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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,
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Sustainability and Regionalism in the Los Angeles Region:
Insights from the 2012 Regional Plan and Collaborative Process

DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in Planning, Policy, and Design

by

Oscar Wenhau Tsai

Dissertation Committee:
Professor Ajay Garde, Chair
Professor Victoria Basolo
Professor Scott Bollens

2015

DEDICATION

To

Mom and Dad,

my first teachers,

with love,

and in recognition of all their love and sacrifices.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AB 32	Assembly Bill 32 (Global Warming Solutions Act)
BREEAM	Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology
CAA	Clean Air Act
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
COG	Council of Governments
CTC	County Transportation Commission
EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
GCCOG	Gateway Cities Council of Governments
GHG	Greenhouse gas
GIB	Green Infrastructure and Building
HUD	United States Department of Housing and Urban Development
ICLEI	International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives
ISTEA	Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act
LEED-ND	Leadership in Environment and Energy Design for Neighborhood Development
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NPD	Neighborhood Pattern and Design
OCCOG	Orange County Council of Governments
PEIR	Programmatic Environmental Impact Report
RC	Regional Council of SCAG
RHNA	Regional Housing Needs Assessment
RTAC	Regional Targets Advisory Committee
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
RTP/SCS	Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy
SB 375	Senate Bill 375 (Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act)
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCS	Sustainable Communities Strategy
SITESv2	Sustainable Sites Initiative Rating System
SLL	Smart Location and Linkage
SPC	State Planning Commission of New Jersey
Three E's	Environment, Equity, and Economy
USGBC	United States Green Building Council
VMT	Vehicle miles of travel

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Sustainability and Regionalism in the Los Angeles Region:
Insights from the 2012 Regional Plan and Collaborative Process

By

Oscar Wenhau Tsai

Doctor of Philosophy in Planning, Policy, and Design

University of California, Irvine, 2015

Professor Ajay Garde, Chair

The main purpose of this research is to examine the regional planning process and product that will influence future development in Southern California. In 2012, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) unanimously adopted the Los Angeles region's first long-term regional plan that intends to reduce carbon emissions by integrating land use and transportation planning. Known as the *2012-2035 Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy* (2012 RTP/SCS), the plan calls itself “a shared vision for the region’s sustainable future.” The 2012 RTP/SCS represents the first major step towards a regional approach to sustainable planning in Southern California, where regional planning has historically been challenged by factors such as political fragmentation and strong local autonomy. To develop the plan, SCAG was required by California's Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act, also known as Senate Bill 375 (SB 375), to implement an extensive cooperative planning process intended to include a variety of stakeholders. This process allowed stakeholders to effectively advocate for mutually beneficial policy objectives by forming a coalition, which according to the literature can become an urban regime if it establishes long-term dominance. Using a qualitative approach, this research examines: 1) the extent to which the 2012 RTP/SCS

promotes principles of sustainable development; 2) how urban regimes might have influenced the development of the regional plan; and 3) the barriers and channels to a regional approach to planning for sustainability. Through an analysis of interviews, observations, and regional planning documents, the findings reveal that the 2012 RTP/SCS generally offers benefits for nearly all stakeholders through stronger sustainable development policies, economic and employment growth, and the preservation of local control. SB 375 gave SCAG more responsibilities and strengthened its role in regional planning and gave stakeholders the opportunity for unified engagement in the planning process. A coalition of stakeholders focused on principles of sustainable development shifted the regional planning discourse away from traditional transportation and economic improvement issues. This research suggests that a form of “regime regionalism” can effectively address complex challenges of sustainability if partners remain committed to the vision towards a sustainable Los Angeles region.

Chapter One

Introduction

This dissertation examines the recently mandated regional plan and planning process for the Los Angeles region and provides insights into regional planning and the coordination of stakeholders to promote sustainable development. In 2008, California captured national attention by adopting the first legislation in the nation to link climate change with land use and transportation planning. Commonly called Senate Bill 375 (SB 375), the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act required metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) in the state to implement a collaborative process to prepare a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) as a new element in their long-range Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs). Intended to involve a wide range of stakeholders throughout the region, the collaborative process used to develop the regional plan was unprecedented for the politically fragmented metropolitan area.

Unanimously adopted in 2012 by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), the largest MPO in the nation, the *2012-2035 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy: Towards a Sustainable Future* (2012 RTP/SCS) represents the first major step towards a regional approach to sustainable planning and development in the Los Angeles region. In an area that faces planning challenges such as the need to accommodate an additional five million inhabitants by 2035, local control of land development regulations, a shrinking supply of developable land, and deteriorating environmental quality, the RTP/SCS is poised to shape future development in the region in a major way. Calling itself “a shared vision for the region’s sustainable future” the 2012 RTP/SCS aims to help California meet its climate policy and GHG reduction goals and achieve a variety of

economic, environmental, and equity co-benefits (SCAG, 2012, p. 4). The regional plan builds upon existing local and regional sustainable planning efforts, integrates regional transportation and land use planning, encourages smart growth policies, and offers regulatory incentives to promote compact and transit-oriented development. The regional planning process provided an opportunity for stakeholders to form coalitions through collaboration, and within the scholarly literature, a dominant coalition that is able to achieve and sustain the power to affect key policy areas is known as an “urban regime.”

This dissertation research, which evaluated the regional plan with a framework for sustainable development and analyzed the regional planning process using urban regime theory, was guided by three primary questions:

- What is the extent to which the 2012 RTP/SCS promotes principles of sustainable development?
- How might an urban regime influence the development of the regional plan?
- What are the barriers and channels to the regional approach to developing the 2012 RTP/SCS?

The findings of this dissertation provide insights into state-mandated regional approaches to sustainable planning, the coordination and mobilization of stakeholders to change planning discourses, and successful approaches to regional planning in politically fragmented urban areas. Additionally, state law requires the RTP/SCS to be revised and updated every four years. Given this, the insights gained from this research contribute to SCAG's future planning processes and updates to the regional plan that seek to advance the Los Angeles region towards a more sustainable future.

Background and Context in Brief

Over the last decade, mounting research has argued that alternative development patterns that do not replicate conventional low-density large-lot suburban neighborhoods have positive implications for addressing climate change. Development that is compact, mixed-use, and transit-oriented has been linked to reduced vehicle miles traveled (VMT), less fuel and energy consumption, and lower greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, as well as additional co-benefits for quality of life and the natural environment. Given that interrelated sustainability issues associated with the environment, the economy, and equity—the “three E’s”—are not confined to jurisdictional boundaries, planning and policymaking at the regional scale addresses sustainable development more comprehensively.

Although regional approaches might address the three E’s most effectively, regional planning is often challenged by a variety of factors such as fragmented regional governance, local control of land use regulations, and competition between municipalities for economic investments and growth. This is particularly true for the Los Angeles region, which is characterized by political fragmentation, strong local autonomy, and enormous diversity. Additionally, SCAG lacks the authority to regulate land use and implement regional policies, which are responsibilities of local governments and sub-regional transportation commissions. In this context, regional planning necessitates cooperation between sub-regional entities, as well as robust plans to link process to action. Given that cooperative planning requires involvement by different actors, the process also provides an opportunity for various organizations to coordinate as coalitions to discuss and advance shared goals and objectives.

California has a long history of strong leadership in environmental policy and planning, and in the past, the actions of the state have influenced other state and federal policies and

policymaking processes. Additionally, the Los Angeles region is one of many fast-growing and politically fragmented metropolitan areas in the nation. This dissertation research contributes to empirical research on SB 375 and focuses on the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process and plan for the Los Angeles region.

Research Approach in Brief

This dissertation research followed a case study approach and utilized a mixed-method approach to collect qualitative data over a period of approximately three years from August 2011 to May 2014. This research began during the pre-draft phase of the RTP/SCS, during the summer in which SCAG was conducting public outreach workshop to seek feedback for the creation of the draft RTP/SCS, continued into the period in which SCAG received public comments on the released draft plan, and concluded in the post-adoption period. The data for this research consisted of a variety of archival documents, 18 interviews, and observations at 12 public planning meetings. Content analysis of the data was conducted using a computer-assisted qualitative analysis program to organize and code the data.

To evaluate sustainability in the regional plan, I used a framework for sustainable development that was adapted from three widely recognized green rating systems: (a) the Leadership in Environmental and Energy Design for Neighborhood Development rating system (LEED-ND), (b) the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology for Communities (BREEAM Communities), and (c) the SITES v2 Rating System (SITES v2). I compared the 2012 RTP/SCS to the preceding 2008 RTP, as well as the new SCAG SCS to the two independent sub-regional SCS sections to evaluate important similarities and differences. In order to analyze interview data, I coded transcripts and looked for patterns and themes pertaining

to coordination and engagement in the regional planning process. Lastly, observations and audio recordings of public meetings provided additional data to complement my analysis of the regional plans and key interviews.

Summary of Findings

This research provides insights into state-mandated regional approaches to sustainable planning, the coordination and mobilization of stakeholders to change planning discourses, and successful approaches to regional planning in politically fragmented urban areas. Among the key findings, this research reveals:

- The 2012 RTP/SCS generally promotes more principles of sustainable development, and to a stronger extent than the 2008 RTP, and includes the concept of sustainability as a primary organizing idea, whereas the preceding plan does not;
- SB 375 enhanced collaboration among stakeholders by mandating a cooperative approach to develop the regional plan and providing advocates for principles of sustainable development with an overarching rubric of sustainability under which to unite and form a coalition;
- The coalition's advocacy efforts and involvement in the regional planning process was influential in shifting the regional planning discourse from focusing on economic and conventional transportation development to one that emphasized the benefits of more sustainable approaches to development involving smart growth principles; and
- The new legislation was instrumental in changing the development process of the regional plan and makes SCAG a stronger and more active regional agency through new planning, modeling, and monitoring responsibilities.

As a long-term plan intended to guide future urban growth and transportation investments, the 2012 RTP/SCS generally promotes sustainable development principles pertaining to built form such as compact, infill and mixed-use development, alternative modes of transportation, and open space conservation to a stronger extent than the preceding 2008 RTP. Additionally, policies included in 2012 RTP/SCS also address the social benefits of these principles for quality of life, health, and access to employment opportunities and open space. However, the findings also show that sub-regional SCS sections, which include policies separate from the SCAG SCS, fragmented the cohesiveness of the regional plan. Sustainable development principles that deserve more attention in future regional plan updates include those associated with housing affordability, renewable energy, and the mitigation of urban heat island effects. Nevertheless, the discussion of sustainability in the 2012 RTP/SCS as it relates to environmental, economic, and equity issues is a promising change from the 2008 RTP, which primarily emphasizes the term as it pertains to the preservation of the transportation network and funding sources.

The overarching rubric of SB 375, which focused on more sustainable planning approaches to achieve GHG goals, as well as the new legislation's mandated cooperative regional planning process, provided an opening for engagement by stakeholders who had previously not been very involved in RTP planning processes. These stakeholders, characterized by environmental and social objectives in contrast to economic and expansionist goals, recognized the new opportunity to cooperate in regional planning with the intent to promote broader policy changes and readdress big-picture issues. By utilizing individual resources in the forms of coordination capacity, connections, and expertise, stakeholders were able to unite as a coalition and mobilize around a relatively unified agenda. Additionally, coalition partners made

new allies in the planning process to expand their network of connections and maintained camaraderie through mutual support and respect. By collaborating, stakeholder organizations reinforced relationships with each other, gained exposure, and strengthened communication channels to become more effective actors in the regional planning process.

To engage effectively in the development process of the 2012 RTP/SCS, the coalition utilized attainable and focused goals, advocacy efforts oriented around data and solutions, and approaches to collaboration that were proactive and constructive. Whereas coalition partners sought to change business-as-usual planning trends, other stakeholders interested in preserving economic growth and laissez-faire development were wary of the implications of the new regional plan. These stakeholders focused on clarifying details in the regional plan with the intent to retain local authority over land use decisions and ensure that development projects seeking incentives would not be overburdened by environmental assessment requirements. However, by targeting broader policy issues, the coalition was able to refocus the regional planning discourse historically centered on transportation and economic development towards an emphasis of sustainable development principles as a key contributing strategies to achieve regional planning and GHG goals. After the adoption of the 2012 RTP/SCS, extended involvement in regional planning by coalition partners contributed to the durability of the coalition for the 2016 regional planning process. The recognition of the coalition's influence has prompted public officials and organizations seeking to maintain business-as-usual planning to reexamine their own strategies and partners for the upcoming RTP/SCS update. This response to the preemptive power of the coalition reflects the potential for the coalition to become a regional regime for sustainability in the Los Angeles region and drive more and stronger sustainable development policies.

Although the 2012 RTP/SCS and its planning process was generally well-received, cynicism towards SCAG and the regional planning effort, as well as desires to protect local autonomy resulted in difficulties during planning workshops and a regional plan fragmented by sub-regional SCS sections. Additionally, the lack of data during the planning process resulted in inadequate responses to concerns for public health and affordable housing, while a lack of resources and the planning effort's regional scale of focus limited engagement by local stakeholders such as small businesses and community advocates. Nevertheless, factors contributing to the overall success of the regional plan include an emphasis of different planning scenarios and co-benefits of sustainable strategies, which helped to focus the planning discourse onto achievable objectives for a variety of stakeholders. Furthermore, the additional regional planning responsibilities of SCAG, as well as its proactive role in facilitating engagement and mediating conflict, served as important contributing factors for success with the development of the 2012 RTP/SCS.

Despite certain weaknesses in policy and participation, the 2012 RTP/SCS was widely supported, unanimously adopted, and serves as an important first framework for sustainable development in the politically fragmented Los Angeles region. In this context, SB 375 mandated structures and processes to facilitate the cooperation of public and private groups and individuals, encouraged voluntary planning, and created conditions for the development of a form of "regime regionalism" focused on sustainable approaches to urban growth. Since the 2012 RTP/SCS process brought coalition partners together for the first time, it is too early to say whether the coalition for sustainable development has established dominance in the region to constitute a regime. Nevertheless, the coordination of stakeholders in the plan's development process and the plan's stronger emphasis of sustainability principles suggest that regime

regionalism is possible. Such a regime focused on supporting the implementation of comprehensive approaches to address the three E's can succeed at driving future policymaking and addressing complex and interrelated challenges to sustainable development if partners remain committed to realizing the vision towards a sustainable Los Angeles region.

Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation begins with an overview in Chapter Two of the shifting relationships between federal, state, and local governments, environmental policies, and land use and transportation planning in the nation to provide a context for the importance of the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act recently adopted by California for planning practice and theory. Chapter Three discusses the leadership and implications of California environmental policymaking and includes a brief overview of political structure for planning in the Los Angeles region. Chapter Four outlines the conceptual framework for this research and provides a review of the supporting theories. The main objective of this dissertation and its guiding research questions are discussed in Chapter Five, and the research methodology is presented in detail. Chapter Six compares the regional plans using sustainable development criteria to first determine how the policies in the sustainable community strategies and transportation plans are similar or different. In Chapter Seven, I present the findings for how stakeholders coordinated during the regional planning process to form a coalition to advocate for mutually beneficial policy objectives. This chapter on coalition formation is followed by Chapter Eight, which presents the findings that show how the coalition partners mobilized and strengthened their collective capacity to act and shifted planning discourses to include more attention on sustainable development principles. Chapter Nine presents the barriers and channels to the development of

the 2012 RTP/SCS, and the major findings and conclusions are discussed in Chapter Ten, which includes the implications and recommendations of this study as well as suggestions for future research. Lastly, this dissertation closes with an Epilogue that discusses the current state of regional planning for the 2016 RTP/SCS update.

Chapter Two

Cycles of Change in Intergovernmental Relations And Environmental and Regional Planning in the United States

From the postwar era to the beginning of 21st century, the interrelated issues of federalism, environmental consciousness, and regional planning have undergone significant transformations in the United States. This chapter provides a general overview of shifting relationships between federal, state, and local governments, environmental policies, and land use and transportation planning in the nation to provide a context for the importance of the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act recently adopted by California for planning practice and theory.

Cooperative Federalism and Development in the Postwar Era

Following the end of World War II, central cities in the United States underwent rapid suburbanization at the cost of environmental deterioration and increased segregation and inequality in urban areas (Cohen, 2003; Daniels, 2009; Jackson, 1985; NJTPA, 1998; Rome, 2001). During this time, the relationship between the federal government and state governments was characterized as “cooperative federalism” and both federal and state agencies shared public welfare responsibilities (Benson, 1965; Krane & Leach, 2006; Sundquist & Davis, 1969). New policies, such as the G.I. Bill and housing and highway acts, as well as grants-in-aid to state governments, facilitated the development of new infrastructure and housing away from city centers (Rome, 2001). However, federal support to stimulate development resulted in negative and disproportionate impacts on the environment and minority groups.

During the post-war housing boom, environmentally sensitive areas were bulldozed for new low-density tracts of single-family homes (Rome, 2001). Highway planning, which often required the demolition of large portions of existing urban neighborhoods, displaced businesses and communities of color. Furthermore, mortgage insurance programs, which provided credit to homebuyers or reduced their income taxes, favored loans in low-risk areas that excluded properties in urban cores. Since only car owners benefited from the billions of dollars spent on highway construction and only homeowners received the deductions that made owning cheaper than renting, both mortgage and highway subsidies discriminated against those with the greatest need for public transit and affordable housing (Hayden, 2004). The economic policies and development practices during the post-war era had lasting effects on metropolitan regions and contributed to the urban environment conditions characterized and debated among scholars today as fragmented, sprawling, and congested (Ewing, 1997; Galster et al., 2001; Gordon & Richardson, 1997; Hayden, 2004).

Creative Federalism and Regional Planning Approaches in the Sixties

During the 1960s, civil unrest and a variety of environmental catastrophes highlighted inequalities and environmental degradation in the nation and prompted more intervention by the federal government. In this era, Jane Jacobs described the erosion of cities by urban renewal and highway programs, Martin Luther King, Jr. expressed his dream for racial equality, and Rachel Carson criticized the detrimental effects of pesticides on the natural world. Additionally, the Santa Barbara oil spill and Cuyahoga River fire demonstrated the more immediate and negative consequences of environmental pollution. Recognizing the need to address dysfunctional social and environmental conditions, the federal government created or expanded aid programs directed

at various environmental, social, and welfare issues (Krane & Leach, 2006). By asserting authority and the national interest into a range of government functions that had previously been the responsibility of state and local governments, the federal government established new patterns of intergovernmental relationships in new fields of activity (Sundquist & Davis, 1969).

For planning in urbanized areas, the Federal Highway Act of 1962 was the first law to require transportation planning as a prerequisite for receiving federal funds. By emphasizing planning in urban areas instead of cities, the act set the scale of planning at the metropolitan scale and highlighted urban transportation as a federal concern that was to be integrated with the future development of urban regions. Since planning agencies in many urban areas were unqualified to undertake regional planning, the Bureau of Public Roads mandated the formation of new organizations that could carry out the required continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative planning process. With the help of federal aid and the growing momentum of the highway program, new regional planning organizations and transportation boards quickly came into being (USGAO, 1992; Weiner, 1999).

Encouraging cooperation at the regional level. During the Johnson Administration, the centralization of power intensified, as the federal government required state and local governments to implement various programs initiated and assisted by national leadership (Canada, 2003; Sundquist & Davis, 1969). The federal government became increasingly involved in local affairs and referred to its relationship with state and local governments as “creative federalism” (Sundquist & Davis, 1969). Whereas federal aid in general had previously been directed to state governments under cooperative federalism, it now targeted regional organizations and programs (Krane & Leach, 2006; Sundquist & Davis, 1969). The Housing and Urban Development Act of 1965 created the Department of Housing and Urban Development

(HUD) to better coordinate programs that addressed urban planning issues. The act granted HUD with the authority to approve eligibility for metropolitan-scale organizations to receive federal funding for the purposes of comprehensive planning, and it required these organizations to be composed of public officials, who represented the political jurisdictions within an urban region or metropolitan area. By encouraging local governments to cooperate in addressing regional problems, the act led to the creation of associations such as Councils of Government (COGs) (Weiner, 1999).

Ever since the Standard State Zoning Enabling Act and the Standard City Planning Enabling Act of the 1920s, federal and state governments had traditionally viewed land use control as a responsibility formally delegated to cities. However, by the end of the 1960s, both federal and state governments recognized that local zoning regulations, as virtually the sole means of land use control, were inadequate at addressing a social and environmental problems at the state and regional levels (Popper, 1988). At the turn of the decade, three national commissions, namely, the National Commission on Urban Problems, the National Committee on Urban Growth Policy, and the Rockefeller Task Force on Land Use and Urban Growth, reported that local urban growth policies led to non-local economic, environmental, and social problems. According to the commissions, restrictive land use policies at the local level contradicted regional objectives related to equity and transportation efficiency. Furthermore, state and local governments, organizations, and agencies were ineffective at working together to manage growth. Catalyzing the restructuring of land use governance within states, the commissions recommended policies that required local governments to accept growth as a means to achieve regional goals and alleviate environmental and social problems (Bollens, 1993).

Sustainability and Decentralization of Federal Power in the Seventies

In the 1970s, the growing environmental movement prompted a reconsideration of long-term ecological and economic stability. Environmentally conscious economists suggested that a steady-state economy would benefit human and ecological well-being better than unrestrained growth, and global organizations, such as the U.N. Conference on the Human Environment, examined the depletion of natural resources and its limiting factor on growth (Wheeler, 2000). Additionally, the World Council of Churches called for a “just, participatory, and sustainable society,” which introduced the term “sustainability” into discussions about the feasibility of long-term development trends (Best, 1990). A shift towards environmentalism was illustrated by federal initiatives leading to the formation of new national agencies, such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the adoption of landmark national environmental policies, such as the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act, and the Clean Air Act Amendments (DeGrove & Miness, 1992). Established by NEPA, the Council on Environmental Quality highlighted the environmental costs of local land use policies for suburban development and the ineffective method of addressing interrelated environmental problems by attempting to solve one issue at a time (Rome, 2001).

During the Nixon Administration, the federal government began to simplify the categorical grants system established under the Johnson Administration, which was complicated by overlapping programs, inefficiency, and excessive administrative requirements (Canada, 2003). In an effort to reduce federal authority and responsibilities, the Nixon Administration initiated “new federalism” to shift power back to state and sub-state governments and organizations to address issues such as transportation and land use problems. Federal, state, and local interests recognized that states, instead of incapable or unwilling local governments, were

better suited to innovate ways of addressing regional problems such as pollution, environmental degradation, and a lack of affordable housing (Bosselman & Callies, 1971; Nelson & Duncan, 1995).

In 1972 and 1973, bills were introduced to Congress for the National Land Use and Planning Assistance Act. Despite an increase in discussions about coordinated growth, there was also a growing resistance against the centralization of planning and environmental governance. A diverse group of supporters for a national land use policy mounted a campaign that emphasized environmental protection and economic development that would benefit regions. However, opponents composed primarily of powerful organizations representing business interests and landowners focused their attention on a primary issue of preserving local land use authority and property rights (Rome, 2001). Although the United States Senate adopted the bills both times, the bills failed to pass the House of Representatives. Meanwhile, the debate in Congress over national land use policy, and the strong support for national action encouraged several state governments to address the issues at home.

A quiet revolution in state land use regulations. Called a “quiet revolution” (Bosselman & Callies, 1971) or “quiet success” (Popper, 1988) in land use control, the centralization of authority over land use regulation and planning in state governments was a major shift from the traditional norm of locally determined land use decisions. This resulted in a “first wave” of state growth management programs, which were primarily characterized by single-purpose, regulatory, and location-specific policies (see Bollens, 1992; Burby & May, 1997; DeGrove & Mines, 1992; Weitz, 1999). Several states required local governments to adopt comprehensive plans that incorporated state environmental protection goals or enacted land use management programs that applied to sub-state areas (for program details, see Burby &

May, 1997, Table 1.1). Notably, Florida and Vermont set guidelines for state review of development projects of regional impact, and Oregon mandated consistency between local comprehensive plans and statewide planning to protect a variety of natural areas and concentrate development within urban growth boundaries (Daniels, 2009). Although these growth management programs intended to protect environmentally sensitive areas, they were also criticized for being overly restrictive of growth, protecting suburban enclaves in rural areas, and permitting “not in my backyard” arguments to block regionally or nationally beneficial projects such as the development of affordable housing and power plants (Bollens, 1992; Bosselman & Callies, 1971; Leo, 1998).

The designation of MPOs. The federal government continued to support regional transportation planning, although the regional agencies required to carry out continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative planning for urban transportation had weakened since the 1960s. These agencies now primarily served in advisory roles to planning, were ineffective at coordinating local organizations, and left decisions about the allocation of transportation funds to state officials focused on constructing highways. With the intent to strengthen regional planning, innovate multimodal solutions to transportation problems, and encourage regional agencies to be productive and consensus-based forums, Congress passed the 1973 Federal-Aid Highway Act. The act authorized state governments to designate metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) in large urbanized areas to receive separate federal aid for transportation planning and designations varied among metropolitan areas as to whether MPOs were established from COGs or in addition to COGs. Through the act, the federal government intended to consolidate various regional transportation planning organizations and discouraged state transportation departments from dominating regional planning with their own agendas, often focused on expanding highway

projects. The act required MPOs to develop all urban highway and transit programs and carry out both long-range and short-range planning to improve existing transportation systems without constructing new roads. Additionally, the act required the Federal Highway Administration and the Urban Mass Transportation Administration (later renamed the Federal Transit Administration) to both certify planning processes and projects for federal funding (NJTPA, 1998; USGAO, 1992; Weiner, 1999).

By the end of 1970s, national problems, such as an economic recession and increased energy costs due to two oil crises, had prompted recentralization of authority in the federal government. The Carter Administration recognized the role of the federal government in readdressing urban inequities and stressed the importance of federal assistance in combination with state, local, and private partnerships (Wolman & Agius, 1996). However, poor economic conditions in the nation contributed to a cutback in certain federal aid for state planning in the following decade, and again, transformed the relationships between federal, state, and local governments and the ways in which they addressed planning, growth, and environmental issues.

New Federalism and Funding Reform for Planning in the Eighties

At the start of the 1980s, President Reagan sought to reduce the size and influence of the federal government, which he saw as the source of many national problems such as a stagnating economy and high inflation (Krane & Leach, 2006; NJTPA, 1998; Sabatier, 1988). Although President Nixon initiated new federalism in the previous decade to decentralize federal authority, President Reagan implemented it in earnest by terminating or reducing federal funding for local programs over time, and consolidating grants into a block grants to give states discretion over the distribution of funds. Additionally, the federal government appointed new administrators to the

EPA, who were committed to reducing federal enforcement of environmental legislation, and reformed regulations with the hope that market forces would result in more environmentally beneficial outcomes (see Daniels, 2009; Fiorino, 2006; Krane & Leach, 2006; Sabatier 1988). For transportation, the federal government gave state and local governments more flexibility in carrying out urban transportation planning but reduced planning funds overall. Reduced funding prompted MPOs to become more dependent on state planning processes and more reliant on state, local, and private funding sources (USGAO, 1992). As an “odd” (Popper, 1988) and “unexpected” (Krane & Leach, 2006) triumph of the devolution of federal authority under the Reagan Administration, state and local governments strengthened their own capacities and resources to address urban issues.

A second wave of state land use regulations. Around the mid-1980s, a “second wave” of state growth management programs emerged. Unlike the restrictive programs of the 1970s, most second wave programs utilized more cooperative problem-solving approaches and intended to balance of environmental regulations with economic development, infrastructure, and “quality of life” policies (Bollens, 1992; Bollens, 1993). The cooperative approach was best evidenced in New Jersey, with a state plan that was created utilizing negotiations and a process of “cross-acceptance” to ensure consistency between local, regional, and state plans (Bollens, 1992; Innes, 1992). Following New Jersey, many states borrowed the “cross-acceptance” process for their own planning purposes, and as recently as 2011, Connecticut adapted it for the creation of its 2013-2018 State Plan for Conservation and Development Policies (CTOPM, 2012). The shift towards cooperative planning during the 1980s was also part of a wider transition towards more collaborative, process-oriented theories of planning that occurred in reaction to planning and

policy decisions that often neglected underrepresented groups (see Berke, 2002; Healy 1996; 2006; Huxley & Yiftachel, 2000; Innes; 1995).

At the end of the decade, the concept of sustainability returned to mainstream discussions about growth with the publication of *Our Common Future* in 1987 by the World Commission on Environment and Development (the Bruntland Commission). Besides producing the most widely cited definition of “sustainable development” today, the report also stressed that balancing the productive potential of ecosystems with population size and growth would be essential for sustainable development (Daniels, 2009; Wheeler, 2000).

Sustainable Development and Smart Growth in the Nineties

At the start of the 1990s, the federal government adopted amendments to the Clean Air Act (CAA) in 1990 with the intent to reduce air pollution. The CAA amendments would be followed by the adoption of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) in 1991 that linked transportation planning and to air quality and changed existing power relationships within many states (NJTPA, 1998). ISTEA increased the authority of MPOs, which now had to evaluate a variety of multimodal transportation solutions to address traffic congestion and air quality issues (Basolo & Hastings, 2003; Lewis & Sprague, 1997). The act required state departments of transportation to work more closely with MPOs and required MPOs to consider a range of environmental, economic, and social goals in their evaluation of projects, as well as in their long-range planning processes (NJTPA, 1998). Due to their roles within MPOs, local governments also gained more power to influence how federal funding would be spent (Daniels, 2009). Although ISTEA generally gave MPOs more aid and authority in regional planning processes, it limited the authority of MPOs in certain multicounty regions, such as the Los

Angeles region, where federal funding was directed to sub-regional county transportation commissions based on population size (CTCs) (Bollens, 1997; Lewis & Sprague, 1997). Nevertheless, testimony on ISTEA presented at federal hearings around the county in 1996 revealed that the legislation facilitated useful and productive relationships between state governments and MPOs and initiated more transit and non-traditional transportation projects to improve goods movement, walking, and biking (NJTPA, 1998).

During this era, attention to the concept of sustainable development encouraged broader perspectives of local and regional planning that gave equal concern for issues pertaining to the “three E’s,” namely, the environment, the economy, and equity (Campbell, 1996; Daniels, 2009). A return to more comprehensive regional thinking also occurred during this time, as scholars highlighted the interrelationships and inequities between cities and suburbs, as well as the need to improve infrastructure and quality of life within regions through cooperation among local governments (Bollens, 1997). As urban and regional planners began to recognize that suburban sprawl resulted in unexpected growth problems, the attempt to bring growth under better control through incentives for more compact development gained more acceptance (Leo, 1998).

A third wave of state land use regulations. At the end of the decade, federal environmental programs were largely voluntary under the Clinton Administration, and devolution intensified with a Republican majority in Congress (Fiorino, 2006). Among state governments, a “third wave” of state growth management programs emerged with policies characterized by “smart growth” (Ingram, Carbonell, Hong, & Flint, 2009). As a reaction to the undesirable effects of urban sprawl, smart growth policies intended to achieve planning objectives such as compact growth, the preservation of open space, and a mix of housing and transportation options (Daniels, 2009; Downs, 2005). Instead of emphasizing land use

regulations, growth boundaries, and comprehensive plan requirements, the third wave of land use regulations focused on the revitalization of cities, compact and infill development, the coordination of the growth policies of state agencies, and the alignment of capital investments with sustainability goals (Ingram et al., 2009).

Most notable in this third wave of state efforts is Maryland's 1997 smart growth initiative, which sought to concentrate development around infrastructure through incentives and disincentives while preserving open space and farmland (Ingram et al., 2009). By the end of the decade, a wide variety of states either adopted growth policies or chose implement programs to maintain existing urban infrastructure, such as roadways, instead of funding new construction (see Ingram et al., 2009).

Climate Change and its Link to Land Use and Transportation in the 21st Century

Since the start of the 21st century, growing challenges pertaining to economic development, climate change, and shifting energy demands and supplies have strengthened support for smart growth initiatives (Ingram et al., 2009). In what has been called the "Era of Sustainable Growth," growth management planners in this fourth wave of growth management planning have been forced to expand their efforts in new policy areas (Chapin, 2012). In some instances, politically conservative economic interest groups have pressured state and local governments to replace the "smart growth" phrase with more general language pertaining to "livable communities" and "quality of life" (Ingram et al., 2009). However, smart growth goals such as compact development, reduced automobile use, affordable housing, and the preservation of open space remain targeted by urban planning policies today (for a guide to smart growth, see APA, 2012).

During this era, growing scientific evidence for global warming refocused national and international attention on global environmental issues, but federal support for addressing environmental issues was overshadowed again by war. Although President G.W. Bush established an Interagency Working Group on Federalism that intended to examine federal accountability and regional approaches to address governmental challenges, the effort was postponed indefinitely following the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 (Canada, 2003).

With less focus on statewide programs, urban growth policies have shifted attention to local and regional actions to encourage more compact development patterns to address vehicle use and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (Ingram et al., 2009). Researchers have argued that a decentralized built environment contributes to increased vehicle miles traveled (VMT), higher fuel consumption, carbon emissions, and has implications for climate change (Boarnet, 2010; Bullard, 2007; Ewing & Cervero, 2010; Ewing, Pendall, & Chen, 2002; Galster et al., 2001; Winkelman, Bishins, & Kooshian, 2010). Today, the abundance of state-sponsored environmental regulations and state-level climate change expertise may rival or surpass that of the federal government (Rabe, 2004; Rabe, 2008).

New policies in California to address climate change. Having adopted the Global Warming Solutions Act (Assembly Bill 32) in 2006 and the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act (Senate Bill 375) in 2008, California currently leads an attempt to achieve statewide GHG emission reduction goals through regional land use and transportation planning. Despite the enactment of AB 32 and SB 375, the two acts are still widely known and denoted by their bill monikers. SB 375 has been colloquially referred to as the “anti-sprawl bill” (Fulton, 2008), since it intends to integrate compact development with transportation planning, reduce VMTs, and curb emissions from cars and light trucks (SB 375, 2008). Additionally, at a

speaker series on SB 375 at the University of California, Berkeley in 2009, which brought together a wide range of experts including scholars, governmental decision makers, and public sector stakeholders, the new legislation was emphasized as the most influential piece of legislation nationwide to help address sprawl (Center for a Sustainable California, 2009). SB 375 combines aspects of state-mandated regional plan making with collaborative land use and transportation planning to address issues associated with sustainability. Given this, research on the new state effort provides scholars and practitioners with insights into smart growth climate planning and policymaking, intergovernmental relations, growth management, and sustainable development (Barbour & Deakin, 2012).

Chapter Three

California and New Climate Change Policy

California has been a leader in air quality and climate policymaking in the United States. With the adoption of the Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32), California passed the most comprehensive legislation in the nation to address climate change. Following this with the adoption of the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act (SB 375) pursuant to AB 32, California passed the first legislation to link transportation and land use planning to greenhouse gas emissions and climate change.

This chapter briefly discusses the leadership of California in environmental policymaking and the implications of AB 32 and SB 375 for national policymaking and regional planning. A brief overview of the political structure for planning in the Los Angeles region is included to illustrate the challenging context in which the mandates of SB 375 were carried out. Lastly, this chapter reviews the current literature on the legislation.

