

Cut greenhouse gases – and make your community more sustainable

[Putting SB 375 to work in Southern California]



San Diego's Centre City



*Mission Meridian Village
and the MTA Gold Line
in South Pasadena*

ClimatePlan



Addressing the land use decisions that shape our climate and our lives



What (SB375) will mean is more environmentally-friendly communities, more sustainable developments, less time people spend in their cars, more alternative transportation options and neighborhoods we can safely and proudly pass on to future generations.

– Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger (R)

Cars and trucks comprise California's largest single source of global warming, with an average of 40% of the state's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions produced by the transportation sector (Air Resources Board news release, March 5, 2009). In some highly car-dependent Southern California cities, the percentage rises as high as 59%.

California can't get serious about climate change without confronting the role of vehicle emissions – and our land use policies, which give many Californians few alternatives to driving long distances between their homes and jobs.

The Legislature and the Governor have put landmark laws on the books establishing California as a leader in the fight against climate change. Three years ago, AB 32

committed California to reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2020. The California Air Resources Board (ARB) has followed up by adopting a plan for reducing GHG emissions through a variety of measures, including more energy-efficient buildings, lower carbon content in fuel, and more electricity from renewable sources.

Developed areas such as the San Gabriel Valley can still sustain more economic growth. SB 375 can encourage San Gabriel Valley cities to attract more jobs and businesses by using land more efficiently and reducing long-distance driving.

*– Cynthia Kurtz
President & CEO,
San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership*

Targeting the biggest source of greenhouse gases

Last year, state government took the next step by enacting SB 375, tackling the connection between land use and transportation decisions causing climate change.

SB 375 gives the ARB authority to set targets for each of the 18 metropolitan regions in the state, working with local governments to do their fair share of reducing GHG emissions caused by land use and transportation policies.

If done properly, implementation of SB 375 could result in:

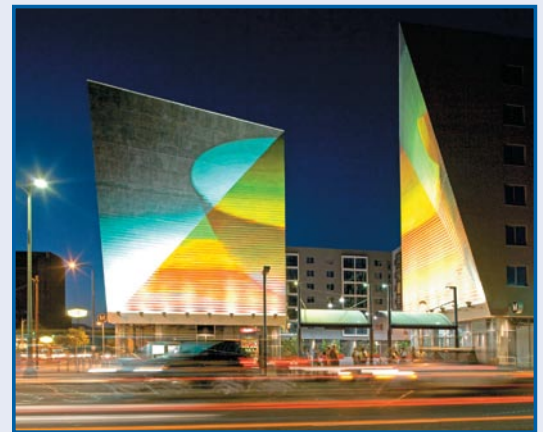
- Shorter commuting between homes and jobs
- Less traffic congestion and air pollution
- Neighborhoods designed for shopping and other daily conveniences located nearby
- Housing, affordable at all income levels, located closer to jobs
- Protection of open space, agricultural lands, and natural habitats
- More alternatives to car use, including expanded public transit, more use of bicycles, and pedestrian-friendly environments

Cracking down on transportation-related greenhouse gases could help local governments in Southern California create communities that have more of the qualities which most people want.

The real estate market in Southern California is witnessing growing demand for housing located closer to jobs. People don't want to waste so much time driving between their homes and their jobs, especially with high gas prices eating up a growing percentage of their paychecks. If SB 375 can help local governments to promote compact development patterns and reduce car use, that will align government policies with positive trends in the real estate market.

– J. Marc Huffman Vice President, Planning & Entitlements, Playa Vista

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The Wilshire Vermont Station, a \$136 million mixed-use transit village development in Los Angeles, features hundreds of rental units, restaurants, and shops, centered on a bustling Metro stop.

People in Orange County are starting to change their attitudes about urban sprawl. In Fullerton, the City and its Redevelopment Agency are planning to put more housing and employment closer to transit so that people won't have to do as much driving and spend so much on gasoline. If SB 375 can help Fullerton use land more efficiently, it would reinforce trends already seen in the real estate marketplace.

*– Robert M. Zur Schmiede
Executive Director, Fullerton Redevelopment Agency*

To start the implementation of SB 375, the ARB has appointed a 21-member Regional Targets Advisory Committee (RTAC), representing a diverse range of stakeholders from around the state. By September 2009,

the RTAC will give the ARB its recommendations for determining GHG emission reduction targets for each region in the state. By September 2010, the ARB will take action setting the regional targets.

