

REGIONAL AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL PLANNING



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WORD FROM THE CHAIR

Dan Reuter, AICP

With great pride I accepted the role as Chair of the *Regional and Intergovernmental Division* (RIPD) during the APA 2014 National Conference in Atlanta. As Community Development Manager for the Atlanta Regional Commission, I am fortunate to work in a dynamic region with many challenges. I am also aware of the many groundbreaking efforts that are underway throughout the U.S. by planning professionals within peer regional agencies, state governments and other organizations. The RIPD Board members and APA staffs work daily to provide a central point where dialogue on regional best practices and communication can occur. In this short column, I want to update you on many activities that are underway to further the work of RIPD members and regional/state agencies across the U.S.

E-Journal. It has been a busy year for the Division. The Spring 2014 Issue of the Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Division “E-Journal” newsletter featured a number of outstanding articles on various topics pertaining to Sustainable Communities and regional planning interests. See weblink: <http://intergovernmental.homestead.com/newsletters.html>

New Collaborative. The Division supported a new initiative called the *National Collaborative of State Planners*. The effort is designed to bring together practitioners, academics and advocates of state planning. The effort has become a forum to collaborate, inventory and promote state level planning best practices, provide support for the continued operation and appropriate expansion of state level planning functions and support continuing research and education targeted to this group.

Division board member Peter Conrad initiated a webinar on April 11 titled: *Is Your State Resilient? - Planning for Climate Change*. The webinar outlined planetary changes that are occurring in measurable ways, from rising sea levels to floods to drought. Discussion occurred on how communities can safeguard human health and the physical environment in the face of nature’s response to warming temperatures. See weblink: <http://stateplannersus.wordpress.com/>

E-News and Website. The Division published four issues of its E-News during FY 2014. Sharon Rooney (Communications Director) produced the E-news in the first half of 2014 and Anais Schenk took over as the E-news editor for the second half of 2014. Under the leadership of Sharon Rooney and Bob Leiter (Past Chair), the Division began to act upon the 2013 Task Force recommendations to upgrade the Division website. The Board voted to move the website to

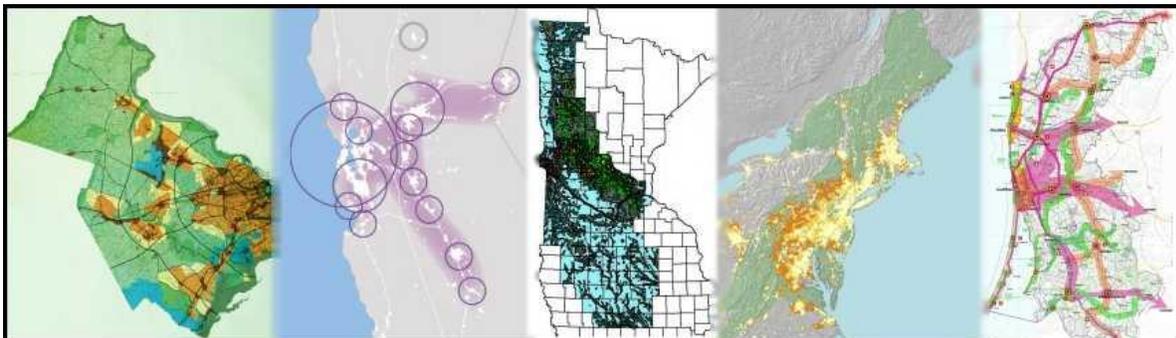
the APA platform, and seek assistance from APA staff. (This upgrade is included in the Division work program for 2015.) The Division also began using a *LinkedIn* account to communicate with existing and potential members.