California as a Policy Leader

California has a long history of strong leadership in environmental policy and planning (Freilich & Popowitz, 2010; Rabe, 2004; Rabe, 2008; Vogel, 1997; Vogel, 2000). Since the 1960s, state and local initiatives have created a variety of environmental agencies, such as the California Air Resources Board (CARB), and enacted various state environmental policies, such as the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the California Clean Air Act (CAA). Although the state does not have a state plan for growth management, since the mid-1900s, it has required local jurisdictions to adopt comprehensive plans for growth and to coordinate efforts to

address issues such as land use, housing, circulation, and open space within separate elements included in the plans. As of 2001, the state has also required comprehensive plans to address environmental justice and sustainability (for a guide to general plans, see CAGOPR, 2003).

Since the 1960s, the federal government has required MPOs to carry out long-term urban transportation planning in the 1960s and create regional transportation plans (RTPs), which include regional projections of population growth, travel demands, and lists of transportation projects. With the enactment of the California Housing Element Law in 1969, MPOs in California have also been required to carry out the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). This law required MPOs in California to use regional growth trends to quantify and allocate each city's "fair share" of housing requirements for all income levels. Cities are then required to engage in detailed planning to accommodate this housing need (Lewis, 2003).

In the past, the actions of California have influenced other state and federal policymaking processes, leading to an increase in regulatory standards through market mechanisms (Vogel, 1997). This diffusion of policies out of the state has been described as a "California effect" in policymaking (Vogel, 1997). After the adoption of the CAA amendments 1970s for example, California adopted the strictest automobile emission standards in the nation. This led the United States Congress to raise the nation's emission standards in 1990 to match those in California, while allowing California to adopt even more stringent standards. The federal government then gave other states the choice to adopt California's new standards or keep to the nation's standards (Vogel, 2000).

In 2006, California adopted the Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32), initiating the nation's most comprehensive state-level climate change program (Mazmanian, Jurewitz, & Nelson, 2008). The act aimed to reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 through a

comprehensive approach that involved all sectors of the economy. The 1990-level goal represents a 30 percent reduction from projected business-as-usual emission levels for 2020, or a per-capita reduction of four tons of carbon dioxide equivalent per person. With GHG emissions from the transportation sector accounting for nearly a third of all emissions, the act initiated stricter standards for vehicle and fuel efficiency. In 2008, as further evidence for the California effect, 16 states declared that they would adopt California's stricter vehicle standards if the federal government allowed it, but the Bush Administration did not ("Cut the sprawl," 2008). Nevertheless, under the Obama Administration in 2009, California finally received federal permission to enforce its vehicle standards. These standards were then extended nationwide, with the EPA setting new vehicle emission standards under the CAA as mandated by the Supreme Court, as well as the federal Department of Transportation setting new vehicle mileage standards as required by Congress ("California rules," 2009)

Despite the landmark status of AB 32 in addressing GHG emissions, it preserved the status quo of leaving land use decisions to local governments, which have traditionally permitted sprawl and the increased vehicle use associated with it (Lampert, 2009). The limited emission reductions that were expected to come from local efforts were reflected in a Climate Change Scoping Plan released by CARB, which set these reductions at one percent of total reduction goals (Lampert, 2009). Facing criticism from environmental groups for failing to set meaningful measures to reform land use policies, the state recognized the need for stronger land use oriented legislation to help the state achieve its GHG reduction goals (Lampert, 2009). Pursuant to AB 32, California adopted the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act (SB 375) in 2008, which focused on land use strategies intended to reduce VMTs. Combined with the policies from

AB 32 that targeted vehicles and fuels, California completed its three-pronged policy approach to reducing GHG emissions with the adoption of SB 375 by targeting mobility.

The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act (Senate Bill 375)

The creation of SB 375 was carried out by what has been called an “impossible coalition” of environmentalists, major employers, labor unions, builders, public officials, and affordable housing advocates, which was ready to confront new climate change realities, fix a broken land use system, and reach agreement on complex, controversial, and large-scale environmental issues (Adams, Eaken, & Nothoff, 2009). To help the state meet its reduction goals set by AB 32, SB 375 required CARB and a state-appointed Regional Targets Advisory Committee (RTAC) to develop regional GHG emission reduction targets for automobiles and light trucks for all MPOs in California. A map of California’s MPOs is provided in Figure 3.1 (p. 29). Composed of stakeholders such as leaders from MPOs, local governments, and homebuilding, affordable housing, and environmental organizations, the RTAC met for eight months in 2009 to set regional GHG emission reduction targets intended to be “the most ambitious and achievable possible” (Barbour & Deakin, 2012, p. 75). While RTAC eventually set targets for all MPOs, it began with the four largest MPOs of the Los Angeles, Sacramento, San Diego, and San Francisco Bay Area regions, which encompass most of the cities in the state (for a discussion of the target-setting process, see Barbour & Deakin, 2012).



Figure 3.1. California’s Metropolitan Planning Organizations (CADOT, 2013).

By focusing on the nexus of land use and transportation planning, through the encouragement of compact development near transit, SB 375 built upon existing regional planning “blueprint” programs that provided support for regional projects addressing issues such as air quality and quality of life (Adams et al., 2009; Barbour & Deakin, 2012; Freilich & Popowitz, 2010). SB 375 called for the coordination of state, regional, local policies with the assistance of MPOs, who serve as technical analysts and coordinators (Adams et al., 2009;

Barbour & Deakin, 2012). Under SB 375, MPOs were required to create a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) as a new element in their federally required RTPs to discuss how land use strategies would contribute to GHG reductions (SB 375, 2008). Since the RHNA allocation schedule varied by regions prior to the adoption of SB 375, with the RTP being updated every four years and RHNA carried out every five years, SB 375 adjusts the RHNA cycle to eight years, so that allocations now occur in conjunction with RTP/SCS updates. This allows MPOs to use RHNA numbers and the figures in the RTP/SCS, to model how regional plans for growth and transportation will achieve GHG reduction targets (Adams et al., 2009).

The key points of SB 375 are that it:

- Requires CARB to set regional targets for GHG emissions tied to plans and regulations for land use and transportation;
- Requires MPOs to add a SCS that links the climate policy with transportation and land use and transportation planning to the RTP to achieve the GHG targets;
- Aligns the RHNA schedule to be consistent with updates to the SCS;
- Adds new CEQA provisions to encourage and incentivize land use decisions to implement the SCS; and
- Adds new modeling provisions to accurately account for the transportation impacts of land use decisions (Adams et al., 2009).

Although the provisions in SB 375 offered gains to nearly everyone, negotiations, compromises, and revisions resulted in the removal of VMT mandates and the addition of a guarantee to local governments that they would retain land use control (Barbour & Deakin, 2012). Respecting local land use authority, SB 375 specified “nothing in this [bill] shall require a city’s or county’s land use policies and regulations, including its general plan, to be consistent

with the regional transportation plan” (SB 375, 2008, p. 12). However, by noting that “the resolution approving the final housing need [sic] allocation plan shall demonstrate that the plan is consistent with the sustainable communities strategy in the regional transportation plan,” SB 375 indirectly impacts local planning through the housing element of city general plans, because the elements are required to be consistent (SB 375, 2008, p. 29). To facilitate implementation of the regional plans, SB 375 uses the RTP/SCS process to direct funding to transportation projects that integrate land use with transportation planning, as well as uses incentives in the form of streamlining and statutory exemptions from CEQA to encourage the development of transit-oriented residential and mixed use projects that are consistent with the RTP/SCS.

Developing the Los Angeles region’s vision towards a sustainable future. As the largest MPO in the nation, SCAG oversees regional planning for the Los Angeles region, and was mandated by SB 375 to create the 2012 RTP/SCS. Characterized by political fragmentation, SCAG includes six counties and their CTCs, fifteen sub-regional COGs, and 191 cities (SCAG, 2014). A map of the SCAG region is provided in Figure 3.2 (p. 34). Since the 1990s, the effectiveness of SCAG at addressing regional problems has frequently been questioned by sub-regional organizations, due to a variety of reasons such as the enormous size and diversity of the region, its multiple responsibilities as both COG and MPO, and its lack of authority (see Bollens, 1997; Barbour, 2002). At the start of the 1990s, SCAG leaders made an effort to strengthen the MPO by proposing to consolidate itself with the air management district and other planning organizations. However, the initiative was withdrawn as Orange County proposed to secede from SCAG, the nation faced an economic recession, and ISTEA diverted federal transportation funds to the CTCs (Barbour, 2002).

As a Joint Powers Authority, the primary role of SCAG is to serve as a forum for local governments and agencies to cooperatively address issues of regional concern, conduct long-range planning, and monitor programs. SCAG does not have the authority of CTCs to implement transportation projects, programs, and services. Decision-making in SCAG is carried out by a Regional Council (RC) of 70 members consisting of an executive committee, elected officials representing sub-district jurisdictions, representatives from tribal governments, and members from regional air quality and transportation corridor agencies (SCAG, 2013). In the Los Angeles region, the CTCs decide which local transportation projects receive federal funding, while SCAG prioritizes and evaluates the projects for their conformity with air quality requirements, as well as their consistency with growth goals set forth in the RTP/SCS (SCAG, 2013).

The creation of the RTP/SCS was required by SB 375 to include a cooperative process that involved a wide range of stakeholders and interested parties through a number of outreach activities. During the pre-draft phase, SCAG surveyed and conducted 11 sub-regional planning workshops with city managers, planners and staff to gather data for the creation of development scenarios for the draft RTP/SCS. During the summer of 2011, SCAG conducted 18 Public Outreach Workshops throughout the six-county region in order to educate the public about the major components and strategies in the RTP/SCS and solicit feedback on the proposed objectives of the plan. Over 700 participants attended these workshops, including residents, elected officials, representatives from diverse public agencies and community organizations (SCAG, 2012). During the RTP/SCS public outreach workshops, SCAG staff emphasized that both the demographic profile of the region and housing market conditions were changing concurrently and that an aging population, combined with a rising number of parents whose children no longer live at home, would increase the demand for smaller housing units and more walkable and

transit-oriented lifestyles (SCAG, 2012). These public outreach workshops were followed by 11 workshops with elected officials before the draft RTP/SCS was released in December 2011.

During the post-draft phase, public comments on the draft were accepted until February 2012, while SCAG conducted six public hearings on the draft. As allowed by SB 375, two sub-regions, the Gateway Cities Council of Governments (Gateway COG) and the Orange County Council of Governments (OCCOG), accepted delegation to each work with their CTCs to create sub-regional SCS documents that were included in the SCAG RTP/SCS. The delegated sub-regions primarily implemented their own planning, outreach, and review processes as required by SB 375 before submitting their SCS documents to SCAG. Although the sub-regional SCS documents outlined projects and strategies to reduce GHG emissions, the GHG reduction targets remained at the SCAG level. With a vision “towards a sustainable future” (SCAG, 2012, p. 1), the SCAG RTP/SCS, was unanimously adopted by the RC in April, making it the second RTP/SCS to be adopted in the state.¹

Literature on SB 375

To date, scant empirical research has examined SB 375 and its mandated regional planning processes and plans. Much of the information on SB 375 currently exists in the form of policy and law analyses, technical summaries, and guides for planning practitioners (see Adams et al., 2009; Altmaier et al., 2009; Freilich & Popowitz, 2010; Fulton, 2008; Lampert, 2009; Nichols, 2010; ULI, 2010). Nevertheless, one study conducted by Barbour and Deakin (2012) examined the regional GHG target-setting process and evaluated perspectives on SB 375 from planners, as well as the effectiveness of the policy in achieving GHG reductions. However, the

¹ The San Diego Association of Governments was the first MPO to adopt its RTP/SCS in October 2011, and the Shasta Regional Transportation Agency was the final MPO to adopt its RTP/SCS in June 2015. All MPOs in California have now adopted its RTP/SCS.

timing of study precluded the authors from examining the actual mandated regional plan making process and plan. Barbour and Deakin (2012) concluded that it is possible for regional smart growth climate change policies to be built on existing transportation planning processes and air quality requirements, but that regional and local planners are concerned with the lack of adequate resources for implementing the policy. This dissertation research contributes to empirical research on SB 375 and focuses on the RTP/SCS planning process and plan for the Los Angeles region.



Figure 3.2. Map of the SCAG region and sub-regions (SCAG, 2013).

Chapter Four

A Regime Theory Perspective for Regional Sustainable Planning

This research is contextualized by the history presented in Chapter Two on the transformations of intergovernmental relations, environmental consciousness, and regional growth planning the United States, as well as the discussion presented in Chapter Three on the national and regional implications of environmental policymaking in California. This chapter outlines the conceptual framework for this research and provides a review of the literature.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this research is built on arguments that many policies and programs today incorporate smart growth strategies, which are intended to promote sustainable development and address environmental, economic, and equity issues—the “three E’s” of sustainability. However, several factors challenge sustainable development, such as broad definitions of sustainability, conflicting approaches that either focus on ecological conservation and preservation or on economic development and expansion, and equity issues that remain unaddressed. Since the issues pertaining to the three E’s cross local boundaries, sustainable development is best addressed by comprehensive planning and policymaking at the regional scale. Regional planning necessitates cooperative planning processes, as well as robust plans to link process to action, while cooperative planning involves engagement by different actors. Given this, a regime theory analysis of the RTP/SCS planning process provides insights into how different individuals and stakeholder groups coordinated in the politically fragmented region to form a coalition that advocated for mutually beneficial policy goals in the regional plan.

The creation of the 2012 RTP/SCS for the Los Angeles region provides an opportunity to examine the extent which principles of sustainable development were incorporated into the plan, how various interest groups mobilized in cooperation during the planning process to create the vision towards a sustainable future for the region, and what factors served as barriers and channels to the regional effort.

Smart Growth and Sustainability

With every MPO in California having received a performance target for reducing GHG emissions and organizing smart growth policies with their RTP/SCS, SB 375 is an important step towards growth management in the state (Barbour & Deakin, 2012). In recent years, the number of organizations supporting smart growth principles have been increasing, while smart growth strategies have also been increasingly incorporated into policies to encourage sustainable development (Edwards & Haines, 2007; Ye et al., 2005). However, no single definition for smart growth exists (Downs, 2005; Ye et al., 2005). In its simplest sense, “smart growth” is the opposite of “sprawled growth” (Burchell, Listokin, & Galley, 2000, p. 822). In a comprehensive review of smart growth, Ye, Mandpe, and Meyer (2005) examined smart growth definitions provided by ten major national organizations, such as the EPA, HUD, American Planning Association, Sierra Club, and National Association of Home Builders. The authors found that various definitions for smart growth addressed six common elements: (a) community development, (b) economic development, (c) housing, (d) planning, (e) natural resource preservation, and (f) transportation, with each element encompassing a number of sub-dimensions (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1. Key components and dimensions of smart growth policies (Ye et al., 2005).

Component	Dimensions
Community development	Popular participation Recognizing/promoting the unique features of each commur
Economic development	Downtown revitalization Infill development Neighborhood business Using existing infrastructure
Housing	Housing for special needs and diverse households Manufactured homes Multifamily housing Smaller lots
Planning	Alternative/innovative water infrastructure and systems Comprehensive planning Increased density Mixed land uses Public facilities planning Street connectivity
Natural resource preservation	Easement conservation Ecological land preservation Farmland preservation Historical preservation Purchase of development rights Subdivision conservation Transferable development rights
Transportation	Facilities for bicycling Pedestrianization Public transit promotion Systems integration and nodal networks

After taking together the common goals from different definitions, smart growth generally refers to a planning approach that encourages compact and mixed-use development, which incorporates a range of housing and transportation options, to reduce vehicle use and preserve open spaces and environmentally sensitive areas (see Downs, 2005; Burchell et al., 2000; Ye et al., 2005). Smart growth suggests that economic efficiency, environmental protection, and social equity can be simultaneously achieved through the coordination of planning policies for urban and regional sustainability (Scott, 2007).

The concept of sustainability is well integrated into the field of planning today, and sustainable development has become an accepted framework for the profession (Beatley, 1995; Berke, 2002; Jepson, 2001; Jepson, 2004). Since the 1970s and 1980s, the field of planning has been primarily engaged with sustainable approaches to development, since planners recognized

the link between urban dynamics and environmental degradation, saw how the physical expansion of cities was directly impacting agricultural capacity, and worked at urban scales considered most applicable for sustainability (Jepson, 2001). Despite the logical relationship between sustainable development and planning, fully incorporating the environmental, economic, and equity dimensions of sustainability into local planning policies and programs remains a challenge (Gunder, 2006; Jepson, 2004). Two interrelated reasons hinder the full integration sustainable development into planning policy and practice: (a) the conflict between an expansionist perspective of sustainability and an ecological perspective, and (b) the broad definition of sustainable development itself (Jepson, 2004).

The expansionist perspective of sustainability. The expansionist perspective, which dominates planning policy and practice, is rooted in Judeo-Christian religious philosophy, and maintains human control over the natural environment, which exists as an exploitable resource for human benefit (Jepson, 2004). Corresponding to the expansionist perspective is neoclassical economics, which revolves around the idea of markets, supply, and demand, and dominates public policies at all levels of government (Jepson, 2004). From the expansionist perspective, the economy is an independent, self-regulating, and self-sustaining system that is relatively unconstrained by the environment, and human mastery over nature and technology will compensate for the depletion of natural resources (Rees, 1995). In this view, sustainability is a simple business of promoting free markets, privatizing resources and services, and eliminating trade barriers to stimulate the growth and wealth necessary for nations to alleviate poverty, inequity, and better protect the natural environment (Rees, 1995). This approach to sustainable development reflects the Environmental Kuznets Curve, illustrated in Figure 4.1 (p. 39), which emerged around the same time as the concept of sustainable development and illustrated

environmental degradation as an inverted U-shaped function of income per capita (Stern, 2004). The dominance of the expansionist perspective in policymaking, for example, is evidenced by goals that emphasize consumption, economic benefits, and personal property (Jepson, 2004).

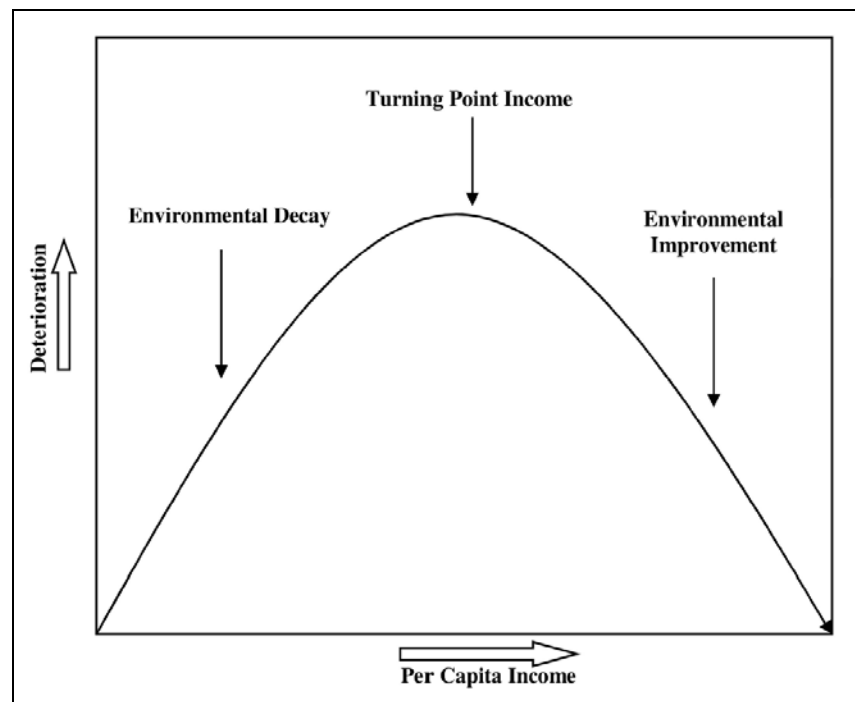


Figure 4.1. Stylized environmental Kuznets curve (Yandle, Vijayaraghavan, & Bhattarai, 2004).

The ecological perspective of sustainability. In contrast to the expansionist perspective, the ecological perspective is rooted in a reinterpretation of religious doctrine, promotes environmental preservation, and recognizes that there are limits to consumption (Jepson, 2004). Corresponding to this perspective is the steady-state model of resource economics, which involves a definition of scarcity based on resources instead of price (Jepson, 2004). From the ecological perspective, the economy is integrated with, constrained by, and dependent on the ecosphere, instead of being an independent entity (Rees, 1995). Policies reflecting an ecological

perspective for example, emphasize the maintenance of environmental resources and the continued functioning of natural systems (Jepson, 2004). Instead of being a simple business left to the free market, attempting to achieve sustainable development under the ecological perspective is a complex task of overcoming the limitations of income in advancing sustainability, the inability of technology to find substitutes for essential natural processes, and the constraint of economic growth by limits in the flow of ecological goods and services (Jepson, 2004).

The broad definition of sustainable development. The dominance of the expansionist perspective is due in part to the vague definition of sustainable development provided by the Bruntland Commission (Jepson, 2004). In 1987, the commission broadly defined sustainable development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (WCED, 1987, p. 43). Although this definition generally accommodates both expansionist and ecological perspectives, the conflict between the two is left unresolved (Jepson, 2004). Given the tradition of neoclassical economics in the nation, the lack of a clear definition of sustainable development contributes to the hegemony of expansionist approaches to policymaking intended to address sustainability (Jepson, 2004). However, since vague definitions have also traditionally lent strength to human ideals such as liberty and democracy, ambiguity also allows the concept of sustainable development to be a unifying force between opposing actors (Jepson, 2001). Although planners face the difficult task of coordinating environmental protection, economic development, and equity, sustainable development encompasses the idea that the three E’s can be achieved in unison (Campbell, 1996; Jepson, 2001). Additionally, given that the issues pertaining to the three

E's cross jurisdictional boundaries, sustainable development is best addressed by planning and policymaking at the regional scale (Wheeler, 2000).

Regional Planning for Sustainability

The coordination of land use and transportation planning at the regional and metropolitan scale is most appropriate for environmental planning and policymaking because it matches the scale of housing markets, labor sheds, and commuter sheds (Barbour & Deakin, 2012). Not only is the regional scale the most important for addressing environmental issues, it is also the scale at which global economies operate (Center for a Sustainable California, 2009). At the regional scale the emphasis of environmental, social, and economic linkages between communities is also more feasible, simpler to understand, and politically easier than encouraging an idea of global sustainability and stewardship (Berke, 2002). However, regional efforts to promote sustainability are often hindered by a variety of factors such as conflicting local and regional political relationships (Lewis, 1996). These conflicting issues include strong local autonomy, opposing central-city and suburban growth agendas, a lack of resources at the regional level, an unwillingness by regional-level entities to support local coordination, and competition between cities for economic investments (Basolo, 2003; Berke, 2002; Bollens, 1997; Wheeler, 2000). Metropolitan regions are the primary social and economic units of the global society, and although fragmented governance can promote competition and innovation, it has also exacerbated regional inefficiencies, since the decisions of one governmental entity can impose a variety of externalities on others (Feiock, 2009). While metropolitan regions continue to grow in both size and complexity, they are still unable to address cross-boundary environmental,

economic, and equity issues due to inadequate regional governments or a lack of regionally-oriented inter-local cooperation (Wheeler, 2000).

Regionalism. Regionalism has been one solution proposed by scholars to address regional governance issues such as the fragmentation of governing entities and the weak authority of regional-level organizations. Without a strict definition, regionalism includes a variety of regional approaches and practices that scholars have suggested as ways to revitalize central cities, reduce regional economic disparities, and curb sprawl (Basolo & Hastings, 2003; Wheeler, 2002). The range of regionalism includes an emphasis of a regional *government* on one end, and an absence of governance on the other. Given this, the literature on regionalism has discussed the consolidation of governments and organizations into a unified metropolitan government, the consolidation of regional functions of services instead of governments, and the complete embracement of political fragmentation and laissez-faire policies to allow market forces to solve regional problems (see Basolo, 2003; Rusk, 2000; Savitch & Vogel, 2000; Wheeler, 2002).

As an example of success with a consolidating approach to regionalism, scholars have frequently pointed to the growth management of Portland, Oregon (Basolo & Hastings, 2003; Rusk, 2000). The role of the Metropolitan Service District, the only popularly elected regional government in the nation, has been credited for the success in establishing a growth boundary for the metropolitan region (Rusk, 2000). However, the involvement of the state, with its ability to legislate, impose goals, and provide a set of formal structures within which negotiations take place, has also been noted as essential for bridging wide ideological gaps in Portland (Leo, 1998).

Meanwhile, other scholars of regionalism have noted that since voluntary interlocal governance and service arrangements have successfully emerged in contexts where transaction costs of cooperation are reduced, a metropolitan structure of nested and overlaid governments is favored over a single government (see Oakerson, 2000; Oakerson & Parks, 1989; Oakerson & Svorny, 2005; Parks & Oakerson, 1989; Parks & Oakerson, 1993). From this perspective, successful regional governance can be achieved through the cooperation of public and private groups and individuals, who come together to address issues of collective importance (Oakerson & Svorney, 2005). However, scholars have also argued that voluntary approaches to regionalism are nearly impossible due to fragmentation and intercity competition, which degrades cooperative organizations as group sizes increase, free-riding becomes an individual strategy, and control is maintained through the use of coercion or selective incentives (Basolo, 2003).

With the recent rise of smart growth, regionalism has been examined in conjunction with the rise of policies, which have been referred to as an operationalization or “pragmatic ‘recoding’” of regionalism (Scott, 2007, p. 15). Despite the success in Portland to establish a regional government to manage growth, the centralization of power is particularly challenging in highly fragmented areas such as the Los Angeles region. Where strong local autonomy exists, regionalism threatens local control over the environment (Basolo, 2003). To be successful in these regions, smart growth approaches that encourage sustainability necessitate cooperative planning.

Cooperative Planning for Sustainability

During the 1960s, faith in the expertise and rationality of planning began to wane, brought on by its inability to effectively deal with societal concerns such as social inequalities

(Gunder, 2006). A cooperative approach to policymaking followed the recognition that policies, as a combination of goals, values, and intent, were just as likely to be defined through bottom-up processes than through formal top-down exercises (Healey, 2006). Planners were advised to perform “incremental” planning instead of comprehensive planning tasks (Lindblom, 1959). Since many large-scale and top-down planning approaches were perceived by advocacy-focused planners as being too exclusionary of diverse stakeholders and driven by experts, many believed this shift to cooperative planning was necessary (Davidoff, 1965). The recognition that knowledge did not exist to be discovered through scientific inquiry, but rather actively constructed through social and interactive processes, resulted in a turn towards planning approaches that were considered communicative, deliberative, and interpretive (Healey, 2006). These approaches went beyond the mere production of collective decisions, and sought to change cultural conceptions, modify systems of understanding, and reshape perspectives (Healey, 2006). The challenge for planning was to carry out the specific coordination of ideas for problem solving instead of simply performing scoping exercises (Healey, 2006).

The adoption of the 1985 State Planning Act of New Jersey is particularly notable for initiating a cooperative planning approach to create a state plan, which utilized an intergovernmental negotiation process to encourage local jurisdictions to voluntarily “cross-accept” mutually beneficial state and local goals (Bollens, 1992). Through the highly formalized process, the State Planning Commission (SPC) of New Jersey initially compared state, regional, county, and municipal plans to create a preliminary draft plan (NJOSG, 2004). Participating county planning boards then compared local plans with the preliminary state plan and prepared a written statement of agreements and disagreements in order to negotiate with the SPC, and a final draft plan was prepared for a final approval phase (NJOSG, 2004). Although the initial

comparison phase took six years, three times as long as anticipated, state and local governments cooperatively developed a preliminary plan in 1988, an interim plan in 1991, and a final State Development and Redevelopment Plan in 1992 (Bollens, 1992). Called a “remarkable achievement” by the executive director of the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, the planning process systematically settled disagreements and was more representative of the will of the people (Innes, 1992, p. 449). However, the plan also reflects limitations of the voluntary cross-acceptance process, since many of its policies have been opposed at the local level due to powerful real estate interests (Berke, 2002; Fainstein, 2000)

In urban regions where questions are raised about how economic development strategies impact environmental quality, and where there is a growing desire to link the three E’s, the need for cooperative and communicative approaches for cultural change is evident (Healey, 2006). In order to strategize solutions to urban problems, stakeholders must find ways to collaborate and develop new and enduring ways of thinking about how to share physical, political, and intellectual spaces (Healey, 2006). Additionally, institutional rules and structures are required to bring about moments of cooperative success, so that progressive planning exercises do not reaffirm the status quo or fade into unproductive rituals (Healey, 2006).

Defining policies and developing strategies through cooperative efforts build social, intellectual, and political capital, which together, become a stronger resource for entities in planning processes that generate new forums in which issues are discussed more effectively, understood more thoroughly, and addressed more quickly (Healey, 2006). However, an overemphasis of planning processes have also resulted in criticisms by the end of the 1990s that without attention paid to physical planning, knowledge was becoming divorced from action (Neuman, 1998a). The planning profession had lost its central ideology of making cities better,

safer, healthier, and functionally more efficient, embodied in physical plans that coordinate policy, urban growth, and illustrate visions (Neuman, 1998b).

Plans for sustainable development. At the turn of the twenty-first century, sustainability and sustainable development had given planning a new agenda and guiding principle (Berke, 2002; Campbell, 1996; Gunder, 2006). With a clearer link between development and environmental degradation, physical plans began to receive renewed attention as a product of process and as a guide for promoting sustainable development (Conroy & Berke, 2004). As a result of the growing interest in sustainable development plans, a wide body of research examined participatory plan making processes, resource allocation, commitment to plans, plan frameworks, and the impact of state mandates (Conroy & Berke, 2004). According to scholars, cooperative planning approaches that bring together a wide array of stakeholders diffuse conflicts, build support, increase commitment, and result in stronger plans (Burby, 2003; Burby & May, 1998; Innes, 1992).

While general state planning mandates help with coordination, they have little impact on the commitment of planners to the objectives of the state (Dalton & Burby, 1994). State mandates may include incomplete planning concepts and assorted criteria created by interests groups that are unaware of the link between plan concepts and criteria (Baer, 1997). In these instances, local planners are left with the difficult task of devising the concepts unarticulated by the mandates, or inventing the evaluation criteria that the mandates imply (Baer, 1997). Single-purpose mandates however, such as those for natural hazard planning, improve the quality of local plans, while a combination of good plans and committed planners results in strong development management programs (Berke & French, 1994; Dalton & Burby, 1994). Nevertheless, mandates are insufficient alone and need to be augmented by active, dedicated, and

competent planners, and financial and technical assistance (Hoch, 2007). In Maine for example, more local governments voluntarily adopted general plans consistent with state goals after the state provided technical assistance, financial aid, and a review of the plans (Pendall, 2001). Pendall (2001) suggests that instead of the hastily imposing a mandate for local planning, providing incentives and technical assistance may result in more widespread improvements in planning. One common thread in the research on state mandates is that top-down requirements direct plan content while deflecting opposition away from local planners (Conroy & Berke, 2004). In Portland for example, local governments were able to overcome political resistance to the development of more compact housing for all income levels by blaming the regional government agency (Leo, 1998).

Research on sustainable development plans found that the amount of verbiage about sustainable development that exists in plans did not reflect how well the plans actually promote principles of sustainability (Berke & Conroy, 2000). Instead of taking a balanced approach to guiding sustainable development, most plans focused narrowly on the traditional planning task of creating livable built environments, without addressing nontraditional sustainability principles such as harmony with nature, place-based economics, and equity (Berke & Conroy, 2000). In order to move beyond the rhetoric, planners can use negotiation and conflict resolution techniques during decision-making processes, emphasize state mandates when incorporating sustainability principles, and utilize evaluation techniques to examine the link between plans, implementation, and outcomes (Berke & Conroy, 2000).

For sustainable planning at the regional scale the combination of effective regional institutions, vision documents, intergovernmental incentives, cooperative planning processes, coalition building, and performance standards create a context for successful regional

sustainability planning (Wheeler, 2000). In the Los Angeles region, factors that contribute to a challenging context for regional planning to address sustainability issues include political fragmentation, strong local autonomy, enormous diversity, and an MPO that lacks authority over land use decisions. In spite of these challenges, the Los Angeles region cooperatively created and unanimously adopted the 2012 RTP/SCS, a plan and vision towards a sustainable future. Given this, a regime theory perspective of regional planning provides insights into how different individuals and stakeholder groups can coordinate in a region without an overarching command structure and develop the collective capacity to act and address complex issues pertaining to sustainability.

A Regime Theory Perspective of Governance

Regime theory emerged in the 1980s in contrast to elitist and pluralist theories of urban power and politics (Stoker, 1995). The influential research by Hunter (1953) on city leadership and policymaking in Atlanta, GA, found that the city was controlled by a small group of business elites. From the elitist view, the economy was seen as the hegemonic sphere that dominates all others (Stone, 1993). This perspective of elite governance was challenged by Dahl (1961), who argued that the governance of New Haven, CT, was pluralistic and carried out through decision making by different actors and groups. From the pluralist view, the economy was one sphere of activity among many (Stone, 1993). Stone (1989), who studied the development of downtown Atlanta, found a middle ground with regime-oriented politics that bridged both elite and pluralist views of the economy, and argued that economic forces and political arrangements mutually shaped each other in coalitions. According to Stone (1989), urban coalitions become urban regimes if they establish governance in a locality for the long-term.

Regime theory accepts as a given that the economy is primarily guided by privately controlled investment decisions and that government institutions are controlled by elected officials (Stone, 1993). In this context, an urban regime is “the informal arrangements by which public bodies and private interests function together in order to be able to make and carry out governing decisions” (Stone, 1989, p. 6). Whereas the debate between pluralist and elitist perspectives focuses on dominion and subordination through the power of social control, a regime perspective focuses on the capacity to act and accomplish goals through preemptive power (Stoker, 1995).

According to Stone (1989), preemptive power, or the power of social production, is one of four forms of power in urban politics, with the additional three being:

- Systemic power, based on an entity’s passive position in the socioeconomic structure;
- Command power, based on social control and an entity’s ability to mobilize resources to achieve dominion over other interests in limited domains and activities; and
- Bargaining power, based on competitive bargaining between entities unable to exercise command power in an unstable coalition.

Pre-emptive power, or the power of social production, is distinctive to regime theory and rests on the idea that long-term leadership in a complex society is not achieved through ideological indoctrination and electoral victory, but rather constructed by a group of interests capable of solving a collective problem by combining their individual resources (Stoker, 1995; Stone, 1989). Through the power of social production, coalition partners form relationships based on solidarity, loyalty, trust, and mutual support, rather than through bargaining tactics or hierarchies (Stoker, 1995). The social production of power is necessary for an urban coalition to continually shape policy for an extended period of time (Stone, 1989). To be effective partners, entities must

possess a strategic knowledge of social transactions and be able to act on that knowledge, as well as control the resources that make the entity an attractive partner (Stoker, 1995). Additionally, partners must often educate each other about how their interdependence supports the agenda of the regime (Stone, 1993).

