

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: California Air Resources Board
(ARB) 2012 Senate Bill 375
Provisional Target Update

REQUESTED ACTION: 1) Provide Concurrence to
Assess Multi-MPO SB-375
Regional Target(s) 2) Provide
Concurrence for the
Coordination of Multi-
Regional SCS Strategies and/or
Goals

BACKGROUND:

2012 Provisional SB-375 Target Update

In September 2010, the California Air Resources Board (ARB) board took action on SB-375 targets¹ (5% per capita reduction from 2005 in 2020 and 10% per capita reduction from 2005 in 2035) for the eight federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) which included a commitment to work collaboratively with the eight MPOs to provide a provisional target update to the ARB board in calendar year 2012 (anticipated October 2012). This action provides the eight MPOs a second opportunity to recommend SB-375 greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets to the ARB board. This was done in recognition that ongoing technical work by the eight MPOs may produce new information in calendar year 2012 that may inform the potential for greenhouse gas reductions in the eight counties, including improved data and travel models (coordinated Prop 84 grant currently funds improvements to the eight county travel demand models through the Model Improvement Program), potential development of alternative target setting scenarios, and the exploration of multi-regional coordination on sustainable community strategies (how the MPOs choose to work together).

Although SB-375 indicates ARB shall set targets for MPOs, ARB has indicated **the form of the target**, percent per capita reduction from 2005, **allows ARB to set targets for multiple MPO regions.**

¹ The SB-375 targets set for the eight MPOs are set for all eight MPOs collectively (2020 and 2035). Please note, although the target is set for the eight MPOs collectively, it can be applied equally to individual MPOs (i.e. each MPO can individually have a target of 5% in 2020 and 10% in 2035).

Sustainable Community Strategy Development:

SB-375 states: "Two or more of the MPOs for Fresno County, Kern County, Kings County, Madera County, Merced County, San Joaquin County, Stanislaus County, and Tulare County may work together to develop and adopt multi-county goals and policies that may address, interregional land use, transportation, economic, air quality, and climate relationships. The participating Metropolitan Planning Organizations may also develop a multiregional sustainable community strategy, to the extent consistent with federal law, or an alternative planning strategy for adoption by the metropolitan planning organizations."

Although SB-375 is a relatively new process, which identifies the ability of the eight MPOs to coordinate efforts, coordination between the eight MPOs is not. In September, 1992 the eight agencies entered into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to ensure a coordinated regional approach to transportation and air quality planning efforts. Development of the MOU and the ongoing process of coordinated planning have improved an already close working relationship between the eight MPOs. One example of the current eight county coordination effort is the \$2.5 million Prop 84 funded Model Improvement Program. Collectively the eight counties applied for Prop 84 funding to enhance each of the eight counties' modeling capabilities. As a result of the coordinated application effort, the eight counties were awarded \$2.5 million, the largest Prop 84 transportation modeling grant awarded to date. Additional coordinated efforts include plans, programs, traffic and emissions modeling, transportation planning, air quality planning, and SR-99 corridor planning (resulting in \$1 billion SR-99 bond), and goods movement planning.

The decision to work together toward the development of multi-county goals, policies, and/or SCSs is at the discretion of each MPO.

DISCUSSION:

SB-375 provides the eight MPOs the option to work together in the development of multi-county goals, policies and sustainable community strategies (SCS); however, it does not define which approach the eight MPOs should utilize if they choose to implement any of the options to work together. **The decision of how the MPOs will work together is the choice of each MPO.** To begin the discussion, this staff report focuses on two main components to SCS development: the first, the ARB 2012 provisional SB-375 target update and the second, SCS development (goals, policies, etc.).

2012 Provisional SB-375 Target Update:

ARB has indicated that **targets can be set for multi-MPO regions**. This provides flexibility in the definition of the region contained within any regional target. For example ARB indicates it can set a target for each individual MPO region (eight targets for the eight individual counties); it can set one target for the entire eight county region; or it can set a target for some combination thereof. ARB has requested a recommendation from the eight MPOs to define the regional target as part of the 2012 provisional SB-375 target update. Although ARB indicates targets can be set for multi-MPO regions, this does not mean that MPOs who choose to recommend multi-MPO regional SB-375 targets are committed to the development of multi-MPO SCSs (i.e., the area contained within an eight MPO regional target can be different than the region covered by each participating MPO in its SCS or Regional Transportation Plan).