2014 National Conference. The Division organized sessions and events at the National Planning Conference in Atlanta. Dan Reuter of the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) and RIPD Chair moderated the Division's by-right panel, "MPO Livable Communities" at APA Atlanta. Panelists included Ken Kirkey, Planning Director for the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) of the San Francisco Bay Area; Karla Weaver, Project Director for the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) in the Dallas area; and, Marsha McClaughlin, Planning Director for Howard County, Maryland, representing the Baltimore Metropolitan Council. These agencies have some of the most extensive Regional Livable Communities programs in the country and have committed millions of dollars to Livable Communities initiatives. More than 150 people attended this panel session.

Immediately following the APA National conference, the Division held a meeting of all *regional planning councils and/or metropolitan planning organization* agencies interested in *Regional Livable Communities*. Led by Dan Reuter, 12 regional agencies described their *Regional Livable Communities* programs or similar initiatives. (The Division will organize an additional *Regional Livable Communities* event prior to the APA Conference in 2015.) The Division also hosted a facilitated discussion for the National Collaborative of State Planners. The discussion was facilitated by Richard E. Hall, AICP, Secretary of the Maryland Department of Planning. Panelists include Timothy S. Chapin, Associate Professor at Florida State University and Armando Carbonell, AICP, Planning Department Chair, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy.

Upcoming Publication. During 2014, Bob Leiter and Rocky Piro (immediate past chair) met with APA staff who agreed to a cooperative relationship to produce a Planning Advisory Service report on *Emerging Trends in Regional Planning*. The report will be available in fall 2015 and will include an overview of the state of regional planning practice in the U.S. It will include information on best practices, new innovations, and state-of-the-art techniques in regional planning. Information will be provided on emerging trends in small, mid-sized, and larger urban regions across the country.

As you can see the Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Division is an active and exciting organization. It is my goal to engage more of our peers to become involved and benefit from the excellent led by the Division Board members and others. I look forward to a great year and the 2015 National Conference in Seattle!



I-15 in City Heights: How a Freeway that Divided the Community Became an Urban Monument to Citizen Activism

Jim Bliesner

Editor's Note

One of the major challenges in developing the U. S. Interstate Highway System over the past fifty years has been the planning and design of highway segments in existing urban neighborhoods. The following article describes a unique intergovernmental planning approach that has successfully navigated through many of the urban and environmental planning challenges associated with such projects. The author of this article, Jim Bliesner, served as President of the Board for the San Diego City Heights Community Development Commission during the period in which the I-15/ 40th Street project was planned and constructed; he currently serves as a lecturer in the University of California – San Diego Urban Studies and Planning Program. The article was originally published in the San Diego Free Press in August 2013, and is reproduced here with the author's permission.

When you drive North or South on I-15 between University Ave. and El Cajon Boulevard you can't help but notice a few unique things, especially if you compare the ride to being on 805 between the same streets. First you notice the walls go straight up and down rather than splayed wide like a sliced piece of chicken. Second, when you go under University or El Cajon you'll notice the street covers are larger than other underpasses on I-15.

The third thing you notice is that you pass under a block long cover; so long it's necessary to light it up underneath, and long enough to honk your horn at least three times before you hit sunlight again. Then you notice there are trees on the wide covers. If you are really attentive and you are heading north, you can look to your left just before University Avenue and there is a huge park adjacent to the freeway. If you look up right then you will see a footpath connecting the homes on each side of the freeway as well.



I-15 at University Avenue in City Heights

If you are quick and you look at the University or El Cajon overhead signs you will see that they read "Transit Plaza." You won't see that designation on other large green overhead signs on the interstate. At the Adams Avenue bridge look left and you will see another park butting up to the freeway. You will probably notice that the Adams Avenue bridge is smaller than those of El Cajon and University. The walls are straight from end to end on either side of the tube. In the

middle of the freeway from end to end through Mid City you see a vacant wide lane sitting there like it is waiting for something to happen, some future plan.

Something happened to create all of those differences. They didn't just show up fully blown from an engineer's sketch pad. It was the assertive voice of the people of City Heights that modified the design over a period of at least twenty years. The covers, in some people's eyes, stand as an *urban monument to citizen activism*, focused on things larger than anything they might ever work on for their whole lives.