Research by Stone (1993) identifies three main types of regimes found in American cities to describe how regimes must mobilize resources that match their agendas for policy change:

- Maintenance regimes seek to preserve the status quo, and their responsibility to deliver routine services requires relatively basic relationships between entities;
- Development regimes seek to promote growth and counter decline, and their more complex governance task requires more resources to coordinate institutional elites;
- and
- Middle class progressive regimes seek social gains, such as environmental protection and affordable housing, through encouraging development, and their governance task requires resources to monitor and regulate the actions of institutional elites.

Stone (1993) argues that a fourth type of regime, the lower class opportunity expansion regime, is largely hypothetical but that there are hints of this type of regime in the United States. This regime seeks social gains such as access and education and job opportunities through mass mobilization that would require a level of resources and coordination absent in most cities.

Although regimes are intended to be long-lasting and stable governing coalitions, an established regime can be disrupted by such factors as social movements, political struggles, fiscal crises, and opposition pressures to policy agenda of the regime (Lauria, 1999; Stoker 1995). In these instances, regimes may be required to attract and incorporate marginal entities

through small-scale material incentives instead of shared visions and may practice exclusion to ensure that decision-making is not accessible to certain entities (Stoker, 1995).

The primary purpose of regimes is to achieve and sustain the power to act and influence key policy areas by blending the capacities of governmental and nongovernmental actors (Stone, 1993). A regime theory perspective of urban politics is not meant to merely identify coalitions, but to explore the conditions under which such coalitions are formed and maintained (Stoker, 1995). However, scholars have also criticized regime theory for its limitations, which include a narrow focus on local economic development and an inability to connect local economic development strategies to wider extra-local and global economic forces (Lauria, 1999).

Regime politics at the regional level. Stone (1989) noted in his research on Atlanta that “we should begin our understanding of regimes by realizing that informal arrangements are by no means peculiar to cities or, for that matter, to government” (p. 3). Additionally, regime theory does not need to be confined to cities or that all private interests need to be business interests (Hamilton, 2002; Mossberger & Stoker, 2001). However, much of the literature on regime theory has focused on the economic development within individual cities, or the relationship between elected officials and businesses, and conducted comparisons between cities (Lauria, 1999; Stoker, 1995).

Urban regimes have traditionally attempted to address problems associated with issues such as economic development and land use, which cannot be adequately resolved within the boundaries of cities in fragmented regions in the nation (Mossberger & Stoker, 2001). Mossberger and Stoker (2001) have argued that there have been promising applications of regime theory to extra-local contexts and diverse issues, such as regional governance and the incorporation of different social groups into governing coalitions. However, the authors also

cautioned against stretching the urban regime concept beyond its original formulation by omitting required elements, such as excluding business interests, or misapplying regime theory by misusing its definition, such as describing any local political system as a regime (Mossberger & Stoker, 2001).

The role of the environment in regime politics. Economic development clearly has a wide range of environmental implications, and environmental issues feature prominently in conflicts over urban development and land use policies (Gibbs & Jonas, 2000). However, environmental policy and its position in the structure of governance has been largely ignored in urban regime literature. (Gibbs & Jonas, 2000). The research by Gibbs and Jonas (2000) in Southern California and the United Kingdom found that environmentalism did have the potential to impact the conditions that preserved the dominance of a regime of accumulation, such as a development or growth regime, and its power of social regulation. However, the possibility for environmentalism to become an object of reform depended on how the environment was mobilized in political discourse, and the repackaging of the environment as a commodity for consumption prevented reform (Gibbs & Jonas, 2000). This repackaging of the environment reflects the way that the concept of sustainable development can support development regimes with expansionist perspectives.

Sustainable development encompasses the idea that the three E's can be addressed in tandem (Campbell, 1996; Jepson, 2001). However, the vague concept of sustainability and its categorical notion of good has frequently been used by planners and politicians to support prevailing ideologies of capital accumulation and growth with little regard for social inequalities and environmental degradation (Gunder, 2006). The subversion of the concept of sustainability is evidenced by policies for higher densities and compact development that ignore the negative

cumulative impacts of population concentration (Neuman, 2005). Additionally, policies may also equate social equity with job creation from economic growth or emphasize physical infrastructure improvements to enhance undefined notions of a sense of place (Gunder, 2006).

However, the reconciliation of both expansionist and ecological perspectives is possible if planners are able to recognize the two perspectives and utilize long-term educational and cooperative planning processes to promote innovative ways to address conflicts (Jepson, 2004). Additionally, scholars have also argued that truly sustainable development requires embracing the ecological worldview, accepting the need to reduce consumption, and preventing the ways discourses can be manipulated (Gunder, 2006; Rees, 1995). Nevertheless, presenting a version of sustainable development focused solely on preserving the natural environment as an only option is erroneous and difficult to reinforce because it requires significant behavioral changes and economic sacrifices (Rees, 1995). Instead, planning efforts must reinforce confidence in people that a future shaped by comprehensive policies inclusive of principles of sustainable development will be more attractive and livable than one offered by any other development strategy (Rees, 1995).

Smart growth approaches to regional planning provide an opening for regime politics to address difficult urban problems associated with equity, the environment, and the economy. Although the research by Gibbs and Jonas (2000) revealed how regime theory is useful to the analysis of environmental policymaking, the authors focused exclusively on governance at the local level. Nevertheless, the authors concluded that since sole intervention at one particular level is unlikely to effectively promote sustainability, it is necessary to take “a more dynamic and multidimensional view of the myriad processes affecting local, regional, etc. environmental outcomes” (Gibbs & Jonas, 2000, p. 311).

Regime theory and sustainable development. The literature on regime politics does not adequately address regional efforts for metropolitan-wide growth management policies concerning areas beyond city limits and far-ranging economic and environmental goals (Leo, 1998). Research by Leo (1998), which applied regime theory to the study of growth management in the Portland metropolitan region found that an ambitious regime achieved successful governance through the use of both formal and informal coordination, tradeoffs to ensure short-term compliance to implement projects, as well as long-term restrictions and obligations (Leo, 1998). In order to integrate state, metropolitan, and local planning in Portland, the regime involved the state as an insider in local politics, included entities that possessed economic resources and knew how to wield them, and offered transparency through widespread public education and involvement (Leo, 1998). Leo (1998) found that a regime must bridge ideological gaps through tradeoffs and unlikely alliances, such as partnerships between environmentalists and a highway commission, to address large-scale issues such as growth management.

Stone (1989) argues that a regime does not imply a group of one mind with identical interests, but rather the informal coordination of diverse entities, and the different institutional capacities they control, without a single authority, but within an overarching structure of organization that guides and unifies behaviors. The rise of smart growth has led to the formation of new forms of regional governance and coalitions consisting of various political, environmental, economic, and social groups and individuals (Scott, 2007). However, as urban development has continued to sprawl in politically fragmented areas and equity issues remain underfunded or sidelined, whether coalitions can achieve some success at changing cultures of governance remains to be seen (Scott, 2007).

With the adoption of SB 375, California began promoting smart growth approaches to link land use and transportation planning and mandated cooperative regional planning processes intended to include a diversity of stakeholders to develop new regional growth strategies. Given the fragmented governance of the Los Angeles region, the creation of the 2012 RTP/SCS provides an opportunity to examine the incorporation of sustainable development principles into the regional plan, the mobilization and cooperation of stakeholders during the planning process, and the barriers and channels to the regional effort to create a vision towards a sustainable future.

Chapter Five

Research Objective and Methodology

As discussed in Chapter Three, SB 375 required SCAG to implement a cooperative process intended to involve a variety of government, private, and public entities to create the 2012 RTP/SCS for the Los Angeles region. Chapter Four discussed the challenges to sustainable development in fragmented metropolitan regions and reviewed regime theory as a frame to examine coordination between diverse stakeholders. This chapter discusses the main purpose for this dissertation, its guiding research questions, the case site of the Los Angeles region, and the research methodology.

Research Objective and Guiding Questions

The purpose of this research is to examine the first RTP/SCS planning process and adopted plan for the Los Angeles region that encourages regional smart growth to help reduce GHG emissions and promote sustainable development. In order to determine what has changed about planning in the Los Angeles region and to provide insight into how a variety of stakeholders coordinated with each other to advance principles of sustainable development in the region, this research is focused around three main research questions:

1. To what extent are principles of sustainable development promoted in the 2012 RTP/SCS?
2. How might an urban regime influence the development of the 2012 RTP/SCS?
3. What are the barriers and channels to the regional planning approach to develop the 2012 RTP/SCS?

Moreover, I included focused sub-questions to link my research objectives to the literature and help guide and organize this research. For example, the literature on sustainability argues that although capital accumulation has traditionally dominated attempts to promote environmental conservation and equity, a recognition of the need to clearly emphasize environment and social goals in plans is necessary in comprehensively addressing sustainable development. With this in mind, how are environmental and social objectives presented in the 2012 RTP/SCS in contrast to economic development? How do planning scenarios of the 2012 RTP/SCS fit with these goals?

The literature on regime politics argues that the coordination of entities into coalitions must satisfy all members, and members must be frequently educated about their interdependence. With this in mind, what shared visions and goals brought entities together and how did members foster a unified agenda? How did coalitions address disagreements? Do coalitions reflect any characteristics of the four types of regimes?

Lastly, the literature on cooperative planning argues that factors such as incentives, technical assistance, and voluntary approaches strengthen planning actions, plan quality, and local commitment. With this in mind, what was the role of SCAG in facilitating cooperative planning in the region and addressing conflicts? Has there been a change in how regional planning is conducted in the Los Angeles region and the relationships between the MPO and its sub-regional entities?

The Los Angeles Region as the Research Setting

Since the turn of the 20th century, the growth of Los Angeles demonstrates how the interplay of political, social, and economic factors transformed a city without a harbor,

transportation hub, or even a reliable source of water, into a leading metropolitan region (Fogelson, 1993; Logan & Molotch, 1987). The economic and political structure within the region facilitated growth coalitions, composed of individuals and organizations seeking to foster conditions that intensified land use and economic development in their cities (Logan & Molotch, 1987). In the postwar era, suburban cities competed to attract housing developers, institutions, services, and homebuyers as a means to stimulate growth (Cohen, 2003). Rapid growth in the Los Angeles region facilitated suburban development away from central business districts (Bottles, 1987; Fulton, 2001; Jackson, 1985). Additionally, the proliferation of the automobile allowed residents to live farther away from the jobs, goods, and services that traditionally remained close to rail and streetcar lines (Bottles, 1987).

The Los Angeles region is one of the largest and fastest-growing metropolitan areas in the nation (Lang, Blakely, & Gough, 2005; Seltzer & Carbonell, 2011). As of 2013, the region included approximately 18 million inhabitants, representing nearly half of the population of California (SCAG, 2014). The region faces planning challenges such as the need to accommodate an additional five million inhabitants by 2035, as well as a shrinking supply of developable land and deteriorating air and environmental quality (see Brookings Institution, 2002; CAHCD, 2000; SCAG, 2011). Additionally, SCAG lacks land use authority yet oversees planning for a metropolitan region fragmented into six counties and their CTCs, fifteen sub-regional COGs, 191 cities, and a variety of sub-jurisdictional agencies (SCAG, 2014). In this context, the 2012 RTP/SCS is poised to shape regional planning and future growth in a major way. This research on the 2012 RTP/SCS provides insights to planners in other large fast-growing and fragmented metropolitan regions who are attempting to encourage sustainable development and solve problems associated with the interrelated issues of the three E's.

Research Design

This research uses a case study approach to examine the coordination of organizations in a new process, which may be difficult to study quantitatively (Yin, 2009). Primary and secondary data for this research consist of interviews with key individuals involved in the development of the 2012 RTP/SCS, observations of regional planning meetings and workshops, and archival documents such as the regional transportation planning documents. The documents provided textual and visual data, which was analyzed using sustainable development principles and coded with a computer-assisted qualitative analysis software program. Interview data provided narratives that were coded and analyzed to provide insights into processes such as how stakeholders organized and negotiated. Additionally, observational data provided additional descriptive details such as how stakeholders participated in meetings and how workshops were facilitated. A discussion of the data used for this research and how the data were collected and analyzed is provided below.

Data

The data for this study consisted of primary sources in the form of interviews and observations, and secondary sources in the form of archival documents. Data collection began in August 2011, during the summer in which SCAG conducted public outreach workshops to seek feedback for the creation of the draft 2012 RTP/SCS, and through the post-draft phase, in which SCAG received public comments on the released draft plan. Data collection concluded in May 2014 in the post-adoption period.

Archival documents. During the research period, I collected an extensive amount of documents, which included the regional transportation plans, meeting agendas, presentations

used during regional planning meetings, handouts and comment letters from organizations, and press releases on the 2012 RTP/SCS. Electronic documents, such as presentations, were downloaded following meetings, or interviews, when interviewees directed me to the website of their organization for a particular document or press release. Hard-copy documents were collected during workshops and meetings, as well as during interviews, when interviewees provided me with hard-copy handouts and reports.

The documents most important to this dissertation were the (a) *2012-2035 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy: Towards a Sustainable Future*, which includes the two sub-regional SCS sections created by GCCOG and OCCOG, and the (b) *2008 Regional Transportation Plan: Making the Connections*. The 2012 regional plan and SCS sections were central to this research because they present the primary visions and plans for regional planning and were created through the mandate of SB 375. The main 2008 RTP is also important because it serves as the preceding RTP, created prior to SB 375, to which the 2012 RTP/SCS can be compared. Both the 2012 RTP SCS and the 2008 highlight potential mitigation measures that are perceived to be important enough to be included in the main regional plans and not in appended programmatic environmental impact reports (PEIRs).

Additional relevant documents include comment letters provided by organizations during the post-draft 2012 RTP/SCS period, as well as documents from the post-adoption phase, such as handouts from organizations discussing what was achieved, as well as memorandums of understanding between SCAG and CTCs. Documents that were related to the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process such as meeting agendas were not relevant to the main objectives of this research and excluded from the analysis.

It is important to note that the 2012 RTP/SCS includes 21 additional appendices and the 2008 RTP includes 19 additional appendices that discuss additional details of the regional plan, as well as separate associated documents such as the Program Environmental Impact Report, which discusses a variety of example mitigation measures that local agencies can consider implementing for consistency with CEQA requirements. Additionally, several amendments have been approved for both plans that apply to details in the appendices, such as those which update projects in the Federal Transportation Improvement Plan. Given the objectives of this research to examine the broader changes to regional planning and organization by stakeholders, these additional appendices, supplemental reports, and technical details were not relevant to the objectives of this research and not included in the analysis.

Participant observations. As an attending participant or audience member, I made observations 12 public meetings associated with the 2012 RTP/SCS. This includes three public outreach workshops, one SCAG sub-committee meeting, three regional council meetings, two joint meetings of the regional council and its sub-committees, one outreach workshop with local elected officials, SCAG's 2011 Transportation, Sustainability, and Economic Recovery Summit, and one 2012 RTP/SCS update meeting at the California Environmental Protection Agency. A list of meetings and workshops attended for this research is provided in Table 5.1 (p. 62).

During regional planning meetings and workshops, I took fieldnotes on how issues regarding the 2012 RTP/SCS were presented and discussed, how SCAG staff facilitated roundtable discussions, the characteristics of audience members and participants, what organizations provided oral feedback during public comments, what concerns were expressed, and what issues were supported. During these public events, I also audio-recorded roundtable discussions with the permission of the participants and took photographs during group activities,

while keeping the identities of the participants confidential. Additionally, attendance at these meetings allowed me to introduce myself to planning staff and other attendees and exchange contact information for follow-up interviews.

Table 5.1. RTP/SCS meetings and workshops attended for data collection.

Date	Meeting or Workshop	Venue (Location, City)
2011 August	Public outreach workshop	Activities Center, Santa Clarita
	Public outreach workshop	Civic Center, Carson
	Public outreach workshop	Main Library, Santa Monica
September	Community, Economic, and Human Development sub-committee meeting	SCAG Main Office, Los Angeles
	Regional Council meeting	SCAG Main Office, Los Angeles
October	Regional Council and sub-committees joint meeting	SCAG Main Office, Los Angeles
	Regional Council and sub-committees joint meeting	SCAG Main Office, Los Angeles
November	Regional Council meeting	SCAG Main Office, Los Angeles
December	Transportation, Sustainability and Economic Recovery Summit	Wilshire Grand Hotel, Los Angeles
	Regional Council meeting	SCAG Main Office, Los Angeles
2012 February	Outreach workshop with elected officials	Brandman University, Irvine
	California Air Resources Board meeting	California EPA, Sacramento

Interviews. From August 2011 to May 2014, I conducted 15 in-person interviews and three phone interviews with individuals from a variety of fields and organizations. A list of interviewee roles and the industries they represent is provided in Table 5.2 (p. 63).

In the pre-draft phase, I conducted semi-formal interviews of approximately one hour each with SCAG planning staff. These interviewees were solicited from the workshop sessions and took place at the SCAG office. From these interviews with regional planners, I sought a better understanding of SCAG’s approach to facilitating the workshops, how discussion and feedback were encouraged, and what lessons were learned to improve subsequent workshops. Additionally, informal interviews of approximately 30–45 minutes each with members of the public following public outreach workshops. During these interviews, I sought a better

understanding of what compelled participants to attend, what knowledge participants gained from the events, and what the participants thought could have been clarified or improved.

Table 5.2. Interviewee roles and represented industries.

Date	Role	Sector or Industry
2011 August	Consultant	Transportation (conventional)
	Small Business Owner	Business
	Graduate Student	Health
	Planner	Regional planning
	Planner	Regional planning
September	Planner	Regional planning
2013 September	Senior Planner	Regional planning
October	Attorney	Business
	Director	Environment
	Coordinator	Health
November	Director	Environment
December	Vice President	Business
2014 January	Vice President	Affordable housing
	Director	Transportation (conventional)
	Elected Official	Local government
	Director	Health
	April	Director
May	Planner	Affordable housing

In the post-adoption phase, I conducted formal interviews of approximately 1–1.5 hours each with key individuals from stakeholder groups within the Los Angeles region. Interviewees were first identified through snowball sampling, beginning with an initial interview with a senior regional planner. Interviewees were asked to identify other prominent organizations that interviewees both worked with and did not work with during the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process. Additionally, interviewees were also purposively sampled from the public comments to the draft 2012 RTP/SCS to account for stakeholder groups that were unidentified, and attention was paid to letters associated with multiple organizations and signatories.

Formal interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview guide that focused on five topics: (a) coordination and cooperation within and between organizations, (b) coordination and involvement during the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process versus previous RTP planning processes, (c) SCAG's approach to facilitating involvement, (d) lessons learned, and (e) other prominent organizations that were involved or difficult to work with. The interview guide is included in Appendix A. Interviews were recorded with permission from my interviewees and transcribed for analysis.

Data Analysis

This dissertation research used content analysis to examine the archival, observational, and interview data collected during the study period. For the purposes of analysis, I used Atlas.ti, a computer-assisted qualitative analysis program as my primary tool for organizing data, coding content, writing memos, and linking memos to codes and passages of text. Qualitative coding and analysis of the regional planning documents was conducted using a framework for sustainable development, which was created from the criteria included in green rating systems. Additionally, analysis of observations and fieldnotes relied on codes that came from the literature, as well as those that emerged from the open coding of the data. The details of my data analysis are discussed below.

Analysis of archival data. The documents most important to this dissertation and analyzed in depth are the 2012 RTP/SCS, which includes the two sub-regional OC SCS and GC SCS sections, and the 2008 RTP. The approach used in this study to analyze the regional plans is similar to the approach used by Garde, Kim, and Tsai (2015) to evaluate and compare the extent to which municipal zoning regulations promote principles of sustainable development. The

literature on sustainability, smart growth, and sustainable development associates the concepts with a variety of principles and objectives. As discussed in Chapter Four, the lack of an agreed-upon definition of the concepts can result in instances where planners have utilized broad language pertaining to the concepts to preserve existing patterns of development while neglecting to adequately address environmental and social problems.

Many green rating systems exist worldwide, but most are focused on rating single buildings, such as homes and offices, and targeting specific sectors such as energy or health (Retzlaff, 2008; Retzlaff, 2009). To operationalize the broad definition of sustainability for the purposes of this dissertation research, I adapted criteria associated with principles for sustainable development from three widely recognized green rating systems:

- The Leadership in Environmental and Energy Design rating system for neighborhood development projects (LEED-ND) published by the United States Green Building Council (USGBC) and updated in 2013;
- The Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology for Communities (BREEAM Communities) published by BRE (Building Research Establishment) Global Limited and updated in 2012; and
- The SITES v2 Rating System (SITES v2) published by the Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES) and updated in 2014.

The LEED-ND rating system was developed by the USGBC, the Natural Resources Defense Council, and the Congress for the New Urbanism through a collaborative approach that involved review and input from over 100 professionals and academics from a variety of fields (USGBC, 2013). Among the different LEED rating systems, LEED-ND applies to development at the neighborhood scale and is used to rate projects for sustainability. The LEED-ND rating

system consists of five broad categories: (a) smart location and linkage (SLL), (b) neighborhood pattern and design (NPD), and (c) green infrastructure and building (GIB), (d) innovation and design process (IDP), and (e) regional priority credit (RPC). The first three categories—SLL, NPD, and GIB—include 12 prerequisite criteria and 41 optional criteria, which encompass over 100 sub-criteria that promote sustainable development. The last two categories—IDP and RPC—provide bonus points and include undefined criteria, which encourage design innovations that are not addressed by the other criteria.

The BREEAM Communities rating system was developed by the BRE Global Limited, an independent approvals body offering certification of fire, security, and sustainability products and services (BRE, 2012). Used primarily in the United Kingdom, the rating system applies to development projects at the neighborhood scale or larger and consists of six broad categories: (a) governance (GO), (b) social and economic well-being (SE), (c) resources and energy (RE), (d) land use and ecology (LE), (e) transport and movement (TM), and (f) innovation (IN). While the five primary categories —GO, SE, RE, LE, and TM—include 12 mandatory and 28 optional standards that promote sustainable development principles, the IN category does not include any specific standards for which bonus points can be earned.

The SITES v2 rating system was produced by SITES, a collaborative program involving the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center at The University of Texas at Austin, the United States Botanic Garden, and the American Society of Landscape Architects. Modeled after and aligned with LEED, the rating system encourages projects to seek simultaneous certification with LEED. The SITES v2 rating system was developed through a collaborative process that included representatives from the USGBC and involved over 70 contributors from a variety of fields (SITES, 2014). The rating system focuses on project areas external to the building and includes

18 prerequisites and 48 optional criteria, which are organized into nine sections that follow typical project design and construction phases. The nine sections are: (a) site context, (b) pre-design assessment and planning, (c) site design—water, (d) site design—soil and vegetation, (e) site design—materials selection, (f) site design—human health and well-being, (g) construction, (h) operations and maintenance, and (i) education and performance monitoring. An additional category, innovation or exemplary performance, offers development projects an opportunity to earn bonus points for satisfying standards that are not included in the SITES v2 rating system.

To develop a framework with which to analyze the 2012 RTP/SCS and 2008 RTP, I relied primarily on the LEED-ND rating system, which addresses most of the sustainable development and smart growth principles identified in the literature (see Conroy & Berke, 2004; Retzlaff, 2008; Retzlaff, 2009; Ye et al., 2005). Additionally, I compared the LEED-ND rating system to the BREEAM Communities and SITES v2 rating systems and identified six additional sustainable development principles that are important to regional planning in Southern California but are not included in LEED-ND. A comparison between LEED-ND criteria and criteria in the BREEAM Communities and SITES v2 rating systems is provided in Table B-1 of Appendix B, and the additional criteria from the BREEAM Communities and SITES v2 rating systems that are not emphasized in LEED-ND are provided in Table B-2.

Adapting the criteria and sub-criteria included in the LEED-ND, BREEAM Communities, and SITES v2 rating systems, I compiled a master code list for content analysis. This code list included the sub-criteria from 41 main criteria and three prerequisites not separately addressed by the other criteria to address the three primary LEED-ND categories—SLL, NPD, and GIB. From the BREEAM Communities rating system, I added the criteria “enhancement of ecological value,” and “adaptation to climate change.” From the SITES

v2 rating system, I added “reduction of wildfire risk,” “sustainability awareness and education,” and “case study development and communication.” Lastly, the criterion “local and regional labor and resources” was adapted from both the BREEAM Communities and SITES v2 rating systems by combining the “labour and skills” criterion from the BREEAM Communities rating system with the “support local economy” and “use regional materials” criteria from the SITES v2 rating system. These additional criteria supplemented the LEED-ND criteria in the framework for analysis and were analyzed and reported separately to preserve the criteria and categories in the LEED-ND rating system. A complete list of sustainable development criteria and sub-criteria used for analysis is provided in Appendix C.

The three rating systems provide different levels of green certification for development projects and sites based upon thresholds for credit points, which are achieved through the satisfaction of the design criteria included in the rating systems. Although the LEED-ND rating system applies to neighborhood-scale development, the USGBC, in conjunction with the Land Use Law Center at the Pace University School of Law, developed a manual for evaluating and amending local plans, codes, and policies using LEED-ND (LULC, 2013). However, I developed a different method for evaluating the regional plans using the sustainable development principles, since the regional plan concerns a metropolitan scale that makes the inclusion of locally specific objectives unlikely.

For the purposes of this research, I did not evaluate the regional plans to determine the amount of credit points the plans could achieve for certification. Instead, I examined the extent to which policies in the plans promote principles of sustainable development addressed by the intents of the criteria. Given this approach, criteria based on project-specific design characteristics or performance measures were interpreted more broadly to account for the

regional scale of the plan. For example, the criterion “water-efficient landscaping” in the GIB category of the LEED-ND rating system requires a 50 percent reduction in potable water use for outdoor landscape irrigation. For the purposes of analysis, this criterion was applied to any policies in the regional plans that addressed the reduction of water for landscaping.

It is important to note that the different rating systems assign various credit weights to criteria and sub-criteria, with higher weights assigned to standards deemed more important (see weights in Tables B-1 and B-2). For the purposes of this research, I did not use the weights as they are presented in the rating systems and instead, equally assigned all sub-criteria with a weight of one. To fully account for sustainable development principles with sub-criteria, I treated each sub-criterion as a principle that may be addressed by policies in the regional plan. Additionally, certain criteria in the rating systems include sub-criteria that apply to project-specific details. For example, the criterion “certified green buildings” in the GIB category of the LEED-ND rating system includes two sub-criteria that can apply either to single buildings within multi-building projects or to the square footage of projects of any size. For the purposes of this research, I revised the criterion to include one green building sub-criterion to address the criteria’s intent to encourage the design, construction, and retrofit of buildings that utilize green building practices.

To analyze the regional plans, I followed a coding protocol that consisted of identifying policies and objectives that addressed a sustainable development criterion through its sub-criteria, assigning a code to note the chapter or section that contained the passage, and assigning an incorporation score (0–3) to reflect the degree to which a sub-criterion was addressed. The scale of incorporation scores is provided in Table 5.3 (p. 70). As an example of coding, the 2012 RTP/SCS includes the following policy an example mitigation measure to protect biological

resources: “Minimizing further impacts to wildlife and their habitats after project construction by replanting disturbed areas” (SCAG, 2012, p. 79). This policy addresses the criterion “restoration of habitat or wetlands and water bodies” in the SLL category of the LEED-ND rating system. In this instance, the following codes would be applied: (a) the criterion’s sub-criterion: SLLc8a restore site to redevelopment conditions, (b) the section in the regional plan: transportation investments, and (c) the incorporation score: three, for emphasizing the intent of the criterion to restore the natural environment.

Table 5.3. Scale of incorporation scores used in coding.

Score	Level	Interpretation of Incorporation
3	Good	Plan content encourages the specific intent of the sustainable development criterion
2	Fair	Plan content moderately addresses the general intent of the development criterion
1	Nominal	Plan content weakly includes the sustainable development criterion "in name"
0	None	Plan content does not address the sustainable development criterion

As noted in Chapter Three, SB 375 required MPOs to create and add a new SCS element to their RTPs that discusses how land use strategies will contribute to GHG reductions. In the Los Angeles region, two sub-regions, GCCOG and OCCOG, accepted delegation to each work with their CTCs to create individual sub-regional SCS sections that were included with the SCAG SCS in the 2012 RTP/SCS. With this in mind, I identified which sections of the regional plans contained relevant objectives and policies that addressed sustainable development criteria. By noting whether a policy was included the SCAG SCS or a sub-regional SCS section for example, I was able to compare the different SCS sections more directly, as well as the 2012 RTP/SCS without any SCS sections to the 2008 RTP, which does not include an SCS.

For each criterion, I calculated raw frequencies (F), normalized frequencies (N), maximum incorporation values (M), and weighted incorporation values (I).

The *F* values indicate the total number of instances that policies or objectives address a sustainable development criterion in a section (e.g., SCAG SCS) of the regional plan. The formula for *F* is as follows:

$$F = \text{Sum of instances that policies address a criterion}$$

The *N* values, presented as percentages, indicate the total number of instances that policies or objectives address a sustainable development criterion in a section, as compared to the total number of instances that all criteria were reflected by policies in that section. I calculated *N* values by dividing the *F* value for a criterion by the total sum of raw frequencies of all criteria identified in the regional plan for the applicable section. The formula for *N* is as follows:

$$N = \left(\frac{F}{\text{Sum of } F \text{ for all criteria addressed by policies in a section of the regional plan}} \right) * 100$$

The *M* values indicate the maximum incorporation score assigned to a policy for addressing a sub-criterion. For example, the criterion “bike network and storage” in the SLL category of the LEED-ND rating system includes two sub-criteria: (a) bike network, and (b) bike parking and storage. If a policy in a section of the regional plan strongly addressed bike networks and received an incorporation score of three, but a separate policy only nominally addressed bike parking or storage and received a score of one, the *M* value for the criterion would be three. The formula for *M* is as follows:

$$M = \text{Maximum incorporation score assigned to a policy for addressing a sub-criterion}$$

The shortcoming of policies to fully address the “bike network and storage” criterion in the bike example would be indicated by the *I* value, which reflects the weighted average of the

incorporation scores of a criterion’s sub-criteria. The *I* value for each criterion was calculated through a two-step process by first taking the sum of incorporation scores received by policies addressing the sub-criteria and then dividing that sum by the total number of sub-criteria for the criterion. In the “bike network and storage” example, the two sub-criteria received integrations scores of three and one. The sum of four is then divided by two, the number of sub-criteria for the criterion, to produce the *I* value of two. The formula for *I* is as follows:

$$I = \frac{\text{Sum of incorporation scores received by sub-criteria for a criterion}}{\text{Total number of sub-criteria for the criterion}}$$

Higher *F* and *N* values indicate more instances that policies incorporated a sustainable development criterion, while a higher *I* score indicates that policies tended to more strongly promote a particular criterion. An *M* value may be higher than the *I* value if one or more of the sub-criteria are weakly addressed by policies. Accordingly, identical *I* and *M* values indicate that all sub-criteria received the same incorporation score.

In this study, I relied primarily on *I* scores, which encapsulates each sustainable development principle with its sub-criteria, to interpret and compare the results from the analysis of the regional plans. Additionally, I used thresholds to infer the strengths of these scores, and the thresholds for *I* values and their interpretations are presented in Table 5.4. In the “bike network and storage” example, the *I* value of two indicates that the criterion is moderately reflected by policies in the applicable section of the regional plan.

Table 5.4. Weighted incorporation thresholds and interpretation.

Threshold	Gradation	Interpretation of Threshold
$I > 2$		The sustainable development criterion is strongly addressed in the regional plan
$1 < I \leq 2$		The sustainable development criterion is moderately addressed in the regional plan
$I \leq 1$		The sustainable development criterion is weakly addressed in the regional plan

Note: *I* = Weighted incorporation value.

To derive the findings from comparing the regional plans, I first compared the 2012 RTP/SCS without any SCS sections to the 2008 RTP to evaluate any basic similarities and differences in the extent to which policies incorporated sustainable development principles. Next, I compared the 2012 RTP/SCS with its SCAG SCS element to the 2008 RTP to evaluate the extent to which the new SCAG SCS section contributes to the promotion of sustainable development principles in the regional plan. I then compared the different SCS sections to evaluate the similarities and differences between the SCAG and sub-regional SCS sections and the sustainable development principles they address. Lastly, I compared the overall 2012 RTP/SCS to the 2008 RTP to derive general conclusions about the extent to which the new regional plan promotes principles of sustainable development. The differences between the regional plans and SCS sections are presented in the tables of Chapter Six.

In addition to the analysis of the regional plans, the analysis of additional documents such as handouts and comment letters provided important information that informed, contextualized, and supplemented the findings of this study. To derive findings from these documents, I used open and focused coding to identify the main themes of the documents and any primary concerns. Particular attention was paid to sustainable development principles that featured prominently in the findings from the analysis of the 2012 RTP/SCS, similar content between different documents, and the identities of the signatories. Analysis of these documents provided insights into the main issues that interested different organizations and public officials, as well as what organizations cooperated to issue unified statements or responses. Following interviews with key individuals, archival data were also used to confirm and supplement the information provided by interviewees, particularly when an interviewee provided me with or directed me to a specific document for additional details.

Analysis of interview and observational data. Open and focused coding were used to analyze interview and observational data. Through focused coding, I paid attention to issues and themes derived from the cooperative planning and regime politics literature, which guided my interview questions and served as the organizing principles for content analysis. These issues include the processes of coordination among organizations, the resources mobilized by individual organizations, dispute resolution processes, differences between the 2012 RTP/SCS regional planning process and past processes, and the role of SCAG in facilitating participation and discussion on important issues pertaining to sustainable development. Additionally, open coding was also used in the analysis of the interviews and observations, which revealed additional themes and provided insights into issues that were not identified by the literature. The themes that emerged from the data through open coding pertained to topics such as building trust, taking proactive approaches, targeting environmental champions, presenting co-benefits of goals, and celebrating achievements. Lastly, I wrote memos during the analytical process to connect results and note the relevance of the findings to the literature and purpose of this research.

Ethical Considerations

This research was approved by the Institutional Review Board of UC Irvine (HS# 2011-8183). During my research, I kept my identity transparent and the identity of my informants confidential. All meetings and workshops I attended were open to the public, and I identified myself as “a graduate student studying the RTP/SCS planning process.” All interviews that were audio-recorded were permitted by my interviewees. Since some interviewees did not want to be

identified in my research, I have identified all interviewees based solely on their role and field of work to maintain confidentiality and consistency in this dissertation.

Research Limitations

One of the primary limitations of this research was that I was unable to interview representatives from all organizations that participated in the regional planning process. Over 150 public comment letters were submitted by a variety of organizations in response to the draft 2012 RTP/SCS, with numerous additional letters submitted by unaffiliated individuals. My interviewees were associated with organizations most involved in the development of the 2012 RTP/SCS and did not speak for organizations they did not interact with. Additionally, the comprehensive nature of the regional plan, which includes many issues including financing for transportation projects, goods movement, and aviation, resulted in comment letters pertaining to a wide range of specific issues that were not relevant to the objectives of this research but might have implications for sustainable development in general. Furthermore, my research regarding sustainability and the regional plan was also limited by the lack of an accepted method for examining regional sustainable development; therefore, I was required to develop my own framework and process of analysis.

