

**FACILITATION NOTES
COLLABORATIVE WORKSHOP
STRATEGIC GROWTH READINESS
OCTOBER 14, 2008**

Final January 9, 2009

The common issues identified by the elected officials commenting during the October 14, 2008 Collaborative Workshop are summarized in these Facilitation Notes.

Collaboration

There appeared to be consensus that collaboration needs to be improved on several issues. The issues identified during the October 14th Workshop needing collaboration follow:

1. The local jurisdictions should jointly begin collaborating with State and other agencies to address **inconsistent mandates, policies and laws**.

Comments Related to this Issue:

Several participants identified inconsistent standards from different State agencies that currently create problems. The consensus appeared to be that local jurisdictions should collaborate in an attempt to notify Sacramento of these inconsistencies, and bring about change, if possible. Otherwise, this issue would create obstacles when trying to implement a countywide strategic growth plan.

***Paso Robles Mayor Mecham** stated that State Regional Housing Needs Allocation (“RHNA”) numbers do not take into consideration local resource limitations. **Board of Supervisor Member Achadjian**, stated that Caltrans can be difficult to work with when trying to coordinate roadway improvements that include State facilities. **San Luis Obispo Council Member Mulholland** said one obstacle is conflicting authority regarding a range of land use planning issues and the diminishing lack of local land use control. **Arroyo Grande Mayor Ferrara** mentioned the challenges of trying to meet conflicting State policies.*

***Grover Beach Mayor Shoals, Morro Bay Mayor Peters and San Luis Obispo Council Member Settle** expressed some concerns about collaborating with LAFCO. **Mr. Shoals** said as cities try and plan beyond their current city boundaries, to have Spheres of Influence that are coterminous to city boundaries means that you are tying their hands and not allowing them to plan in an orderly manner. **Mrs. Peters** said that LAFCO removed their Sphere of Influence this year over the city's objections. **Mr. Settle** said it is confusing about local control to have LAFCO control annexations, while it has no control over county development of antiquated subdivisions.*

***Aileen Loe, Caltrans District 5 Deputy Director, Planning and Program**, acknowledged the frustration of local government. **Ms. Loe** said State agency partners have attempted to work with local government to correlate the appropriate infrastructure size that supports the county's quality of life. **Ms. Loe** also said Caltrans is willing to host new forums for discussions to help collaborate on local solutions.*

***Paul Hood, Executive Director of LAFCO**, encouraged collaboration between agencies. The Community 2050 Goals are compatible with LAFCO's mission to preserve agriculture and open space. **Mr. Hood** said LAFCO must consider the effect of any proposal on existing agricultural land and guide development toward vacant urban land. LAFCO is required to consider a number of factors, including current and future levels of service to an area.*

2. The local jurisdictions and County should expand collaboration on a **sub-regional basis to implement a strategic growth plan**, working jointly to resolve common issues, such as infrastructure (e.g., circulation), resources (e.g., water supply) and affordable housing.

Comments Related to this Issue:

In addition to working together to implement a countrywide strategic growth plan, several participants support implementing it on a sub-regional basis due to localized issues.

***Arroyo Grande Mayor Ferrara** said sub-regional issues are real and should be planned for accordingly. Some of the communities are already collaborating on infrastructure and public services issues. **Jim Hill, Board President of the Oceano Community Service District**, said there is a great collaboration between Oceano and the City of Arroyo Grande. The Oceano Community Service District, City of Arroyo Grande and City of Grover Beach are working on a joint fire services plan.*

*Some of the participants voiced interest in better collaboration with the County on public works improvements. **Jim Hill, President of the Oceano Community Service District**, said Oceano lacked drainage and flood control, curbs and gutters and needs assistance from the County Public Works Department.*

3. The local jurisdictions and County should continue collaborating on a **Countywide strategic growth plan** to resolve common issues, such as infrastructure (e.g. circulation), resources (e.g., water supply), schools and affordable housing near good jobs.

Comments Related to this Issue:

Most of the participants agreed there were advantages to working jointly to implement a strategic growth plan on a countywide basis.