Each of those design details was pushed for by City Heights residents through many, many meetings and appearances at government hearings. There are people who, over twenty years, took on each of those details and pushed for them to be part of the design. They own them and walk around with the personal satisfaction of having caused a significant change in their environment and in the freeway experience in their neighborhood.

It seems like they should be memorialized somehow, with a little plaque, a mural, a string of flashing lights, a monument, some commemorative sculpture, a story board of some kind.

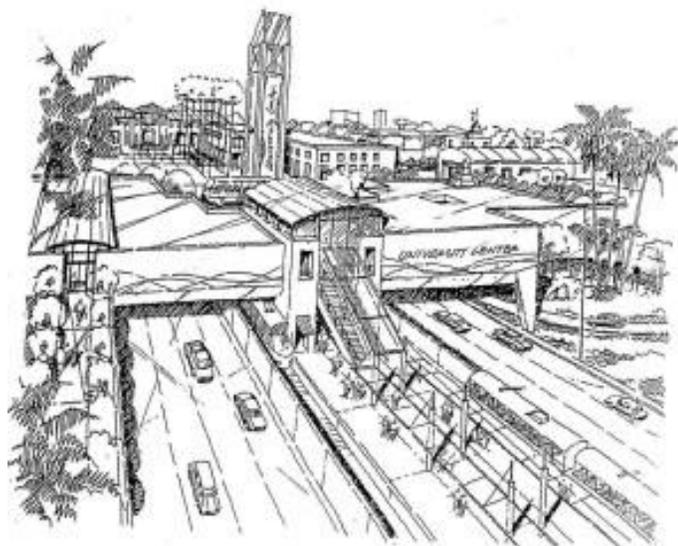
The story starts about 1983 when Caltrans decided to extend the I-15, which runs from one border of the country to the other across a piece of geography that had about 5000 people living on it and just happened to intersect between two schools, an elementary (Central) and a middle school (Wilson). Because the geography had been overbuilt with apartments, maybe another 10,000 people lived just adjacent to the freeway path.

Caltrans had let the plans lay dormant for many years. The moment they opened the file a letter was sent from the community signed by Jim Bliesner. It said, "if you build this 2.2 mile freeway extension you will negatively impact the lives of thousands of people and you will destroy any 'community cohesion' that might exist." The procedural foot was in the door.

From then until today the residents of City Heights have met and met and organized their way through more conceptual and technical information than most graduate level planners or engineers, all followed with the question "What about the people?"

They asked for parks at either end using dirt from the excavation. They asked that the walls be built to funnel the bad air up and out of the community.

People like Joan Fitzsimmons and the late John Taylor insisted on the desires of the community to build the walls so that in the future they could support additional covers. They asked that the middle of the freeway be designed to



Artist rendering of commercial development on I-15 cover

incorporate the trolley or bus rapid transit in the future. It was all written into the agreements with Caltrans and the City about 1989.

The City Heights Community Development Corporation (CHCDC) had been organized by residents just for issues like this. They said they wanted the whole freeway covered and turned into an economic and residential model similar to downtown Phoenix and downtown Boston.

The CHDC wrote a grant and hired the professionals who designed those covers to show that it could be done. Caltrans and the City said there was no money. A funding strategy was developed.

CHDC leaders including Barry Schultz, John Stump and Bill Baber and residents organized a redevelopment district and wrote a plan that covered the freeway. They asked the City Council to come and hear the plan in an old church, now replaced by the library. The City Council sat on a small stage looking at supporters that spilled out the windows and doors like an old fashioned church camp meeting. Everyone was sweating on a hot summer night. CHDC leaders sat with design professionals at a long table and detailed their dream in colored slides. The council voted to accept the report, and subsequently voted to accept the community plan and then the redevelopment plan.

