interest and concern to the cities and county, and to facilitate the development of policies and action recommendations for the solution of such problems. As a result, it serves as an integrator of city, county and other stakeholder interests in the region; a focus for the resolution of common issues. Over the years, its role has expanded to address a range of issues requiring consensus building intended to improve the quality of life in the region.

Work on the strategic planning process began in April 2011. The objectives of the strategic planning process were as follows:

- Establish a mission, vision, values, goals and strategies for the organization; intended to guide priority setting, decisions about work programs and staffing, and other decisions by staff and Board over the next several years.
- Strengthen SBCAG's ability to successfully provide the support, innovation and assistance needed by our region to meet the challenges it is and will be facing.
- Create a dynamic document and framework which can be used on an ongoing basis to help guide budget and work planning efforts to ensure that they are focused, targeted and meet the interests of the Board and the region.
- Engage SBCAG staff, Board and stakeholders in identifying important goals for the strategic plan.

The Strategic Plan which resulted from this effort has **three overarching themes** which are further spelled out in the strategic plan hierarchy of mission, vision, values, goals, and strategies. These themes, in no particular order of importance, are summarized below:

- The Strategic Plan is intended to be an important tool in helping SBCAG to improve the federally required Overall Work Program (OWP) process. It will do this by linking the budget and the OWP to the development of annual action plans under the Strategic Plan umbrella.
- The Strategic Plan is intended to establish a process for assisting SBCAG with organizing and establishing its priorities. As an organization, SBCAG exists in a highly dynamic environment; the Board, staff and community stakeholders will be aided by this structure for deciding what the organization can do successfully.

- Finally, but importantly, the Strategic Plan is designed to guide SBCAG's work as a partner with its member agencies by assisting the local governments in coping with the tremendous demands for service they face.

The specifics of how SBCAG will approach this work are laid out in the Strategic Plan contained herein. The overall intent of the Plan is to provide SBCAG with the tools necessary to best serve the interests of the region, and continue to be a leader in this regard across California and the nation. The following background information on SBCAG's history, organizational structure, and roles are intended to provide context for understanding the impact and importance of the Strategic Plan.

HISTORY

The Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) was originally established as the Santa Barbara County-Cities Area Planning Council (SBCAPC) on October 26, 1966 upon execution of a Joint Powers Agreement by the Cities of Carpinteria, Guadalupe, Lompoc, Santa Barbara, Santa Maria, and the County of Santa Barbara. At that time, the SBCAPC was part of the Department of Regional Programs within Santa Barbara County.

SBCAG's roles and responsibilities have evolved and grown over time. While the agency continues to prepare long range transportation plans and serve as a venue for addressing regional issues concerning its member agencies, SBCAG has taken on many new responsibilities. These include developing and constructing major capital improvement projects, providing public transportation and motorist aid services, reducing traffic congestion through alternative transportation modes and meeting state requirements to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by linking transportation and land use planning and addressing housing needs in the region.

Due to the passage of Measure D, a 1/2 cent sales tax for transportation, in 1989 the SBCAPC became the Local Transportation Authority (LTA) for Santa Barbara County. It was this new designation that served as the impetus, in 1990, for the Santa Barbara County-Cities Area Planning Council to form a separate public entity known as the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG). Authority for the creation of SBCAG is contained in Section 65600-65604 of the California Government Code. The cities of Solvang, Buellton and Goleta joined SBCAG upon their incorporation in 1985, 1992 and 2002 respectively.

ORGANIZATION

SBCAG serves the County of Santa Barbara and its eight cities, comprising a 2,727 square mile area with an estimated population of 423,895. Member agencies are the incorporated cities of Carpinteria, Santa Barbara, Goleta, Solvang, Buellton, Lompoc, Guadalupe and Santa Maria and the County of Santa Barbara. SBCAG is governed by a thirteen member Board of Directors. Voting members are appointed by member jurisdictions. Ex Officio Members of the Board of Directors are the two members of the State Assembly and the two members of the State Senate that represent parts of Santa Barbara County in the State Legislature and the Caltrans District 5 Director.

Depending on the location of their jurisdiction, SBCAG Board members serve on two sub regional planning committees for the South Coast and North County. The Board Executive Committee is comprised of the SBCAG Chair and Vice Chair and the two Chairs of the sub regional committees. The SBCAG Board is served by four advisory committees: the Technical Transportation Advisory Committee, Technical Planning Advisory Committee, Santa Barbara County Transit Advisory Council and the Measure A Citizens' Advisory Committee.

ROLES

SBCAG was established to examine common problems and suggest solutions. It was designed to be a regional, multi-jurisdictional forum for collaborative discussion and resolution of problems and issues.