Validity and Reliability

The use of multiple methods for data collection and different forms of data contributed to the validity of this dissertation research. During the analysis, I crosschecked information between different forms of data and corroborated the responses provided by interviewees with each other. Interviewing individuals from key organizations accounted for the inability to interview representatives from every organization, and I achieved data “saturation” when the information

provided to me by interviewees began to converge and sounded familiar and repetitive. With data saturation, I could identify the primary coalition that contributed to the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process, how the organizations coordinated with each other, and what they considered as achievements. The use of an interview guide, coding protocol, and documented process of interpretation contributed to the reliability and of this research and its potential for replication. The interview protocol primarily consists of questions that can be applied to other collaborative and participatory regional planning process to better understand the impacts of stakeholder coalitions. Additionally, the sustainable development criteria and process of content analysis can be used to examine the promotion of sustainability in other regional plans and policy documents.

Given that this was the first RTP/SCS planning process, replication of this research may result in different findings regarding the organizations involved and the nature of their coordination. Additionally, since SB 375 gives sub-regional COGs the option to assume delegation to create a separate sub-regional SCS, the amount of separate sub-regional plans may vary in the future. Nevertheless, MPOs are required to make regional plans, a variety of issues challenge planning in many regions, and smart growth characterizes many planning policies. This research provides generalizable methods and theories to planners in other similar areas that are attempting to promote sustainable development through regional planning efforts.

Chapter Six

A Comparison of the 2012 and 2008 Regional Plans in Promoting Principles of Sustainable Development

This chapter presents the results from the analysis of the 2012-2035 Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy (2012 RTP/SCS) and the preceding 2008 Regional Transportation Plan (2008 RTP). The presentation begins with the findings from the comparison of the two regional plans using LEED-ND criteria. The findings are organized by category and show that in general, the 2012 RTP/SCS addresses more sustainable development principles, and to a stronger extent, than the 2008 RTP. In particular, the 2012 RTP/SCS promotes LEED-ND criteria pertaining to issues such as compact, affordable, infill, and mixed-use development, alternative modes of transportation, and natural resource conservation.

To derive the results, I began by comparing the difference in integration scores between the new regional plan and the 2008 RTP. Table 6.1 (p. 92) presents the findings from this comparison and show that in general, the 2012 RTP/SCS promotes sustainable development principles to a stronger extent than the 2008 RTP. The addition of the SCAG SCS and sub-regional SCS sections contribute to stronger incorporation of criteria from the Smart Location and Linkage (SLL) and Neighborhood Pattern and Design (NPD) categories and emphasize compact and mixed-use development in infill areas. However, criteria from the Green Infrastructure and Building (GIB) category remain largely unaddressed in both regional plans. Given that the SCS sections are new elements in the regional plan, I also compared the extent to which individual SCS sections differed in the promotion of sustainable development principles. The findings from this comparison of SCS sections are presented in Table 6.2 (p. 94) and show

that although the new sections promote many criteria from the SLL and NPD categories, they hardly emphasize GIB criteria.

Detailed results from the analysis of the 2012 RTP/SCS and 2008 RTP using LEED-ND criteria, which were used for comparison, are presented in additional tables that also include frequencies and maximum incorporation scores. Table 6.3 (p. 96) presents the results from the analysis of the 2012 RTP/SCS and 2008 RTP, and Table 6.4 (p. 98) presents the results from the analysis of the individual SCS sections.

Following the presentation of the findings from the comparison of the 2012 RTP/SCS and 2008 RTP using LEED-ND criteria, I present the findings from the comparison of the two regional plans using additional sustainable development principles, which are not included in the LEED-ND rating system. These additional criteria were selected from the BREEAM Communities and SITES v2 rating systems. Table 6.5 (p. 104), which presents the findings from this comparison in terms of the difference in integration scores between the two plans, shows that the 2012 RTP/SCS promotes the BREEAM Communities and SITES v2 criteria to a much stronger extent than the 2008 RTP. As shown in Table 6.6 (p. 104) however, the SCS sections do not contribute strongly to the promotion of these criteria in the 2012 RTP/SCS. The results show that the 2012 RTP/SCS addresses issues pertaining to climate change, fire risk mitigation, and case study demonstrations to a greater extent than the 2008 RTP. Notably, the 2012 RTP/SCS promotes educating the public about more sustainability issues than the 2008 RTP and in general, reflects the concept of sustainability to a greater extent than the preceding regional plan.

The detailed results from the analysis of the 2012 RTP/SCS and 2008 RTP using criteria from the BREEAM Communities and SITES v2 rating systems are presented in Table 6.7 (p.

105), while Table 6.8 (p. 105) presents the results from the analysis of the SCS sections. Lastly, this chapter concludes with an overall summary of the findings.

Incorporation of LEED-ND criteria in the 2012 RTP/SCS and 2008 RTP

In general, the 2012 RTP/SCS addresses more LEED-ND criteria, and to a stronger extent, than the 2008 RTP. The stronger emphasis of sustainable development principles into the 2012 RTP/SCS is due to the addition of the SCS sections, which address criteria from the SLL and NPD categories of the LEED-ND rating system to a greater extent than the 2012 regional plan without the SCS sections. The findings from the comparison of the 2012 RTP/SCS without any SCS sections to the 2008 RTP show that several NPD criteria are more strongly reflected in the 2008 RTP than the 2012 RTP/SCS. In these cases however, the use of nearly identical language shows that policies addressing these criteria in the 2008 RTP were copied into the SCAG SCS section of the 2012 RTP/SCS. Whereas the SCAG SCS addresses criteria from the NPD category to a greater extent than the sub-regional SCS elements, the sub-regional SCS sections address SLL criteria to a greater extent. However, almost all criteria from the GIB category remain unaddressed by the SCS sections. Indeed, the comparison of the 2012 RTP/SCS to the 2008 RTP shows that policies in both regional plans only address half of the GIB criteria and to a similar extent through nearly identical policies.

Smart location and linkage. The SLL category of the LEED-ND rating system emphasizes the location of new development as it pertains to equitable development and environmental conservation. The criteria in this category encourage mixed-use development and access to alternative modes of transportation with the intent to bring jobs and housing closer and reduce automobile use. Additionally, these criteria encourage infill and brownfield development

with the intent to reduce investment in new infrastructure, preserve undeveloped land, and protect wildlife habitats. At the regional scale, policies and objectives in the regional plan facilitate the achievement of criteria from the SLL category by incentivizing transit-oriented development, encouraging mixed-use development on infill sites, strengthening bike networks, and emphasizing the preservation of natural resource areas.

In both the 2012 RTP/SCS and the 2008 RTP, each SLL criteria is incorporated to some extent, with the exception of “brownfield redevelopment,” which is only addressed through the Gateway Cities and Orange County sub-regional SCS sections. Nevertheless, the 2012 RTP/SCS reflects more SLL criteria to a stronger extent than the 2008 RTP. In addition to addressing brownfields, notable criteria incorporated into the 2012 RTP/SCS to a stronger extent include “bike network and storage,” “housing and jobs proximity,” and “preferred locations.”

The greatest difference between the two regional plans is in the incorporation of policies reflecting “bike network and storage.” Whereas this criterion is strongly addressed in the 2012 RTP/SCS, it is only nominally addressed in the 2008 RTP. The 2012 RTP/SCS emphasizes an increase in financial investment to \$6.7 billion for active transportation from \$1.8 billion in the 2008 RTP. The plan directs SCAG staff to work with local jurisdictions to complete the SCAG Regional Bikeway Network and link cities by closing gaps in existing and proposed bike networks. By increasing investments for biking, the RTP/SCS notes that it intends to extend bikeways within the region to 10,122 miles from 4,315 miles, as well as increase access to bikeways for 62.4 percent of residents in the region from 42.6 percent of residents. Additionally, the 2012 RTP/SCS includes a separate section focused on bikeways in its Strategic Plan chapter that foresees the further expansion and connection of regional, citywide, and neighborhood bike networks. In contrast to the strong focus on biking in the 2012 RTP/SCS, the 2008 RTP

nominally addresses biking as a component of non-motorized transportation and in conjunction with pedestrian-oriented street improvements. Additionally, the 2008 RTP does not discuss bike networks in its Strategic Plan. Furthermore, whereas the 2012 RTP/SCS encourages the accommodation of bicycles on public transportation and includes a figure illustrating bicycle racks and lockers at a transit station, the 2008 RTP does not address bike storage at all.

The criterion “housing and jobs proximity” is addressed to a strong extent in the 2012 RTP/SCS, as compared to the 2008 RTP, which only addresses this criterion to a moderate extent. The 2012 RTP/SCS encourages mixed-use development, particularly in existing main streets and downtown areas, and emphasizes incentives for residential and mixed-use development in “high-quality transit areas” (HQTAs). The 2012 RTP/SCS characterizes HQTAs as well-serviced transit corridors and walkable villages located within a half-mile of a major transit stop. To emphasize the concentration of housing and jobs near transit, the 2012 RTP/SCS notes that it focuses 51 percent of new housing growth and 53 percent of new employment growth in HQTAs, whereas the 2008 RTP focuses 39 percent of new housing and 48 percent of new employment in these areas. Additionally, the 2012 RTP/SCS includes more policies that specifically encourage the revitalization of older, traditionally commercial areas through the promotion of residential and mixed-use development, while the 2008 RTP includes more general policies about developing mixed-use and transit-oriented nodes. Moreover, the addition of the GC SCS contributes to a stronger incorporation of the “housing and jobs proximity” criterion by including the use of housing overlay zones as a possible strategy to achieve the goals of the SCS by encouraging the development of affordable housing in non-residential areas.

The LEED-ND rating system assigns the greatest weight in importance to the criterion “preferred locations” in the SLL category. This criterion encourages the conservation of

undeveloped land and natural and financial resources by promoting development in infill and previously developed sites that are located within a well-connected street network. Whereas “preferred locations” is reflected to a strong extent in the 2012 RTP/SCS, this criterion is only nominally reflected in the 2008 RTP. Both the 2012 RTP/SCS and the 2008 RTP use nearly identical language that promotes identifying strategic areas for growth and planning for a change in housing demands as a result of an aging workforce population. However, the 2012 RTP/SCS emphasizes this criterion by discussing the transition from large-lot to small-lot and multifamily homes in infill locations as a result of shifting demographic trends and housing demands. Additionally, the 2012 RTP/SCS includes a map that identifies urban centers in the Los Angeles region, where focused growth and redevelopment based upon the objectives of the SCS are more likely to succeed. These policies not only encourage development within existing downtowns, but also intend to bring jobs and housing closer. By incentivizing development that concentrates new housing and jobs in HQTAs, the 2012 RTP/SCS also promotes growth in locations where public infrastructure and street connectivity already exist.

A notable criterion addressed by the 2012 RTP/SCS to a moderate extent is “brownfield redevelopment.” The general comparison of the two regional plans shows that this criterion is reflected by policies found in the new SCS section, and the detailed comparison of SCS sections shows that only the two sub-regional SCS sections include policies addressing brownfields. The results show that the GC SCS moderately emphasizes this criterion by specifically encouraging the use of brownfield sites as a source of land for economic development and new affordable housing. Although the OC SCS does not specifically emphasize the redevelopment of brownfields, it includes policies that nominally reflect this criterion by emphasizing that the raw land available for development largely includes decommissioned military bases. Whereas the

2012 RTP/SCS addresses brownfields through the sub-regional SCS sections, the 2008 RTP does not address this criterion at all.

Both the 2012 RTP/SCS and the 2008 RTP address criteria pertaining to the restoration and conservation of natural areas and habitats to a similarly strong extent and uses nearly identical language to encourage the protection of biological resources. Policies in both regional plans promote conducting surveys and planning transportation routes to ensure that sensitive habitats are not destroyed. Additionally, both the 2012 RTP/SCS and the 2008 RTP encourage mitigating construction impacts on natural communities by utilizing vegetation buffers, salvaging native plants and soil, replanting disturbed areas, and avoiding construction during important life stages or active seasons for critical species. The sub-regional SCS sections of the 2012 RTP/SCS also strongly emphasize the conservation of open space in chapters that discuss natural resource areas. While both sub-regional plans identify open spaces to be protected in perpetuity, the OC SCS includes a detailed discussion of environmental conservation and provides a map of critical habitats. Additionally, the OC SCS emphasizes the county's renewal of Measure M, which supports the large-scale acquisition of land to reduce carbon emissions and preserve nature open space, in exchange for streamlined approval of county transportation projects.

It is important to note that the criterion "locations with reduced automobile dependence" is moderately reflected in the 2012 RTP/SCS and nominally reflected the 2008 RTP. In the LEED-ND rating system, this criterion promotes development in areas within walking distance to transit, as well as development within transportation analysis zones (TAZs) that have been determined by an MPO as having low VMTs. As transportation plans, both the 2012 RTP/SCS and the 2008 RTP strongly emphasize transit-oriented development, and the 2012 RTP/SCS in

particular, also encourages development in HQTAs. However, neither plan includes policies that promote development within low-VMT TAZs, despite discussing the use of TAZs for the purpose of modeling performance. In particular, the 2012 RTP/SCS emphasizes that the growth and land use assumptions in the 2012 RTP/SCS are to be adopted at the jurisdictional level, thereby promoting changes more broadly across cities instead of changes within smaller areas.

Neighborhood pattern and design. The NPD category emphasizes the design of neighborhoods as it pertains to social equity, local economic development, and the public realm. The criteria in this category intend to reduce social and spatial segregation by encouraging development projects that are affordable, compact, mixed-use, and within walking distance of diverse services. The criteria pertaining to community outreach and universal design promote local involvement in planning processes and diverse accessibility. Additional criteria promote reduced parking and travel demand management strategies, as well as transit- and pedestrian-oriented streetscapes, with the intent to reduce automobile use and support local businesses.

At the regional scale, policies that facilitate the integration of NPD criteria include those that support underrepresented communities, encourage high-density and mixed-use development, promote walking as a mode of active transportation, and emphasize strategies to reduce automobile dependency. In general, the 2012 RTP/SCS reflects more NPD criteria than the 2008 RTP and to a stronger extent. The criteria reflected most strongly in the new regional plan are associated with diverse communities, higher density development, accessibility, and parking reductions. Of these issues, the SCS sections emphasize diverse and compact communities, as well as strategies for parking and transportation management. The only two criteria that are not addressed in the 2012 RTP/SCS or the 2008 RTP are “local food production” and “tree-lined and shaded streets.”

Notably, the 2012 RTP/SCS reflects the criterion “mixed-income diverse communities” to a strong extent, whereas the 2008 RTP only addresses this criterion to a nominal extent. As discussed in chapter three, SB 375 aligns land use and transportation planning by requiring consistency between the RHNA and the RTP/SCS. This alignment intends to ensure that the housing needed to accommodate all income groups are based on the land use development patterns reflected in the regional plan and distributed equitably among jurisdictions.

Policies that highlight “mixed-income diverse communities” in the 2012 RTP/SCS include those that intend to balance the proportion of affordable housing distributed throughout the region by adjusting RHNA numbers and mitigate concentrations of income groups. Policies in the 2012 RTP/SCS promote the development of permanently affordable housing through the use of deed restrictions and non-profit developers, encourage high-density housing to reduce housing costs by increasing its supply, and support the mixing of income groups. Additionally, policies in the 2012 RTP/SCS address the provision of diverse housing types by strongly emphasizing that changing demographics within the region will result in a shift in housing demands from large-lot single-family homes to small-lot, condominium, and multifamily housing in close proximity to amenities. In contrast to the specific policies and objectives included in the 2012 RTP/SCS that address “mixed-income diverse communities,” the 2008 RTP only acknowledges the insufficient supply of affordable housing in general and encourages the anticipation of changing housing demands.

The comparison of the sub-regional SCS sections shows that the GC SCS addresses “mixed-income diverse communities” to a greater extent than the OC SCS by including a chapter focused on affordable housing accommodation. In addition to encouraging the redevelopment of brownfields for affordable housing, the GC SCS emphasizes that higher-density development of

at least 30 units per acre, contributes to the financial feasibility of lower-income housing. Furthermore, the GC SCS promotes both development incentives and rental assistance to support the development of affordable housing that accommodates residents with special needs. Whereas the GC SCS reflects “mixed-income diverse communities” to a moderate extent, the OC SCS only addresses this criterion to a nominal extent. Despite including a distinct strategy intended to support the retention and development of affordable housing, the policy approach in the OC SCS focuses on increasing the supply and density of development as the primary method of addressing housing affordability and diversity.

Policies that address the criterion “compact development” are strongly emphasized in the 2012 RTP/SCS, as well as both sub-regional SCS sections, and support increasing the supply of housing, particularly through high-density infill development. In contrast, this criterion is only nominally addressed in the 2008 RTP by broad objectives that encourage increasing the density in developed areas. The 2012 RTP/SCS highlights compact development throughout the regional plan by encouraging focused development in HQTAs and emphasizing growing demands for higher-density, small-lot, and multifamily housing. To accommodate both housing preferences and population growth over the 2012-2035 timeframe of the regional plan, the 2012 RTP/SCS anticipates that approximately 30 percent of new housing will be at a minimum of 30 units per acre in 2020 and beyond.

In the sub-regional SCS sections, “compact development” is also strongly addressed by both Gateway Cities and Orange County, which emphasize the limited supply of land available for development. In the GC SCS, the density of 30 units per acre is reflected by policies that encourage the development of affordable housing. Additionally, the GC SCS suggests rezoning as a strategy for increasing the permitted development intensity of underutilized and

residentially-zoned land, and includes an example of a jurisdiction that considered increasing the permitted density beyond the maximum specified in its general plan to encourage growth in specific areas. In the OC SCS, policies emphasize increasing the density of development to cope with a limited supply of developable land and to address housing diversity and affordability. The OC SCS foresees 75 percent of new housing over the course of the plan to be in some form of attached unit and promotes infrastructure, zoning, and public finance policies as ways for jurisdictions to encourage higher density development. Examples of these policies in the OC SCS include relaxing minimum lot size requirements, increasing the density permitted for projects, and concentrating development around transit stations.

As compared to the 2008 RTP, two criteria addressed to a stronger extent in the 2012 RTP/SCS are “reduced parking footprint” and “transportation demand management.” The inclusion of the sub-regional SCS sections contributes moderately to the incorporation of these criteria in the 2012 RTP/SCS, with the GC SCS emphasizing parking reductions and the OC SCS emphasizing transportation demand management (TDM) strategies. A parking reduction strategy included in the GC SCS suggests implementing limits on the absolute number of parking spaces permitted in central business, retail, or employment centers, with the exception of carpool spaces. In the OC SCS, policies addressing the reduction of automobile use promote TDM strategies and encourage large employers to develop alternative transportation plans and provide employees with incentives. These incentives, also encouraged in the 2012 RTP/SCS, include subsidized transit passes and preferential parking for rideshare vehicles.

Two criteria that are addressed in the 2012 RTP/SCS, but not in the 2008 RTP, are “visitability and universal design” and “neighborhood schools.” While “visitability and universal design” pertains to ensuring that built environments are accessible to people of all

abilities, “neighborhood schools” pertains to close proximity and safe travel between schools and housing. Policies in the 2012 RTP/SCS promote retrofitting deficient sidewalks to be compliant with requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), supporting local efforts in developing transition plans to bring city facilities into compliance with the ADA, and encouraging children of all abilities to walk and bicycle to school. Additionally, the 2012 RTP/SCS strongly addresses the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program intended to support infrastructure and behavioral projects geared towards to facilitating more active lifestyles, particularly for children. In the sub-regional SCS sections, the GC SCS nominally addresses SRTS, whereas the OC SCS does not.

The comparison of the 2012 RTP/SCS, without any SCS sections, to the 2008 RTP initially shows that several NPD criteria pertaining to community outreach, transportation facilities, and access to open space are more strongly reflected in the 2008 RTP. However, the comparison of the 2012 RTP/SCS with the SCAG SCS to the 2008 RTP reveals that these criteria are incorporated into both regional plans to a similar extent. This indicates that policies that moderately address these issues in the 2008 RTP were moved into the new SCAG SCS section of the 2012 RTP/SCS. Indeed, both the 2012 RTP/SCS and the 2008 RTP use similar language to promote access to open space, encourage projects to incorporate local input, and ensure that the planning of new transportation facilities considers existing nearby communities. Nevertheless, a comparison of the frequencies of policies shows that the 2012 RTP/SCS, with its new SCAG SCS section, reiterates these issues, despite similarly strong integration scores to the 2008 RTP.

Lastly, the criteria “local food production” and “tree-lined and shaded streets” are not addressed in either of the regional plans. Although both the 2012 RTP/SCS and the 2008 RTP

include policies to protect farmland, which addresses a criterion from the SLL category to conserve agricultural land, neither regional plan emphasizes locally-sourced food or community-supported farms and gardens. Additionally, neither the 2012 RTP/SCS nor the 2008 RTP addresses streetscapes or shading despite including objectives to create comfortable environments for walking and biking.

Green infrastructure and buildings. The criteria included in the GIB category are based on performance standards and intend to contribute to the conservation of energy and natural resources by emphasizing energy and water efficiency in the design and development of projects and landscaping. The criteria in this category also intend to minimize heat island effects and reduce stormwater runoff. Additional criteria encourage the preservation and reuse of existing and historic buildings with the intent to preserve cultural resources and reduce the need to invest in new infrastructure and raw materials. At the regional scale, policies promoting GIB criteria include those that emphasize the reduction of construction waste and pollution, the protection of cultural and paleontological resources, the management of stormwater, the preservation of undeveloped land, and the use of green building strategies.

The findings from the comparison of the 2012 RTP/SCS to the 2008 RTP show that both regional plans address few GIB criteria. Additionally, the findings from the comparison of the SCS sections shows that the SCS sections scarcely contribute to the promotion of GIB criteria in the 2012 RTP/SCS. The 2012 RTP/SCS only addresses half of the eighteen GIB criteria while the 2008 RTP addresses even fewer. However, of the criteria that are addressed in both the 2012 RTP/SCS and the 2008 RTP, the regional plans address these criteria to a similarly strong extent. These criteria addressed in both the 2012 RTP/SCS and the 2008 RTP are “construction activity pollution prevention,” “historic preservation and adaptive reuse,” “stormwater management,”

and “minimized site disturbance in design and construction.” Through the use of nearly identical language, both regional plans include policies that encourage the suppression of pollution from construction activities, emphasize the protection of historical, archaeological, and paleontological resources, and promote the use of water capture techniques to control stormwater runoff. Additionally, policies that strongly address the “preferred locations” criterion in the SLL category by promoting development in infill or previously developed sites also emphasize the “minimized site disturbance in design and construction” criterion and its intent to leave undeveloped land undisturbed.

Notably, the criterion “certified green building” is addressed to a nominal extent in the 2012 RTP/SCS but addressed to a strong extent in the 2008 RTP. This is the only LEED-ND criterion that is addressed more strongly in the 2008 RTP than the 2012 RTP/SCS. Both regional plans generally encourage the use of low-impact development and green building standards to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills. However, the 2008 RTP specifically emphasizes that energy conservation programs could integrate green building measures identified by a variety of green building rating systems, including LEED, into project designs and zoning. Through this policy, the 2008 RTP strongly reflects the “certified green building” criterion.

Two criteria addressed in the 2012 RTP/SCS but not addressed in the 2008 RTP are “building water efficiency” and “water-efficient landscaping.” The 2012 RTP/SCS nominally addresses these criteria in a brief discussion of residential water use, which acknowledges that both indoor and outdoor water use contribute to overall water consumption and waste. The 2012 RTP/SCS emphasizes that large-lot single family homes consume more water for lawn irrigation purposes and that the promotion of more compact, infill, attached, and multifamily development in the 2012 RTP/SCS intends to reduce both water use and water-related costs. However, neither

the 2012 RTP/SCS nor the 2008 RTP address the criterion “wastewater management” or includes policies that emphasize the use of gray or recycled water as a conservation strategy.

In addition to “wastewater management,” criteria that are not addressed in the 2012 RTP/SCS or the 2008 RTP include those that pertain to reducing heat island effects, generating renewable energy, and promoting infrastructure energy efficiency.

As part of a discussion on coping with possible urban effects associated with climate change, the 2012 RTP/SCS mentions that heat-related illnesses and higher cooling costs may demonstrate increased urban heat island impacts. However, the new regional plan does not include any policies intended to cool the urban microclimate, which would address the “heat island reduction” criterion.

Both the 2012 RTP/SCS and the 2008 RTP include similar sections that discuss energy as an area of focus for environmental mitigation programs and question the long-term viability of a petroleum-based energy future. Additionally, policies in both regional plans encourage the development of more energy-efficient buildings, energy conservation programs, incentives for energy-efficient appliances, and infrastructure to accommodate alternatively fueled vehicles. However, no policies encourage the development of renewable energy infrastructure in the region, which would address the criterion “on-site renewable energy sources.” Lastly, despite numerous policies in both regional plans that emphasize the preservation, maintenance, and improvement of public infrastructure, neither regional plan addresses the criterion “infrastructure energy efficiency” or includes policies intended to conserve energy and natural resources required to operate and sustain the infrastructure.

Table 6.1. Differences in integration scores for LEED-ND criteria between the 2012 RTP/SCS and 2008 RTP

LEED-ND Criteria (Weight)	2012 RTP/SCS - 2008 RTP Difference 1	2012 w/ SCAG SCS - 2008 Difference 2	2012 w/o Any SCS - 2008 Difference 3	2012 RTP/SCS - 2012 w/o Any SCS Difference 4
Smart Location and Linkage Category				
Bike network and storage (1)	2.00	2.00	2.00	0
Housing and jobs proximity (3)	1.67	0.67	0.67	1.00
Preferred locations (10)	1.66	1.00	1.00	0.66
Brownfield redevelopment (2)	1.50	-	-	1.50
Agricultural land conservation	0.84	0.34	0.34	0.50
Floodplain avoidance	0.67	0	0	0.67
Locations with reduced auto dependence (7)	0.50	0.50	0.50	0
Site design for habitat or wetland conservation (1)	0.33	0.33	0.33	0
Steep slope protection (1)	0	0	0	0
Restoration of habitat or wetlands (1)	0	0	0	0
Long-term conservation of habitat or wetlands (1)	0	0	0	0
Neighborhood Pattern and Design Category				
Visitability and universal design (1)	2.50	2.50	2.50	0
Compact development (6)	2.00	2.00	0	2.00
Reduced parking footprint (1)	2.00	0.75	0.75	1.25
Mixed-income diverse communities (7)	1.66	1.33	0	1.66
Neighborhood schools (1)	1.50	1.50	1.00	0.50
Access to recreation facilities (1)	1.00	1.00	-	1.00
Walkable streets (12)	1.00	1.00	1.00	0
Street network (2)	1.00	1.00	1.00	0
Transportation demand management (2)	0.60	0	-0.40	1.00
Mixed-use neighborhood centers (4)	0.34	0.34	-0.66	1.00
Community outreach and involvement (2)	0	0	-0.34	0.34
Transit facilities (1)	0	0	-1.00	1.00
Access to civic and public space (1)	0	0	-1.00	1.00
Local food production (1)	-	-	-	-
Tree-lined and shaded streets (2)	-	-	-	-

Table continues.

Table 6.1 (continued). Differences in integration scores for LEED-ND criteria between the 2012 RTP/SCS and 2008 RTP

LEED-ND Criteria (Weight)	2012 RTP/SCS - 2008 RTP Difference 1	2012 w/ SCAG SCS - 2008 Difference 2	2012 w/o Any SCS - 2008 Difference 3	2012 RTP/SCS - 2012 w/o Any SCS Difference 4
Green Infrastructure and Buildings Category				
Building energy efficiency (2)	1.00	1.00	1.00	0
Building water efficiency (1)	1.00	1.00	1.00	0
Water-efficient landscaping (1)	1.00	1.00	1.00	0
Minimized site disturbance in design and construction (1)	0.33	0.33	0.33	0
Construction activity pollution prevention	0	0	0	0
Existing building reuse (1)	0	0	0	0
Historic resource preservation and adaptive reuse (1)	0	0	0	0
Stormwater management (4)	0	0	0	0
Certified green building (5)	-2.00	-2.00	-2.00	0
Heat island reduction (1)	-	-	-	-
Solar orientation (1)	-	-	-	-
On-site renewable energy sources (3)	-	-	-	-
District heating and cooling (2)	-	-	-	-
Infrastructure energy efficiency (1)	-	-	-	-
Wastewater management (2)	-	-	-	-
Recycled content in infrastructure (1)	-	-	-	-
Solid waste management infrastructure (1)	-	-	-	-
Light pollution reduction (1)	-	-	-	-

Note: A dash indicates that the criterion was not addressed.

The results are ranked by difference.

Table 6.2. Differences in integration scores for LEED-ND criteria between the SCS sections in the 2012 RTP/SCS

LEED-ND Criteria (Weight)	SCAG SCS - GC SCS Difference A	SCAG SCS - OC SCS Difference B	GC SCS - OC SCS Difference C
Smart Location and Linkage Category			
Bike network and storage (1)	0.50	-1.50	-2.00
Housing and jobs proximity (3)	0.33	0.33	0
Preferred locations (10)	-0.67	-0.33	0.34
Brownfield redevelopment (2)	-1.50	-1.00	0.50
Agricultural land conservation	0	-0.17	-0.17
Floodplain avoidance	-0.34	-0.34	0
Locations with reduced auto dependence (7)	0	0	0
Site design for habitat or wetland conservation (1)	1.00	0.33	-0.67
Steep slope protection (1)	-	-	-
Restoration of habitat or wetlands (1)	-	-2.00	-2.00
Long-term conservation of habitat or wetlands (1)	0	0	0
Neighborhood Pattern and Design Category			
Visitability and universal design (1)	1.50	1.50	-
Compact development (6)	0	0	0
Reduced parking footprint (1)	-1.50	-0.75	0.75
Mixed-income diverse communities (7)	0.67	1.00	0.33
Neighborhood schools (1)	0.50	1.50	1.00
Access to recreation facilities (1)	0	1.00	1.00
Walkable streets (12)	-	-1.00	-1.00
Street network (2)	-	-0.50	-0.50
Transportation demand management (2)	0.20	-0.60	-0.80
Mixed-use neighborhood centers (4)	0.67	0.34	-0.33
Community outreach and involvement (2)	1.00	0.67	-0.33
Transit facilities (1)	1.00	-0.33	-1.33
Access to civic and public space (1)	1.00	1.50	0.50
Local food production (1)	-	-	-
Tree-lined and shaded streets (2)	-	-	-

Table continues.

Table 6.2 (continued). Differences in integration scores for LEED-ND criteria between the SCS sections in the 2012 RTP/SCS

LEED-ND Criteria (Weight)	<u>SCAG SCS - GC SCS</u> Difference A	<u>SCAG SCS - OC SCS</u> Difference B	<u>GC SCS - OC SCS</u> Difference C
Green Infrastructure and Buildings Category			
Construction activity pollution prevention	-	-	-
Existing building reuse (1)	-	-	-
Historic resource preservation and adaptive reuse (1)	-	-	-
Stormwater management (4)	0	-1.00	-1.00
Minimize site disturbance in design and construction (1)	0	0	0
Building energy efficiency (2)	-	-	-
Certified green building (5)	-	-	-
Building water efficiency (1)	-	-	-
Water-efficient landscaping (1)	-	-	-
Heat island reduction (1)	-	-	-
Solar orientation (1)	-	-	-
On-site renewable energy sources (3)	-	-	-
District heating and cooling (2)	-	-	-
Infrastructure energy efficiency (1)	-	-	-
Wastewater management (2)	-	-	-
Recycled content in infrastructure (1)	-	-	-
Solid waste management infrastructure (1)	-	-	-
Light pollution reduction (1)	-	-	-

Note: GC SCS = Gateway Cities SCS; OC SCS = Orange County SCS.

A dash indicates that the criterion was not addressed.

Table 6.3. Incorporation of LEED-ND criteria in the 2012 RTP/SCS, with and without the SCS, and in the 2008 RTP

LEED-ND Criteria (Weight)	2012 RTP/SCS				2012 With SCAG SCS Only				2012 Without Any SCS				2008 RTP			
	N (%)	F	I	M	N (%)	F	I	M	N (%)	F	I	M	N (%)	F	I	M
Smart Location and Linkage Category																
Restoration of habitat or wetlands (1)	0.63	4	3.00	3	0.56	2	3.00	3	1.16	2	3.00	3	0.69	1	3.00	3
Long-term conservation of habitat or wetlands (1)	2.66	17	3.00	3	1.98	7	3.00	3	2.89	5	3.00	3	2.78	4	3.00	3
Site design for habitat or wetland conservation (1)	5.64	36	3.00	3	5.08	18	3.00	3	6.36	11	3.00	3	6.25	9	2.67	3
Bike network and storage (1)	6.90	44	3.00	3	8.76	31	3.00	3	14.45	25	3.00	3	3.47	5	1.00	2
Agricultural land conservation	14.58	93	2.67	3	14.97	53	2.17	3	12.14	21	2.17	3	15.28	22	1.83	3
Housing and jobs proximity (3)	4.70	30	3.00	3	4.52	16	2.00	3	2.31	4	2.00	3	4.86	7	1.33	2
Preferred locations (10)	5.80	37	2.33	3	4.24	15	1.67	3	2.31	4	1.67	3	4.17	6	0.67	2
Locations with reduced auto dependence (7)	7.05	45	1.50	3	7.91	28	1.50	3	6.94	12	1.50	3	8.33	12	1.00	2
Floodplain avoidance	0.63	4	1.67	3	0.56	2	1.00	3	0.58	1	1.00	3	0.69	1	1.00	3
Brownfield redevelopment (2)	0.63	4	1.50	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Steep slope protection (1)	0.16	1	0.33	1	0.28	1	0.33	1	0.58	1	0.33	1	0.69	1	0.33	1
Category Average	4.49	28.64	2.27	2.82	4.44	15.73	1.88	2.55	4.52	7.82	1.88	2.55	4.29	6.18	1.44	2.18
Category Subtotal	49.37	315	25.00	31	48.87	173	20.67	28	49.71	86	20.67	28	47.22	68	15.83	24
Neighborhood Pattern and Design Category																
Compact development (6)	6.90	44	3.00	3	4.52	16	3.00	3	1.73	3	1.00	1	2.08	3	1.00	1
Visitability and universal design (1)	1.41	9	2.50	3	2.54	9	2.50	3	3.47	6	2.50	3	0	0	0	0
Mixed-income diverse communities (7)	6.43	41	2.33	3	5.65	20	2.00	3	1.16	2	0.67	1	2.08	3	0.67	2
Reduced parking footprint (1)	1.57	10	2.25	3	1.41	5	1.00	3	2.89	5	1.00	3	0.69	1	0.25	1
Transportation demand management (2)	5.02	32	2.20	3	3.67	13	1.60	2	5.20	9	1.20	2	5.56	8	1.60	3
Walkable streets (12)	1.25	8	2.00	2	1.69	6	2.00	2	3.47	6	2.00	2	0.69	1	1.00	1
Community outreach and involvement (2)	5.33	34	1.67	3	8.76	31	1.67	3	8.67	15	1.33	3	11.11	16	1.67	3
Transit facilities (1)	1.57	10	1.67	3	1.13	4	1.67	3	0.58	1	0.67	2	2.08	3	1.67	3
Mixed-use neighborhood centers (4)	4.86	31	1.67	3	4.52	16	1.67	3	1.73	3	0.67	1	3.47	5	1.33	3
Neighborhood schools (1)	0.94	6	1.50	3	1.41	5	1.50	3	1.73	3	1.00	2	0	0	0	0
Access to civic and public space (1)	0.78	5	1.50	3	1.13	4	1.50	3	0.58	1	0.50	1	3.47	5	1.50	3
Street network (2)	0.31	2	1.00	2	0.28	1	1.00	2	0.58	1	1.00	2	0	0	0	0
Access to recreation facilities (1)	0.31	2	1.00	1	0.28	1	1.00	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Local food production (1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tree-lined and shaded streets (2)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Category Average	2.45	15.60	1.62	2.33	2.47	8.73	1.47	2.27	2.12	3.67	0.90	1.53	2.08	3.00	0.71	1.33
Category Subtotal	36.68	234	24.29	35	37.01	131	22.11	34	31.79	55	13.54	23	31.25	45	10.69	20

Table continues.

