



## Modifying the Regional Transportation Plan Guidelines to equitably achieve SB 375's goals

Creating closer linkages between the transportation system and land use decisions is the crux of SB 375's greenhouse gas reduction strategy. To this end, new Government Code Section 65080(b)(2)(B) requires each region's Sustainable Communities Strategy to identify residential development areas for "all economic segments of the population."

Over the past three decades, however, the state's housing market has not met the goal of building enough homes at a variety of price points for "all economic segments of the population." Multiple factors contribute to the shortfall, including a lack of political will, land availability and pricing, and other factors.

Implementation of SB 375 could exacerbate this market failure: less land available for residential development = higher land and housing prices. Revitalization of infill areas can cause gentrification and push lower income workers further from their jobs. Sustainable communities strategies must avoid these outcomes and address existing barriers to fully realize SB 375's GHG reduction goal and avert inequitable impacts on lower income households.

The new RTP guidelines can assist by highlighting policies and approaches that encourage localities and the housing market to build a range of affordable places to live near job centers. Below, we identify some of the opportunities through modifications to the existing Addendum to the 2007 Regional Transportation Plan Guidelines. Additionally, we have suggested issues that should be addressed as new sections are crafted describing the required contents of the Sustainable Communities Strategy.

### **Suggested modifications to the addendum**

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Under RTP Policy Element, modify item 1 to read "Develop investments and programs that support local jurisdictions that make land use decisions that implement regional blueprints and other smart growth strategies, including rural sustainability strategies *and strategies to increase the housing supply and affordability levels near job centers.*"

Under Transportation Planning and Investment Strategies, insert *mixed-income* before "housing near transit." (Alternatively, after "housing" insert *at a variety of price points.*)

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Under Performance Measures:

- Modify #2 to read “Compare projected SCS development to actual development in applicable locations, *including the affordability of new residential developments*, and provide an explanation for variances as updated.”
- Add #4. *Compare areas identified in the SCS for residential development with the local zoning designation in the subsequent housing element or zoning ordinance.*

Under TRANSPORTATION MODELING, add *housing supply and affordability* to the last line of #2.

*Pages 6 and 7*

Under Policy analysis capabilities in “C.” and “D.” add housing affordability as a measure that the model set should produce.

### **Major additions to the addendum**

A community’s general plan, in particular its housing element, is the most comprehensive representation of its planned residential development pattern. Therefore, the guidelines should specify the SCS shall reflect the housing elements in place at the time of RTP adoption. This is specifically relevant to compliance with Government Code Section 65080(b)(2)(B)(ii)(iii) and (vii).

In addition, the subcommittee and the guidelines should address how an MPO can demonstrate a site is sufficient to house a given income group, as required in Section 65080(b)(2)(B)(ii) and (iii).

- For the eight-year housing need, can the MPO rely on an adopted housing element and subsequent annual reports? What if the element identifies sites needing zoning changes that have not been completed? Or no element has been adopted?
- For “the course of the planning period of the RTP,” what should be the basis for the MPO’s determination that a site is sufficient?

The subcommittee should carefully consider how these statutory requirements can be fully and accurately implemented.