The agency's twenty full-time employees work in four major programs: Administration, Programming & Project Delivery, Planning, and Traffic Solutions. SBCAG serves in a number of specific capacities for planning and programming purposes as described below.

- Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) - SBCAG has been federally designated as the MPO serving Santa Barbara County including the Santa Barbara, Santa Maria, and Lompoc urbanized areas. As the MPO, SBCAG conducts a comprehensive transportation planning process and decides how federal transportation funding will be invested
- Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) – Designated by the Secretary of the California Business, Transportation and Housing Agency as the RTPA for Santa Barbara County, SBCAG is the agency responsible for the development of the Regional Transportation Plan and Regional Transportation Improvement Program and for the annual allocation of funds from the Transportation Development Act to local jurisdictions and transit operators.
- Areawide Clearinghouse - SBCAG has been designated by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research as the Areawide Clearinghouse for Santa Barbara County, as such, SBCAG coordinates the regional review and response to proposed programs for federal assistance and proposed federal development activities
- Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) - SBCAG has the authority to ensure that currently lands in the vicinity of the county's airports are planned and zoned for uses compatible with the operation of each airport.
- Local Transportation Authority (LTA) - SBCAG is responsible for the administration and implementation of Measure A, approved by voters in 2008, which extends the existing county one-half cent sales tax until 2040. SBCAG is directly responsible for the development and delivery of transportation projects and the allocation, administration, and oversight of sales tax funding to local agencies.

- Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE) - SBCAG is responsible for implementing motorist aid systems including the installation, operation, and maintenance of a system of roadside call boxes on state highways throughout Santa Barbara County and also provides a Freeway Service Patrol on Highway 101, south coast urbanized area during morning and evening peak travel periods.
- Congestion Management Agency (CMA) – SBCAG is responsible, in cooperation with local and state agencies, to identify and resolve traffic congestion problems within the County pursuant to specific legislative requirements.
- Council of Governments (COG) - As the Council of Governments for Santa Barbara County, SBCAG is responsible for carrying out the Regional Housing Needs Allocation process prescribed in state housing law. Also pursuant to SB-375 SBCAG is responsible for preparing the Sustainable Communities Strategy element of the Regional Transportation Plan which is intended to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by strengthening the alignment of regional land use and transportation planning processes.
- Areawide Planning Organization (APO) - Designated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development as the APO for Santa Barbara County, SBCAG has the responsibility to comply with the comprehensive planning responsibilities of Section 701 of the Housing Act of 1954 and subsequent related legislation.

STRATEGIC PLANNING APPROACH

A variety of methods were used to gather and analyze data and to engage staff, Board and other stakeholders throughout the strategic planning process. SBCAG staff was involved through focus groups and a workshop. Through the focus groups and workshop, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were identified (SLOT), along with a set of organizational values. The values are listed in the next section of this report (Strategic Planning Components). The complete list of supporting behaviors for the values is provided in Attachment A.

Strategic planning workshops were held with SBCAG staff and management team. SBCAG leaders also participated in a focus group with members of Technical Transportation Advisory Committee (TTAC) and Transportation Planning Advisory Committee (TPAC) with the goal of strengthening relationships and improving communication. Board members were likewise engaged through interviews, focus groups and a workshop. Outside stakeholders were interviewed and focus groups were conducted to obtain their valuable input. Stakeholders included the city and county chief executives from the region, the Technical Transportation Advisory Committee (TTAC), Transportation Planning Advisory Committee (TPAC), and Measure A Citizen's Oversight Committee (COC).

As part of this process, an environmental scan was prepared by a cross-functional team comprised of SBCAG staff with assistance from Management Partners. It provided important context for identifying goals for the future. The complete environmental scan is shown in Attachment B.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENTS

SBCAG’s leadership identified a need to set a path for the future so that SBCAG could ensure that its decisions, priorities and work plans are focused on strategic goals for the organization. This strategic plan meets the organization’s needs for:

- Clear goals and priorities
- Integration of agency-wide goals and priorities
- Keeping SBCAG on the cutting edge
- Implementing the agency’s strategic mission

Strategic planning is about setting multi-year, broad goals and strategies that are consistently used to guide decisions about resources and where effort will be directed. It is about providing the context and basis for an action plan for the agency. Strategic planning is a collaborative process involving staff, policy makers, and other stakeholders in order to ensure that the full range of interests are considered as part of the planning process.

As a designated Metropolitan Planning Organization, SBCAG must follow Federal regulations with respect to budget planning in order to be able to draw from a variety of Federal funding programs. The Federal approach, which was first mapped out in the 1970s, is called the Overall Work Program (OWP). This is an annual budget and planning tool which essentially sets the annual SBCAG budget and work plan.