Table 6.3 (continued). Incorporation of LEED-ND criteria in the 2012 RTP/SCS, with and without the SCS, and in the 2008 RTP

LEED-ND Criteria (Weight)	2012 RTP/SCS				2012 With SCAG SCS Only				2012 Without Any SCS				2008 RTP			
	N (%)	F	I	M	N (%)	F	I	M	N (%)	F	I	M	N (%)	F	I	M
Green Infrastructure and Buildings Category																
Construction activity pollution prevention	0.16	1	3.00	3	0.28	1	3.00	3	0.58	1	3.00	3	0.69	1	3.00	3
Existing building reuse (1)	1.25	8	3.00	3	2.26	8	3.00	3	4.62	8	3.00	3	5.56	8	3.00	3
Historic resource preservation and adaptive reuse (1)	1.10	7	3.00	3	1.98	7	3.00	3	4.05	7	3.00	3	4.86	7	3.00	3
Stormwater management (4)	0.78	5	3.00	3	0.56	2	3.00	3	0.58	1	3.00	3	0.69	1	3.00	3
Minimize site disturbance in design and construction (1)	9.72	62	3.00	3	7.34	26	3.00	3	5.20	9	3.00	3	6.94	10	2.67	3
Building energy efficiency (2)	0.31	2	2.00	2	0.56	2	2.00	2	1.16	2	2.00	2	1.39	2	1.00	1
Certified green building (5)	0.16	1	1.00	1	0.28	1	1.00	1	0.58	1	1.00	1	1.39	2	3.00	3
Building water efficiency (1)	0.16	1	1.00	1	0.28	1	1.00	1	0.58	1	1.00	1	0	0	0	0
Water-efficient landscaping (1)	0.31	2	1.00	1	0.56	2	1.00	1	1.16	2	1.00	1	0	0	0	0
Heat island reduction (1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Solar orientation (1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
On-site renewable energy sources (3)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
District heating and cooling (2)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Infrastructure energy efficiency (1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wastewater management (2)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Recycled content in infrastructure (1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Solid waste management infrastructure (1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Light pollution reduction (1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Category Average	0.77	4.94	1.11	1.11	0.78	2.78	1.11	1.11	1.03	1.78	1.11	1.11	1.20	1.72	1.04	1.06
Category Subtotal	13.95	89	20.00	20	14.12	50	20.00	20	18.50	32	20.00	20	21.53	31	18.67	19
Total	100.00	638	69.29	86	100.00	354	62.78	82	100.00	173	54.21	71	100.00	144	45.19	63

Note: N (%) = Normalized frequency; F = Raw frequency; I = Incorporation score; M = Maximum incorporation score. The results are ranked by integration score.

Table 6.4. Incorporation of LEED-ND criteria in the SCAG SCS and sub-regional SCS sections of the 2012 RTP/SCS

LEED-ND Criteria (Weight)	SCAG SCS				Gateway Cities SCS				Orange County SCS			
	N (%)	F	I	M	N (%)	F	I	M	N (%)	F	I	M
Smart Location and Linkage Category												
Restoration of habitat or wetlands (1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.99	2	2.00	2
Long-term conservation of habitat or wetlands (1)	1.11	2	3.00	3	1.23	1	3.00	3	4.43	9	3.00	3
Site design for habitat or wetland conservation (1)	3.87	7	2.00	3	2.47	2	1.00	3	7.88	16	1.67	3
Bike network and storage (1)	3.31	6	1.50	3	1.23	1	1.00	2	5.91	12	3.00	3
Agricultural land conservation	17.68	32	1.50	3	14.81	12	1.50	3	13.79	28	1.67	3
Housing and jobs proximity (3)	6.63	12	2.00	3	4.94	4	1.67	3	4.93	10	1.67	2
Preferred locations (10)	6.08	11	1.00	3	9.88	8	1.67	3	6.90	14	1.33	3
Locations with reduced auto dependence (7)	8.84	16	1.50	3	4.94	4	1.50	3	6.40	13	1.50	3
Floodplain avoidance	0.55	1	0.33	1	1.23	1	0.67	2	0.49	1	0.67	2
Brownfield redevelopment (2)	0	0	0	0	3.70	3	1.50	3	0.49	1	1.00	2
Steep slope protection (1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Category Average	4.37	7.91	1.17	2.00	4.04	3.27	1.23	2.27	4.75	9.64	1.59	2.36
Category Subtotal	48.07	87	12.83	22	44.44	36	13.51	25	52.22	106	17.51	26
Neighborhood Pattern and Design Category												
Compact development (6)	7.18	13	3.00	3	7.41	6	3.00	3	10.84	22	3.00	3
Visitability and universal design (1)	1.66	3	1.50	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mixed-income diverse communities (7)	9.94	18	2.00	3	16.05	13	1.33	3	3.94	8	1.00	2
Reduced parking footprint (1)	0	0	0	0	2.47	2	1.50	3	1.48	3	0.75	3
Transportation demand management (2)	2.21	4	1.20	2	7.41	6	1.00	2	6.40	13	1.80	3
Walkable streets (12)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.99	2	1.00	1
Community outreach and involvement (2)	8.84	16	1.67	3	1.23	1	0.67	2	0.99	2	1.00	2
Transit facilities (1)	1.66	3	1.00	3	0	0	0	0	2.96	6	1.33	2
Mixed-use neighborhood centers (4)	7.18	13	1.67	3	4.94	4	1.00	3	5.42	11	1.33	2
Neighborhood schools (1)	1.11	2	1.50	3	1.23	1	1.00	2	0	0	0	0
Access to civic and public space (1)	1.66	3	1.50	3	1.23	1	0.50	1	0	0	0	0
Street network (2)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.49	1	0.50	1
Access to recreation facilities (1)	0.55	1	1.00	1	1.23	1	1.00	1	0	0	0	0
Local food production (1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tree-lined and shaded streets (2)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Category Average	2.80	5.07	1.07	1.80	2.88	2.33	0.73	1.33	2.23	4.53	0.78	1.27
Category Subtotal	41.99	76	16.04	27	43.21	35	11.00	20	33.50	68	11.71	19

Table continues.

Table 6.4 (continued). Incorporation of LEED-ND criteria in the SCAG SCS and sub-regional SCS sections of the 2012 RTP/SCS

LEED-ND Criteria (Weight)	SCAG SCS				Gateway Cities SCS				Orange County SCS			
	N (%)	F	I	M	N (%)	F	I	M	N (%)	F	I	M
Green Infrastructure and Buildings Category												
Construction activity pollution prevention	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Existing building reuse (1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Historic resource preservation and adaptive reuse (1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stormwater management (4)	0.55	1	1.00	1	1.23	1	1.00	1	0.99	2	2.00	2
Minimize site disturbance in design and construction (1)	9.39	17	2.00	3	11.11	9	2.00	3	13.30	27	2.00	3
Building energy efficiency (2)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Certified green building (5)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Building water efficiency (1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Water-efficient landscaping (1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Heat island reduction (1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Solar orientation (1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
On-site renewable energy sources (3)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
District heating and cooling (2)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Infrastructure energy efficiency (1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wastewater management (2)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Recycled content in infrastructure (1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Solid waste management infrastructure (1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Light pollution reduction (1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Category Average	0.55	1.00	0.17	0.22	0.69	0.56	0.17	0.22	0.79	1.61	0.22	0.28
Category Subtotal	9.94	18	3.00	4	12.35	10	3.00	4	14.29	29	4.00	5
Total	100.00	181	31.87	53	100.00	81	27.51	49	100.00	203	33.22	50

Note: N (%) = Normalized frequency; F = Raw frequency; I = Incorporation score; M = Maximum incorporation score.

Incorporation of BREEAM and SITES criteria in the 2012 RTP/SCS and 2008 RTP

Several criteria that are not included in the LEED-ND rating system were identified in the BREEAM Communities and SITES v2 rating systems and have implications for planning in the Los Angeles region. From the BREEAM Communities rating system, these criteria are “enhancement of ecological value,” and “adaptation to climate change.” The criteria identified from the SITES v2 rating system are “reduction of wildfire risk,” “sustainability awareness and education,” and “case study development and communication.” Lastly, the criterion “local and regional labor and resources” was adapted from both rating systems by combining the “labour and skills” criterion from the BREEAM Communities rating system with the “support local economy” and “use regional materials” criteria from the SITES v2 rating system. At the regional scale, policies reflecting these criteria include those that emphasize ways that the region can prepare for climate change impacts, discourage fragmentation of natural areas, reduce combustibles in fire-prone areas, encourage employment of local workers and resources, and promote programs and studies that educate the public about sustainability.

The results show that as with the LEED-ND criteria, the 2012 RTP/SCS generally incorporates the additional BREEAM and SITES v2 criteria to a greater and stronger extent than the 2008 RTP. However, the comparison of the SCS sections shows that only the OC SCS contributes to one additional criterion, while the GC SCS does not encourage any of the additional criteria. The criteria strongly addressed in the 2012 RTP/SCS pertain to climate change adaptation, wildfire risk, local labor, and case study communication, whereas the 2008 RTP does not address these issues at all. Identical policies in both regional plans strongly address the enhancement of ecological value, while the addition of the OC SCS reiterates this criterion in the 2012 RTP/SCS by including specific examples. Although policies in both regional plans

encourage public education programs about certain issues associated with sustainability, the 2012 RTP/SCS emphasizes more issues and to a greater extent than the 2008 RTP. Moreover, the 2012 RTP/SCS incorporates the concept of sustainability to a greater extent than the 2008 RTP and reflects a shift in how the concept is presented in the regional plan.

Whereas the criterion “adaptation to climate change” is not addressed in the 2008 RTP, the 2012 RTP/SCS addresses this criterion to a strong extent. Although the 2008 RTP defines *climate change* in a separate section, which also includes several examples of state policies aimed at reducing GHG emissions, it does not address *adaptation*. In contrast, the 2012 RTP/SCS emphasizes climate change adaptation to a strong extent by discussing climate change mitigation within a separate section on adaptation. By referring to a 2009 report to the governor regarding a climate adaptation strategy for the state, the 2012 RTP/SCS highlights specific climate change impacts that Southern California is expected to face and manage. These impacts include more extreme temperatures and severe weather phenomena, which are projected to contribute to longer heat waves and droughts, increased heat island effects, stronger storms, more flooding, and the deterioration of natural habitats and ecosystems. The 2012 RTP/SCS notes that detailed local impacts of climate change on infrastructure and quality of life have only recently been considered, and that additional research and impact modeling are required to better inform planning with scientific data. However, it emphasizes that a failure to anticipate and prepare for climate change variability may result in serious negative consequences, and that more resilient resource and land use planning is a start to adaptation.

Adapted from similar criteria in the BREEAM and SITES v2 rating systems, the criterion “local and regional labor and resources” is addressed to a fair extent in the 2012 RTP/SCS. This criterion emphasizes the enhancement of social and economic benefits to the local and regional

community through development that provides employment and skills-training opportunities and utilizes local and regional materials and services, which also conserves energy for transportation. Although policies in the 2012 RTP/SCS do not emphasize the use of local materials, it does include a specific strategy that encourages the hiring and training of local residents for the construction and operation of development projects as a way to promote environmental justice. Additionally, most of the discussion that emphasizes stimulating the local economy promotes jobs-housing proximity to strengthen labor pools for employers. Although the 2008 RTP emphasizes employment growth in general, policies do not specifically address the criterion “local and regional labor and resources.”

The 2012 RTP/SCS notes that longer droughts, hotter heat waves, and increased wildfire risk are all impacts associated with climate change that Southern California is expected to face. By including a strategy that encourages the use of fire-resistant vegetation and materials for development projects in areas with high fire threat, the 2012 RTP/SCS strongly addresses the criterion “reduction of wildfire risk.” In contrast, the 2008 RTP does not address wildfires at all.

In the SITES v2 rating system, the criterion “case study development and communication” is intended to educate the public about the value of sustainable landscapes through the use of project-scaled demonstrations. In both the 2012 RTP/SCS and 2008 RTP, policies strongly address this criterion by promoting the development of local blueprint projects that support regional goals. However, it is important to note that the 2012 RTP/SCS also reiterates blueprint projects by incorporating many sections on “local efforts,” which highlight and describe examples of blueprint projects that advance the sustainability strategies of the regional plan at the local level. Additionally, the 2012 RTP/SCS emphasizes the development of a near-term zero-emission transportation technology project to demonstrate the feasibility of

infrastructure that supports a zero-emission trucking system. In the sub-regional SCS sections, neither the GC SCS nor the OC SCS includes policies that specifically encourage developing projects, blueprint or otherwise, as examples to demonstrate the implementation of regional goals. However, both sub-regional SCS sections contain many examples of projects that align with the goals of the SCS.

In the BREEAM rating system, the criterion “enhancement of ecological value” intends to maximize the value of the natural environment by increasing the scale of existing habitats and protecting, creating, or enhancing wildlife corridors. Both the 2012 RTP/SCS and the 2008 RTP use nearly identical language that promotes the enhancement of habitats through projects and programs such as mitigation banking, protecting and improving wildlife corridors and crossings, and discouraging habitat fragmentation. Additionally, both regional plans encourage project developers to review the Wildlife Crossing Guidelines of Ventura County, and the Critter Crossing policies provided by the FHWA. The OC SCS also strongly addresses “enhancement of ecological value” by emphasizing the habitat linkage areas included in the open space mitigation program, whereas the GC SCS does not address this criterion at all.

Lastly, the criterion “sustainability awareness and education” emphasizes public education about issues associated with sustainability. This criterion is incorporated to a moderate extent in the 2012 RTP/SCS by policies that promote programs to educate the public about safety for all road users, active transportation options, and the environmental health impacts that communities face. In contrast, the 2008 RTP only nominally addresses this criterion by including policies promoting public education about TDM strategies that are intended to reduce traffic congestion and emissions during peak commute times.

Table 6.5. Differences in integration scores for BREEAM and SITES criteria between the 2012 RTP/SCS and 2008 RTP

BREEAM Communities and SITES v2 Criteria	2012 RTP/SCS - 2008 RTP	2012 w/ SCAG SCS - 2008	2012 w/o Any SCS - 2008	2012 RTP/SCS - 2012 w/o Any SCS
	Difference 1	Difference 2	Difference 3	Difference 4
Adaptation to climate change	3.00	3.00	3.00	0
Reduction of wildfire risk	3.00	3.00	3.00	0
Case study development and communication	3.00	3.00	3.00	0
Local and regional labor and resources	2.00	2.00	2.00	0
Sustainability awareness and education	1.00	1.00	1.00	0
Enhancement of ecological value	0	0	0	0
Average	2.00	2.00	1.50	0.50
Total	12.00	12.00	9.00	3.00

Note: The results are ranked by difference.

Table 6.6. Differences in integration scores for BREEAM and SITES criteria between the SCS sections in the 2012 RTP/SCS

BREEAM Communities and SITES v2 Criteria	SCAG SCS - GC SCS	SCAG SCS - OC SCS	GC SCS - OC SCS
	Difference A	Difference B	Difference C
Adaptation to climate change	-	-	-
Reduction of wildfire risk	-	-	-
Case study development and communication	3.00	3.00	-
Local and regional labor and resources	-	-	-
Sustainability awareness and education	1.00	1.00	-
Enhancement of ecological value	-	-3.00	-3.00
Average	0.67	0.17	-0.50
Total	4.00	1.00	-3.00

Note: GC SCS = Gateway Cities SCS; OC SCS = Orange County SCS.

A dash indicates that the criterion was not addressed.

Table 6.7. Incorporation of BREEAM and SITES criteria in the 2012 RTP/SCS, with and without the SCS, and in the 2008 RTP

BREEAM Communities and SITES v2 Criteria	2012 RTP/SCS				2012 With SCAG SCS Only				2012 Without Any SCS				2008 RTP			
	N (%)	F	I	M	N (%)	F	I	M	N (%)	F	I	M	N (%)	F	I	M
Enhancement of ecological value	24.00	6	3.00	3	17.39	4	3.00	3	25.00	4	3.00	3	83.33	5	3.00	3
Case study development and communication	48.00	12	3.00	3	52.17	12	3.00	3	43.75	7	3.00	3	0	0	0	0
Reduction of wildfire risk	4.00	1	3.00	3	4.35	1	3.00	3	6.25	1	3.00	3	0	0	0	0
Adaptation to climate change	4.00	1	3.00	3	4.35	1	3.00	3	6	1	3.00	3	0	0	0	0
Sustainability awareness and education	16.00	4	2.00	2	17.39	4	2.00	2	12.50	2	2.00	2	16.67	1	1.00	1
Local and regional labor and resources	4.00	1	2.00	2	4.35	1	2.00	2	6.25	1	2.00	2	0	0	0	0
Average	16.67	4.17	2.67	2.67	16.67	3.83	2.67	2.67	16.67	2.67	2.67	2.67	16.67	1.00	0.67	0.67
Total	100.00	25	16.00	16	100.00	23	16.00	16	100.00	16	16.00	16	100.00	6	4.00	4

Note: N (%) = Normalized frequency; F = Raw frequency; I = Incorporation score; M = Maximum incorporation score. The results are ranked by integration score.

Table 6.8. Incorporation of BREEAM and SITES criteria in the SCAG SCS and sub-regional SCS sections of the 2012 RTP/SCS

BREEAM Communities and SITES v2 Criteria	SCAG SCS				Gateway Cities SCS				Orange County SCS			
	N (%)	F	I	M	N (%)	F	I	M	N (%)	F	I	M
Enhancement of ecological value	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100.00	2	3.00	3
Case study development and communication	71.43	5	3.00	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reduction of wildfire risk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Adaptation to climate change	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sustainability awareness and education	28.57	2	1.00	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Local and regional labor and resources	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Average	16.67	1.17	0.67	0.67	0	0	0	0	16.67	0.33	0.50	0.50
Total	100.00	7	4.00	4	0	0	0	0	100.00	2	3.00	3

Note: N (%) = Normalized frequency; F = Raw frequency; I = Incorporation score; M = Maximum incorporation score.

Incorporation of the Concept of Sustainability in the 2012 RTP/SCS and 2008 RTP

It is important to note that the concept of sustainability, as it pertains to environmental, economic, and equity issues, is incorporated to a stronger extent in the 2012 RTP/SCS, as compared to the 2008 RTP. The 2012 RTP/SCS includes sustainability, with economy and mobility, as one of the three key elements of the overarching vision for the regional plan. The 2012 RTP/SCS broadly defines sustainability by noting,

A successful RTP/SCS allows future residents to enjoy a better quality of life than we do today, including the ability to lead a healthy lifestyle and enjoy clean air and water and ample opportunities for recreation and physical activity. It will have direct and substantial benefits to public health by reducing pollutant emissions and expanding the opportunities for active transportation. It also demonstrates how we can transition from things we know to be unsustainable over the long term and beyond the term of this RTP/SCS—such as reliance on fossil fuels—to new technologies for the future. Finally, a successful RTP/SCS establishes how we preserve what makes the region special, including our stable and successful neighborhoods and our array of open spaces for future generations to enjoy. (SCAG, 2012, p. 11)

The 2012 RTP/SCS refers to sustainability throughout the regional plan and associates the concept with additional issues such as GHG emissions, land use and transportation choices, blueprint planning, and public health. The sub-regional SCS sections also incorporate the concept of sustainability, but to a nominal extent, by noting that the preservation of resource areas, the reduction of emissions, and the promotion of active transportation contribute to sustainability in the region.

In the 2008 RTP, the concept of sustainability is not strongly addressed. Despite mentioning that blueprint projects promote sustainability, the plan does not link the concept to issues pertaining to the three E's. Instead, the 2008 RTP primarily emphasizes sustainability as it pertains to maintaining the overall performance of transportation systems and infrastructure, as well as securing continually viable sources of funding.

Summary of the Comparison of the 2012 and 2008 Regional Plans

The results show that in general, the 2012 RTP/SCS reflects more principles for sustainable development, and to a stronger extent, than the preceding 2008 RTP. Policies in the 2012 RTP/SCS that most strongly incorporate criteria from the LEED-ND, BREEAM Communities, and SITES v2 rating systems include those that promote compact, infill, and mixed-use development, which bring jobs and housing closer and can demonstrate the implementation of regional goals at the local level. As compared to the 2008 RTP, policies in the 2012 RTP/SCS strongly encourage active transportation, particularly in terms of accommodating bicyclists in the region and supporting safe pedestrian environments around schools. The 2012 RTP/SCS addresses climate change impacts by strongly emphasizing the need to adapt and prepare for changing conditions, and encouraging landscaping that reduces the risk of wildfires. Lastly, the 2012 RTP/SCS encourages more public awareness about a variety of issues that support the sustainable strategies of the regional plan, and in general, incorporates the concept of sustainability in terms of what it means for the environment, economy, and equity, whereas the 2008 RTP does not.

The stronger emphasis of sustainable development principles in the 2012 RTP/SCS is partly due to the addition of the SCS sections, which address many criteria from the SLL and

NPD categories of the LEED-ND rating system to a greater extent than the regional plan without the SCS. Although the addition of the SCS sections does not contribute to a stronger promotion of criteria from the GIB category of the LEED-ND rating system, the new SCS sections do address additional sustainable development principles from the BREEAM Communities and SITES v2 rating systems, particularly for the criteria pertaining to communicating case studies and enhancing ecological value. While the new SCS sections contribute to the promotion of sustainable development principles in the 2012 RTP/SCS, the comparison of the SCS sections revealed disparities between the sub-regional plans and the criteria they emphasized. As shown by the results, the GC SCS emphasizes criteria pertaining to infill and brownfield development and parking reductions, the OC SCS emphasizes criteria pertaining to active transportation and environmental restoration, and the SCAG SCS emphasizes criteria pertaining to affordable housing, accessibility, and proximity between housing, jobs, schools, and public spaces.

Although the 2012 RTP/SCS addresses more sustainable development principles and to a stronger extent than the 2008 RTP, the lack of GIB criteria reflected in the 2012 RTP/SCS reveals shortcomings of the new regional plan. In particular, principles such as the development of renewable energy infrastructure, conservation natural resources, and mitigation of climate change impacts on the urban microclimate deserve more attention in the regional plan and its sustainable strategies. Additionally, the nearly identical language used in both the 2012 RTP/SCS and the 2008 RTP reveals that many policies and descriptive sections were copied into the new plan. Nevertheless, the results show that in most cases where both the 2012 RTP/SCS and 2008 RTP address certain criteria to a similar extent, the 2012 RTP/SCS includes more policies that reiterate these principles of sustainable development.

Chapter Seven

The Formation of a New Advocacy Coalition in the 2012 RTP/SCS Planning Process

As discussed in Chapter Three, SB 375—California’s new climate change legislation—was created at the state level by an “impossible coalition” composed of environmentalists, public officials, builders, major employers, labor unions, and affordable housing advocates. With the intent to curb GHG emissions by reducing VMTs, SB 375 required the state’s MPOs to create unprecedented SCS elements that integrate land use into regional transportation planning. To create the SCS for the Los Angeles region, SCAG implemented a cooperative process intended to be open and inclusive of a variety of stakeholders.

In Chapter Four, the literature suggests that approaches to sustainable development are often hindered by conflict between the ecological and expansionist perspectives of sustainability. Whereas the ecological perspective emphasizes natural resources and proactive approaches to overcome the limits of technology and a free market economy, the expansionist perspective promotes free markets, privatized property, resources, and services, and the stimulation of growth and wealth to alleviate sustainability issues. However, cooperative planning processes can generate new forums in which issues are discussed more effectively, understood more thoroughly, and addressed more quickly. According to the literature, stakeholders are able to form coalitions by developing and mobilizing social, intellectual, and political capital in collaborative processes to devise strategies that are aimed at solving complex issues of mutual concern. In the Los Angeles region, these issues include environmental degradation, social inequity, and low-density development patterns considered by scholars as unsustainable and undesirable. As shown in Chapter Six, the 2012 RTP/SCS intends to address these issues

associated with the three E's by promoting sustainability to a greater extent than the preceding 2008 RTP. In particular, the new regional plan strongly incorporates sustainable development principles pertaining to infill, compact, and mixed-use development, alternative modes of transportation, and natural resource conservation.

This chapter presents the findings from the analysis of interviews and relevant documents and provides insights into the conditions that contributed to the formation of a new coalition of advocates in the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process. In general, the findings show that SB 375 and its mandated regional planning process provided an opening for engagement by stakeholders who had previously not been very involved in regional transportation planning processes. These stakeholders, characterized by the ecological perspective discussed in Chapter Four, recognized the new opportunity to cooperate in regional planning with the intent to promote policy changes and readdress big-picture issues. By utilizing individual resources in the forms of capacity, connections, and expertise, stakeholders were able to unite as a coalition and mobilize around a relatively unified agenda. Additionally, coalition partners made new allies in the planning process to expand their network of connections and maintained camaraderie through mutual support and respect.

A New Opportunity for Advocacy

According to a SCAG planner, “just the enactment of SB 375 was a real game changer in terms of our planning process; it just raised the level of visibility, [and] the level of engagement” (personal communication, September 18, 2013). Whereas SCAG had once been perceived as an unproductive arena for advocacy, the objectives of SB 375 and the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process reemphasized the agency's purpose to cooperatively tackle complex issues and renewed

optimism in its effectiveness. As a new piece of legislation, the adoption of SB 375 sparked a heightened level of involvement by a variety of stakeholders in regional planning, which had not always been the case in the Los Angeles region. Stakeholders associated with the ecological perspective recognized the new legislation’s overarching rubric of sustainability as a comprehensive theme within which to cooperate and integrate their individual interests into a relatively unified agenda. However, stakeholders associated with the expansionist perspective were wary of implications the new legislation and sought to maintain autonomous authority over land use control and development. A general classification of stakeholder groups included in this research and their relative sustainability perspectives is presented in Table 7.1. It is important to note that the industries represented by the stakeholder groups and the sustainability perspectives are not mutually exclusive, since ecological stakeholders can also include infill developers and progressive local officials, while expansionist stakeholders can also include industry groups such as affordable housing developers.

Table 7.1. Stakeholder groups and relative sustainability perspectives.

Expansionist Stakeholders	Ecological Stakeholders
Business	Affordable housing
Industry	Environment
Local government	Public health
Transportation (conventional)	Transportation (alternative)

SB 375 as a trigger for involvement and change. In an interview with a health advocate who participated in the creation of SB 375, the interviewee noted that the new legislation mandated regional agencies to develop a sustainable communities strategy that integrated

different strategies to reduce GHG emissions. According to the interviewee, after SB 375 was adopted,

It was recognized that there would need to be some strong advocates to ensure there was strong movement out there [at the regional level]. It's great that the law was passed, but this isn't something you could let go on autopilot. (Personal communication, January 31, 2014)

Whereas the health community recognized the opportunity provided by SB 375 to shape regional growth policies, local governments and the business community were more cautious of the effects that the new legislation could bring.

According to a health advocate, “there was a lot of worry about if the state was going to take over land use” (personal communication, January 31, 2014). Local governments, which interviewees characterized as “very property-rights oriented” (personal communication, October 8, 2013) or “protective of their land” (personal communication, January 10, 2014), were initially “pissed off [by] the new bill that required them to participate in a new planning process and do things like fund affordable housing and transit [during an economic recession]” (personal communication, April 17, 2014). Although SB 375 explicitly noted that jurisdictions would retain local land use control, an interview with a SCAG planner revealed that there was still a lot of uncertainty around this issue and early involvement, especially by local governments, was motivated by worries about what the new legislation would impose (personal communication, September 18, 2013). The business community was equally cautious of the new legislation, with one advocate recalling that “there was so much trepidation from the beginning” and stating that “we worked closely with the particular trades [such as some particular industry and infrastructure

companies and organizations] because we knew we would all be impacted by what this [regional planning] document would be” (personal communication, December 5, 2013).

Nevertheless, even though initial involvement by stakeholders was motivated by what they did not know or want, the planner at SCAG noted, “towards the end, they were making a push for the things they [did] want,” and “everybody [had] some stake in what was going on so they were just following through to try to get as much as they could out of the plan.” As examples, the interviewee recalled that business groups were interested in CEQA streamlining provisions, development and industry groups were interested in determining consistency between projects and the SCS, and advocacy groups were interested in funding for transit and active transportation. For health advocates, SB 375 provided a new opportunity to emphasize public health issues. The SCAG planner recalled,

One of the things that I think was particularly interesting for us about this plan compared to the last plan, or plans before that, was the engagement of public health stakeholders who have really not been involved in RTP processes before at all. Of if they have, it’s been to a fairly limited degree and focused on a fairly limited set of issues. (Personal communication, September 18, 2013)

In interviews with health advocates, one interviewee noted that with the adoption of SB 375, “all of a sudden it’s like ‘We have to make this a reality,’ and there were a lot of strategic thinkers thinking, ‘This could be it’ in terms of having different implications, and we could actually embed health in transportation” (personal communication, October 30, 2013). The interviewee recalled that while most health advocacy in the past had been done at the state level or at the very local level, following the adoption of SB 375, “I think what ended up happening

was that people started making connections and thinking we could use SB 375 as a vehicle to embed health” (personal communication, October 30, 2013). The interviewee added,

I honestly think from our end, you had a huge amount of public health advocates that helped change the agenda, because they’re also more into ‘Yeah we need equity or else it doesn’t make sense,’ and honestly I don’t think that mainstream environmental groups see it sometimes that way. (Personal communication, October 30, 2013)

The new legislation, which brought various stakeholders together, combined with the adoption of the legislation during a recession triggered the connection of different issues and the recognition that business-as-usual planning was not addressing regional problems. In an interview with an alternative transportation advocate, the interviewee stated that that in the context of broader political, demographic, economic, and real estate market changes,

SB 375 came into being in exactly the right place and at exactly the right time, and there was a lot of momentum that caused all these people to come together with us. I also think this happening on the heels of the 2008 recession was really important because everybody recognized that the way they had been doing it wasn’t working anymore. There were some serious problems that had to be addressed, so I think everybody was open, [and] I think that was important. (Personal communication, April 17, 2014)

The interviewee added,

It was the fact that SB 375 specifically integrated all those concerns with the overarching concept of sustainability, I think was hugely part of the power of this; that SB 375 wasn’t about one thing, but about many things that fall under the rubric of sustainability. (Personal communication, April 17, 2014)

This belief in the unifying idea of sustainability is shared by an environmental advocate, who noted that while their organization had some experience with advocacy for air quality issues during sub-regional planning processes for specific transportation projects, the organization did not have experience with GHGs and RTPs. Notably, the organization did not even have staff to address land use, transportation, or climate issues before SB 375. The interviewee stated that in the past,

We haven't approached [advocacy] from the perspective of smarter land use and transportation choices to reduce reasons to drive, with the specific goal of reducing GHG emissions. That was the innovation of SB 375; it was the first [legislation] of its kind to bring those three conversations together. (Personal communication, November 15, 2013)

For advocates who had not been uninvolved in RTP planning processes, overcoming previous perceptions of SCAG as an ineffective forum and recognizing opportunities for cooperation and advocacy in the new planning process was particularly important for success.

Previous perceptions of SCAG. Interviews with representatives from alternative transportation, health, and environmental groups revealed that since SCAG had commonly been perceived as an ineffective organization, advocates were not very active in regional planning processes in the past. One interviewee recalled that a partner organization, which had previous experience working with SCAG, referred to it as “this almost irrelevant agency” (personal communication, November 15, 2013). Similarly, another interviewee stated,

SCAG has always been viewed as a loser organization. It was a laughing stock. It was the perception that the agency couldn't do anything right, couldn't do anything beyond naval gazing, and as a result, there weren't that many advocates that went to SCAG because

nobody perceived that you could get anything out of it. (Personal communication, April 17, 2014)

The interviewee noted that in the past, the regional council (RC) of SCAG had been “tightly controlled” by Orange County republicans and industry representatives who “always held the floor,” while more progressive members on the council remained silent (personal communication, April 17, 2014). Indeed, one public official stated that Orange County had always been “very anti-SCAG,” and added that “When I was in San Bernardino county, we didn’t like SCAG either” (personal communication, January 10, 2014). The public official went on to explain that SCAG was always seen as Los Angeles-centric because the entire city council of Los Angeles, as well as two members from the board of supervisors, all have seats on the RC, and it was necessary for outside representatives to ensure that decisions were not “L.A. driven” (personal communication, January 10, 2014).

The political fragmentation, trepidation, and struggle for control within the Los Angeles region was also evident in the permission for sub-regions to assume delegation to create their own SCS sections. As a SCAG planner noted, this option stemmed from “the sort of historical relationship between SCAG and its sub-regions” (personal communication, September 18, 2013). After SB 375 charged MPOs with the task of creating an RTP/SCS, there was a perception from Southern Californian sub-regions “that SCAG was not in a position to represent faithfully, all of its sub-regions’ visions for the future” (personal communication, September 18, 2013). For this reason, the planner believes that the option for sub-regions to assume delegation “was specifically carved out in the legislation for SCAG, for the SCAG region only. It’s not a secret and it shouldn’t come as a surprise that it’s in the legislation because our sub-regions were asking for it” (personal communication, September 18, 2013).

As outlined in the SCAG (2010) framework and guidelines for the development of sub-regional SCS sections, assuming delegation ensured that sub-regional growth and land use assumptions would remain consistent, even if region-wide growth assumptions would change as a result of the RHNA. However, the SCAG planner noted that in working with the sub-regions to create the guidelines, SCAG was careful to include provisions ensuring that regional policies and measures to reduce GHG emissions would still apply regionally, and sub-regions would not be excused, even if they assumed delegation (personal communication, September 18, 2013).