***Atascadero Council Member Ellen Beraud** said countywide collaboration is needed on a strategic growth plan. **Supervisor Gibson** said the public would be more likely to accept a strategic growth plan, if collaboration is used at a local level.*

*Most of the participants identified increased traffic as a major obstacle, if there is no countywide collaboration on a strategic growth plan. **Morro Bay Mayor Peters** said there needs to be improved transportation provided from communities to the train stations and airport.*

***San Luis Obispo Council Member Mulholland** said that job-housing balance must include alternative transportation methods. She believes that by year 2050, light rail transportation will be possible for San Luis Obispo County.*

*Other participants identified lack of affordable housing, schools, public service constraints, and infrastructure constraints as obstacles that can be resolved through working jointly on a countywide basis. **Dr. Julian Crocker, County Superintendent of Schools**, said lack of collaboration has been an obstacle in providing adequate school facilities, particularly within neighborhoods. The schools must be consulted early in the planning process to reserve school sites and maintain quality education. **Dr. Crocker** said an advantage of collaborating on building affordable housing is that it positively affects the quality of future education.*

4. The local jurisdictions and County should expand collaboration on **joint funding of infrastructure** (e.g., roadways), **resources** (e.g., water supply), **affordable housing, and economic development opportunities.**

Comments Related to this Issue:

There was agreement that insufficient funding affects many areas, including economic vitality and affordable housing. Many of the participants said limited funding was an issue to infrastructure maintenance, improvement and expansion.

***Ron DiCarli, SLOCOG Executive Director**, said the current transportation system is not sustainable to serve projected growth. He stated that if needed improvements are not made, traffic projections show the transportation system shutting down. However, maintenance, operations and public transportation systems need financing. **Larry Allen, Executive Director, APCD**, said financing future infrastructure is a huge issue because less of it will be available and grants are available for alternative transportation projects.*

*Several of the participants connected funding of needed services to economic development opportunities. **Supervisor Lenthall** stressed the need to work on regional circulation and help make the San Luis Obispo County Regional Airport successful. Both are needed for regional economic vitality. **Mayor Peters** said improved transportation systems to communities would help tourism. For example, transportation service could be provided to the train station and airport to and from the isolated county communities such as Morro Bay. This would help get people out of their cars and help tourism in different communities.*

*Several participants said that while there are solutions to their resource issues, funding is a constraining fact. **Cambria CSD President Cobin** said that Cambria has a Water Master Plan that provides a solution to the community's water problem but funding is unavailable. Additionally, Cambria's roads are non-fire friendly, the wastewater treatment plan is thirty (30) years old and needs to be upgraded but the needed funding is not available.*

Public Education

Another item of consensus appeared to be the need for a public education and outreach program to explain the strategic growth plan and illustrate the benefits of implementing its principles.

5. The SLOCOG, County and local jurisdictions should work jointly on **countywide and community educational outreach programs**, explaining the specifics of the strategic growth plan (e.g., illustrating what densities look like, impacts on communities).

Comments Related to this Issue:

Most of the participants stated that public education was necessary to make their constituents aware of State requirements, how "Smart Growth" principles and higher densities would affect their community, and the advantages of embracing a countywide strategic growth plan. Participants clearly illustrated how their communities are different and stated that their constituents need to be shown how a countywide strategic growth plan would be beneficial to meet localized requirements.

***Arroyo Grande Mayor Ferrara** said an outreach program to address the negative public perception of a strategic growth plan is needed. He also stated SLOCOG and County documents need to have standardized language to make it easier for the public to understand them.*

Grover Beach Mayor Shoals** said the public needs to be shown that increased density is not negative. **Mike Winn, President, Nipomo Community Service District**, said many residents in Nipomo move from urban areas and consider "Smart Growth" too dense and a return to the city. He questioned how "Smart Growth" could be accomplished when people have to drive to major services. **Mr.

Winn said that Nipomo has no major transportation system, no social service organizations, limited public parks, lacks jobs, and has few of the other amenities "Smart Growth" principles encourage. Mr. Winn said other communities that have built "Smart Growth" projects that are not city-like should be consulted. Supervisor Gibson stressed the need for a public educational program that highlights the advantages of a strategic growth plan and the consequences of not implementing it.

FACILITATOR'S RECOMMENDATIONS:

While not discussed during the October workshop, the Facilitator's recommendations follow:

Collaboration

Items No. 1 and 4: Inconsistent Mandates And Funding

- a. County and SLOCOG staff should meet to:
 - i. Identify areas of inconsistent regulations and laws mandated by regional and State agencies,
 - ii. Address inconsistencies and barriers to strategic growth as identified above,
 - iii. Define sub-regional constraints for future growth,
 - iv. Define sub-regional solutions to make efficient and cost-effective use of funds for strategic growth,
 - v. Identify funding measures addressing countywide, sub-regional, and locally (individual jurisdiction) funding opportunities. The issues may include *resources, infrastructure, housing, and economic development*. Strategic Growth amenities, such as, *parks, schools, pre-schools, and walkways*, should also be addressed.