One of the intents of this strategic plan effort is to provide a more policy-oriented and modern approach to setting the policy vision of SBCAG, which will then be used to shape the development of the annual OWP. In this way, the elements of the OWP contribute to achieving the long-term goals set forth in the strategic plan.

The components of this SBCAG strategic plan are shown in this graphic.



MISSION STATEMENT

A mission statement conveys the purpose of an organization and serves as the foundation for policy and resource decisions.

SBCAG provides collaborative leadership, planning, projects and services that serve regional and local needs to improve mobility and promote sustainable communities in Santa Barbara County.

VISION STATEMENT

A vision statement describes the desired future as a result of the organization's work.

SBCAG envisions Santa Barbara County as a region that values its diverse communities and resources, fosters economic vitality and innovation, and provides a mix of housing and mobility options that meet local and regional needs. This is accomplished through maximum cooperation between the SBCAG Board, staff, member agencies and other stakeholders.

VALUES

Values are what an agency stands for. The underlying values of an agency drive behavior and support effective implementation of the mission, vision and goals. A list of behaviors associated with these values is included in Attachment A.

- ***Professional Excellence***
- ***Fiscal Responsibility***
- ***Responsive Service***
- ***Respect***
- ***Progressive Innovation***
- ***Integrity***
- ***Communication, Collaboration, and Teamwork***
- ***Leadership***

GOALS

Goals and strategies provide the roadmap for achieving an organization's mission and vision. Goals are multi-year in nature, with a typical timeframe for achievement of five to ten years. Strategies are the means to achieve the goals. The timeframe for implementing strategies can span several years through specific programs and projects.

Through the strategic planning process SBCAG identified **FIVE GOALS** as well as a number of strategies for each goal.

GOAL 1: TRANSPORTATION

Enhance mobility throughout Santa Barbara County through the implementation of transportation programs, projects and funding.

Strategies:

1. Implement the Measure A plan.
2. Provide an array of traffic solutions and alternatives to transportation to reduce congestion (including widening 101, implementing Measure A promises and other methods) and meet the needs of sub-regional and inter-regional communities.
3. Aggressively pursue State and Federal funding for identified transportation projects.
4. Regularly assess regional and sub-regional transportation needs.
5. Collaborate with member agencies to reach consensus on priorities and funding allocations.
6. Build positive working relationships with other local, State and regional transportation agencies.
7. Collaborate with agencies responsible for disaster planning to maintain mobility in the event of natural or man-made disasters.

GOAL 2: HOUSING

Reduce jobs and housing imbalance by facilitating consensus among member agencies regarding housing production goals.

Strategies:

1. Develop robust data collection and modeling tools to aid SBCAG and member agencies in analyzing housing trends and future needs.
2. Engage the State of California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) in ongoing dialogue focused on establishing housing goals that are acceptable to local agencies.
3. Implement effective public participation plans in concert with member agencies and other stakeholders; designed to facilitate a consensus about housing goals for the region.

GOAL 3: SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Meet greenhouse gas targets by facilitating consensus among member agencies in promoting sustainable communities.

Strategies:

1. Develop a Sustainable Communities Strategy through collaboration with local agencies that integrates planning processes for transportation, land use, and housing.
2. Engage the State of California Air Resources Board (CARB) to establish greenhouse gas reduction goals that are acceptable to local agencies to ensure the Sustainable Communities Strategy meets the requirements of SB 375.
3. Implement effective public participation plans and public relations strategies in concert with member agencies and other stakeholders; designed to facilitate a consensus about greenhouse gas emission goals for the region.
4. Pursue local and state policies to create incentives for the reduction of greenhouse gases.

GOAL 4: MEMBER AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Serve as a source of expertise, information, and facilitation to aid member agencies in meeting their transportation and land use objectives and other regional interests requiring strong collaboration among the partners.

Strategies:

1. Engage with member agencies and the community, on a frequent basis, to foster ongoing awareness about their interests and the ways in which SBCAG can assist them.
2. Implement formal and informal methods to obtain regular feedback from member agencies, including Board members and staff of those agencies, about their satisfaction with SBCAG's services and to obtain suggestions for changes to better meet member agencies' interests.
3. Implement public relations strategies to increase public awareness of SBCAG, its role, challenges and accomplishments.
4. Ensure issues and projects are fully vetted by technical advisory committees and sub-regional committees before review by the Board.
5. Ensure that all SBCAG Board members think and act regionally.

GOAL 5: ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Be the standard-bearer of excellence for regional agencies.

Strategies:

1. Create a workplace that attracts and retains highly competent professionals committed to excellence in achieving SBCAG's mission, vision, values and goals; as well as to maintaining collaborative relationships with member agencies.
2. Implement best practices for accountability, performance management, efficiency, and effectiveness.
3. Ensure that staff has the resources and skills necessary to do their jobs well.