Indeed, according to the framework and guidelines,

The development of a subregional SCS does not exempt any subregion from further GHG emission reduction measures being included in the regional SCS. Further, all regional measures needed to meet the regional target will be subject to adoption by the Regional Council, and any additional subregional measures beyond the SCS submittal from subregions accepting delegation needed to meet the regional target must also be adopted by the subregional governing body. (SCAG, 2010, p. 5)

SCAG as an arena for engagement. In an interview with an environmental advocate, the interviewee recognized that SCAG was a primary arena for participating in the regional planning process and developing policies to readdress complex issues. According to the interviewee, given the Los Angeles region's notoriety and challenging context for planning,

If you want opportunity, SCAG was pretty much where you had to focus, because there were opportunities with [county transit improvement] implementation, and through potentially changing preferences around the kinds of houses people want to live in, and the kinds of neighborhoods, and the way they want to get around their community, and It was a particularly interesting case study because L.A. is such a worldwide icon of car

dependence and sprawl. If there was a place where you wanted to look at in terms of impact, with half the state's population, half the state's VMTs, half the state's GHG emissions, it just seems like the place to engage. (Personal communication, November 15, 2013)

In this case, the interviewee not only identifies SCAG as the arena for advocacy, but also acknowledges the positive implications that success would have on the lives of many people. Additionally, by referring to Los Angeles as a worldwide icon of urban sprawl and car dependence, this interviewee also recognized that successes at curbing sprawl and reducing VMTs in the Los Angeles region would serve as important examples of what can be achieved elsewhere.

Health advocates, who had primarily been involved in air quality issues at the state level, also recognized the regional planning process was an opportunity to shape policies at the regional and local levels. Having previously worked on AB 32, an environmental health advocate noted that after SB 375 was enacted,

We realized that it was a great issue for us to engage with because it's important in the air quality and climate change policy arena, and it's also an area where there's a tremendous need for public health engagement, just to overcome the reticence and anxieties at the local level. (Personal communication, January 31, 2014)

Whereas health advocates saw the regional planning process as an opportunity to engage with issues at a smaller scale, after achieving successes at the state level, one environmental advocate saw it as an opportunity to emphasize conservation issues at the larger scale, after having achieved success at the county level.

In an interview with a planner at SCAG, the interviewee noted, “A lower-profile part of the plan document was the inclusion of the conservation strategy and that was [advocated by] another sort of less-than-active-in-prior-cycles group of stakeholders as well” (personal communication, September 18, 2013). This new level of involvement was confirmed by an interview with an environmental advocate who supported the conservation strategy and said “it was because of [the success with the sub-regional conservation measure] and dealing with the transportation side, that we ended up getting involved with RTPs, which we’ve never done before” (personal communication, October 8, 2013). According to the environmental advocate,

What [SB 375] allowed us to do is to say, ‘No more wildland-urban interface development, [and] no more sprawl. Keep everything in the urban core. You’ll reduce your VMTs, you’ll have healthier communities, healthier people, better transit opportunities, walkable, bikeable, you name it. You get all of these advantages, whereas if you put [development] at the wildland-urban interface, not so much. You have to increase your services, your costs go up because you’re adding infrastructure that doesn’t exist already, you’re increasing the wildland-urban interface for fires, you’re destroying important habitats, [and] so all of the arguments point towards infill. (Personal communication, October 8, 2013)

Given the objectives of the legislation and the purpose of the regional plan to encourage smarter growth patterns, the interviewee recognized the link between reducing VMTs through more compact development on infill sites, which preserves natural open spaces, conserves energy and resources for development, and reduces the risks of wildfires.

Although alternative and conventional transportation advocates had some prior experience working with SCAG and regional planning in the past, they also perceived the 2012

RTP/SCS as a new opportunity to review the efficiency of the transportation network as a whole, as well as to promote different modes of transportation. Calling it a “paradigm shift,” a conventional transportation advocate believed the creation of the 2012 RTP/SCS allowed both transportation practitioners and users to reexamine the transportation system in a more holistic and multi-modal way, by taking into account not just how people get from place to place but also fuel efficiency, traffic, emissions, and public resources, which all contribute to livability in Southern California (personal communication, January 8, 2014).

In an interview with an alternative transportation advocate who worked in an organization that coordinated with many other organizations, the interviewee echoed the idea of a paradigm shift by noting,

I feel like in the world at large, there is this general paradigm shift from people working in silos to people working in a much more integrative and collaborative fashion, and I feel like this was an exercise in and evidence of that. (Personal communication, April 17, 2014)

Associated with the shift towards reexamining conventional planning decisions, the perception of SCAG as an irrelevant arena for advocacy also changed. According to the interviewee,

I think everybody thought that SCAG was just a waste of time. ... We had funding to enable us to spend a lot of time at SCAG so we knew what was going on. Everybody else was like ‘SCAG? What?’ But they were intrigued, so they would come to our meetings. (Personal communication, April 17, 2014)

Intrigued by SCAG’s renewed relevancy, recognizing the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process as an opportunity for effective engagement, and willing to work together, advocates of various

sustainable development principles were able to organize as a coalition, unify on an agenda, and strengthen their collective capacity to act.

The Formation of a New Coalition

The interviews revealed that during the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process, advocates for sustainable development issues were able to coordinate more effectively than in the past and form a coalition to advocate for mutually beneficial policy goals. In an interview, a planner at SCAG recalled that besides involvement by new stakeholders, “Another thing that was interesting about advocacy involvement [in the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process] was the level of coordination and organization behind it (personal communication, September 18, 2013). Similarly, an alternative transportation advocate revealed that in previous regional planning processes, different stakeholders would go before SCAG with their own agendas, but SB 375 brought stakeholders together (personal communication, April 17, 2014). The planner at SCAG noted that in previous regional planning processes,

You might see a series of groups give comments on a plan, as in one group give their comments and another group gives their comments, and they might have the same general interests, but their comments might sort of conflict. In this instance, there was a major effort on the part of advocacy groups to get on the same page, [and] to be asking for the same things. (Personal communication, September 18, 2013)

According to interviewees, SB 375’s overarching objective of sustainability and the renewed relevancy of SCAG as the appropriate arena for involvement contributed to a new opportunity for advocacy. However, stakeholders were still required to mobilize resources, make new allies, and maintain camaraderie to support a relatively unified agenda.

Mobilizing individual resources. The interviews show that in order to come together as a coalition, individual organizations mobilized various resources in the form of coordination capacity, existing relationships with important stakeholder groups and individuals, and previous experiences and successes.

Coordination capacity. In the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process, the capacity for organizations to serve as a convener of both coalition partners and stakeholders outside the coalition facilitated information exchange and mutual support. In the primary coalition of advocates, three organizations possessed the capacity to remain informed about the regional planning process and served as conveners of organizations from their respective advocacy arenas of transportation, health, and the environment.

One of the starting points for the formation of the coalition was when a statewide air quality advocacy group, which had worked on SB 375, provided funding to a locally based alternative transportation organization. According to interviewees, given that the statewide group did not hold a large presence in Southern California, the well-known alternative transportation organization served as a local coordinator, which according to a health advocate, “was helpful, and we needed that at the time” (personal communication, October 30, 2013). The health advocate added,

Because we were all tracking SCAG on our own, it takes a lot of time, and it helps to have someone come in and say, ‘Here’s our next meeting, here’s what we’re putting together, who’s going to say what, and let’s strategize.’ (Personal communication, October 30, 2013)

In order to coordinate, the alternative transportation organization created an local committee of advocacy groups, which according to a health advocate, involved “zillions of conference calls

and meetings to figure out how to work together and identify the key priorities that we could all be focused on” (personal communication, January 31, 2014). An interviewee with an alternative transportation advocate from the convening organization, revealed that the committee would hold small and informal monthly meetings, as well as large bi-monthly meetings via video conference with state organizations and advocates in other regions of the state to exchange information and lessons learned (personal communication, April 17, 2014).

In an interview with an advocate from the convening health organization, the interviewee stated that while the alternative transportation group was an overarching coordinator, “[We] took the lead in organizing health organizations” (personal communication, January 31, 2014). To bring health advocates into the discussion, the organization held forums “that brought health groups together to talk about the issues and express why it was so important for health groups to be engaged” (personal communication, January 31, 2014).

Bringing stakeholders together for discussion in sub-groups was also important for the convening environmental organization, which had expanded its primarily sub-regional organization to include environmental stakeholders from throughout the Los Angeles region. According to an interviewee from the convening environmental organization,

We’re trying to be the convener basically. We’re the ones watching the agendas, notifying people about when it’s important to comment, go to a meeting, even providing talking points because they’re not paying as close attention to things as we are, but we’re keeping people in the loop. (Personal communication, October 8, 2013)

The interviewee went on to explain that as part of the informal process of bringing stakeholders together and exchanging information,

We would hold conference calls three times a week at different times because people work, people have kids, people have soccer practice, whatever. We'd have a morning call, and afternoon call, [and] an evening call, on different days, so people have the opportunity to join, to ask questions, to bring up concerns and things like that; so there are definitely moments when we have a back-and-forth dialogue, but most of the time we're providing the information and saying here's what we think are the benefits.

(Personal communication, October 8, 2013)

Existing connections. While the capacity to coordinate brought different stakeholders together for the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process, the interviews reveal that existing connections and prior working relationships between individuals and organizations contributed to the successful formation of the coalition. Key organizations not only possessed existing relationships with individuals and organizations from different fields, but also relationships with people and groups from both the public and private sectors.

The interviews revealed that the convening alternative transportation organization was led by senior members who had previously been extensively involved in politics, knew many RC members personally, worked on a variety of campaigns, were involved in the initiation of other organizations which later became partners, and had non-profit experience collaborating with other advocates who were later hired into influential government positions (personal communication, October 30, 2013; November 15, 2013; April 17, 2014). Given that the alternative transportation organization possessed these strong relationships, an advocate from the organization noted that “we had easy access to [our allies]” and discussions between partners were “very collegial” (personal communication, April 17, 2014).

For the convening environmental organization, unlikely alliances had been built through prior involvement and success with local initiatives. In fact, the organization had previously been asked by its unlikely allies to support sub-regional transportation plans, as noted by an environmental advocate (personal communication, October 8, 2013). According to the interviewee, “In retrospect, that is hilarious, because in what normal circumstance is [a conventional transportation] agency going to call an environmental group and say, ‘Can you come support us?’” (personal communication, October 8, 2013). Following these sub-regional successes, the environmental group was able to use its connections to garner additional support during the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process.

The interview with the environmental advocate revealed how the organization reached out to its unlikely allies and used a proactive tactic of drafting letters of support on behalf of their partners. The interviewee recalled,

With the SCAG stuff, because we had been so successful with the [sub-regional] programs, and we were working with what we were calling non-traditional partners—[a major business organization and a major transportation agency]—folks that you wouldn’t think environmentalists would sit at the table with. I said, ‘Would you write a letter of support for this program we’re working on for SCAG?,’ and they said, ‘Well I don’t really have time,’ and I said, ‘Perfect, why don’t I write it for you?’ And I’m sure they’re sitting there thinking, ‘Yeah, I’m sure coming from an environmentalist, it’s all going to be fluffy flowers and little bunnies and whatnot.’ Are you kidding? I went straight to their website and took their language, pasted in the letter and thought, ‘Hey, if it’s approved on their website, they’ve got to support it,’ so I did that for I think three different agencies, [by] writing their letter for them, giving it to them, and they’re like, ‘This is great!’ And I

said, ‘Well it’s your stuff, of course you like it!’ (Personal communication, October 8, 2013)

By reaching out to its non-traditional environmental partners and facilitating support by drafting letters using language familiar to the partner, the organization was able to strengthen the support of their advocacy at the six-county level. Furthermore, the interviewee acknowledged the importance of connecting with not only groups from outside fields, but also influential groups within the region.

By possessing relationships with influential organizations in different fields, the environmental organization cultivated trust from outsiders and support for the organization’s advocacy for a large-scale conservation program. According to the interviewee,

that was another thing that really played into it; that it wasn’t just environmentalists that they were saying they supported this advanced mitigation program in the RTP. It was that we had [a major business organization] behind us, we had [a major transportation agency] behind us, [another major transportation agency], and [a sub-regional government agency]. These are heavy hitters in [a sub-region], so I think with that clout, we finally had a seat at the table. (Personal communication, October 8, 2013)

In an interview with a business advocate, the interviewee similarly acknowledged the importance of possessing relationships with organizations from different fields. The interviewee explained that by having a conventional transportation organization on the board of the business organization,

We worked together to leverage each other’s strong suits to make sure that that document [of feedback on the regional plan] reflected mutual goals. I feel like I’m repeating myself, but all of these partnerships are in existence, and really you want to have them, so when

these things come up, you are able to deliver the message. So [the conventional transportation organization] might deliver a message that's very specific to transportation, of course, but [the business community] could also echo that message, or put a stronger business spin on it, so the message is getting repeated and therefore underscored and strengthened, but each with a different spin on it that reflects the industry. (Personal communication, December 5, 2013)

Experience and expertise. Through the process of coming together and reaching out to allies, stakeholders were able to learn from each other's experiences, expertise, and stories of success. The exchange of these resources contributed to the connection of issues and the development of strategies for advocacy. Various stakeholders brought specialized knowledge into the coalition, which had been learned from previous experience working on campaigns and within politics (personal communication, April 17, 2013). Additionally, smaller groups involved in sub-regional SCS planning processes, which had earlier deadlines than the 2012 RTP/SCS, were able "to give [other stakeholders] a heads-up as to what we're doing and how the planning process is panning out and what they can anticipate when it's their turn to do their SCS" (personal communication, May 20, 2014).

An interview with a health advocate revealed that by working with groups that had experience with RTP planning processes in both the Los Angeles region and in the San Francisco Bay Area, organizations new to the planning process were able to learn about regional planning and figure out where their individual expertise fits (personal communication, October 30, 2013). As the interviewee recalled,

You had everybody who had a stake in it, like our stake was public health and equity, and you had [another group] who also looked at public health, [a group] looking at public

transportation, [a group] that wanted to look at bicycles and pedestrian safety, and [another group] looking at biking, so you had all these groups who were local, but bigger, but not like neighborhood. ... Everybody knew that we would need to make this successful, because there was a lot that we could benefit from. It was completely new to everyone, so there wasn't an area where this group had expertise. It was the first time [the SCS was] being done, so I think that made us also come together; we all needed to rely on each other's expertise in order to make it successful. (Personal communication, October 30, 2013)

The reliance on individual expertise was especially important for the convening environmental organization, which worked on mapping significant habitat areas that could be used for mitigation programs. In order to collect accurate information to produce a baseline map, an advocate recalled that the organization reached out to its allies because

If you have a particular expertise along the base of the [city's] foothills, I don't know those foothills, so the [environmental group with that expertise] needs to be involved and tell us what the opportunities are, or what's been protected in a private stewardship fashion, as opposed to public, so we need them at the table. (Personal communication, October 8, 2013)

According to the environmental advocate, success with programs at the sub-regional level was also particularly important for advocacy at the six-county level, since the previous work contributed to exposure, connections, and recognition. As the interviewee stated,

I think if [the sub-regions] hadn't happened, with their advanced mitigation programs, SCAG wouldn't have been so positive about the possibility of a mitigation program itself. It comes back to your approach, and what successes you have behind you, and people at

least know my name, so that's good, and they recognize my face, so we're building from the grassroots up. (Personal communication, October 8, 2013)

Making new allies. In addition to coordinating various groups, building upon prior connections, and exchanging expertise, stakeholders formed new alliances in the planning process. While some of these new relationships occurred organically as different organizations were brought together to cooperate, other new alliances were formed through proactive strategies.

Natural circumstance. As noted by both a business advocate and a public official, concerns of being “swallowed up into L.A.” (personal communication, December 5, 2013) and resistance to “L.A.-driven” decisions (personal communication, January 10, 2014) contributed to a stronger presence of city leaders on the RC from outside of Los Angeles. An interview with an advocate from the convening alternative transportation organization revealed that the lack of presence by Los Angeles leaders contributed to new relationships that the organization formed with leaders from other parts of the region, including outlying areas “because rural interests are very different from urban interests, but there's a baseline commonality” (personal communication, April 17, 2014). The interviewee stated,

It's interesting because L.A. is not there, so we made friends with city council members from smaller cities in L.A. County, but mostly San Bernardino and Ventura, I would say, but also Riverside county to some extent because we have a lot of advocates from Riverside. I feel like whereas the Republicans had the upper hand when we came in, by the end, it was a big coalition, a broader coalition, which was not just democratic, because there are a lot of Republicans on the RC, but it was a pretty bipartisan group. (Personal communication, April 17, 2013)

According to the interviewee, advocating for an agenda that addressed issues pertaining to public health, active transportation, and air quality was especially important, since “those were the issues that appealed to both the republicans and democrats.” The interviewee also recalled, “There was a city council woman, a republican, from Ventura who once told me she thought that [advocates for pedestrian safety] in particular was one group that appealed to Republicans and could get passionate about” (personal communication, April 17, 2014).

Targeted approach. Whereas new relationships formed organically from the advocacy by the convening alternative transportation organization, the convening environmental organization formed new alliances by targeting specific leaders. An environmental advocate revealed that the organization first asked SCAG staff for information on which RC members might be particularly attracted to environmental issues or enjoy outdoor activities or hobbies. The organization then conducted more research on the individuals to determine if they were working on campaigns that involved the environment. Finding an “environmental champion,” the organization reached out to the individual to build reciprocal support (personal communication, October 8, 2013).

As an example, the interviewee explained how the organization found one RC member who had been working to improve a waterway. Given that the waterway cuts through several counties on its way from the mountains to the sea, the organization knew that they would be able to help. In return, the RC member provided support for the organization in the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process. The interviewee described that after getting an issue on the agenda of SCAG,

I reach out to my champions and say ‘Ok, it’s on the agenda, and here’s what the goal is, so you know what I’m going to talk about, so if you could concur, support, oppose, whatever we need you to do, stand up and do it.’ And they’ve done that. And it tends to

be the more leading edge cities or counties that you work with when picking the environmental champions. (Personal communication, October 8, 2013)

Another environmental advocate, who had primarily been involved with state-level advocacy in the past, revealed that through the 2012 RTP/SCS process, the organization was able to form new and close relationships with other state-level groups focused on health, as well as local groups focused on active transportation and infill development. Additionally, while the organization “didn’t have too much of a relationship with SCAG in the past,” the interviewee believed the organization was able to develop lasting relationships with SCAG staff, as well as “some of the board members who really emerged as champions” (personal communication, November 15, 2013).

Maintaining camaraderie. After stakeholders came together and developed cooperative relationships for advocacy, it was important to maintain camaraderie within the coalition by mutually supporting and educating one another while respecting each other’s differences. The interviews revealed that although organizations fundamentally sought to work together, there were sometimes disagreements that required partners to respectfully step aside through abstentions.

Mutual support. Reflecting on the collaborative ethos of the coalition, a health advocate stated, “I think people felt that if we disagreed completely, no one would be able to work and move anything forward” (personal communication, October 30, 2013). Describing an example of supporting and educating partners, an environmental advocate recalled,

We tried to support some of the things that other folks were doing because the environment process crosses so many lines. Whereas if you’re a transit advocate, you

might not recognize the benefit of having a park near a transit station, so you get tunnel vision. We try to maintain a broad focus. (Personal communication, October 8, 2013)

When overlapping issues came up, the organization also reminded its partners of their reciprocal dependence by stating, “It’s like well, ‘We’re out there supporting you, and it would be really helpful if you could support us, even if you just throw in a token ‘We like parks!’ That helps” (personal communication, October 8, 2013). Additionally, the interviewee noted the importance of trust and understanding in maintaining effective relationships with the organization’s environmental champions. Given that the relationships between the organization and its partners are not based on force or meant to put the leaders in an awkward position, the interviewee noted,

It’s not like I’m asking them to all of a sudden carry around a cane or crown. It’s just that when the opportunity comes up to comment on something environmental, I hope they would do it, so that again comes down to them knowing who I am, [and] having them understand what the program is. (Personal communication, October 8, 2013)

Respect for dissent. Although organizations cooperated and mutually supported the interests of one another in general, disagreements arose over issues such as what advocacy issues take priority, what position should organizations take on specific items of interest, and what should be the approach to advocacy. As an example of a disagreement, an alternative transportation advocate recalled, “Somebody would draft a letter and they would put [their interests] first, and we would say [our interests] should go first, so that was part of our internal issues, but it all worked out.” Referring to the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process, the interviewee added, “It was a really good exercise for people to learn how to work together” (personal communication, April 17, 2014).

Interviewees revealed that as a way for stakeholders to work together and maintain camaraderie, it was sometimes helpful to step aside. As an action that was both accepted and respected, partners could abstain from issues they disagreed with. An environmental advocate explained that when the organization circulated letters asking for support, allies were not obligated to add their endorsement. According to the interviewee, “If you sign on, great, but if you don’t, that’s fine too. Pick what’s good for your organization. We don’t hold it against you if you’re not involved” (personal communication, October 8, 2013).

Similarly, the option to abstain contributed to maintaining relationships within the coalition. As a health advocate recalled, there were many discussions between organizations about how much someone was willing to negotiate or move aside, where a partner might not voice support, but were not going to voice opposition either (personal communication, October 30, 2013). A particular issue of disagreement pertained to the types of relationships certain organizations had with decision makers and what would be appropriate approaches for advocacy. The interviewee explained in detail,

Whereas one approach was ‘Why are you asking? You need to be telling.’ Some groups felt ‘No, I’m going to ask, and be nice, and whatever they say, I’m going to do,’ and in those situations, some groups like us said, ‘Well we’re not going to ask, but we’ll step aside.’ (Personal communication, October 30, 2013)

For the interviewee’s organization, abstaining was a new approach, because

Originally, what you have is like ‘Okay, you can ask, and be very friendly, and use the insider game,’ and we could have said, ‘Well while you are doing that, we’re going to out you and use that against you to show you’re not getting to what you need, and we don’t believe in that strategy.’ [This time,] It was more about a different strategy, so in this

case, we don't agree with you but we're not going to stop that strategy, but we're going to make room for our own and you have to respect it. It was more of negotiating strategies, and I think it was more of how certain groups saw the balance of power and who had it, and how you make room for other people. (Personal communication, October 30, 2013)

Recognizing the importance of maintaining camaraderie between stakeholders in the coalition through abstentions and preventing conflict, the interviewee stated,

It was more a strategy where people many not always agree on it, but at the end, we're in a coalition, so we're going to respect it. And even on sign-ons [to letters asking for support], we may not agree on the letter that's out, so we're not going to put our name on it, but we won't write a letter contradicting it, which sometimes happens. (Personal communication, October 30, 2013)

Notably, in the case of one conventional transportation organization, which works closely with SCAG, it was SCAG that abstained to allow other organization members to provide feedback on the 2012 RTP/SCS. In an interview with an advocate from the organization, the interviewee stated, "Honestly, it was a little bit of a challenge" to provide critical feedback to a partner organization (personal communication, January 8, 2014). The interviewee added,

It's kind of interesting to have a coalition write a letter to one of our partners, essentially to say 'Hey, partner, this is what you need to consider,' so that did require some discussion; and the way [the organization] works, [is that] we really try hard to develop consensus, and if a partner has such a strong objection to us taking a position on something or supporting or opposing something, they are able to say 'We want [the organization] to stay out of it.' To [the SCAG Executive Director's] credit, he didn't do

that. He said, ‘Okay, you’re my partners, and if you feel strongly that this letter should be included, I’m going to step away from the discussion and let you have that and submit it.’ I think it was a little bit awkward for him, so I really respect that he allowed that process to move forward and take place, and enabled [the organization] to weigh in on the things we thought were really great and the things we thought still could be tweaked in the RTP process. It was unprecedented for us, actually. We don’t normally lobby our own members. (Personal communication, January 8, 2014)

Summary of the Conditions for the Formation of a Coalition

Generally, the findings revealed that the planning process mandated by SB 375 created an opening for engagement by stakeholders who had not been actively involved in past regional transportation planning processes. Whereas SCAG had once been perceived as an unproductive arena for advocacy, the objectives of SB 375 and the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process reemphasized the agency’s purpose to cooperatively tackle complex issues and renewed optimism in its effectiveness. Different organizations associated with the ecological perspective recognized the new legislation’s overarching rubric of sustainability as unifying theme within which to cooperatively promote policy changes.

By utilizing individual resources such as capacity, connections, and expertise, stakeholders were able to form a coalition, strengthen their collective power to act, and mobilize around a relatively unified agenda. Referring to the many discussions that took place between coalition partners to educate each other about one another’s interests, a health advocate stated, “Honestly, it was all conversations. I don’t think at any point it was someone saying we don’t

need it, I think we did a lot of education to get our coalition partners on board” (personal communication, October 30, 2013).

During the planning process, stakeholders within the coalition also expanded their network of partners by making new allies and maintained camaraderie through supporting and educating each other. Additionally, the findings revealed that respecting different viewpoints and allowing for abstentions was important in maintaining the relationships between stakeholders. By respecting and permitting abstentions from group decision-making processes, both collective and individual advocacy strategies could proceed without the threat of being challenged or undermined by an otherwise partnered organization.

According to an environmental advocate, by cooperating with other new organizations in regional planning process, the interviewee’s organization became more focused on public health issues, and more knowledgeable funding for transit and active transportation. The interviewee added that as a result, “those partnerships inform our advocacy in a lasting way” (personal communication, November 15, 2013). In an interview with an alternative transportation advocate, the interviewee reflected on the 2012 RTP/SCS process and stated,

It was SB 375 that brought us together as a coalition instead of as separate interests.

Public health may have gone to SCAG, active transport may have gone to SCAG, we may have gone to SCAG, but all of us coming there together to talk about this one issue, I think was really really [sic] powerful. (Personal communication, April 17, 2014)

Chapter Eight

The Mobilization of a New Advocacy Coalition in the 2012 RTP/SCS Planning Process

As shown in Chapter Seven, the adoption of SB 375 renewed the relevancy of SCAG to advocates and spurred new stakeholders to unite and engage in the regional planning process under the legislation's rubric of sustainability. By drawing upon individual resources, connecting with new allies, and preserving camaraderie, advocates for a variety of interests formed a new coalition around a relatively unified agenda for the promotion of sustainable development principles. This chapter builds upon the examination of the formation of the coalition in the regional planning process and provides insights into how the coalition mobilized in the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process and sustained its influence.

The findings show that the advocacy coalition engaged effectively in the regional planning process by utilizing approaches that were attainable and focused, oriented around data and solutions, and proactive and constructive. By using these strategies, the coalition refocused the regional planning discourse commonly centered on transportation and economic development to emphasize sustainable development principles as key contributing strategies. In the planning process, organizations associated with the ecological perspective of sustainability recognized the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process as an opportunity to promote change and readdress big-picture issues. However, expansionist stakeholders were wary of the implications of the new regional plan and focused on clarifying details with the intent to preserve authority over land use and development decisions. Moreover, coalition partners remained involved in regional planning after the adoption of the 2012 RTP/SCS by serving on SCAG sub-committees intended to develop recommendations for the implementation of the regional plan. This extended

engagement contributes to the durability of the coalition for the 2016 regional planning process. The recognition of the coalition's influence has prompted public officials and organizations seeking to preserve business-as-usual planning to reexamine their own strategies and partners for the upcoming RTP/SCS update.

The Coalition Approach to Effective Engagement

The interviews showed that in general, the coalition was mindful that the issues it promoted in the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process were both focused and attainable. Additionally, coalition members used data and offered solutions to support and advance their goals. By taking proactive and constructive approaches to engagement, coalition members also stayed ahead of the regional planning process and remained positive about what was collectively achievable.

Focus and feasibility. Under SB 375's rubric of sustainability, the coalition supported the integration of various sustainable development principles. Through an inclusive process of discussion and cooperation, coalition members connected each other's interests and strengthened mutual support. Additionally, coalition members considered the feasibility of their objectives with the intent to ensure that their advocacy agenda was acceptable and realistically possible.

Unifying objectives. By being inclusive of each other's interests, coalition members unified the objectives included in their agendas. As one health advocate described,

I know the folks that worked on bikability and walkability, and I know they had issues with investment in public transit. I don't think anyone put anything aside, but maybe groups that had only a public transit agenda said 'We'll include the message of bikability and walkability. So then you're not just framing it from bus, rail, or automobile; now

you're adding components. We did the same for health equity. (Personal communication, October 30, 2013)

In an interview with an environmental advocate, the interviewee noted that the unified agenda of the coalition

had very specific goals around funding, transportation choices, and new growth coming in these configurations that support walkable communities, support transit-oriented communities, infill goals, goals of reducing open space and habitat loss as a result of growth, goals of reducing congestion, air pollution, and saving households money on transportation. (Personal communication, November 15, 2013)

According to an alternative transportation advocate, it was possible to agree on a relatively unified agenda that linked coalition partners because "It was just so clear that all these things worked really well together" (personal communication, April 17, 2014). In an interview with a SCAG planner, the interviewee stated that having specific goals was important for the regional plan because

If the level of specificity was too general, then we're not committed to some of the improvements that allow us to show greenhouse gas emission reductions; in other words, it's just too loose, it could go in any number of directions that could impact performance. (Personal communication, September 18, 2013)

Ensuring feasibility. According to interviewees, the use of a focused agenda with feasible objectives contributed to the coalition's successes. Organizations were cognizant of their area of expertise and focused on issues that were attainable. In some cases, the understanding of local policies and funding mechanisms allowed local organizations to educate other groups about what strategies would work in the Southern Californian context. An alternative transportation

advocate noted that many large advocacy groups from the San Francisco Bay Area were familiar with more forceful advocacy strategies, and “push[ed] us to use a very combative style, like ‘We have to take all of these highway projects out of the RTP!’” (personal communication, April 17, 2014). However, the local organization knew that due to earmarking, it would not be possible repurpose funds already devoted to specific infrastructure projects. According to the interviewee, a senior member of the organization

understood that taking away a pet highway project from some city council member was probably not the best way to go and that the better way to go was to create opportunities for local government to support good projects. Rather than taking away bad projects, we already see demographic shifts, real estate market changes going this way and favoring cities built up around transit more than suburban enclaves that are far away from everything, so let’s just make it possible. (Personal communication, April 17, 2014)

Organizations also recognized that although many projects and strategies could promote sustainable development, focusing on fewer attainable objectives would be more successful to their advocacy efforts. As an environmental advocate recalled, the organization had many ideas that could contribute to sustainability, such as

free carpool lanes, which is a great idea, but I don’t think that’s our fight; that’s someone else’s fight, so we had to really think about and synthesize what was important to us. So we generally go in with one ask, and that ask relates to conservation and open space.

(Personal communication, October 8, 2013)

The interviewee added, “If you throw everything against the wall and see what sticks, you are not going to be listened to, you may be laughed out of the room, I mean who knows” (personal communication, October 8, 2013).

Two environmental advocates from different environmental organizations independently emphasized the notion of holding to realistic goals to help ensure that coalition members would not be “laughed out of the room” (personal communication, October 8, 2013; November 15, 2013). According to interviewees, feasibility was important to the promotion of sustainable development strategies, as well as the encouragement of funding increases. As one environmental advocate recalled,

When we were negotiating the [sub-regional] deal, we had all sorts of ideas like personal pod car-type things on a monorail, where instead of driving, you got into a pod. If we brought that to [the sub-regional transportation agency], they were going to laugh us out of the room. (Personal communication, October 8, 2013)

In a similar response, another environmental advocate described a negotiation between stakeholders to agree on realistic funding goals by stating,

Some of the bike coalition folks said the demand for biking facilities is \$40 billion, and I think we were starting out with \$1 billion—that is what the last plan had, or \$2 billion—so a lot of people said, ‘We need to go after SCAG for \$40 billion for bikes!’ So there was a bit of a negotiation to get to a number that wouldn’t result in being laughed out of the room, and a 40-fold increase is probably not going to happen, so I think we ended up saying \$10 billion or some much more reasonable number. (Personal communication, November 15, 2013)

The interviewee added that in order for coalition partners to agree on both the focus of the agenda and the attainability of its goals, “there were those types of negotiations of squaring pie-in-the-sky with reality” (personal communication, November 15, 2013).

Data and solutions. In combination with promoting specific and attainable goals, the coalition supported its advocacy with data and provided solutions to advance its agenda.

Utilizing data. Different interviewees pointed to a presentation given by scholar Arthur Nelson to the RC as an important moment that highlighted data on the supply and demand for housing in California (personal communication, November 15, 2013; April 17, 2014). According to Nelson (2011), the state's four largest metropolitan regions have an oversupply of conventional, large-lot single-family housing development, while demand is rising for multifamily and small-lot homes. By building upon this research, coalition partners strengthened their advocacy for more emphasis in the regional plan on compact infill development.

In an interview with an environmental advocate, the interviewee described how using the housing supply and demand data also helped to advance the coalition's agenda in negotiations with housing and industry representatives. The interviewee stated,

We tried to keep [negotiations] very data driven. We tried to really focus on the market demand and our estimations on how those demands were shifting and how it seemed like the demand for sprawl was drying up. We tried to go back to Nelson's study about how we've oversupplied sprawl product and undersupplied walkable product, and just kept it there. We invited [the housing and industry representatives] to share their studies that show that they did need more sprawl, and that the market did want it, even in the face of the mortgage meltdown, and it's funny in the meeting there's lots of posturing, and then quietly they admitted to me later that they don't have any studies. (Personal communication, November 15, 2013).

Within public health organizations, advocates saw that SB 375 initiated new discussions around infill and transit-oriented development, which were not emphasized in the past. The

organizations recognized the regional planning process as an opportunity to present data to support an agenda of advocating for land use decisions that are associated with positive health impacts. As one health advocate noted,

That's when we said, 'Okay, let's really start putting a program together.' It was really a bunch of different things. I think people are just used to talking about [land use and health] in isolation, and finally I think you can say 'There's been enough studies, and if we can build in certain ways, we can do this.' The built environment research came out in the early 2000s so it wasn't necessarily new, but it takes a while for local agencies and entities to say 'Oh, we can actually do something with it.' I think it was just all coming together. (Personal communication, October 30, 2013)

According to the interviewee, health organizations were also able to broaden their agenda to include equity issues by using research to promote affordable housing as a public health strategy.

The interviewee explained,

Whereas people were looking at diabetes and chronic disease, we included the affordable housing component. That was a health equity concern from our point of view, and we actually showed that if you make housing unaffordable, you create high stress levels. So it became a stress level concern, and that also contributes to certain chronic diseases like high blood pressure, so we expanded our vision of what [public health] meant. (Personal communication, October 30, 2013)

In addition to using existing research to support its objectives, health organizations also conducted new studies that helped to emphasize the health benefits of reduced automobile dependency. In an interview with another health advocate, the interviewee referred to developing health measures to support the organization's advocacy and stated,

We were really thankful there were funders who helped in different ways, funding groups to bring together that process to develop those [health] metrics, and they funded a lot of research we were able to do, and we found it very helpful to use research to demonstrate the health case and health benefits that could be achieved, and we were able to model what health outcomes could be achieved if we reduced VMT in the Southern California region. Again, it was incredibly helpful in changing the dialogue, changing the focus, away from just a car-centered focus, to really what is here for public health. (Personal communication, January 31, 2014)

According to an environmental advocate, producing and utilizing accurate data was also important for advocacy before larger planning decisions were made. Focused on the conservation of open space, the organization and its partners produced a baseline map of habitat areas and protected natural areas. This map was then used to support the organization's advocacy for more infill development in the region. According to the interviewee, basic foundational data about open spaces have to be accurate

because I think we can absolutely accommodate more people; we just have to start with the right baseline information. If you know what's protected, instead of saying this area is going to be developed, no it's not—it's a state park—you can't put houses there, it's protected. You have to understand that before you model anything, so I don't care about the numbers being projected, I just want the information behind that to be accurate, so then you can model appropriately. Once the maps were done, it was like 'Yeah okay, let's add more people, [and] this looks like a good spot in the interior of the county.' (Personal communication, October 8, 2013)

In an interview with a conventional transportation advocate who worked with business groups, data and research were also important to attracting support for sustainable strategies proposed for the regional plan. The interviewee stated that partner business organizations offered SCAG their economists to work with the regional planning team to model the economic impacts of various regional proposals. This economic and job creation analysis was included in the 2012 RTP/SCS and described the benefits of the regional plan for the regional economic and employment climate. The economists and the planning team examined

not just what [different planning strategies] would do for our environment, or our air quality, but if you input that, what does it do to our business climate? How does it change our economic viability, our competitiveness, our job market? Does it enhance our position as a leading employer, our position as a green economy, or will it threaten our ability to bring good paying jobs to Southern California or retain them? I think having that perspective, in addition to the sustainability perspective that came out of the SCS process, was really important to the overall long-term success of implementing the RTP. (Personal communication, January 8, 2014)

Providing solutions. In addition to utilizing data to support its advocacy, coalition members also offered solutions to advance their sustainable objectives. As an environmental advocate noted, “We know what the problems are,” and explained that when providing comments at a meeting, “You can say ‘We don’t want you to do X, but here’s our solution instead,’ because it really comes back to solutions.” (personal communication, October 8, 2013). A health advocate provided a similar statement about the solutions-based approach to cooperation and moving forward by noting,

There were a lot of conversations and space to have them, and I think a goal was ‘We know the issues, now can we get to a solution?’ So we were also solutions-oriented.