Meanwhile construction had begun. The CHDC had two noted organizers—Jay Powell and Frank Gormlie— to bring the community forward. Residents were grieving at all the vacant land left by the destruction of so many homes on the 40th Street corridor. Their friends had been sent away and their homes and memories crunched under the bulldozers or loaded atop trucks and planted on a squatters plot in suburban Tijuana.

As much out of sorrow as forward looking joy the community leaders said let there be a garden for all those lost. The newly arrived immigrants from Asia came forward and the flowers, art and vegetables bloomed for two years while Caltrans negotiated designs.

In 1991 community leaders traveled to Washington DC to solicit then Congressmen Lowery and Cunningham to insert a “earmark” item into the transportation budget to expand the sidewalks above the freeway on University and El Cajon; to create a platform for future commercial development and a transit stop. Cunningham did. It passed, providing \$5 million dollars for the project. Redevelopment funds were around the corner.

The community then mobilized behind John Hartley, a city council candidate who promised to do everything possible to cover the whole freeway. Meanwhile, some opposition emerged from the community against the full cover. The residents of Kensington held vigils against the cover for fear that “those” people might then have easy access to their treasures they hid in their homes.



Park over I-15 between University and El Cajon

The community stuck with the dream of a cover from end to end with new grocery stores, a community college facility, parks, a library, a new post office, and went so far as to invite Sol Price to put a Price Club over the freeway. The tensions reached their peak at a final council vote in 1990 to approve the final agreements with Caltrans.

Councilman Hartley sold out and voted with Councilman Roberts to proceed with construction, incorporating all the details requested by the community to mitigate the negative effects of the Caltrans design, but denying the full cover. The rationale was that the land next to the freeway was not worth enough to justify the cost of the covers.

Funds from the redevelopment district began to accumulate. As they say “one man’s ceiling is another man’s floor.” Price Charities and former Councilman William Jones accessed not only philanthropic funds from Price Charities but City general fund dollars, redevelopment funds, municipal bonds, and eminent domain to scrape six or seven more blocks of housing and build everything that had initially been designed on the freeway cover. But they were instead located four blocks to the east. They closed a grocery store and opened a police station. The community held a funeral for the lost grocery store.

Between the scraping of the land for the freeway and the land for the Urban Village, some estimate that more than 4000 residents were displaced. The community of City Heights was bursting forth in erratic spurts and starts, in some cases betraying the original desire to build community cohesion and not destroy it. A loyal following of residents trailed the Price work as a newly formed Town Council. What was built has been sold now to a national investment firm, but the community still “owns” the freeway.

The memory of the original design did not fade from the CHDC’s playbook. For the next 15 years the CHCDC board with Steve Russell, Jay Powell and staff advocated for SANDAG to fund the construction of transit stations on University and El Cajon. These transit stations would provide access a high speed transit system below that would take residents to outlying jobs. They called it Mid City Moves. Funds were recently allocated to move that project forward (\$42 million).

The community participants have changed over time but the intrusion, or the dream, however you see it remains. The large decks need commercial structures to reunite the business district.

The access to the transit stations needs redesign. City land lays vacant waiting for innovative development. And most of all, the walls of the freeway await additional cover.

WHAT'S THAT THIRD "E"?

Anais Schenk

Transportation Planner, Fehr & Peers, San Jose

There is growing evidence that people, particularly millennials, are now gravitating towards living in denser urbanized areas closer to amenities. To address this shift planners are adopting policies and practices that focus development in urbanized cores and are investing in land use and transportation infrastructure that supports density and reduces sprawl. Compact development shows not only travel efficiencies, but also economic efficiencies achieved from mutually supportive land uses existing within close proximity to each other. Denser land use patterns also have beneficial impacts on our environment by improving air quality due to shorter trip distances and conserving open space around our cities. This approach is state of the practice for sustainable planning as it has the potential to boost the economic engines of our cities and improve the environment. Compact development has the potential to hit on two of the three E's of sustainability, but what about the third? Recent regional planning efforts in the Monterey Bay Area shed light on how to reincorporate social equity into state of the practice of sustainability planning.

