

STAFF REPORT
City of Lancaster

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12/08/09
MVB

Date: December 8, 2009

To: Mayor Parris and City Council Members

From: Brian S. Ludicke, Planning Director

Subject: **Participation in Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)
Collaborative Process for Preparation of a Regional Sustainable Community
Strategy (SCS)**

Recommendation:

Adopt **Resolution No. 09-113**, notifying SCAG of the City of Lancaster’s intent to participate in the collaborative process for preparation of a regional SCS.

Fiscal Impact:

Limited; primarily existing staff time.

Background:

In 2006, the State adopted Assembly Bill 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. The primary objective of this legislation is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) to 1990 levels in the State of California by 2020. California Senate Bill 375, adopted in 2008, requires SCAG, as the region’s metropolitan planning organization (MPO), to develop a regional SCS. The primary goal of the SCS is to reduce GHG emissions from light cars and trucks, estimated to be the source of approximately 30% of overall GHG emissions in California. The SCS would seek to achieve this reduction by decreasing total vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by combining transportation and land use strategies. Ultimately, this SCS will be integrated with the 2012 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the next Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA).

There are provisions in SB 375 that apply specifically to the SCAG region which permit SCAG subregions to prepare their own SCS. If a subregion chooses to do this, the subregion would be responsible for ensuring that the SCS achieves the GHG reduction targets that will be determined by the California Air Resources Board (CARB). Otherwise, subregions can work in a collaborative process with SCAG to prepare the regional SCS. Subregions are required to notify SCAG by December 31, 2009, whether they will work with SCAG in the collaborative process or prepare an individual SCS.

City staff has reviewed and discussed the options available with the other two cities in the North Los Angeles County Subregion (NLACS), Palmdale and Santa Clarita. In addition, all three cities have met with SCAG staff to determine the advantages and disadvantages of each

approach. Collectively, the staff of the NLACS cities believes that participating in SCAG's collaborative process is the best option. Some of the factors in this recommendation are:

- Financial Considerations: There is no outside funding available to prepare a separate subregional SCS. Therefore, the NLACS cities would have to self-fund preparation of the SCS. Further, since this is a new requirement, it is likely that consultant and staff time would be considerable and costly because there is no "off-the-shelf" expertise available.
- City Participation: The SCAG collaborative process allows the City of Lancaster to actively participate in the preparation of the overall SCS. Therefore, by choosing this option, the City would be able to assist in developing housing, population, and employment projections, as well as the land use and transportation policies that would become part of the regional SCS.
- Regional Perspective: The SCAG collaborative process may allow for the NLACS cities to benefit from reductions achieved elsewhere in the SCAG region that may not be possible in the North County. As an example, if greater reductions in GHG's can be achieved in parts of metropolitan Los Angeles County because of proximity to transit service, this may allow for meeting regional targets even if the NLACS could not individually achieve it.
- Staff Commitment: Staff time will need to be allotted to various tasks associated with participation in the SCAG collaborative process. However, as noted under financial considerations, this commitment would be far less in terms of total hours than if a separate subregional SCS were prepared.

Staff is recommending that the Council adopt the attached resolution. Both Palmdale and Santa Clarita will take similar actions prior to the end of the year, and this information will be transmitted to SCAG.

BSL/jr

Attachments:

Resolution No. 09-113