Often times you just say, ‘Here’s the issue,’ and you never get past it. (Personal communication, October 30, 2013)

In an interview with an environmental advocate, the interviewee provided an example of offering solutions as a method of supporting and integrating the objectives of the coalition, as well as the goals of SB 375. According to the interviewee, “most people were focused on infill development and transit, and we said if you buy open space at the wild land-urban interface and you force development in the interior, you’re meeting the demands of SB 375” (personal communication, October 8, 2013). The interviewee added that in the process of promoting the organization’s objectives and providing solutions, data were also used to support organization’s proposed strategy. According to the interviewee,

You have to know what you’re asking, where it’s been done before, and it gets scary if no one’s done this before. If they’re out there leading the charge, it’s terrifying, but if you can say Portland’s done it and it’s no big deal, or Seattle’s done it, then it’s like ‘Ok, we can just copy their language and adjust it to ours.’ (Personal communication, October 8, 2013)

Initiative and constructiveness. Besides advocating for focused and feasible objectives that were supported by data and alternative solutions, coalition members also took proactive and constructive approaches to collaboration and engagement in the 2012 RTP/SCS process. As an environmental advocate stated, “Before, our focus was on transportation and air quality and conformity through the framework of litigation, as opposed to being proactive with solutions-based planning” (personal communication, November 15, 2013). The interviewee’s statement

showed that working with new approaches reshaped the organization's focus and traditionally litigious approach to advocacy.

Taking initiative. The interviews revealed that proactively staying ahead of the regional planning process and coordinating partners contributed to the coalition's advocacy. A health advocate recalled that after bringing partners together, the organizations would collaborate and "develop talking points, and have different health leaders to testify, and make sure we had a good group of health folks and voices at each of the SCAG meetings when they were taking testimony and having key votes" (personal communication, January 31, 2014). This ensured that coalition members could promote its agenda through a strong presence at meetings. As an environmental advocate described, "Most of these SCAG meetings were packed, and they had to cut public testimonies short at almost every meeting because so many people wanted to talk" (personal communication, November 15, 2013). The interviewee added that with "five physicians in a row at the podium, and five infill builders in a row, and much more robust engagement, I think there was much more of a spotlight on SCAG" (personal communication, November 15, 2013).

In an interview with another environmental advocate, the interviewee explained how the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process was also a learning experience in how to take a proactive approach to engagement. The interviewee recalled an instance during a public comment period where an advocate had spent their feedback time listing demands, and a public official responded with:

'You can't tell us what to do, you need to draft the language and give it to us for us to consider,' and I thought 'Oh dear god, take the lesson, this poor [person] just got skewered!' So I'm the next up, and I said at the end of my speech, 'By the way we have language drafted and we'll have it to you by the end of the day.' So I run home, I write

language, and again tactics—we made it look like their page, same font, same bullet points, [and] same intro. (Personal communication, October 8, 2013)

Additionally, the interviewee commented on the importance of proactively supporting a proposal for a small-scaled mitigation program that would involve cooperation between a local government and a sub-regional transportation agency. According to the interviewee,

We're hoping that something like this, where it's cross-jurisdictional, could be the pilot program [for a large-scale mitigation program], which is why it's so important to be in touch with the other transportation agencies and have that coalition built up, because you never know when something like that's going to come into fruition; and again, being proactive, rather than reactive. It's been a learning experience, and boy, you've got to stay organized, you've got to stay on the ball, you've got to pay attention to meetings, but you also get to the point where it's not a confrontational relationship anymore. (Personal communication, October 8, 2013)

Being constructive. Given that the coordination of organizations brought together various individuals with diverse experiences from different fields, advocates learned from each other's experiences to develop a more productive strategy for advocacy and cooperation. The interviews revealed that in general, coalition members recognized that avoiding confrontational relationships and steering partners away from adversarial approaches would be more successful than issuing demands or threatening legal challenges.

In particular, the coordinating alternative transportation organization strongly sought to facilitate constructive approaches, since its senior members had extensive prior experience in local government and “knew a lot about how government worked and why government moves

forward and why it sometimes stops” (personal communication, April 17, 2014). In an interview with an advocate from the organization, the interviewee explained,

I’ve worked a very long time as an advocate, where you have a goal, and you just fight for it, and you knock at the doors of government and you go ‘We demand this!’ but [a senior member of the organization], having been in government for so long, had a much more collaborative, much more, ‘Let’s figure out how to help SCAG, and help all these regional council members who are mayors, or who are on the city council of all these small cities around the region. Let’s figure out what they need to be able to move this agenda forward; let’s figure out how our agenda also makes sense to them.’ (Personal communication, April 17, 2014)

In order to encourage a more constructive approach to engagement, the alternative transportation organization negotiated with its partners to dissuade stakeholders from being overly aggressive in their advocacy efforts. According to the interviewee,

trying to build up the coalition for good projects, instead of taking away bad projects, was our way of doing it, and [two large Northern Californian advocacy groups] both were trying to say ‘No, we need to be the enforcers; to be forceful!’ but [our organization] was always trying to find ways to move things forward, instead of trying to stop bad things. (Personal communication, April 17, 2014)

The alternative transportation advocate noted that in some cases, traditionally adversarial groups served as powerful partners “because they just want to sue. They look for legal remedies [and] when we walked in the door with [a prominent environmental partner], everybody was like, ‘I wasn’t doing anything; I’m cool’” (personal communication, April 17, 2014). However,

in an interview with an environmental advocate from the organization, the interviewee stated that by shifting to a more constructive approach,

we tried to enter [engagement] with an advisory role, where we would be offering guidance in terms of what would make for a strong plan, and so rather than serving a role of playing outsider, challenging, being adversarial, we chose—if there was an opening for, which we perceived was a real opening for guidance and partnership—to engage more in terms of an advisor and a partner. That was the way it worked and we ended up developing relationships that were very close working relationships. (Personal communication, November 15, 2013).

An interview with an advocate from another environmental organization revealed that taking a supportive and constructive approach was also more successful than being adversarial (personal communication, October 8, 2013). Similar to the transportation organization, the interviewee’s environmental organization also negotiated with other groups to discourage aggressive advocacy efforts and emphasized a more positive outlook. As the interviewee recalled,

There was an environmental group that was going to sue [a sub-regional transportation agency], and we were able to talk them back and say, ‘Look, we’re working on this other thing that’s huge.’ And granted, like the SCS and RTP, it’s not perfect, there are plenty of things we would like to fix, but we’re focused on one thing, and if we got it, then we can potentially ignore the rest and work on it the next time. (Personal communication, October 8, 2013)

The environmental advocate referred to the organization’s positive approach to engagement and stated, “We tried to cut the emotion out. We’re not out there screaming or picketing or filling

bulldozer [fuel] tanks with gravel. This is an effective way to get something done, so if we're successful, why would we change our approach?" The interviewee acknowledged that although the organization may disagree with the transportation agencies about certain projects,

We know where we get along, and if you can channel the energy, channel the ask, just like we did with the various entities, you can get a lot farther by supporting something, than you can get by opposing it. That comes back to having constructive comments as opposed to having emotional comments in your letters. (Personal communication, October 8, 2013)

The interviewee added that as a result of constructive and cooperative approaches, the organization built new relationships in the sub-region "that had never seen the light of day before." The interviewee acknowledges "there are some things we'll agree on and some things we won't, but when we channeled our energy, boy did it pay off in huge dividends. (Personal communication, October 8, 2013)

According to an alternative transportation advocate, coalition partners recognized that taking a constructive approach would be the most appropriate strategy for cooperation, particularly when diverse stakeholders and decision makers are involved. The interviewee explained,

With a government body like the RC that is so diverse, it just proved to be a much more effective strategy, so I would say that most of the arguments [between coalition members] was about the strategy. There was always back and forth about 'Do we yell about stuff, or do we say yes let's do this together?' So [our organization] was very persuasive, and the approach was welcomed by SCAG [staff] and the RC, so it just became clear that we were on a path that was potentially going to yield such great results;

[and] in the end all those arguments melted away. (Personal communication, April 17, 2014)

A Shift in the Regional Planning Discourse

The data show that following the adoption of SB 375, a coalition of transportation, health, and environmental advocates used the legislation's rubric of sustainability and its mandated regional planning process to promote a relatively unified agenda focused on feasible goals and solutions. Whereas expansionist stakeholders such as certain business and industry stakeholders focused on clarifying details within the plan, the new coalition of advocates guided by the ecological perspective sought to readdress broader policy issues.

By utilizing supportive and productive approaches to negotiation and engagement, the coalition achieved successes at reshaping the regional planning dialogue conventionally focused on transportation and economic development. Advocates and decision makers recognized the potential to shift long-term regional planning towards more sustainable approaches to suit the preferences of a changing population, while still accommodating conventional planning decisions in the short-term.

In contrast to the previous regional plan, the 2012 RTP/SCS includes a stronger emphasis on alternative land use decisions and active transportation as strategies for regional approaches to sustainable development. As noted by an environmental advocate who had previously perceived SCAG as an unimportant arena for successful advocacy, "there's never been such a robust conversation at SCAG before about land use and transportation planning," and that SCAG's recognition of how land use patterns can be a form of transportation management was a "light bulb" moment (personal communication, November 15, 2013).

Conventional concerns. As shown in Chapter Seven, there was strong concern from public officials and business and industry stakeholders that SB 375 would take land use decisions away from local governments and give SCAG new regulatory powers. Although SB 375 (2008) states, “Nothing in a sustainable communities strategy shall be interpreted as superseding the exercise of the land use authority of cities and counties within the region” (p. 11-12), and “Nothing in this section shall require a city’s or county’s land use policies and regulations, including its general plan, to be consistent with the regional transportation plan” (p. 12), stakeholders were wary of the plan’s implications.

However, the concerns are valid, given that SB 375 also does not limit the authority of CARB to issue mandates if for instance, conformity between local plans and the regional plan is necessary to achieve air quality requirements. Additionally, as noted in Chapter Three, SB 375 permits CEQA streaming for projects consistent with the objectives of the 2012 RTP/SCS and impacts the RHNA. For these reasons, stakeholders from business and industry sectors expressed concerns over details in the regional plan, which might increase the costs of business or hinder projects from receiving development incentives (personal communication, October 7, 2013; December 5, 2013). Additionally, public officials were concerned that the incentives themselves would encourage higher density in areas where it is unwanted or unsuitable (personal communication, January 10, 2014). In an interview with a planner at SCAG, the interviewee discussed the promotion of land use changes more broadly in the regional plan by noting,

There was a lot of discussion about the level of specificity of land uses. On the one hand, people thinking that if our plan adopted very specific land uses at a small level of geography, that would have the effect of being binding on jurisdictions or on individual projects, that it might make it harder for projects seeking CEQA streaming to be found

consistent with the plan, which I mentioned was the main thing that some of the business groups were interested in. (Personal communication, September 18, 2013)

Indeed, a business advocate revealed that negotiating for flexibility is “something that comes up time and again related to California and its ‘overregulated environment,’ in the vernacular of the business community” (personal communication, December 5, 2013). The interviewee added that negotiations are necessary because often “policies are made, but there isn’t really an understanding of how it affects business” (personal communication, December 5, 2013).

In order to negotiate for flexibility, business stakeholders partnered with industry stakeholders and focused their advocacy efforts on ensuring that they would not be bound by requirements included in the 2012 RTP/SCS Programmatic Environmental Impact Assessment (PEIR) (personal communication, October 7, 2013; December 5, 2013). The stakeholders sought to eliminate what a SCAG planner described as “the level of detail, and depending on how you interpret it, the proscriptiveness of the mitigation program” (personal communication, September 18, 2013) in the PEIR, which offers a framework of mitigation measures that future projects can adopt for inclusion in the regional plan. As a response to the concerns of business and industry stakeholders, SCAG restructured the PEIR and compiled the mitigation measures in an appendix for clarification and identified them as suggested measures. According to a planner from SCAG, the mitigation measures

are now sort of references, as opposed to actual binding mitigation measures in our EIR. I think that is consistent with our original intended approach, but nevertheless a pretty meaningful structural change in the later document in order to satisfy the concern.

(Personal communication, September 18, 2013)

The business community perceived the clarification of mitigation measures and restructuring of the PEIR as a win,

because the mitigation measures were very extreme in some cases, and you get to talking with [SCAG], and SCAG would explain what their purpose was, and when you hear it explained, you're like 'Okay, but that's not how it's written,' and you always have to look two or ten years down the road, where someone's going to use that document in a lawsuit, and you can't say 'Well, they told me it was going to be this.' (Personal communication, December 5, 2013)

While business and industry stakeholders expressed concern for the details of the mitigation measures of the regional plan, which might make CEQA streamlining procedures difficult, local governments were wary that the incentives themselves could focus development in jurisdictions that are unsuitable for higher density growth patterns. As stated by a public official from a sub-regional council of governments, the regional plan

is going to upset a lot of elected officials because there's been new CEQA reform, and in the new CEQA language, it's giving exemptions or special privileges to those areas that have a high transit-oriented development included in them, so you're going to see a lot of that, and in some areas, it just doesn't lend itself. I live out in [redacted] county, and there is no transit there, so it doesn't make sense there, so it's creating an imbalance in trying to push that on more rural areas rather than urban areas. So that's a whole debate, because you can't force people out of their cars totally. You can't force people from wanting to own a single-family home and a third of an acre of land for whatever they want to do. (Personal communication, January 10, 2014)

New directions. Expansionist stakeholders that had previously participated in the regional planning process, such as business and industry advocates, focused on clarifying details to protect themselves from what were perceived as requirements associated with the regional plan. In contrast, the new coalition of advocates for sustainable development issues sought to facilitate a reexamination of broader policy issues and the acceptance for new directions in regional planning.

In an interview with an alternative transportation advocate, the interviewee recalled that the recognition of the interrelated benefits of the 2012 RTP/SCS by public officials at SCAG was a “turning point” in the regional planning discussion (personal communication, April 17, 2014). According to the interviewee, an analysis and presentation of various benefits associated with different planning scenarios helped officials understand that

this isn't really about reducing GHG emissions—I mean yes, it is—but it's really about reducing housing and transportation costs for families; so there's more money in their wallet because they live closer to where they work, and it's about increasing energy efficiency because more density increases energy efficiency. It's about reducing water usage, it's about lowering infrastructure costs for local governments, it's about all these co-benefits, and I think finally local government was like ‘Okay, I get it. This is about all of these other things that of course we are trying, as local elected officials, to do anyway.’ (Personal communication, April 17, 2014)

Figure 8.1 (p. 157) shows a detail of SCAG's presentation of various benefits associated with four different planning scenarios. The scenario outcomes were also included in the handouts that were distributed during public outreach workshops, and a complete figure is provided in Appendix D.

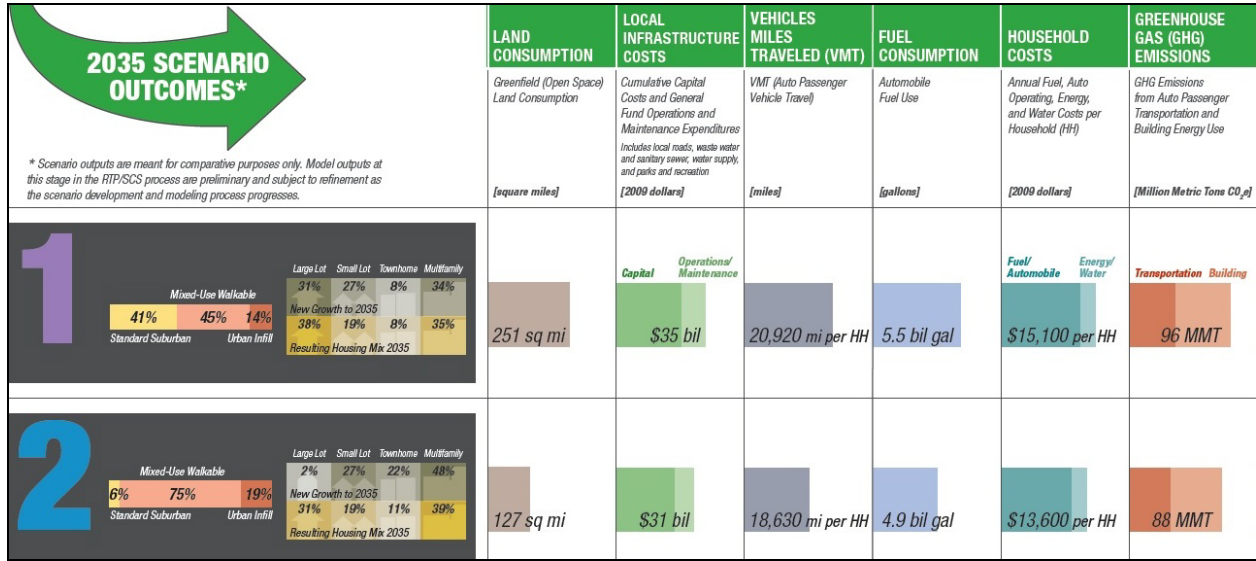


Figure 8.1. Detail of presentation of scenarios outcomes and co-benefits (SCAG, 2011).

Similar to the response provided by the alternative transportation advocate, a health advocate also noted that the scenarios provided by SCAG, combined with Nelson’s report, played important roles in encouraging public officials to reexamine traditional planning assumptions. According to the interviewee, even though SCAG does not have authority over local land use decisions,

They were able to look at different land use scenarios, and that’s where I felt they pushed pretty hard, and they actually did push on their local governments. Some of the regions just say ‘You know, we don’t control land use, cities control land use, so we’re just going to take whatever’s in the existing general plan and that will be the regional land use allocations,’ but SCAG said ‘You know, we really see the market going in a different direction, and we’re going to assume for the short term that what the locals have in their plans will happen. But after 2020, we’re going to shift away from what’s in those general

plans and shift towards a more transit-oriented, walkable development future.’ And that was a very open conversation they had with the cities, and they actually went around and asked ‘Can we make a different assumption in the plan than what’s in your general plan on the premise that things are changing and preferences are changing?’ That was fairly forward-looking of this plan. (Personal communication, November 15, 2013)

In order to discuss different planning scenarios and promote an alternative direction for regional planning that would help the state meet its emission reduction goals, a SCAG planner noted that it was necessary to be progressive while understanding the limits of feasibility. As the interviewee explained,

The balance we were trying to achieve was between what was the most aggressive or sustainable plan we could come up with that we also felt was feasible, and to a large extent, feasibility was judged by the degree of departure from existing plans. So in other words, we felt like we could only push so far from what’s in existing general plans, what our local governments were telling us during the local input process; and quite frankly, outside the 375 realm, when we get into the federal transportation law, we don’t think we could adopt a plan, and get it approved, if it departs too radically from existing plans. (Personal communication, September 18, 2013)

As a result of the objectives of SB 375, SCAG’s responsibility to produce a regional plan to meet mandates, and a cooperative ethos among participants, the data show that in general, stakeholders were satisfied with the 2012 RTP/SCS and supported its adoption. Sub-regional COGs wary of the implications of the SCAG SCS on sub-regional development were able to create their own SCS and retain their sub-regional growth and land use assumptions. Business, industry, and conventional transportation groups perceived wins in the successful clarification

and restructuring of the mitigation measures and the positive findings of the economic and job creation analysis. Environmental organizations perceived wins through a stronger focus on infill development and commitments to open space conservation. Lastly, alternative transportation and health organizations perceived wins in increased investments for transit, walking, and biking in the new regional plan and the stronger emphasis on compact, transit-oriented development.

A health advocate described the new direction for regional planning as “a real win, and we saw the dialogue change throughout the process” (personal communication, January 31, 2014). An alternative transportation advocate who also noticed the shift in the regional planning discourse noted that although politically conservative voices had traditionally dominated the floor at SCAG,

over the two years of that campaign, we changed that dynamic utterly to a dynamic that wasn't just lead by progressive voices, but it had a [progressive city] mayor and city council member as President of the regional council in 2012 when we won the victory, which was very important, because [the President] was a strong voice for a progressive way of thinking. [The President] understood sustainable development and understood sustainable prosperity. (Personal communication, April 17, 2014)

The interviews show that a variety of advocates also recognized the importance of progressive leaders in reshaping the regional planning dialogue. According to a conventional transportation advocate, the Executive Director of SCAG

was extremely committed developing a consensus-based collaborative process, and [the President of the RC] who was the chair of SCAG during the RTP/SCS adoption process was also. That's really [the President's] M.O. in leadership—to bring everybody to the table and find win-win situations for them. The fact that they had this RTP pass with no

abstentions, with no objections, with unanimous consent of 189 cities was really an accomplishment. (Personal communication, January 8, 2014)

Additionally, a health advocate observed the positive role of progressive officials who helped to change the perspectives of leaders who had preferred business-as-usual planning decisions. The interviewee stated, “I think it also happened because we do have leaders who saw the benefit of it all and helped guide other people who thought, ‘Well this is what I want, and I’ve been doing it this way for a long time’” (personal communication, October 30, 2013).

Durability of the New Coalition

Beyond achieving successes in the 2012 RTP/SCS, coalition partners remained involved in regional planning processes after the adoption of the plan to advance their agenda issues and facilitate the implementation of the plan. The influence of the coalition was recognized by expansionist stakeholders who have now taken the role of advocacy groups into serious consideration when making decisions about how to proceed in the 2016 RTP/SCS planning process.

Prolonged engagement. According to an environmental advocate focused on conservation, “Now we’re meeting with [SCAG] every other month to talk about conservation and open space, which we’ve never done before” (personal communication, October 8, 2013). The interviewee added that the organization’s conversations with SCAG have “turned into just a really frank dialogue about what we’re doing that helps them, what they’re doing that might help us” (personal communication, October 8, 2013). Furthermore, SCAG included a conservation element in the annual survey it uses to collect data from jurisdictions and approached the environmental organization to ask for feedback in advance of distributing the survey. According

to the interviewee, “It’s just been really an eye-opening experience that they’re using us as resources now, which never happened before, so that has just been incredible” (personal communication, October 8, 2013).

In addition to working independently with SCAG staff, advocates also remained engaged in regional planning through SCAG’s ad-hoc sub-committees primarily focused on active transportation and public health issues. According to a planner at SCAG,

Part of the adoption of the plan was this thing called the “Enhancement Motion,” that was put forward by some of the advocacy groups, and passed unanimously at the same time they adopted the plan. The idea was to continue engagement, [and] to follow through on some of the policies that were included in the SCS. One of the things that we did in response to the motion was form sub-committees. These were ad-hoc sub-committees that met for six-to-eight months and came up with recommendations about our on-going activities. The reason I bring them up is because one of the purposes of the sub-committees was to continue the engagement, [and] continue to build relationships with stakeholders who were active in the planning process. (Personal communication, September 18, 2013)

Additionally, an alternative transportation advocate also noted that the purpose of the sub-committees was “to continually search for new sources of funding for transit and active transportation, to focus in on better performance measures for public health, and to work on strategies for moving forward” (personal communication, April 17, 2014). The interviewee added,

It was striking that another thing that came out of our motion was that SCAG then set on a course of developing MOUs (Memorandums of Understanding) with each of the county

transportation commissions, which are very progressive documents about making first-mile and last-mile connections to transit, the importance of transit, the importance of development around transit. They are very important documents for charting out partnerships with the county transportation commissions, because that's where the money is. (Personal communication, April 17, 2014)

Given that the new regional planning process brought new stakeholders into discussions, the planner from SCAG explained that the sub-committees were “a good thing to help keep them at the table, keep them interested, and also to get some indication about what they're going to want from us as we start working towards 2016” (personal communication, September 18, 2013).

Preemptive power. Notably, the interviews show that as the 2016 RTP/SCS update process commenced, recognition of the influence and coordination of the new advocacy coalition had already impacted the decisions of participants who have traditionally focused on economic and conventional transportation goals. As a significant change from the 2012 RTP/SCS process, even if sub-regions assume delegation to produce their own SCS sections for the 2016 regional plan, sub-regional growth and land use assumptions would be open to modification by SCAG. As a public official revealed, the anticipation that advocacy groups would challenge sub-regions, combined with limited financial resources, had prompted sub-regions to decline delegation and choose to work directly with SCAG on the six-county SCS instead (personal communication, January 10, 2014). The interviewee believed that “a lot of components included in the last [plan] were directly requested of an activist group at the very last minute” and acknowledged that all of the advocacy groups, whether good or bad, have become a key component of working with SCAG. They're there marching up to the podium every SCAG meeting and going on saying, ‘Here we are! Here we are!’ So it's forcing elected officials to say ‘Geez,

when [the regional plan] is going to be compromised, what is going to happen is it's going to be what they want and not necessarily what's best for the community,' so that's just changing everything. (Personal communication, January 10, 2014)

By stating, "I'll be meeting with one of them next week, but you have to," the interviewee recognized that meeting with advocacy groups from the coalition was now a necessity to planning the next RTP/SCS. Additionally, a conventional transportation advocate also considered the importance of working with advocacy groups from the coalition by stating that "the RTP/SCS process helped us take a more serious look at active transportation groups and how we could partner with them." However, the interviewee added, "we have kept tabs on what they're doing without supporting them at this point" (personal communication, January 8, 2014).

In an interview with a business advocate, the interviewee noted the lack of coordination among public officials during the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process. The interviewee believed that since sub-regions will not be creating their own SCS sections for the 2016 regional plan, greater coordination while working with SCAG would be necessary. The interviewee stated,

I think there are some [RC] members that are particularly strong and articulate, but the problem has been that they haven't all been coordinated. You may have one or two members saying 'This is important' or 'This we need to do,' and maybe the other members from [a sub-region] don't disagree, but that's a couple of drops in a really big board at SCAG. ... I think there will be a greater need for [the sub-regional] members to work together before SCAG meetings to make sure there is a unified voice; that there's a particular issue that's important to [the sub-region]; or if they feel like something's not being reflected accurately. (Personal communication, December 5, 2013)

Summary of Coalition Mobilization

In order to engage effectively in the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process, the new coalition of advocates focused their agenda on mutually supportive issues and attainable objectives. Coalition partners utilized research and data to support their goals, while offering solutions to advance their agenda. Lastly, the coalition took proactive and constructive approaches to engagement, while encouraging traditionally adversarial partners to adopt supportive strategies instead. Whereas local governments and business and industry organizations focused their advocacy efforts on ensuring that they would not be bound by regulatory details, advocates for sustainable development issues advocated for broader policy changes and new directions for regional planning. An environmental advocate who achieved advocacy goals and formed productive partnerships through the regional planning process stated,

Whereas sometimes you go to city council meetings and you're constantly butting heads, at this point, I can just pick up the phone and call SCAG and say 'Hey, do I need to show up at this meeting or not?' and they're like 'No, you're good, come to the next one though!' 'Ok!'" And that's never happened before, so we clearly have something that's building here. I think there's a level of trust that's in play, and it's like we're not bad, you're not bad, and everyone can get along, and that it's doable. Most people don't think that you can work with government and actually get something positive done, but I totally disagree, because we have awesome examples of how it can be done. (Personal communication, October 8, 2013)

By working positively with SCAG to help the agency achieve its objectives while achieving its own, the coalition redirected the conventional regional planning discourse to include an emphasis on the co-benefits of adopting alternative transportation and land use

scenarios that emphasize transit, walking, and biking, as well as more compact infill development and commitments to environmental conservation. Following the adoption of the 2012 RTP/SCS, coalition partners remained engaged in regional planning to support the implementation of the regional plan by working directly with SCAG staff and serving on ad-hoc sub-committees. Stakeholders associated with the expansionist perspective recognized the influence of the coalition in the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process, and anticipated that the coalition would continue to influence the 2016 RTP/SCS. Wary of challenges by advocacy groups and attempting to avert potentially large conflicts, public officials decided to decline delegation to create sub-regional SCS sections, which no longer have protected sub-regional growth and land use assumptions, and work directly with SCAG and coalition members.

Chapter Nine

Barriers and Channels to the Development of the 2012 RTP/SCS

The 2012 RTP/SCS, which was unanimously adopted by the SCAG RC and supported by a variety of stakeholders, presents a strategy for future growth at the regional scale. The regional plan links land use and transportation planning with the intent to improve the Los Angeles region's air quality; access to jobs, housing, and services; quality of life for residents; and economic competitiveness. As noted in Chapters Seven and Eight, the development of the regional plan involved participation by stakeholders from a variety of fields and was influenced by a coalition of advocates focused on issues of sustainability. The comparison presented in Chapter Six of the 2012 RTP/SCS to the preceding 2008 RTP shows that the new regional plan promotes many principles pertaining to sustainable development to a greater extent than the preceding RTP.

The literature discussed in Chapter Four notes that factors such as local autonomy, opposing central city and suburban growth agendas, lack of resources at the regional level, unwillingness by regional agencies to support local coordination, and competition between cities for economic investments often challenge regional approaches to sustainable development. In contexts with these characteristics, strategies such as state mandates, collaborative and voluntary planning processes, coalition building, performance standards, and the availability of technical assistance can contribute to successful approaches to sustainable planning at the regional scale.

In this chapter, I present the findings of factors that served as barriers and channels to the development of the 2012 RTP/SCS. Despite the generally positive response to the 2012 RTP/SCS and its development, a number of factors challenged the planning process and

detracted from the overall cohesiveness of the regional plan. The data show that cynicism towards SCAG and the regional planning effort, as well as desires to protect local autonomy resulted in difficulties during planning workshops and a regional plan fragmented by sub-regional SCS sections. Additionally, the lack of data during the planning process resulted in inadequate responses to concerns for public health and equitable housing, while a lack of resources and the planning effort's scale of focus limited engagement by local stakeholders.

Nevertheless, a variety of factors also facilitated the development of the 2012 RTP/SCS and in spite of barriers, contributed to the overall positive reception for the regional plan. According to the data, an emphasis of different planning scenarios and the co-benefits of sustainable strategies helped to focus the planning discourse onto achievable objectives for a variety of stakeholders. Additionally, the role of SCAG staff in facilitating engagement and mediating conflict, while calling attention to the state mandate, served as important contributing factors for success with the regional planning process. Moreover, success with the regional plan and planning process was enhanced by different stakeholders who celebrated and supported the 2012 RTP/SCS as an important step in collaborative planning for the Los Angeles region.

Barriers to the Development of the Regional Plan

Although the 2012 RTP/SCS met the requirements of SB 375 and was unanimously adopted by the RC, several factors challenged the regional planning process and the cohesiveness of the adopted plan. These factors included local officials who resisted the idea of sustainable development and sub-regional agencies that sought to protect local autonomy in planning decisions. Associated with these challenges, collaborative planning processes were hindered by misunderstandings and distrust of SCAG and the regional effort while limited attention was

focused on equitable housing issues. Additionally, a lack of data prevented certain housing and health issues from being fully addressed in the 2012 RTP/SCS and the sub-regional SCS sections. Furthermore, given the size and diversity of the Los Angeles region, SCAG's reliance on local agencies to solicit participation, as well as the plan's regional scale of focus, hampered engagement by local and community stakeholders.

Resistance and parochialism. As noted in Chapter Seven, many local officials, primarily in the initial stages of the regional planning process, were wary of SB 375 and its implications. As one affordable housing advocate noted,

Jurisdictions didn't want to do the SCS because there's this big strong need to have local control, and I think that's why [a sub-region] wanted to do their own SCS too, so they can have more control over the whole process, and SCAG wouldn't have all the control.

(Personal communication, May 20, 2014)

Local jurisdictions perceived the new legislation as an infringement upon their rights and opposed the regional effort for what was perceived to be a method of forcing cities to undertake sustainable development.

From the concerns expressed by public officials at an outreach workshop, it was evident that in some cases, resistance to the regional planning effort at the local level was associated with a strong laissez-faire philosophy and a mistrust of SB 375 in general, which was perceived to be associated with Agenda 21 of the United Nations. During the comments and questions period, a local official responded to a SCAG presentation about the regional plan by stating that the regional plan

is absolutely Agenda 21. Sustainable development comes from United Nations Agenda 21. In that document, their overall objective is to take away personal property rights. The

property rights of the people of the United States of America, the foundation to our Republic, and to not be open and honest about sustainable development, what it is, where it came from, how people are going to be impacted by that; and for the elected [officials] in the room, we need to stand in favor of the constitution. This is in direct conflict with the constitution, and if you look at the U.N. documents, and you look at what's unsustainable, what they deem unsustainable is the American middle-class, property rights, golf courses, ski slopes. This is the truth, so let's have an open dialogue, so people can understand not only the pros—the flowery stuff you have here—but also the negatives, and then let's make some informed decisions. (Workshop recording, February 6, 2012)

Followed by applause from the audience, it was clear that other officials shared a similar sentiment towards the regional plan and planning process.

Since the bottom-up approach to the creation of the regional plan utilized existing general plans as a foundation, another official in attendance perceived the regional plan and planning process as a way of forcing sustainable development onto resistant jurisdictions. The local official believed that since the cities involved in the regional planning process are also members of the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), also known as Local Governments for Sustainability, the general plans used to create the regional plan surreptitiously promote sustainable development. With this in mind, the official not only objects to the regional plan, but also SCAG for implementing the planning process. According to the official,

All of those cities are ICLEI cities, so they have been making these plans based on sustainable development and transportation corridors and all that, which is not what the American people want; it's not how we've lived our lives, and it's not how we plan to

live our lives, and I believe once the entire population understands clearly where these plans are coming from, you guys will be thrown out of town on a rail because we're not having it. (Workshop recording, February 6, 2012)

Nevertheless, the reaction was unsurprising to SCAG, who viewed the resistance from local governments, particularly against density, as persistent barriers to collaborative processes.

