

Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS)

Public Participation Plan for the

Tulare County Region

Prepared by:



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I. Introduction to Senate Bill 375

SB 375 (Steinberg), the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008, is a California state law that became effective January 1, 2009. This bill looks to reduce emissions from automobiles and light-duty trucks in the state of California. One of the implementing arms of the 2006 Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32), implementation of the bill is expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 5 million metric tons statewide.

This new law requires California's Air Resources Board (ARB) to develop regional reduction targets for greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) for the years 2020 and 2035. California's 18 Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) have been tasked with creating Sustainable Communities Strategies (SCSs) and Alternative Planning Strategies (APS), if applicable. The goal of the SCS is to design a comprehensive regional plan that will reduce emissions from vehicle operation within each MPO region. The MPOs are required to develop an SCS through integrated land use, housing, and transportation planning and demonstrate an ability to attain the targets set by ARB in 2020 and 2035. If those targets are unable to be met via an SCS, an APS may be prepared.

II. Role of the Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG)

TCAG is the designated MPO for the Tulare County region. Each MPO is required to develop a public participation plan for the Sustainable Communities Strategy and Alternative Planning Strategy, if applicable. Elements of the plan will include: outreach efforts to encourage the active participation of a broad range of stakeholder groups in the planning process, consultation with various transportation agencies, public workshops throughout the region, preparation and circulation of a draft SCS (and APS, if applicable), a minimum of two public hearings on the draft SCS, and a process for members of the public to request to receive notices. This document complies with the public participation plan preparation requirements of SB 375.

III. SCS Public Participation Plan and Related Outreach

The Sustainable Communities Strategy is one component of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for the Tulare County Region. Outreach in addition to those items outlined here will be undertaken throughout the region for purposes of RTP development. TCAG also has an adopted comprehensive Public Participation Plan which can be found on the agency's website at www.tularecog.org. The Public Participation Plan, originally adopted in 2009 and updated in 2015, was created to comply with SAFETEA-LU, the transportation authorization bill that was in place until replaced by MAP-21 in 2012 and then the FAST Act in 2015. This document does not replace or supersede any elements in the 2015 comprehensive Public Participation Plan, but should be seen as complementary.

IV. Sustainable Communities Strategy Public Participation Plan

A. Notifications

TCAG will provide the public with the opportunity to request to receive notices and information regarding Tulare County's SCS in the following ways:

i. Members of the public will be able to use TCAG's website to sign up for RTP and SCS updates throughout the process. Members of the public will be able to provide an email address and/or other information for TCAG to use to send out notices and updates as needed. Contact information on the website will also assist residents in providing comments on the update of the documents and on the documents themselves, and allow them to request presentations, etc. throughout the process.

ii. TCAG may be contacted by phone, fax, or at the physical office location listed below:

Tulare County Association of Governments

210 N. Church Street, Suite B

Visalia, CA 93291

Phone: (559) 623-0450

Fax: (559) 733-6720

iii. Requests for information can be directed to any member of TCAG staff, but should primarily be directed to:

Ted Smalley, Executive Director at TSmalley@tularecog.org

Roberto Brady, SCS Manager at RBrady@tularecog.org

B. Stakeholder Outreach

TCAG will undertake significant outreach efforts to encourage active participation from a number 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. TCAG will also seek out input from the local federally recognized Tule River Tribe.

i. TCAG will create, appoint, and facilitate an RTP Roundtable. The Roundtable will provide input on a number of issues related to the RTP; however, the primary focus of the Roundtable will be the development of the SCS.

ii. TCAG will provide information to various civic clubs, organization, community action groups and any other interested parties with which TCAG or its contractors have contact. TCAG staff will be available for presentations, meetings, etc. with groups in the community that request such information.

C. Public Agency Consultation

TCAG will consult with transportation agencies and other public agencies. A position on the RTP Roundtable will be reserved for Caltrans District staff.

D. Public Hearings and Workshops

TCAG will conduct public workshops and public hearings throughout the Tulare County region. In addition to the elements specifically outlined below, TCAG will comply with all regulations regarding presentations and approvals to and by elected bodies and the governing board of TCAG. More outreach than described below is expected to be undertaken by TCAG staff; however, at a minimum, TCAG will:

i. Prior to release of a draft SCS, conduct a series of presentations within the Tulare County region to present the public with the information and tools necessary to provide a clear understanding of the issues and policy choices, and to solicit public input.

ii. Hold two public hearings on the draft SCS (and APS, if applicable).

E. Informational Meetings with Local Elected Bodies

TCAG will conduct a minimum of one informational meeting to present a draft of the SCS (and APS, if applicable) to representatives of Tulare County and its incorporated cities. The meeting must be attended by representatives of the County Board of Supervisors and city council members representing a majority of the cities representing a majority of the incorporated population within the county. Notice of the meeting will be provided to each agency's clerk.

F. Circulation of Draft and Adoption

TCAG will prepare and circulate the draft SCS (and APS, if applicable) a minimum of 55 days prior to the adoption of the final Regional Transportation Plan.