The author of this article was an Associate Planner at the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments during the development of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan discussed later in this article. She worked on the development of the Sustainable Communities Strategy, the Regional Housing Needs Allocation and the land use inputs for the regional travel demand model. She now works for Fehr & Peers in San Jose, California on a variety of projects from transportation impact analysis to complete streets planning.

National and California Planning Context

Concurrent with the trend toward infill development planners have been moving toward using quantitative metrics to gauge the impacts of our transportation investments. While transportation planners have long since been refining our abilities to model travel behavior, it was usually with an eye towards mobility that planners used this information to make decisions. Only in more recent years have transportation planners started to understand that the increasing popularity of infill development and urbanized environments is due to other human needs such as access to amenities, livability and connectivity. Planners have started using metrics to measure the effects of transportation infrastructure on these other aspects of a community. These metrics, or performance measures, help planners and policy bodies make informed decisions about how to best invest in the needs of a community.

In addition to planning practice changing to meet the needs of our population, planning legislation has also implemented change, particularly in California. Assembly Bill (AB) 32, passed in 2006, set aggressive greenhouse gas reduction targets for the state. In doing so it also established a process for scoping out the path to achieving those targets and an enforcement mechanism (cap and trade) that helps achieve those targets. The enforcement mechanism sets a cap on greenhouse gas emissions allowed by a particular industry and allows businesses to

trade permits (allowances) for emitting GHGs. Additionally, a portion of those allowances are auctioned off by the State. Those proceeds are then used to fund projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This program, called cap and trade, is also a funding mechanism and has developed a funding pool large enough that the state is now using the money to fund regional transportation improvements that can demonstrate a future reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

In support of AB 32, Senate Bill (SB) 375, passed in 2008, established a process for reducing greenhouse gas emissions specific to the transportation sector. The mechanism for establishing and monitoring target reductions in greenhouse gas emissions is the regional transportation plan (RTP). RTPs are prepared by regional entities called Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) with the input of community members, city planners and other major stakeholders. The RTPs have always acted as the guidebook for transportation investments over a twenty year period. Now, with the passage of SB 375 the RTPs also contain the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), or the strategy for reducing greenhouse gas emissions to a specific target level as determined by the State of California.

Typically the development of the RTP begins with a vision expressed by the community. Based on that vision, planners set goals that are also vetted by community members and stakeholders. With the implementation of SB 375 those goals are then used to establish metrics which in turn measure the performance of a set of transportation investment scenarios. Using a scenario planning process allows planners and the general public to gain a fuller picture of how investment decisions help (or do not help) communities reach their goals. For example, when considering the equal distribution of transportation dollars, a RTP may use a metric that considers the location of projects, and therefore measures the geographic distribution of transportation dollars, in a given scenario. With the exception of greenhouse gas emissions per capita, metrics vary across regions in California. However with the implementation of the most recent federal transportation reauthorization bill, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21), there will be a baseline set of performance measures that will be consistently used across regions.

The Monterey Bay Area Planning Context

The Monterey Bay Area is located on the Central Coast of California. It is a popular tourist destination with first rate wineries, well preserved cypress and oak forests and dramatic rocky beaches with world renowned surf breaks. The region is also home to some of the best agricultural soil in California. Most of the nation's lettuce and berries come from the Salinas Valley in Monterey County, also known as the "Salad Bowl" of the U.S. The hospitality industry on the coast employs many people to provide services to visitors and retail centers, but at low wages. The agricultural industry is another major employer, but also pays low wages. The result is a region with a mix of mostly low income jobs. People who are paid well tend to work outside of the region and commute to their coastal homes or simply keep their coastal home as a vacation rental or second home. The income gaps are fairly large as demonstrated by the

median income of the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea at \$72,582 compared to the City of Watsonville at \$46,603.¹ This diversity translates to diverging transportation needs.

