

Work Group: Land Use, Agriculture and Housing (LUAH)
Consultant: Carol Whiteside, Consultant
Dejeune Shelton, Senior Program Manager
Organization: Great Valley Center
Quarter: 1st 2009
Phone: 209.522.5103
Email: carol@greatvalley.org
dejeune@greatvalley.org

By Goal and Objective – Description of Activity, Planned Activities, Challenges/Problems/Bottlenecks/Feedback

- a. = Description of Activity
- b. = Planned Activities
- c. = Challenges/Problems/Bottlenecks/Feedback

Goal 1: Foster regional consensus to support development and implementation of the Regional Blueprint Plan.

Objective A: Assist development of regional consensus on values, goals, strategies, and guidelines for the Regional Blueprint Plan to achieve the desired outcomes and identify appropriate locations for growth and economic development that accommodates projected population increases while contributing to the conservation of important agricultural land and natural resources.

- a. Policy Council has adopted Scenario B+ for the Valley; this decision will no longer go to the local boards and councils for ratification. LUAH wrote a letter of support to the Policy Council for Scenario C. LUAH is keeping informed of developments and considering next steps in terms of implementation.
- b. Transportation and (former) BRAC members to attend joint LUAH/Transportation meeting on May 13 in Fresno to discuss issues relevant to both work groups.
- c. Concern over local reaction to change in Blueprint process. Policy Council did not adopt the densest scenario.

Objective B: Develop a high-value parks and open space strategy to be used in the development of the Regional Blueprint Plan with a goal of encouraging the designation and long-term management and restoration (as feasible) of a permanent open space system that will include public and private lands, state, regional and local parks, and conservancies and conservation easement areas.

- b. GVC setting up a meeting with leaders of the San Joaquin River Restoration Group for late May/early June to discuss open space possibilities near San Joaquin River.

Goal 2: Promulgate and promote adoption of community design guidelines that will ensure strong neighborhoods, improve mobility and health by promoting walking and biking, improve air quality by reducing trip generation and parking requirements, increase energy efficiency by modifying building standards, and increase infrastructure cost effectiveness through efficient land use.

Objective A: Increase the overall density of new development.

- a. Adoption of Scenario B+ by Policy Council.
- b. Discuss and decide what a set of design guidelines could look like. Collect and determine what has been done before on the topic. Does anything exist that can serve as a model?
- c. Identifying members of the group with the requisite experience to put together the design guidelines.

Objective B: Reduce urban run-off by decreasing the land covered by commercial and industrial parking.

- a. GVC is monitoring reports and studies (including from cities and COGs) which establish that reducing parking area ratios will not only reduce run-off but allow for other uses of land and buildings and encourage people to walk more.
- b. Joint meeting in May with Transportation Work Group. To discuss parking ordinances and what is being done in other regions/cities. Possible workshops also could be discussed.
- c. Need an alternative strategy if attorneys will not undertake the ordinance drafting. Funding for workshops.

Objective C: Promote the adoption and implementation of zoning ordinances that are form-based and more flexible to encourage desired outcomes.

- a. Policy Council has adopted Scenario B+ so form-based codes and zoning will need to conform to the regional Blueprint.
- b. Explore ways to promote information about form-based codes and zoning options; include this information as part of the Tool Kit for Planners.
- c. No funding; finding someone to help develop the Tool Kit.

Objective D: Study and adopt a strategic concept for accommodating new growth by encouraging communities with the necessary elements and constraints to be cost-effective and self-sufficient in achieving the overall goals and objectives.

- a. Policy Council has adopted Scenario B+ which sets the framework for the new growth.
- b. Betty Deakin has discussed the possibility that one of her graduate students doing some research on the topic for us, if there are no funds to complete the study previously discussed.
- c. Funding

Goal 3: Determine requisite regional infrastructure and funding strategies to support implementation of the Regional Blueprint Plan

Objective A: Develop and implement a plan for the provision of regional infrastructure.