Federal, State, and *private* funds and grants, revenue sharing, community and special districts (e.g., Community Facility Districts) should be considered and actively pursued. The local jurisdictions and County may want to consider using the concept of *Natural Capitalism* that helps to build economic value while protecting and restoring community assets and consider appropriate *public/private* cooperative projects.

Representatives from SLOCOG may want to consider appointing a subcommittee to strategize on how elected officials can collaborate to work with regional and State agencies to address the issues identified by County and SLOCOG staff. (*Reference Item "a" above.*) The subcommittee could work with the League of California Cities, the California State Association of Counties, local State representatives and local regional and State agencies to educate them on the barriers created by the inconsistencies identified above and work jointly on solutions.

Item No. 2: Collaborate Sub-regionally

- a. SLOCOG and County staff work jointly to:
 - i. Prepare a comprehensive list by region of the known issues and potential solutions, and
 - ii. Identify sub-regional solutions for local decision makers to consider supporting with specific actions between jurisdictions, such as:
 - a. Making the most of remaining water supplies, and setting realistic goals for additions,
 - b. Determining the funding needed for projected growth, water supply and infrastructure,

- c. Meeting local RHNA allocations where jobs, water and infrastructure are planned or available, and
 - d. Adopting a memorandum of agreement supporting a countywide strategic growth plan.
- b. Schedule regional meetings with cities, CSDs and other stakeholders to collaborate and establish priorities on regional issues, and identify solutions, such as:
- i. Developing and adopting a Strategic Work Program that identifies a course of action over a 1-5 year period to achieve countywide strategic growth range. The Strategic Work Program should include,
 - a. Agreed upon final Goal(s) at the end of the Program (e.g., end of 5-years).
 - b. Description of tasks to achieve final Goal(s).
 - c. Milestones to meet each task.
 - d. Identification of a critical path for milestones.
 - e. Time period for each task.
 - f. Staffing and funding needed to achieve the each milestone and the final Goal(s).
 - g. Responsibilities by jurisdiction of each task.
- (Note: A Strategic Work Program is being recommended at a sub-regional level to implement strategic growth, however, it can occur on a countywide basis.)***
- ii. Preparing a scope of work that identifies the resources, infrastructure and facilities, services and land use changes, at the regional, sub-regional, rural, urban and neighborhood scales, and how the sub-regional jurisdictions will collaborate together on funding and implementation, and
 - iii. Considering joint funding alternatives for sub-regional needs.

Item No. 3: Collaborate Countywide To Resolve Common Issues

The County, local jurisdictions, SLOCOG, and other stakeholders should schedule, at a minimum, annual countywide strategic growth planning workshops to discuss and update the public on countywide issues, progress made since the October 14, 2008 Workshop, and efforts underway to work jointly on a countywide strategic growth plan.

(Item No. 4 Is Addressed With Item No. 1)

Item No. 5: Public Education And Outreach

The SLOCOG, County and local jurisdictions should work jointly on countywide and community educational outreach programs, explaining the specifics of the strategic growth plan (e.g., illustrating what densities look like, impacts on communities).

Develop a public education and outreach scope and work program that can be supported by local jurisdictions in concept and financially, to include:

- a. The fundamental requirements of AB 32 and SB 375,
- b. Basic principles of how local government is financed, the mandates placed on local government, and the results of not implementing mandates,
- c. Strategic Growth by design examples and concepts, with data about time, cost, health and energy differences from conventional growth,

- d. Examples of what development may look like at different densities, and how transects can be used to blend higher densities into lower densities,
- e. Locally relevant designs of neighborhoods and homes that fit within the county history and future expectations,
- f. Transportation and land use connections that reduce pollution, save energy and increase health, as alternatives to suburban development,
- g. Strategic Growth opportunity areas that could fit along major corridors, infill as neighborhood centers, and expand some communities,
- h. Funding needs for Strategic Growth, compared to those for conventional development, per person or unit, and
- i. Benefits of Strategic Growth on open space, community and rural character, recreation, renewed civic life and healthier families.