4. Foster a work environment that values collaboration, communication, and quality public service.
5. Develop confidence and trust in SBCAG staff at all levels.
6. Implement best practices for continuous process improvement.

IMPLEMENTING AND UPDATING THE PLAN

This strategic plan should be updated annually by the staff and Board. When the Overall Work Program and SBCAG budgets are prepared, the strategic plan should be reviewed to determine whether changes are warranted. Additionally, accountability for implementation through the action plan will be critical to ensure that this plan is in fact used as the principal policy guide for the organization and Board.

Key steps that will help the organization keep on track and update the plan include:

- Preparing an action plan to implement the strategic plan, integrating the Overall Work Program and other projects. That will enable the organization to ascertain whether it has the resources to accomplish all that it is currently doing, and determine changes needed to match projects to the goals established as part of this strategic planning process.
- Conducting an annual review of the strategic plan that includes a review of progress toward goals and revising elements of the plan as appropriate to meet changing conditions.
- Keeping the Board apprised of status toward achievement of strategic plan goals by sharing information regularly, and referencing the goals and strategies in reports to the Board, including recommended actions.
- Providing a copy of the strategic plan to every SBCAG staff member and having each member of the management team use the plan for their individual work plans and accountability measures.
- Keeping SBCAG staff apprised of accomplishments of strategic plan goals by sharing information regularly.
- Making the new SBCAG strategic mission, values, and goals highly visible to staff and others, including SBCAG board committees and advisory groups.
- Connecting the strategic plan goals and strategies to annual work plans developed collaboratively by SBCAG teams.

ATTACHMENTS

A. Behaviors Associated with Values

B. Environmental Scan

ATTACHMENT A

BEHAVIORS ASSOCIATED WITH VALUES

Each of the identified values has supporting behaviors, as listed below.

VALUE: Professional Excellence

- Produces and communicates consistently high quality, technically competent work of value to the organization.
- Recognizes and maintains a clear focus on strategic goals and outcomes consistent with the organization's work programs.
- Utilizes expertise, strong interpersonal skills and effective problem-solving to achieve continuous improvement.
- Maximizes opportunities to increase productivity and achieve high quality results.
- Utilizes all resources efficiently and effectively.

VALUE: Fiscal Responsibility

- Committed to prudent fiscal policies and management.
- Demonstrates cost-consciousness and concern about the effective and efficient delivery of services to the public.

VALUE: Responsive Service

- Communicates readily and/or takes action in response to requests from others for information or assistance.
- Is reliably prompt and does not require reminders to achieve results, communicate or meet obligations.
- Is responsive to the needs of all stakeholders, both local and regional.

VALUE: Respect

- Listens to other perspectives with an open mind and a sincere desire to understand.
- Is observant, considerate and respectful of others' time and schedules.
- Models courtesy and civility at all times.
- Shows respect for roles, responsibilities and communication protocols.

VALUE: Progressive Innovation

- Solves problems creatively and is open to new ideas
- Creates new ways of moving the organization forward to achieve its mission.
- Fosters new and creative thinking and solutions.

VALUE: Integrity

- Adheres to individual and organizational professional and ethical standards in the conduct of the organization's business.
- Produces documents and work products that are objective, credible and reliable.
- Fulfills commitments and keeps promises.

VALUE: Communication, Collaboration and Teamwork

- Demonstrates simplicity, accuracy and clarity in communications with the public and each other.
- Encourages the open exchange of ideas and information among employees.
- Takes the initiative to ensure that objectives are met and volunteers to help others for the good of the organization.
- Engages team members to work collaboratively and reliably towards a defined objective.
- Selects the right people for the team.
- Recognizes, values, and leverages each person's strengths and differences.

VALUE: Leadership

- Creates and sustains an atmosphere that fosters a culture of openness, inclusion, trust and results.
- Contributes to creating a clear vision and direction.
- Inspires results and effective teamwork.
- Exhibits the full range of professional competencies and models integrity and ethics.

ATTACHMENT B

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN



Purpose of Environmental Scan

- Provides critical data and a foundation for the creation of goals and strategies.
- Identifies factors which will influence the organization both today and into the future.



Major factors impacting SBCAG & partners

1. Jobs/housing mismatch.
2. Longer commutes lead to highway congestion & impact local economy.
3. Funding constraints limit options to enhance road & transit capacity.
4. Constraints to providing more housing near jobs.
5. Significant sub-regional differences
6. Federal and State mandates on SBCAG and local agencies.

