

## Transportation and Land Use

This subject will be an essential challenge for the *Transportation 2030 Plan*. Much work has been accomplished in the region with the completion of the Smart Growth Project, and related efforts such as MTC's newly initiated Transportation Planning and Land Use Solutions program with the CMAs.

There are several key policy questions that we expect to emerge as part of the T-2030 deliberations:

- How should the Commission assess performance of transportation projects against Smart Growth objectives?
- Should the Commission develop a specific policy that explicitly links transportation investment to land use?
- How can the TLC/HIP model be expanded and leveraged to advance more incentives for transportation/land use connections and Resolution 3434?

### **Recommendations**

#### **1. Develop a transportation/land use policy statement for T-2030**

The Smart Growth project suggests an overall direction for future land development around transit corridors and stations, which closely aligns with adopted Commission transit expansion plans. However, there is not yet a clear transportation/land use policy statement that brings provides a framework for evaluating the land use implications of major project and program choices in T-2030 . Such a policy statement would focus on assessing transportation projects and programs specifically, as a complement to the other elements of the Smart Growth recommendations dealing with housing, open space preservation, socio-economic location/displacement etc. However, as these elements are inter-dependent to various degrees, it is important that this policy be developed in cooperation with other partners, particularly local government which holds land development authority—the Smart Growth policy adopted by SANDAG, which highlights distinct regional and local responsibilities may be a good model for the Bay Area.

#### **2. Determine an appropriate percentage of TLC/HIP program that should fund specific plan development around existing or near-term future rail stations and/or corridors.**

The Commission is currently reassessing its TLC/HIP program. With the tripling of investment in this program, a major question is the degree to which the program should continue to focus on discreet, community/neighborhood scale improvement projects, or strive to influence significant changes in land development patterns, particularly around present and future transit stations. Financial support of specific plans detailing developable parcels, zoning requirements and mitigation hazards in areas around transit stations or along transit corridors would enhance the potential that complex transit oriented developments may actually be judged feasible and eventually implemented. A joint complementary planning exercise with ABAG would be to prepare a GIS map of development opportunities around Resolution 3434 transit projects, to demonstrate how assumptions of increased densities under Smart Growth projections would be met by implementing housing/mixed use development in these areas. Proactively working with local governments to generate developments suggested by the map would be a logical next step, and could be coordinated with the next

recommendation.

**3. Encourage changes to local general plans that support Transit Oriented Development for Resolution 3434 investments.**

While specific plans may be helpful, the denser development patterns along transit corridors as envisioned in the Smart Growth project will be subject to many other pressures, not least among them the revenue generation potential of future developments, and the attendant local service pressures created by various land uses. However, any major transit investment must consider its ridership markets if it is to be economically feasible, and adjacent land uses to the transit infrastructure plays an enormous role in determining that viability. Therefore, the Commission should consider explicitly conditioning the award of those funds under its control for Resolution 3434 expansion projects— namely, that regional discretionary dollars will not be programmed until local government demonstrates that plans are in place supporting some level of increased housing/employment density around transit stations/transfer centers.

**4. Support transportation/land use coordination beyond transit corridors.**

While the “network of neighborhood” concept is core to the Smart Growth project recommendations, it was not the sole focus. Infill beyond TOD around rail/express bus stations has additional potential that should be supported, particularly to the extent that it encourages walking and biking for non-work trips in addition to the transit-commuter linkages anticipated as a primary market for 3434 extensions. Therefore the following complementary actions could be undertaken:

- continue to pursue neighborhood scale access improvements (bike/pedestrian/local transit) outside of the rail network, highlighted through the TLC program.
- develop an open space plan, in conjunction with ABAG, that would reinforce infill development as a priority for growth in cities and established suburbs.

**5. Coordinate transportation/land use issues with regional neighbors**

In-commuting pressures are directly tied to jobs/housing imbalances spilling over our borders. Bringing more housing into the Bay Area instead of future anticipated development in neighboring regions is a major underlying objective of the Smart Growth project recommendations. However, this will require cooperative planning with neighbors to the north (SACOG), east (San Joaquin and Stanislaus) and south (San Benito, Monterey and Santa Cruz) of the Bay Area region. A critical first step will be to identify and resolve data gaps or inconsistencies in long range demographic forecasts (what are these regions projecting for future jobs and housing?), as well as travel projections on key transportation facilities connecting the MTC region to its neighbors—I-80, I-580, US 101-North; US 101- South, State Hwy 17 and State Hwy 1. A next step would be to identify opportunities for joint planning or investments in these corridors that would reinforce the Bay Area’s Smart Growth objectives.