Southern California takes center stage

The region facing the toughest challenge and potentially the most rewarding outcome will be Southern California. Comprising almost half of the state's population, the

Recognizing the scale and diversity of the Southern California region, SB 375 provided SCAG with a unique tool not given to the state's other regions. Because the Southern California region is so large, SCAG is authorized to delegate responsibility for preparation of a GHG emission reduction plan (known as a Sustainable Communities Strategy, or SCS) to local and subregional officials in each of the 14 SCAG subregions:

- Arroyo Verdugo Cities
- City of Los Angeles
- Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG)
- Gateway Cities Council of Governments (GCCOG)
- Imperial Valley Association of Governments (IVAG)
- Las Virgenes Malibu Council of Governments
- North Los Angeles County
- Orange County Council of Governments (OCCOG)
- San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG)
- San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments (SGVCOG)
- South Bay Cities Council of Governments (SBCCOG)
- Ventura Council of Governments (VCOG)
- Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG)
- Westside Cities Council of Governments (WCCOG)

Transportation and land use are so inexorably linked that SB 375 finally makes the connections more apparent and guides communities to look at how to better balance the two. Jobs/housing balances and minimizing long commutes can now be more carefully considered.

*– Carl E. Morehouse, AICP
Ventura City Councilmember*

Southern California region includes an astonishing range of communities in Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura Counties. The region contains the most populous city in the state (Los Angeles) and some of the smallest towns in the agricultural and desert areas. It is marked by some of the state's fastest-growing tracts, in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, and yet it also is home to some of California's most stable suburban communities.

Leading the way in implementing SB 375 will be the region's voluntary council of city and county officials, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). SCAG will develop a regional consensus responding to the land use and transportation-related GHG emission reduction target set by the ARB.

Low land costs made San Bernardino one of the fastest-growing areas in California. But urban sprawl isn't necessarily the best or only model for San Bernardino's future growth. We believe that SB 375 provides the incentive to move towards a more sustainable growth pattern with land use and transportation decisions more closely aligned.

*– Casey Dailey
Assistant to the Mayor, City of San Bernardino*

Next step: Use SB 375 to make Southern California communities more sustainable

SB 375 gives local communities in Southern California an opportunity to better coordinate their land use and transportation decisions. If local and subregional officials in a Southern California subregion develop a Sustainable Communities Strategy, they can replace urban sprawl with more pedestrian- and transit-oriented projects, supported by incentives which reduce the permit-processing time for projects which generate fewer car trips and carbon emissions. The new SCSs will be incorporated into the Regional Transportation Plan allocating transportation funding for Southern California.

Communities which already have invested in rail and bus transit will have an opportunity to show how their land use plans would maximize transit ridership, by locating housing closer to jobs and transit, reducing unnecessary off-street parking spaces near transit, and encouraging more efficient, low-carbon alternatives such as bicycles, car-sharing, car-pooling, and walking. Even in other communities where current levels of transit service do not yet provide a realistic alternative to driving, there is growing frustration with traffic congestion, long commute trips, and unpredictable gas prices -- potentially leading to new ways of thinking about the future.

The unpredictability of gas prices really hits the worker who can least afford to pay more for commuting to work. I'm hoping that SCAG can help the City of Claremont and other local governments plan for their future without being so dependent on cars.

– Sam Pedroza, Claremont City Councilmember

California's dependency on private automobiles due to urban sprawl is the biggest source of greenhouse gas emissions impacting our state. If we're going to get serious about controlling global climate change, we've got to plan for a greater balance of mixed land uses and affordable housing closer to transit systems. The City of Irvine is moving in this direction, but to have a real impact on reducing emissions, we need to connect with other local governments by fostering more collaboration across city and county boundaries. SB 375 should jump-start this process.

*– Chandra Krout, AICP, LEED AP, GPR
Environmental Programs Administrator,
Planning & Redevelopment, City of Irvine*

Current economic realities may dampen some people's enthusiasm for changing the region's land use and transportation patterns. But the more sustainable development patterns reinforced by SB 375 will establish a more stable economic and environmental basis for Southern California's future.

Join ClimatePlan's efforts to help Southern California become more sustainable.



Ash Street Cottages in the City of Brea, with public open space enabling the developer to reduce yard size and increase housing to 10 homes per acre.

ClimatePlan

Sustainable Communities for Southern California

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