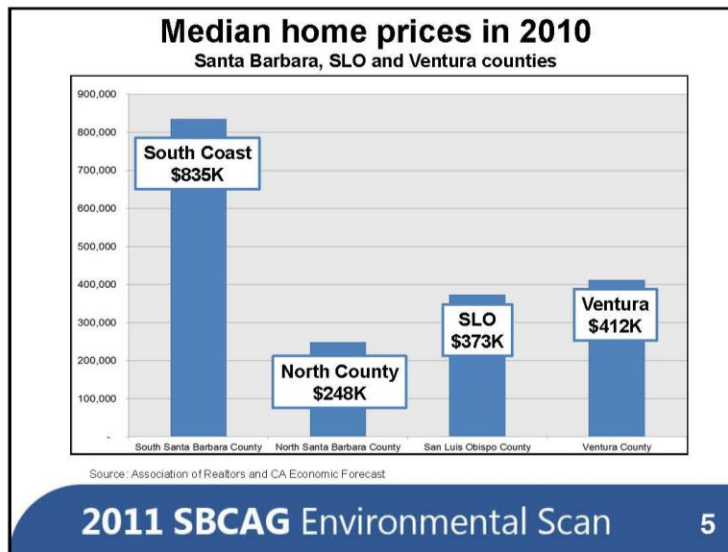
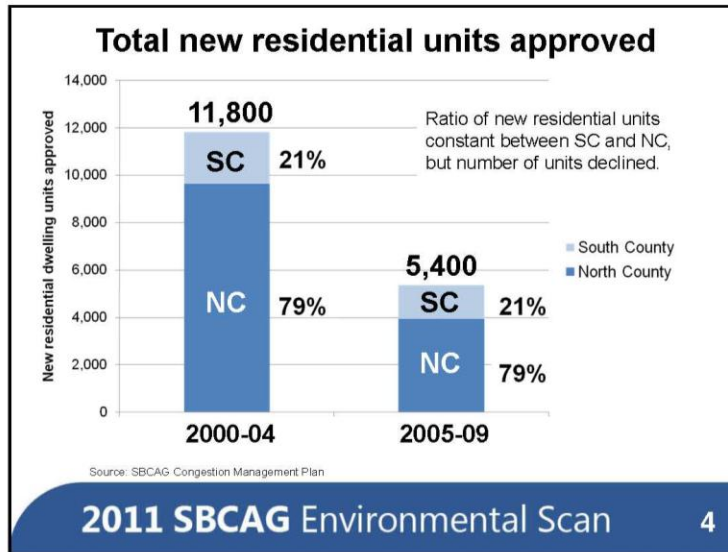
2011 SBCAG Environmental Scan 2

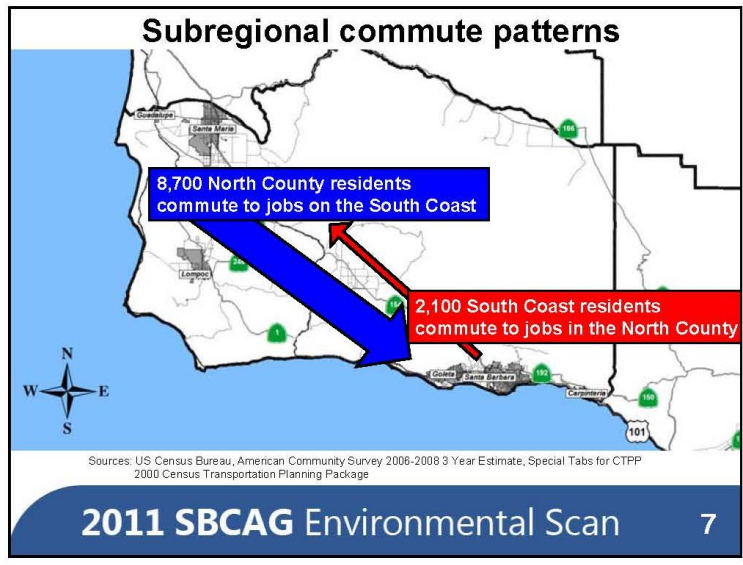
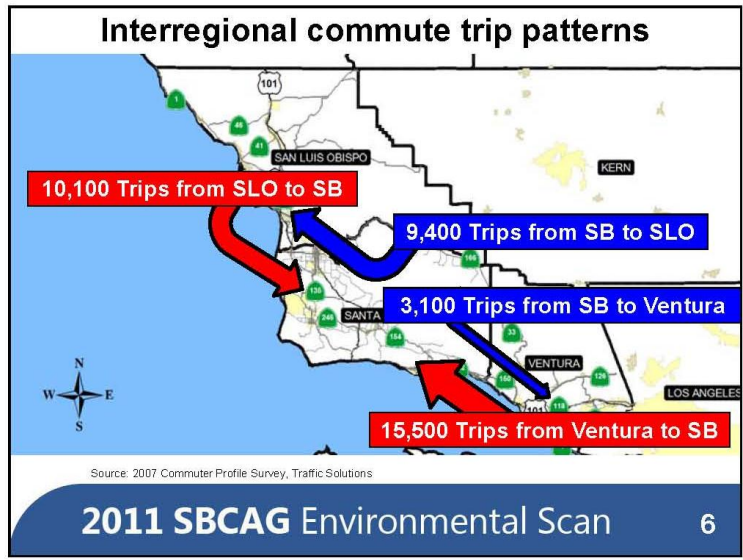
Factor #1 Jobs/housing mismatch

