



Agenda Date: 3/18/2008
Agenda Placement: 11A

NAPA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Board Agenda Letter

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Siegel, Howard - Director
Community and Intergovernmental Affairs Division
REPORT BY: Celeste Buckley, Analyst - 253-4477
SUBJECT: SB 375 Sustainable Communities Strategies legislation

RECOMMENDATION

Approval of and authorization for the Chair to sign a letter of support for SB 375 Sustainable Communities Strategies.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Legislative Subcommittee will present a report. The Board may or may not take action on any or all items presented for discussion. (Unanimous vote required).

FISCAL IMPACT

Is there a Fiscal Impact? No

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

There is no Environmental Impact for this item.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

Senate Bill 375 has been introduced by Senator Darrell Steinberg as incentive legislation with the goal of encouraging smart growth practices, and thereby creating green house gas (GHG) benefits, by providing easier CEQA compliance options that reward certain types of development projects that are consistent with a regional "sustainable communities strategy".

SB 375 requires that only metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) or regional transportation agencies (RTPAs) in air quality non-attainment areas comply with the requirements of the bill. However, other regional entities may voluntarily comply and, in return, their member agencies may be eligible for relief under the CEQA for specific infill projects.

This bill also includes a Land Use Component of Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs) that outlines requirements for the development of a land use element regional long-range plans referred to as a "sustainable communities strategy". Regions would be required to follow specific provisions--similar to regional blueprint processes--to determine both areas of preferred growth and protected significant resources areas and significant farmland following smart growth patterns. The primary goal being the reduction of vehicle miles traveled by providing housing choices and development that is in close proximity to transportation choices.

SB 375 specifically requires that sufficient areas be identified for growth to house all economic segments of the population and employment growth over the course of the planning period. The bill contains priorities for establishing these growth areas, with housing and job growth areas designated as follows:

- | Infill and redevelopment in existing urbanized areas and any areas within Spheres of Influence as of July 1, 2007, and
- | Vacant or substantially undeveloped areas adjacent to an existing or reasonably foreseeable planned development area, excluding significant resource or significant farmlands.

The Legislative Subcommittee has reviewed and discussed the proposed legislation at length with our county legislative consultant and supports the intent of the bill. The Subcommittee is recommending additional language that would ensure consistency between the Sustainable Communities Strategy identification of areas for housing growth and the allocation of Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) to require a region's housing need to reflect a feasible balance between jobs and housing using the employment projections in the RTP. The approach identified in the bill also follows smart growth principles, consistent with CSAC policy including support for infill and compact development within cities and existing urban communities, promoting housing/job proximity and transit-oriented development. The Legislative Subcommittee is supportive of this approach as indicated in the attached letter of support.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

A . Attachment A: Letter of Support

B . Attachment B: SB 375 Fact Sheet

CEO Recommendation: Approve

Reviewed By: Karen Collins