- a. Attendance at Policy Council meeting. Awaiting decisions on funding.
- b. Will need to follow and complement the regional Blueprint plan.
- c. Defining what regional infrastructure means, coming to a consensus and then finding funding to implement.

Objective B: Develop and implement a process for monitoring the performance and adequacy of regional infrastructure and determining future needs.

- a. Part of implementation strategy for blueprint. Not until 2010 at the earliest.
- c. Public and/or city councils and county supervisors could choose a scenario that is not much better than the status quo.

Goal 4: Improve the planning and development process to be consistent with the Regional Blueprint Plan and to provide incentives for smart growth.

Objective A: Improve the sharing, access, and use of planning and environmental resource data among state, COGs, local governments, business organizations, environmental groups, other stakeholders, and the public for more informed decision-making.

- a. COG directors meeting on a monthly basis to discuss and share information.
- b. Discussions will be held about creating a shared data center for the region. GVC is hosting events to discuss the impact of AB32 and SB375 for planners in the region.
- c. Data must be shared in meaningful ways.

Goal 5: Develop a long-range strategy for agriculture in the San Joaquin Valley that ensures its viability and sustainability.

Objective A: Develop a long-range plan to maintain the viability of agriculture in the region, as a leading strategy for economic development and as a key component of the Regional Blueprint Plan.

- a. AFT is wrapping up their work from the seed grant.
- b. LUAH will monitor their work and discuss how to proceed next and to expand the model, regionally.

Objective B: Minimize the proliferation of ranchette development on important farmland.

- a. AFT and ICE continuing previous work from seed grant.
- b. Assess the conclusions of AFT regarding ranchette development in the context of Scenario B+ of the regional Blueprint.

Objective C: Reduce the loss of farmland attributable to General Plan amendments.

- b. Group discussion about how to best preserve farmland within the context of AFT's and ICE's work, and of the chosen growth Scenario B+.

Goal 6: Ensure safe and healthy communities that provide a variety of housing types affordable to all residents with increased opportunities for home ownership.

Objective A: Increase the number and availability of housing units for people of all income levels, especially working families.

- a. Stimulus dollars provided to counties to purchase foreclosed homes at a reduced rate to low-income community members.
- c. Down-payment cost.

Objective B: Provide incentives for affordable housing that meet the needs of all income levels in the region.

- a. Housing Trust has applied for permanent funds to sustain itself and is working on a model for obtaining matching funds from the state and others.

- b. Continuing search for funds.
- c. Lack of participation by many of the Housing Trust members.

Goal 7: Identify legislative and regulatory changes necessary to facilitate the implementation of adopted goals and strategies.

Objective A: Use the San Joaquin Valley as a pilot for testing new permitting and environmental review incentives that will facilitate infill and refill developments.

- b. GVC hosting meetings on SB375 and AB32, which discuss what CEQA infill incentives could mean for the Valley.
- c. Unclear how SB375 and the Regional Blueprint will interface.

Objective B: Develop an innovative approach to establishing a voluntary high-value open space conservation system.

- a. Discussions taking place
- b. Meeting with San Joaquin River Restoration leaders to discuss open space or river parkway as part of an open space and conversation system. Workshops also could be an option.
- c. Funding

Objective C: Increase the coordination among local General Plans regionwide to facilitate better land use, transportation, air quality, and energy outcomes.

- a. SB375 will require some alignment of certain general plan elements.
- b. Joint meeting of LUAH and Transportation work groups will discuss energy and regional strategies for implementing the Blueprint.
- c. Local governments are low on funds; waiting for guidance from the state about how their general plans need to comport with AB32 and SB375 before incurring significant expenses to update them.

Objective D: Analyze options for assessing impact fees that will promote above goals and objectives.

- a. Policy Council selected Scenario B+ as the preferred alternative.
- b. More regional developments in terms of the Blueprint will need to occur before reaching the stage of considering assessing fees.