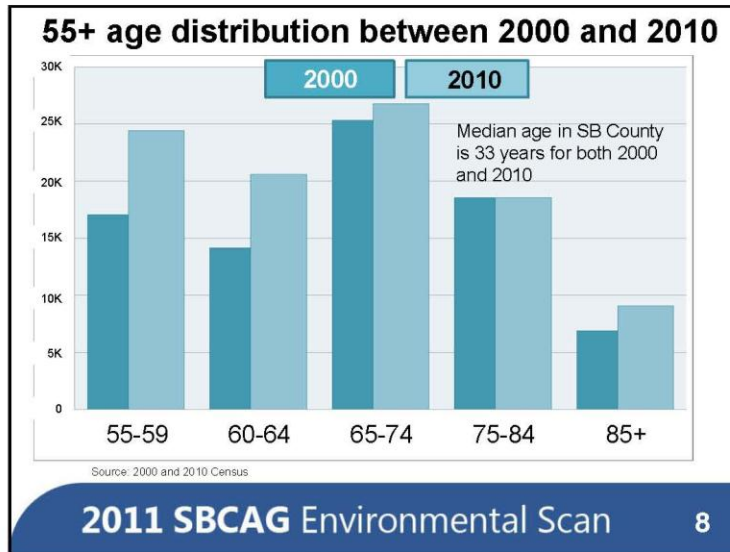
- Limited affordable housing near major job centers.
- Workers moving to lower cost areas drives growth away from major job centers.
- Aging-in-place population consumes additional housing supply near job centers.



2011 SBCAG Environmental Scan 3



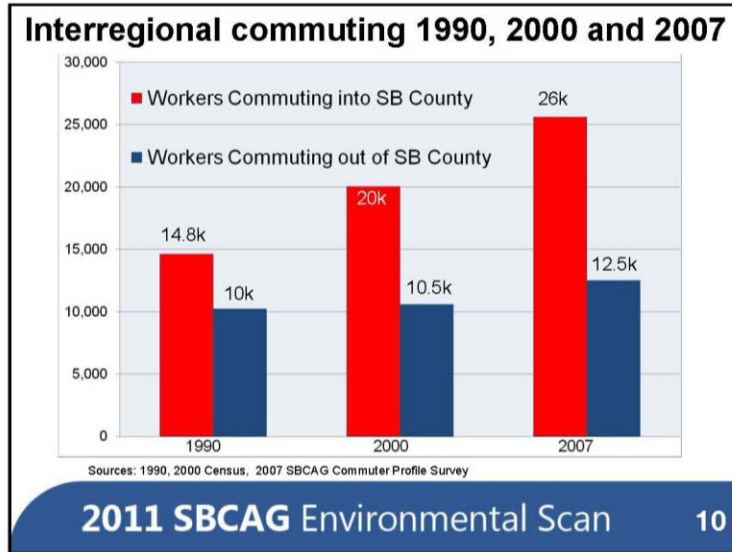


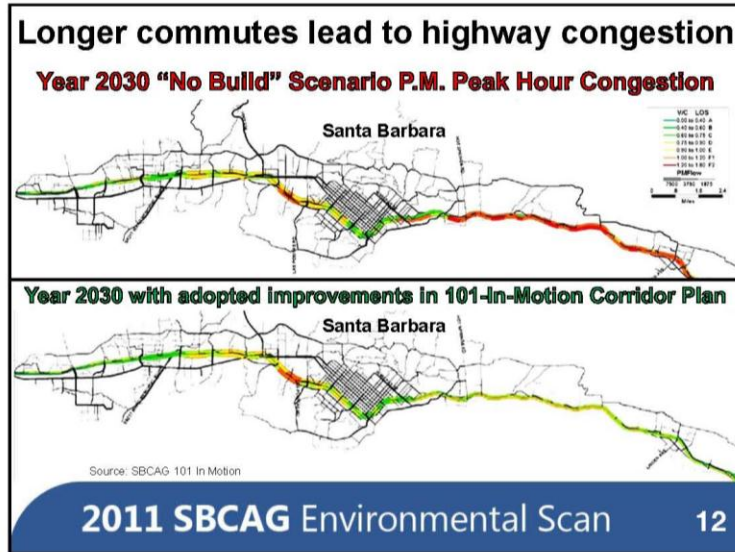


Factor #2

Longer commutes lead to highway congestion & impact local economy.