The MPO for the area, the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), is responsible for regional transportation planning for Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Benito Counties. As the MPO, AMBAG is responsible for preparing the RTP, which locally is referred to as the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The MTP also contains the SCS as described above and was most recently adopted in 2014. The greenhouse gas emission targets were set to two horizon years, 2020 and 2035. In 2020 the MTP shows no increase in per capita greenhouse gas emissions compared to 2005 emission levels. In 2035 the MTP shows a 5% per capita reduction.



Source: Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments. *Monterey Bay 2035 Moving*

The Monterey Bay Area SCS Performance Measures

Like other regional transportation plans, the MTP establishes a set of performance measures that are used to evaluate scenarios for transportation investments. There were approximately a dozen performance measures used that fit into the following goal areas: Access and Mobility, Economic Vitality, Environment, Healthy Communities, Social Equity as well as System Preservation and Safety. For the purposes of this article I will focus on those related to social equity and economic vitality goals. The figure below shows all of the performance measures used.

¹ U.S. Census Bureau. 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. *Median Income in the Past 12 Months (In 2012 Inflation-adjusted Dollars)*.

AMBAG Performance Measure Results

Regional Performance Measures	2010 Existing	2035 No Build	2035 MTP/SCS
Access and Mobility			
Work Trips Within 30 Minutes (percent)			
Drive Alone	84.3%	84.0%	84.2%
Carpool	84.3%	84.0%	84.2%
Transit	15.4%	16.9%	17.1%
Commute Travel Time (minutes)	15.7	15.7	15.7
Economic Vitality			
Jobs Near High Quality Transit (percent)	17.5%	27.2%	57.3%
Daily Truck Delay (hours)	2,802	11,471	10,667
Environment			
GHG Reductions (Percent reduction from 2005 baseline)*	N/A	0.6%	-5.9%
Open Space Consumed (acres)	N/A	2,944	2,556
Farmland Converted (acres)	N/A	14,611	14,316
Healthy Communities			
Alternative Transportation Trips (percent)	17.3%	18.1%	17.7%
Air Pollution - all vehicles (tons/day)	31.3	9.5	9.4
Peak Period Congested Vehicle Miles of Travel (miles)	128,463	749,430	618,975
Social Equity			
Distribution of MTP/SCS Investments (percent)			
Low income population	N/A	N/A	90.3%
Non low income population	N/A	N/A	9.7%
Minority population	N/A	N/A	79.1%
Non minority population	N/A	N/A	20.9%
Poverty population	N/A	N/A	62.2%
Non poverty population	N/A	N/A	37.8%
Access to Transit within 1/2 mile (percent)			
Low income population	14.5%	16.4%	48.2%
Non low income population	10.3%	12.8%	38.4%
Minority population	12.8%	14.9%	47.1%
Non minority population	14.5%	17.0%	44.3%
Poverty population	16.0%	13.6%	50.5%
Non poverty population	11.9%	14.3%	42.6%
System Preservation and Safety			
Maintain the Transportation System (percent)	N/A	N/A	50%
Fatalities and Injuries per Capita	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%
*Greenhouse gas reductions in 2020 are -3.5 percent from 2005 levels.			

Source: Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments. *Monterey Bay 2035 Moving Forward*.

Social Equity

Performance measures in the SCS are calculated at a larger scale due to the regional nature of the MTP. The ones related to social equity make comparisons of low income and minority populations to non-low income and minority populations. These comparisons are done at the Census tract level due to the availability of data. The two performance measures related to social equity are:

- The dollar amount of transportation investment made in low income and minority areas versus other areas.

- Access to transit within a half mile of residential location for low income and minority populations versus non-low income and minority populations.