Why should an MPO contemplate anything other than individual MPO targets? Each MPO should evaluate the flexibility to define the regional target to identify which option has the potential to provide the most benefit. Each regional target option offers its own potential advantage, including the flexibility to share greenhouse gas emissions reductions.

Additional technical work will need to be completed before a final assessment of any of the regional targets described above can be completed. **There are several unanswered questions that will likely need clarification.** To fully evaluate the benefits of any multi-county scenario prior to the 2012 provisional SB-375 target update, staff recommends each of the eight MPOs develop target scenario(s) for its region. This **provides the most flexibility in terms of keeping the MPO options open to select the SB-375 target that has the potential to provide the best benefit.**

Once individual MPO scenarios are drafted each scenario will be “stitched” together to formulate a scenario that represents the regional target being assessed. For example, if the assessment evaluates one target for the entire eight county region, all eight scenarios would be “stitched” together to form one scenario for assessment purposes. Please note, the “stitching” together of scenarios to evaluate any regional target does not eliminate or lessen local control of land use decisions/authority. Local land use decisions/authority under any regional target remain solely with the local jurisdiction.

MPO staff requests board concurrence to continue the assessment of regional target options through the process identified above.

SCS Development:

When trying to answer the question: **how should the eight MPOs work together in SCS development**, it is important to **consider in what areas it makes sense for the eight MPOs to coordinate their efforts and in what areas it does not**. The eight MPOs have coordinated their efforts in areas where there is potential for regional benefit such as: the SR-99 business plan, San Joaquin Valley goods movement studies, a coordinated chapter in each MPO's 2011 RTP, the San Joaquin Valley Express Bus Study, intelligent transportation system (ITS) planning, and air quality planning efforts. In recognition of current eight county coordination efforts, each MPO's SCS will contain a coordinated chapter/section. This chapter will contain a brief summary of the eight county coordination efforts (similar the 2011 RTP coordinated chapter) and include multi-MPO SCS strategies and/or goals where there is voluntary participation and individual MPO concurrence to do so.

The eight MPOs have not coordinated efforts in areas where the scale of the process is not applicable to an eight county effort. For example, attempts to coordinate land use have not been recommended in recognition that land use is a local decision and one size does not fit all.

The eight MPO executive directors acknowledge, similar to current eight county planning efforts, there are **potential benefits to the coordination of some SCS development efforts²**, **but not all**. Areas where SCS coordination makes sense for multi-county coordination include, but are not limited to:

- Greenhouse gas emissions quantification methodology
- SR-99
- Rideshare
- Cross County Transit Services
- Short Haul Rail
- Transportation Project development (where projects straddle multiple counties, local jurisdictions and MPOs currently coordinate development of multi-county projects)

Areas where SCS coordination does not make sense and is not recommended to be coordinated include:

- Land use planning (local decision)
- Transportation Project development (where projects are contained within one county)

² Please note, SCS development efforts should not be construed to mean the adoption of multi-county SCS documents.

Although land use is not recommended as an eight county coordination effort, this recommendation does not preclude local jurisdictions from voluntarily coordinating land use planning efforts across jurisdictional boundaries (e.g. city, county, and/or MPO).

With board concurrence, additional work will be done to identify which areas potentially provide benefits to the eight MPOs through coordination of SCS development.

Next Steps:

1. September/October 2011: MPO Board item – Request Concurrence to Pursue Working Together Approach
2. September 2011 through Spring 2012: Individual MPO Scenario Development & Evaluation
3. Spring 2012: MPO Board Item – 2012 Provisional SB-375 Target Update (Regional Target(s) Update/Recommendation)
4. Fall 2012: ARB Draft Staff Report for ARB 2012 Board SB-375 Provisional Target Update Released for Public Comment
5. Fall/Winter 2012: ARB Board Item - 2012 Provisional Target Update

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Provide concurrence to assess multi-MPO regional target(s). This assessment would enable the MPOs to determine which target option provides the greatest benefit.

Provide concurrence for the coordination of multi-MPO SCS strategies and/or goals where there is benefit to do so and voluntary MPO participation.

The eight MPO executive directors have reached consensus on the approach described in this staff report and request board concurrence. Please note concurrence to staff's recommendation creates only a process to assess different regional target options, additional MPO concurrence will be requested prior to recommending any target to the ARB board in Fall 2012.