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Factor #3

Funding constraints limit options to enhance road & transit capacity.

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**Santa Barbara County transportation
 funding needs, 2010-2040**

Total estimated project needs (Highways, transit, local roads, rail, and bicycle and pedestrian projects)	\$7.3 billion
Total estimated available funds	\$5.1 billion
Shortfall	\$2.2 billion

Source: 2008 Regional Transportation Plan

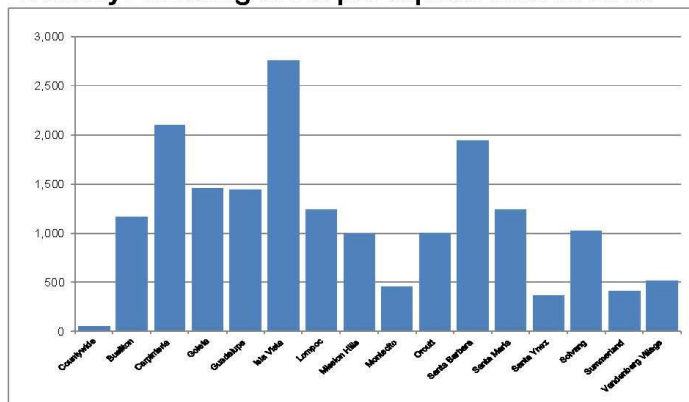
Funding constraints

- **Decline in State and local revenues**
 – *Economic downturn*
- **Project cost increase over long term**
 – *Continued escalation of global fuel prices*
- **Funds diverted from transportation**
 – *Example: \$14.4m in State Transit Assistance funds*
- **Erosion of funds**
 – *Federal and state gas tax not increased since 1992*

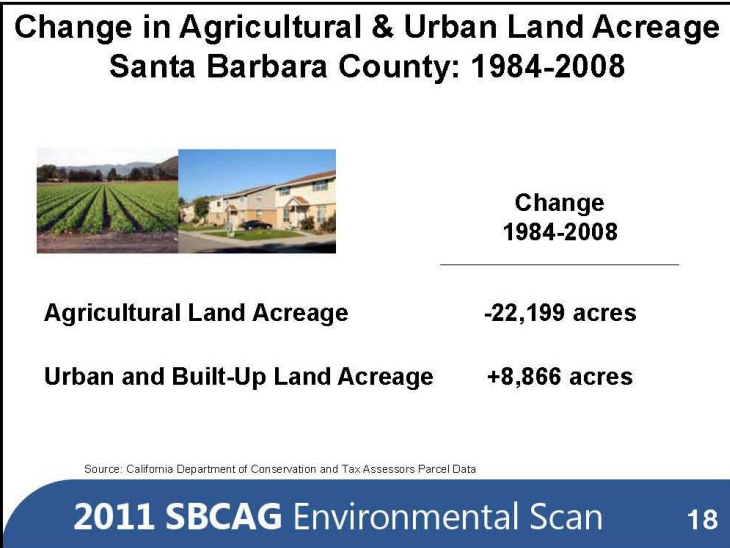
Factor #4

Constraints to providing more housing near jobs.

Density: housing units per square mile in 2010



Source: 2010 Census



Factor #5

Significant sub-regional differences.

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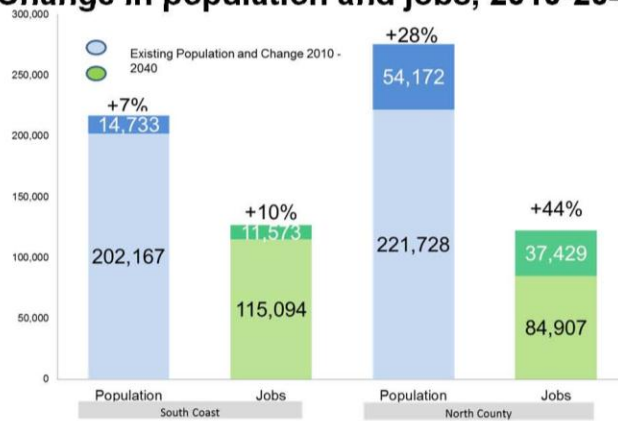
North and South County differences

- Employment sectors and availability of jobs
- Availability and cost of housing
- Median household income
- Local transit utilization