The first performance measure shows that investment will occur equally across low income and minority areas versus other areas. However, the measure does not take into account the type of investment and whether that investment is responding to community needs. To address this issue AMBAG planners conducted community outreach to understand how to appropriately balance transportation investments. For example, community members in Salinas and in the Salinas Valley were very clear about the need for increasing local bus service. Yet using this performance measure alone would have shown equal investments without bus service enhancements. Other expensive projects such as interchange safety improvements on U.S. 101 mean that the dollar value of investments are equal in low income and minority areas as compared to other areas. While the interchange improvements are incredibly important to preserve freight movement and keep people traveling on U.S. 101 safe, bus enhancements are an essential daily service for the local population. Operational bus investment is not the kind of project that excites people outside these communities and therefore it is a project that does not get much attention. Furthermore these types of transit projects do not help to improve the performance measure. It would have been easy for this need to get lost amongst the metrics if the community had not been vocal about it and AMBAG staff had not done intensive public outreach.

The second social equity performance measure is one that reflects the increasing emphasis on infill development. While access to transit helps to capture some of the subtleties discussed above it inherently assumes that either a region will be more compact and therefore locate more people along core transit routes, or that the region can afford to operate transit service in a dispersed suburban environment. The latter is unrealistic for most regions which are struggling to fund existing transit service. Operating transit service in dispersed communities is far more expensive than operating service along core routes that capture more riders, such as in a city core. Therefore in a scenario that does not emphasize infill this metric will suffer because it would be harder to show great numbers of people living within such close proximity to transit service. However, as I will argue below by emphasizing infill we could potentially overlook what is actually economically viable in the region's low income minority areas.

Economic Development and Economic Vitality

The Monterey Bay Area has a very diverse population and land use pattern. While the region as a whole is considered mid-sized, there are many small rural cities and towns in the tri-county area. These smaller cities and towns such as those in the Salinas Valley are the most affordable places to live with the low housing costs they can offer. Unfortunately, they are also the places where there are few jobs and where government entities struggle to provide basic services such as police and fire to its residents. Given the need for more jobs and more income these cities often emphasize economic development. However, the form and shape of that development often does not meet the expectations of planners for infill mixed use development. There is a very simple explanation for this. Infill mixed use development may not be financially feasible for

these cities because the cost to purchase and develop land outweighs the profit as measured by the residual land value. Therefore a city with low land values that only emphasizes infill misses out on new development opportunities. As the MTP states, “[a]ssuming that development in the form of mixed use will help to address the need for jobs in low cost areas ignores the reality of market conditions.”² To make this kind of development viable in the long term policy, construction costs, pricing and other factors would have to change.

The “economic vitality” performance measures used by AMBAG include jobs within a half mile of high quality transit³ and daily truck hours of delay. The first measure emphasizes infill and access to high frequency transit routes, whereas the second reflects the importance of freight to the economy. Locating jobs near high quality transit is much easier for a city that has high land values and policies in place to incentivize density and infill. For a city with low land values that does not already have a critical mass of development it is much harder to attract infill development. Additionally, if those cities have economic development policies in place that are geared towards incentivizing new business first and foremost, then the likelihood of compact development occurring is much lower. The inability of these cities to do infill development means they are pitted against the goals of the state and planning activities at large. Their economic development plans which prioritize growth of services and jobs, such as retail and manufacturing are viewed as contradictory to the goals of the state, the SCS and other environmental causes such as preservation of farmland.

Metric Alternatives

Now that California MPOs have completed their first round of SCS development efforts and SB 375 compliance there are lessons learned that can be applied to future regional planning efforts particularly with regard to performance measure analysis. The issues encountered above in the Monterey Bay Area were addressed through a robust public outreach process. The outreach process was funded through a one-time grant from the Strategic Growth Council. In the future the funding to run a similar extensive outreach process may not be available. However, the experiences gained from previous outreach provide a valuable opportunity to learn how to better measure the impacts of transportation investments. The outreach allowed regional planners to hear directly from the community the gaps that performance measures leave behind. Planners can use this valuable information to develop more refined performance measures that help to fill in those gaps.