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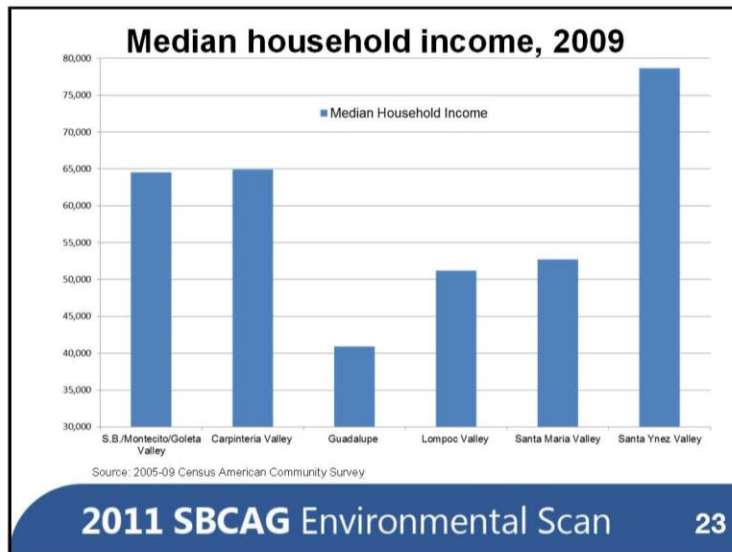
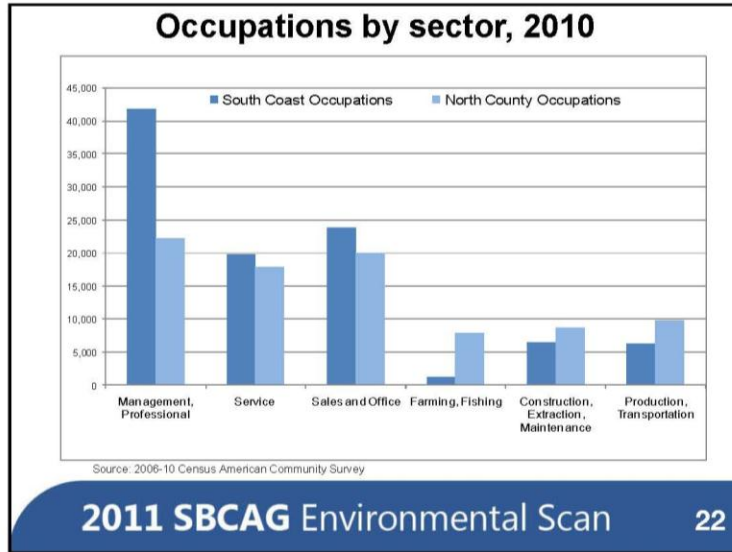
Change in population and jobs, 2010-2040



Source: SBCAG Regional Growth Forecast

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Transit Ridership Per Capita, 2010

	FY10 Transit Ridership	Trips Per Capita
South Coast (SBMTD & Easy Lift)	7,976,749	39.5
Santa Maria & Guadalupe (SMAT, Guadalupe, SMOOTH)	1,179,622	8.4
Lompoc Valley (COLT)	197,978	3.4
Santa Ynez Valley (SYVT)	45,081	2.0

Sources: 2010 Census and 2011 SBCAG Transit Needs Assessment

Factor #6

Federal and State mandates
on SBCAG and local agencies.

SBCAG's Mandates

Designation	Responsibility
MPO/RTPA/ Council of Governments	Regional Transportation Plan • Sustainable Communities Strategy (SB 375) • Regional Housing Needs Allocation Transportation Improvement Programs (Federal and Regional) Overall Work Program Transportation Development Act
Local Transportation Authority	Measure A/Measure D • Implement provisions of ordinances/investment plans • Allocate funds to local agencies and manage grant programs • Deliver named projects (e.g., 101 HOV, 101 UVP) • Strategic plan and financial plan • Accountability/oversight
Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies	Motorist Aid Systems (Highway call boxes, Freeway service patrols)
Airport Land Use Commission	Airport Land Use Plan
Congestion Management Agency	Congestion Management Plan
Census Affiliate Center	Provide census data/reports to local agencies and public

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Non-mandated roles

- **Traffic Solutions** (carpools, vanpools, other employer outreach)
- **Coordinating Interregional Transit Services** (CAE, Coastal, Breeze)
- **Seeking discretionary funding** (federal and state programs)
- **Assisting local agencies with projects** (funding and delivery)
- **Corridor/regional plans** (e.g., North County Transit Plan, Regional Bikeway Plan, Park and Ride Lot Plan)

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Summary

- **Growing transportation needs**
- **Measure A and matching funds can fund high priority projects**
- **Shortfall in funding requires SBCAG to:**
 - Leverage outside funding
 - Set priorities and stick to them
 - Be nimble and entrepreneurial
 - Expedite project delivery
- **Mobility needs can't be met only through increasing supply of transportation infrastructure and services**
 - Land uses influence transportation demand, congestion, GHG
- **SBCAG's role in regional planning is evolving to include more than just transportation**
 - SB 375 requires regional linkage of transportation and land use