The performance measures used to examine social equity and economic vitality cannot account for the type and quality of investments made in low income and minority areas. However, a metric that considers travel time and proximity to job serving land uses would have a more relevant relationship to the types of investments being made both in transportation and land

² Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments. *Monterey Bay 2035 Moving Forward*. (June, 2014). Pg 4-58.

³High quality transit is defined as service with headways of 15 minutes or better. If the headways of multiple routes combined shows service every 15 minutes or less that corridor meets the definition of having high quality transit.

use. A metric of this type would have captured the gaps in bus connectivity and access in the Salinas Valley and in the future could help to point planners in the right direction when public outreach funds are slimmer.

The Importance of Collaboration

AMBAG regional planners responded to the planning priorities of its residents by incorporating economic development into the SCS. The SCS includes a section describing economic development priorities and acknowledges that not all jurisdictions will be able to implement infill development. By including this the SCS allows for a more flexible land use pattern in the region. It also includes implementation strategies that encourage economic development consistent with the goals of small cities currently planning for revitalized economies and the long term goals of the MTP. This key component of the SCS ensures that the MTP reflects the varying land use priorities of the diverse population. Some cities are more urbanized and are able to take advantage of the economic benefits from compact and diverse development. However, other cities in the Monterey Bay Area are still relatively small and have a greater need for simply being able to provide basic goods and services to their residents. These cities cannot attract infill development at this point in time and will not see it come to fruition in the short to medium term of the MTP. An SCS that did not recognize this market reality would have been irrelevant to these communities. Without a respectful dialogue between city planners and regional planners the MTP could have closed the door on transportation and land use opportunities in these predominately low income and minority cities.

The goals of California and MPOs around the state to reduce greenhouse gas emissions are a necessary and ground breaking step towards accountability and responsibility for our environment. However, as planners we also have a responsibility to plan for a future that reflects the needs and desires of the communities we serve, even if those needs do not fit within our existing planning framework. Monterey Bay Area planners were able to think outside the box and prepare a MTP that balances environmental responsibility, economic vitality *and* social equity by using one of our classic planning tools - outreach. It is now our responsibility to develop performance measures that are more accountable to all of the three E's of sustainability.

Resources on Urban Centers in Regional Planning

The Puget Sound Regional Council has developed two resources for better understanding the state of planning for centers in various urban regions across the U.S. A detailed report, titled Regional Centers Monitoring Report is at the website:

<http://www.psrc.org/assets/10190/Centers-Monitoring.pdf>

A related article, published in *Practicing Planner* titled Regional Planning for Centers, can be accessed by APA members at: <https://www.planning.org/practicingplanner/2014/fall/>. The authors are Ivan Miller, AICP, and Jada Maxwell.

According to the Regional Centers Monitoring Report regional planning in the central Puget Sound region of Washington state has emphasized the importance of urban centers for focusing growth and investments for more than 25 years. The Puget Sound Regional Council, the four-county metropolitan planning organization for the Seattle urban region has conducted a comparative study of peer regions which also include urban centers as part of their regional development and transportation strategy. The study relied on information from regional planning agencies' websites, the review of plans and documents, data from questionnaires, and interviews with regional planning staff.

The central Puget Sound region recognized it was not alone in promoting a centers-based growth strategy in its regional plans. Peer regions identified and included in the research are: San Diego Association of Governments; Portland Metro; Metropolitan Washington (D.C.) Council of Governments; Metro Vancouver (British Columbia); Denver Regional Council of Governments; Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission; and Association of Bay Area Governments.

The PSRC report resulted in findings that there were no comparative studies that addressed planning for centers in major U.S. urban regions. There are reports on transit-oriented development or infrastructure funding, but no



comparative framework focused on defining and implementing regional centers in regional plans.

The PSRC study provides a foundation for other urban regions to use to create monitoring frameworks to: (a) connect local and regional planning; (b) support clearly defined criteria and procedures for designating centers; (c) foster targeted investment through multiple funding sources; and, (d) ultimately, help regions grow in a sensible and sustainable manner.

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