Identifying a historically conservative sub-region in particular, a planner from SCAG noted,

I think the electeds (elected officials) are going to balk at the idea of increasing density because density is still a bad word, and absent of the context in which you see what a denser neighborhood looks like—and that it can actually be quite nice—they're just going to say 'Nobody wants that because me and none of my friends want to live there.' Again, it's really hard for these areas to look at the plan and not think that we are saying 'you should do this' and that 'you should replace what you have with this.' If the plan says 'you should increase density,' they see it as taking away a single family home, and that's not what this is about. (Personal communication, September 1, 2011)

A conventional transportation advocate who works with CTCs also noted that resistance to collaboration between sub-regional agencies is often hindered by locally oriented funding pursuits, in which CTCs primarily focus on their own sub-regions. According to the interviewee,

Regionally, there is still a lot of parochialism amongst the [CTC] boards, so [different CTCs] measure their executives, and their staff, and their government relations teams, and consultants, on how much they individually bring back to those agencies. They don't look at the RTP program and say 'Okay, in the region, these are the top priorities and we are going to try to secure money for those and it doesn't matter if it's in my region or not.' They're very much focused on their own backyard, and as they should be, since they

represent the individuals living in those specific areas, but it is philosophically and pragmatically a big hurdle in Southern California to overcome. (Personal communication, January 8, 2014)

Parochialism among sub-regional agencies, combined with intent to preserve autonomy, was evidenced by the fragmentation of the 2012 RTP/SCS by sub-regional SCS sections. Although the sub-regional SCS sections were approved and included in the 2012 RTP/SCS in full, they are separate guiding policy documents for the Gateway Cities and Orange County sub-regions. Additionally, according to a planner from SCAG, “some of the adjustments [to growth and land use assumptions] that we made for other sub-regions didn’t apply in Orange County or Gateway Cities” (personal communication, September 18, 2013). The interviewee explained, once the framework and guidelines were in place,

We turned [the sub-regions] loose, they did their own thing, and we incorporated their plans at the end of the day. They didn’t really have a problem with anything we were doing and vice versa. The one thing that was a little bit of an issue was Gateway [Cities COG]. We did not issue them a sub-regional greenhouse gas target, and we told them we don’t expect you to do any performance measurement and modeling, and they went ahead and did it anyway, which was fine, but we had to sort of disclaim it. We sent them a letter accepting their sub-regional SCS, and in our letter we essentially said, ‘You went off and did this on your own, we didn’t look at it, we didn’t assess whether we thought you did it accurately or not, you did it for your own information, and it’s none of our business.’

(Personal communication, September 18, 2013)

The response provided by the SCAG planner reflects a disconnection between SCAG and the sub-regions in both duties and plan content. Although the planner noted that there was no serious

conflict between SCAG and the sub-regions, there was discrepancy between which agency's determination of the achievement of GHG reduction goals was valid. Additionally, the hands-off approach, which allowed sub-regions to independently determine what policies would suit sub-regional contexts, compromised the cohesiveness of the overall regional plan.

Given the independence to create sub-regional SCS sections within a limited time frame, an affordable housing advocate noted that the sub-regions focused on producing plans that met legal standards but did not need to emphasize equity. The interviewee recalled the organization's experience with advocating for affordable housing during the shortened time frame of creating a sub-regional SCS and noted,

With one month left, [the sub-region] said they just had to meet the requirements of SCAG; that they just had to meet the bar of legislation, so it met the requirements. They only focused on strategies that reduced GHG emissions. If it doesn't, let's not even talk about it. Unless it directly affects [GHG reductions] and you have some resources to back it up or have a good reason to do it, then let's talk about it, but we have a strict timeline here. We need to be on time, we just want to make sure this gets done, we want to make sure [the sub-region] will provide that model for SCAG to look at, but we're not going to provide more, we're not going to provide less, we're just going to meet the bar. (Personal communication, May 20, 2014)

Despite engaging with the sub-regional planning process and advocating for the addition of a housing strategy for low-income households to supplement the transit-oriented and infill development strategies included in the sub-regional SCS, the sub-region prioritized the meeting of legal requirements (personal communication, May 20, 2014). Although the sub-regional SCS ultimately included a strategy to address affordable housing, which was perceived as a partial

success by the affordable housing organization, the emphasis on ‘low-income’ households was excluded from the language. The advocate added that a “it would have been great to see something come out of the language that was more effective, that would be affordable to lower-income families, because the word ‘affordable’ is so subjective” (personal communication, May 20, 2014).

Lack of data and resources. The data show that a lack of data and resources limited the content of the 2012 RTP/SCS, as well the engagement by smaller stakeholders in the planning process. Without health and technical data for example, SCAG was unable to address some concerns expressed by health and equity groups regarding localized health and displacement impacts, as well as concerns expressed by environmental groups regarding the feasibility of proposed green technologies included in the regional plan. Additionally, without up-to-date housing data from the RHNA, sub-regional COGs were also unable to effectively address the development of housing in the sub-regional SCS sections. Lastly, given the extensive regional planning process, some stakeholder groups were hindered from effectively engaging in the process without adequate resources and dedicated staff to outreach to local communities and stay updated.

In an interview with a SCAG planner, the interviewee acknowledges how a lack of data limited SCAG’s ability to address issues that stakeholders found important. The interviewee explained,

I think there are issues that we weren’t able to get as far as we would have liked, more from a regulatory or technical standpoint. One is vehicle technology, because it’s just unclear what we can take credit for. Another is with the public health discussion. I don’t think we were able to produce as much information as some people were asking us for

and that we ourselves would have liked to produce, so for example, people really wanted to know what are the variations in chronic disease outcomes for our various scenarios, and we just couldn't credibly produce that information. (Personal communication, September 18, 2013)

Indeed, a health advocate noted that without adequate attention paid to localized health and equity impacts, addressing these issues would require continuous work. As the health advocate stated,

There's always a concern in this area of smart growth and sustainable communities that we struggle with, which is how these policies are going to affect those communities that are already living there in the dense urban areas. We want to have more compact communities and development in housing and jobs near transit, so is that going to create incentives to displace communities already living there in favor of fancier and higher-cost housing? There's always a concern about displacement, and equity, and environmental justice impacts, so there was certainly a lot of discussion about that, and it's ongoing because there's not going to be one solution to that. It certainly was a topic of discussion for a lot of groups in a lot of meetings—how do you make sure there's not going to be a displacement effect here—and in the process of moving to sustainable communities, we don't want to make the situation worse by forcing people to move from the urban center because they can't afford to live there anymore. I think that's the biggest issue that is still being sorted out. (Personal communication, January 31, 2014)

Additionally, stakeholders recognized that the lack of data regarding green technologies and certain transportation funding sources introduced uncertainties into the feasibility of regional plan. According to an environmental advocate, as a result of SCAG's reliance on assumptions

regarding future funding sources for the implementation of the regional plan, “they didn’t make their plan truly fiscally constrained” (personal communication, November 15, 2013). As the advocate explained,

Yes they got FHWA to sign off on the plan, but there are some big funding gaps in the plan and there are some big assumptions about a new VMT fee, new tolling revenue, and all these new revenue sources, that allows them to dodge the harder conversations about what we actually want to fund with the real money that we do have. (Personal communication, November 15, 2013)

Similarly, a conventional transportation advocate who worked with business advocates expressed concerns that SCAG’s reliance on assumptions regarding green vehicle technology might result in detrimental impacts to the economy of the region. As the interviewee stated,

For instance, green freight is a tremendous goal, but depending on how who you talk to, there may or may not be technology available at a reasonable cost to business to be able to implement it today. When you don’t take [the economic implications] into account, you’re going to drive 15 percent of the logistics business out of the state of California and that’s going to kill jobs, and hurt our ability to maintain the traffic coming in and out of the ports, that there’s a domino effect. (Personal communication, January 8, 2014)

At the sub-regional level, a lack of data in the form of unreleased RHNA numbers prevented sub-regional SCS sections from adequately addressing the development of affordable housing. As a result of a timing discrepancy between when RHNA numbers would be distributed and when sub-regional SCS sections were due for submission to SCAG, “subregions are not automatically required to take on RHNA delegation as described in state law if they prepare an SCS” (SCAG, 2010, p. 8). Nevertheless, “SCAG encourages subregions to undertake both

processes due to their inherent connections” (SCAG, 2010, p. 8). In spite of SCAG’s encouragement of sub-regions to take on RHNA delegation, the sub-regions did not, and as an affordable housing advocate explained,

There was not much in terms of strategy that you could change. There was definitely a conversation that ‘Well, the RHNA numbers aren’t out yet, so if we really want to talk about affordable housing, you can definitely do it in the housing element, which was coming out.’ So if there’s anything that was missing, we could do it in the housing element. But at the same time, you have this opportunity [with the regional plan], why not do more? And if we could do more in the housing element, we will, but again [the sub-region] fell back on ‘Well, we don’t have the RHNA numbers, and we don’t want to guess what they will be or it would be a waste of time.’ It was the attitude of just doing enough—‘We just need to do enough, and so long as we address the eight elements [in the framework and guidelines] that SCAG wants us to do, it’s going to get approved, and we just want it to get approved’ and that’s what the consultant was coming out with because this was their job, and ‘If you want to do more, great, but as of right now, due to the time constraint, we’re just going to do what we need to do.’ (Personal communication, May 20, 2014)

Without housing need allocations addressed in the sub-regional SCS, it was the responsibility of SCAG to determine consistency between the 2012 RTP/SCS and the RHNA, once the numbers were released later in the planning process, and adjust the regional SCS as necessary. It is important to note that these adjustments would not have affected the sub-regional SCS sections as established by the frameworks and guidelines. However, in an interview with a

planner from SCAG, the interviewee acknowledged that limited time frames also served as barriers to the development of the regional plan. As the interviewee stated,

There's always the issue in planning with getting information out early enough, and getting it out with the right level of detail that people can find what they're looking for and respond to it. So some of the information that people were interested in, in our plan especially like I was talking about, with the detailed land use information, came out pretty late, and at that point it was hard for people to digest, it was hard for us to make adjustments when people wanted adjustments. (Personal communication, September 18, 2013)

Limits in participation. During the development of the 2012 RTP/SCS, SCAG intended to solicit widespread participation in the regional planning process by meeting with numerous stakeholders, implementing public outreach workshops, and attending sub-regional planning meetings. However, several factors contributed to limitations in participation, including SCAG's reliance on local governments to publicize outreach events, the lack of resources of smaller stakeholder groups, and a perception that regional planning was an inappropriate arena for achieving local goals.

According to the 2012 RTP/SCS, the MPO advertised public outreach workshops through newspapers and requested SCAG member cities and stakeholders to encourage engagement through emails and announcements (SCAG, 2012). However, a locally elected official commented on the lack of participation by community members by stating,

I hear a lot of talk about stakeholders, and participants, and getting everybody on the same page ... and I saw a lot of NGOs represented, a lot of non-profits represented, and a lot of government agencies represented, but two glaring situations that I didn't see

represented were one, the taxpayer, and two, I didn't see small business represented. So while there's talk about bring stakeholders together, you have two really key components that aren't part of the conversation. (Workshop recording, February 6, 2012)

Similarly, a health advocate also noted the lack of participation by community members, and stated that SCAG members "pride themselves with working with local governments, and that's true, but local governments don't always work with local communities" (personal communication, October 30, 2013). The interviewee perceived local community members as outside the target stakeholders of SCAG, and added "SCAG's outreach is to local cities because they're the ones that have to adopt the plan, so I think they were intentional in terms of whom they were outreaching to" (personal communication, October 30, 2013). By stating that SCAG's "target is the local cities, and I don't think they worry too much beyond that," the health advocate's comments reflected cynicism in SCAG's outreach strategy, which was primarily perceived as a way "to get buy-in from people and asking 'Where are the problems just so we know about them,'" and "to sell the plan" to local governments (personal communication, October 30, 2013).

Indeed, a planner from SCAG recognized that the regional plan "is very long-range heavy stuff. Not a lot of people think about 2035 or 2020, and this is literally what we are talking about" (personal communication, September 1, 2011). According to the planner, SCAG presumed community members would be more interested in local projects than the regional planning process, since "You get tons more involvement when it's about development that's going into construction, than you do when it's going into a two-year plan, much less a 25-year plan" (personal communication, September 1, 2011).

The data show that without adequate capacity, stakeholders found it difficult to encourage community involvement and remain engaged in the planning process. According to an affordable housing advocate, although SCAG would

come back to us and ask us to provide names of community groups and to bring people in ... you need time to educate residents to get them engaged in the process and to take ownership of what is happening because it's so hard to get them to think about regional issues versus just local issues. (Personal communication, May 20, 2014)

The interviewee added that although the organization did try to learn outreach strategies from affordable housing advocates in the San Francisco Bay Area, it was clear that groups in Northern California were more successful in soliciting involvement by residents because they

spent a lot of time and capacity and resources—that we don't have—and this was a two-year process that they did. They started way ahead of time and that really helped because the residents understood the process, and there were translators, so it was a different type of outreach. (Personal communication, May 20, 2014)

In contrast to the experiences of advocacy groups in Northern California, the interviewee stated “by the time the draft [of the sub-regional SCS] came out, I decided that there was no point outreaching to residents or stakeholders by this point in time because it was too late. It was just too late” (personal communication, May 20, 2014). In an interview with a health advocate, the interviewee provided a similar response about the difficulties with a lack of capacity and encouraging participation by community advocates. As the interviewee recalled,

The local groups found the process tedious to be honest, unless you had a lot of resources, and that was the challenge—those groups didn't have a lot of resources to

engage. So whereas I was hired and part of my salary went to this, other folks didn't have any money to do this. (Personal communication, October 30, 2013)

Given that two sub-regions created their own SCS sections, the fragmentation of the regional plan also contributed to difficulties for engagement by advocates with limited capacities. An affordable housing advocate noted that it was necessary for stakeholder organizations without adequate resources to choose where to invest their advocacy efforts. The interviewee explained that many organizations questioned whether it was worth attending sub-regional SCS planning sessions and asked,

'Because there's no other SCS we can look at, so we don't know what the language will look like, and the [sub-regional] draft is coming out in February or March, and that's due in April, so is it really worth our time?' And since I'm reaching out to non-profits, 'Do we really have the capacity and resources to dedicate our time and resources to this?' And unfortunately, it's usually no. So they would dedicate their resources to working in Los Angeles. (Personal communication, May 20, 2014)

While advocacy groups deliberated over which regional or sub-regional planning process was more valuable for advocacy, other stakeholders questioned whether it was worth participating in regional planning at all. Additionally, perceptions that the regional planning process was an ineffective means to achieve local goals, contributed to further distrust in SCAG and large-scale regional planning.

As an alternative transportation advocate recalled, "We had lots of affordable housing advocates with us in the beginning, but they dropped like flies. It became clear that SCAG was not the arena for affordable housing, so that was a real disappointment" (personal communication, April 17, 2014). An affordable housing advocate explained the difficulty by

stating “to really mobilize people to talk about all this stuff ... takes a different type of educational outreach versus community and local issues, such as ‘I need a stop sign on my street for safety concerns’” (Personal communication, May 20, 2014).

Additionally, even though affordable housing advocates worked closely with developers of affordable housing, the developers were reluctant to provide strong support for their advocacy partners in the regional planning process. As an affordable housing developer explained,

We are affordable housing developers, and we are significant players within that world.

We don't like the idea of big-footing that profile into places where it can essentially harm us, where we're seen as imposing dictums on cities or increasing regulations or increasing the obligation. (Personal communication, December 10, 2013)

The developer added, “the housing element is pretty much all that we have left in terms of anyone dictating or requiring or obligating the development of affordable housing” (personal communication, December 10, 2013). Both the advocates for affordable housing and active transportation shared the sentiment and recognition that involvement in the regional planning process would require a different strategy and mindset (personal communication, April 17, 2014; May 20, 2014). As the affordable housing advocate noted,

Just getting the community to be supportive as a whole to talk about these issues would have been really different than just [the organization] asking about affordable housing. It takes a lot of time, training, and residents to feel they have ownership and a stake in this. Just talking about affordable housing is one thing, but with the SCS, you have to talk about transportation, and environmental concerns, and all of these other things that come together and are just different monsters to tackle. (Personal communication, May 20, 2014)

The data show that it was both difficult for some stakeholders to understand the purpose of the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process and difficult to educate stakeholders about it. A planner from SCAG acknowledged the challenging task of keeping local stakeholders focused on the purpose of the regional plan by recalling a planning session with advocates, who

were definitely community members, and even though they represented other agencies, they were really close to the community. They understood what the plan was about, but even they had trouble connecting the plan to really small local improvements, and at the end of the day, even I had to say ‘This isn’t about your sidewalk.’ (Personal communication, September 1, 2011)

Although the SCAG planner noted that community advocates “did bring up some very important local issues,” it was necessary to remind participants that SCAG “is an agency that is responsible to other agencies, and is not an implementer; and at the end of the day, no one’s in the street with a shovel and a SCAG logo on their vest” (personal communication, September 1, 2011).

Similarly, an alternative transportation advocate noted that “there were advocates for the poor, and groups like that that realized early on that this was not where they were going to win anything because local governments really protect land use authority” (personal communication, April 17, 2014).

The recognition of SCAG’s lack of implementation power and limited funding authority was associated with further distrust in SCAG and fragmentation of participation in the regional planning process. As a health advocate observed,

I think there were a lot of people who were disappointed and don’t want to work with SCAG anymore because they get the plan from the bottom up, and they trickle down the money, but they don’t do anything. They don’t hold the money to certain things. They

just put in the local cities' plans and say 'Yep it all lines up, so we can get federal funds, and this is a priority, so here you go.' They are more of a mediator in this area, so people moved onto [sub-regional CTCs], because that's where you're going to see the implementation. (Personal communication, October 30, 2013)

The interviewee's response revealed that certain stakeholders perceived SCAG as an ineffective agency and a recognized the stronger funding capacity of sub-regional CTCs. This prompted stakeholders to turn their attention away from SCAG and work directly with CTCs, thus compromising the collaborative 2012 RTP/SCS development process. An alternative transportation advocate expressed a similar sentiment by stating,

The main understanding that we got from this work was that SCAG is an important venue for bringing cities together, for bringing local elected officials together, and for bringing people together people for consensus on something like SB 375 and the co-benefits; and that is important, but it isn't really the place to accomplish big initiatives like [a sub-regional transportation measure] with [a CTC] for instance. If you want to do something with really big impact, you have to do it there. SCAG is another venue important for consensus, but not initiatives. (Personal communication, April 17, 2014)

Channels to the Development of the Regional Plan

In spite of the barriers to the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process, a variety of factors facilitated the development of the regional plan and contributed its overall positive reception. The data show that emphasizing different planning scenarios and co-benefits helped to focus the planning discourse onto achievable objectives that accorded with the agendas of various stakeholders. As discussed in Chapter Eight, the coalition was a key factor in shifting the

planning discourse. However, SCAG staff was also instrumental in facilitating cooperation in the regional planning process by calling attention to the state mandate and utilizing an approach focused on possibilities. Lastly, success with the 2012 RTP/SCS was enhanced by stakeholders from different fields who celebrated and supported the adopted plan as an important step in better planning for the Los Angeles region.

Utilizing scenario planning. The development of the 2012 RTP/SCS utilized a bottom-up scenario planning approach. Following the collection of data on land use and transportation efforts at the local level, SCAG produced four planning scenarios that presented different visions of the future land use and transportation at the regional level. Figure 9.1 shows a detail of SCAG’s presentation of the four planning scenarios, and a complete figure of the scenario descriptions is provided in Appendix E.

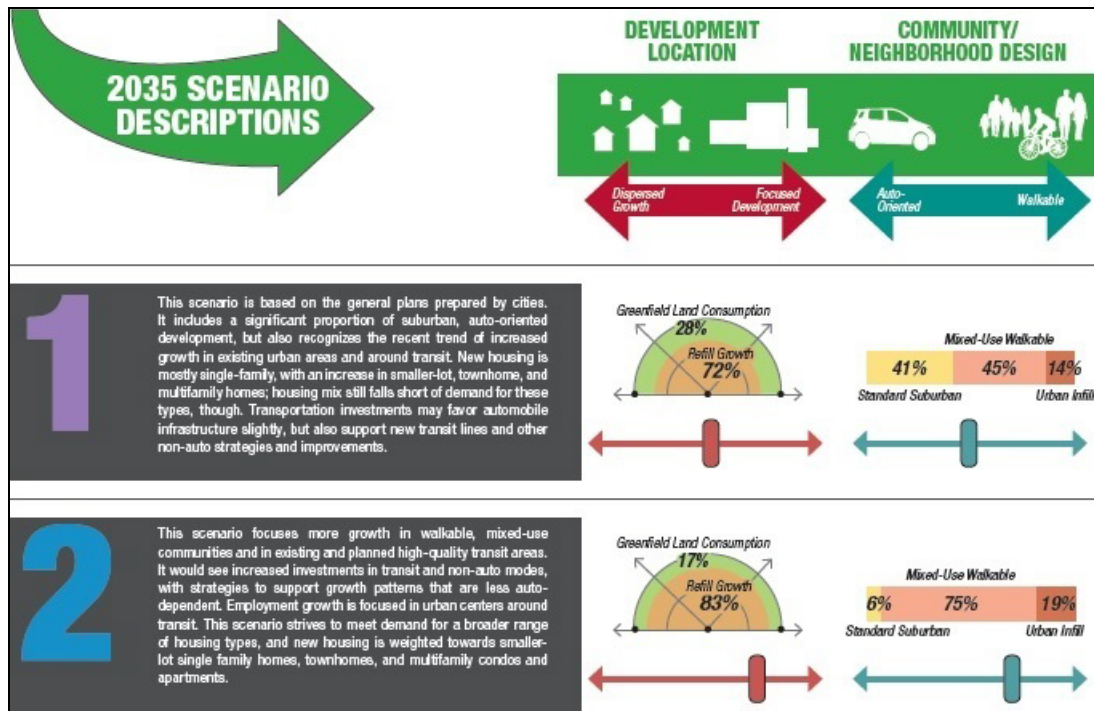


Figure 9.1. Detail of presentation of scenario descriptions (SCAG, 2011).

Through the use of modeling, each scenario was accompanied by details on the impacts to issues such as land consumption, VMTs, GHG emissions, and household costs (see Appendix D for scenario outcomes). By focusing on scenarios and presenting the costs and benefits associated with each, SCAG was able to emphasize the achievable outcomes of the planning process instead of addressing the broad and controversial notion of climate change. As an alternative transportation advocate recalled, “There was very little discussion about global warming throughout this process, and I don’t think it was ever discussed, so I think that’s why so many people were able to agree on it” (personal communication, April 17, 2014).

Utilizing the scenarios during outreach workshops with local officials and the public, SCAG was also able to gather feedback about the future that participants want to see for the Los Angeles region. Through presentations, small group discussions, and wireless live-polling, participants exchanges responses on the scenarios and the associated objectives, thereby provided information to SCAG about which scenario suited the visions of participants. As a planner from SCAG noted,

You may recall we had this pre-draft phase called the ‘preferred scenario.’ So we were doing public workshops and had a range of scenarios at that time, we weren’t saying at that time what we thought the draft plan was going to be, and just before we got into the formal draft, we said ‘Okay, this is the one that staff was identifying as the preferred scenario that we were going to build the draft plan around.’ (Personal communication, September 18, 2013)

Another planner from SCAG reflected on the difference between the previous regional planning process and the development of the 2012 RTP/SCS and explained,

Whereas in previous RTP processes, where we take existing conditions, project them forward, and then talk about how to deal with that future, in this process, we ask ‘What is the future we want to see?’ and then talk about how the projections fit into that. (Personal communication, September 1, 2011)

In order to facilitate the integration of scenarios with local plans, SCAG also developed and offered a Local Sustainability Planning Tool to local jurisdictions. By working cities and training users, SCAG facilitated more informed input on the 2012 RTP/SCS from local governments, who could “create, modify, and compare a variety of scenarios and their subsequent impacts on vehicle ownership, vehicle miles traveled, mode use, and GHG emissions” (SCAG, 2012, p. 115).

Facilitating cooperation. Despite limitations in participation, a consistent theme throughout the interviews was a generally positive view towards the role of SCAG in facilitating cooperation and productivity. Responding to resistance from locally elected officials towards the regional planning process, SCAG called attention to the duty of the agency by stating,

SCAG does not make the laws. SCAG does not make the regulations, and yet we are charged with developing the plans that implement the laws, whether it’s AB 32 or SB 375. We don’t get to vote on that. That vote has been taken, and the requirements have been passed down. So when you look at the workshop, what we’re here to do today, keep the issues un-clustered. (Workshop recording, February 6, 2012)

By shifting responsibility for the legislation to the state legislature, SCAG focused attention on the task at hand to encourage more productive outreach sessions.

A health advocate believed SCAG “did a good job of trying to convene everyone, considering how big the region is. They had great facilitation in terms of seeking feedback on the

plan during the outreach sessions” (personal communication, October 30, 2013). A business advocate noted that SCAG was being considered for honor as a government entity that was supporting businesses for “really trying to work with the stakeholders that were impacted by the RTP/SCS and to make sure it was an accurate document that accurately reflected planning for the future and expected growth, but was also accommodating to economic development” (personal communication, December 5, 2013). Additionally, a conventional transportation advocate stated that SCAG “used all the tools in their toolbox this time around for sure” to encourage involvement. The interviewee recalled that SCAG

tried very hard to keep their website a repository for drafts and iterations, and used their Twitter feed and their media outreach team to really let people know what was going on. They conducted a lot of meetings with their agency partners, they implemented a new video-conferencing system, which didn’t require people to come to the Los Angeles location and allowed them to participate by going to one of their satellite offices, and they opened more satellite offices. (Personal communication, January 8, 2014)

The interviewee added that SCAG staff also proactively reached out to the region by attending events that were not sponsored by SCAG, such as a Women in Transportation seminar and a CTC retreat, to strengthen their presence in the community and enhance their activity with stakeholder groups (personal communication, January 8, 2014).

In order to facilitate cooperation among organizations from different sectors, SCAG established an informal advisory council intended to be representative of a range of stakeholders. According to a planner from SCAG, the group included representatives from environmental groups, a representative from [SCAG’s land use and business council], [and] somebody from the [industry sector]. The idea of that was two-fold: it was really to

serve as a sounding-board for staff, so we could say to them, “We put this idea into the plan, how would they respond to it?” The other purpose of it though, was to make sure the stakeholder groups heard from each other, so that they realized ... that what goes into the plan is because there’s input coming from a variety of different viewpoints. (Personal communication, September 18, 2013)

By utilizing the advisory council, SCAG enhanced the transparency of the regional plan’s development process and facilitated a forum in which various groups could hear each other’s sides. Throughout the regional planning process, promoting opportunities for exchange was a key strategy that contributed to the development of the 2012 RTP/SCS.

In addition to crediting SCAG for promoting cooperation, interviewees emphasized SCAG’s Executive Director as a particularly facilitative leader. An environmental advocate recalled that the Executive director “did a lot of the working back and forth between the different partners” on the advisory council (personal communication, November 15, 2013). The business and conventional transportation advocates who had previous experiences with RTP planning processes all observed a change in SCAG leadership, which contributed to more outreach, partnerships, and collaboration in the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process. As a business advocate noted,

I will say that there had also been a change at SCAG—a change in leadership at SCAG—and [the Executive Director] has been a great leader and worked very hard to make sure he has good relationships with all of the COGs that make up SCAG. (Personal communication, December 5, 2013)

According to a conventional transportation advocate,

In past RTP processes ... that consensus, that unanimity was not there, and [the Executive Director] has really worked hard to have it be a new day at SCAG, to have it be a partnership, to reach out to new stakeholders and to bring new voices into the fold, and I really commend him for that. He's done a tremendous job and it's not easy.

(Personal communication, January 8, 2014)

Additionally, an alternative transportation advocate also commended the Executive Director for utilizing an open approach that brought stakeholders together while mediating conflict. As the interviewee explained, the Executive Director

really embraced us. He would meet with us, talk with us, for a while there was a monthly meeting he would have with [stakeholders from different fields], and he was always willing to collaborate with us as he was with anyone else. I don't think we ever asked [the Executive Director] for anything and got turned down. He always said 'Yes,' and I suspect that he probably always told the [industry stakeholders] 'Yes,' and he had a way of telling competing interests 'Yes,' and then somehow it would all work out. I don't know how he could do it, but he was very much a yes-man but in a good way, because 'Yes' was the goal. (Personal communication, April 17, 2014)

Instead of utilizing a negative approach of responding to feedback with rejections, the Executive Director took positive approach focused on possibilities. Given that the 2012 RTP/SCS plan and planning process was unprecedented, the open approach was necessary to facilitate the contribution and inclusion of ideas. As the Executive Director stated during an outreach workshop,

We're here to listen, we're very much ok with differing opinions, there is nothing I didn't hear before, so feel free, you can call us any name you want, we've heard it all. United Nations Agenda 21, social engineering, all of that we've heard, so feel free to talk and ask questions. When we talk about planning, it is about choices, it is not to impose any planning ideas on anybody. This is a collaborative process, and we would like this process to be open and orderly. (Workshop recording, February 6, 2012)

Celebrating achievement. The 2012 RTP/SCS was developed through the use of planning scenarios that emphasized co-benefits for a different issues, as well as a collaborative approach that was receptive to a variety of feedback. The data show that stakeholders recognized the regional plan as an important step in cooperative planning for a more sustainable future for the Los Angeles region. Interviewees from a variety of fields perceived “wins” in the regional plan as a result of their advocacy efforts in the new planning process and expressed support for what the region was able to accomplish.

In an interview with an affordable housing advocate, the interviewee believed that as a result of the organization's early involvement and constant advocacy efforts, the sub-regional COG “did provide that one standalone [strategy] that said they would support the retention or development of affordable homes, so it was a win from our side that they finally put something in there about affordable housing” (personal communication, May 20, 2014). Although the interviewee acknowledged that the strategy “doesn't have any teeth, [and] it's just a suggestion, but it took a long time, and it's definitely a win” (personal communication, May 20, 2014).

By celebrating achievement, stakeholders demonstrated the positive results of cooperation and strengthened their partnerships. According to a business advocate,

in one sense [the regional planning process] was fun, and we were working with all these partners and we were trying to achieve something new, so I remember it fondly, much more than some other similar projects that I had to work on. I think there was a perhaps a more good-natured feeling about this one, perhaps more because it was new, so we're all trying to figure it out. (Personal communication, December 5, 2013)

In an interviews with environmental advocates, the interviewees acknowledged the importance of celebrating accomplishments and the detriments of not recognizing important steps in progress. According to an advocate focused on conservation, "being an environmentalist, you get really good at getting one problem solved and then moving to the next one. We don't ever stop to celebrate, and so we're trying to get better at that" (personal communication, October 8, 2013). Referring to the organization's achievement in working with SCAG to create a framework for an advanced mitigation program, the interviewee added, "People often see in terms of 'either-or,' but there's an 'and.' You can do transportation projects and mitigate them with huge conservation projects" (personal communication, October 8, 2013). As another environmental advocate observed,

There were a lot of times where advocacy groups will ask for something, and then they get it, and then they'll ask for more, and then they'll get it, and then they feel criticized, and then they ask for more, and I feel like it makes the situation one where those you're negotiating with are not necessarily going to be motivated to work with you in the future because it's not good faith. You'll never reach the 'Okay, we're there, and we're willing to support this.' (Personal communication, November 15, 2013)

The interviewee recognized the regional plan as an important step and vehicle in the process of regional planning and stated,

In the case of the SCAG plan, I felt that it was very important for us that once we got a lot of what we wanted, to be able to say positive things about the plan and support it. And of course people will say ‘It’s not perfect,’ and we’re willing to go further, but this is significant progress, and so that was an important piece to our strategy. (Personal communication, November 15, 2013)

Public health advocates also recognized the regional plan and planning process as an important step in planning and future cooperation between stakeholders. A health advocate noted that although the implementation of the regional plan requires significant action by local governments and business stakeholders, which the organization had not been involved with in the past, the planning process “moved us closer to working together” (personal communication, October 30, 2013). The interviewee added that in order to continue to move forward successfully as the plan is implemented and updated, further work is required to adequately address health and equity issues in the region (personal communication, October 30, 2013). Similarly, another health advocate commented on moving forward with the 2012 RTP/SCS by stating,

It’s great that we have this Southern California plan, and that’s really helpful, but there are a lot of things that feed into making that successful. It’s not just the locally elected officials, and they need to buy into it in an even stronger way. There’s a lot that needs to happen moving forward, as they move into the next round of planning—a lot of continued education and outreach that needs to happen—and to make sure the state and federal government are consistent in promoting these smart growth strategies in all ways, especially in the incentives and the priorities in the funding process, to support these efforts. (Personal communication, January 31, 2014)

The interviewee recognized that although the development and adoption of the 2012 RTP/SCS was an important step for regional planning in Southern California, continuing efforts need to focus on securing additional funding and policies to support the realization of the regional vision.

Summary of Barriers and Channels

Although the 2012 RTP/SCS was ultimately supported by a variety of stakeholders, the regional plan was fragmented by relatively autonomous sub-regional SCS sections. Cynicism towards SCAG and the regional planning effort challenged cooperative planning processes. Without sufficient data, SCAG was unable to address localized health and equity concerns in the plan, while insufficient resources and the planning effort's scale of focus limited engagement by local stakeholders. However, the role of SCAG staff in facilitating engagement served as an important contributing factor for the development of the regional plan. The planning process emphasized different planning scenarios and the co-benefits of sustainable strategies to focus the planning discourse onto achievable possibilities for a variety of stakeholders. In a politically fragmented region characterized by a variety of complex environmental and social issues that challenge regional planning, success with the 2012 RTP/SCS and its development process was enhanced by stakeholders from different fields who celebrated and supported the regional effort as an significant step in collaborative planning for a more sustainable Los Angeles region.

Chapter Ten

Discussion of Findings and Conclusions

The purpose of this dissertation research was to gain insights into regional planning and sustainable development by examining the first RTP/SCS plan and planning process mandated by SB 375 for the Los Angeles region. In the context of environmental policymaking and approaches to addressing urban growth around the nation discussed in Chapter Two, SB 375 represents a new step in a growing trend towards policies that encourage compact transit-oriented development as a strategy to manage growth. As discussed in Chapter Three, SB 375 contributed to California's leadership in environmental policymaking, since it was the first law in the nation to link land use and transportation decisions to climate change. The law required the state's MPOs to develop a new SCS through a collaborative process intended to involve a variety of stakeholders. The SCS, combined with the RTP, promotes smart growth strategies with the goal of reducing VMTs and achieving GHG emission reduction targets. As discussed in Chapter Five, the Los Angeles region faces complex regional planning challenges such as intense population growth, political fragmentation, and the deterioration of environmental quality. Given these planning challenges, the unanimously adopted 2012 RTP/SCS is poised to shape future sustainable development in a major way.

This research was guided by three primary questions that I used to examine:

- The extent to which the 2012 RTP/SCS promotes principles of sustainable development;
- How urban regimes might have influenced the development of the regional plan; and
- The barriers and channels to a regional approach to planning for sustainability.

By analyzing the regional plan and planning process using regime theory and a framework for sustainable development, this research provides insights into state-mandated regional approaches to sustainable planning, the coordination and mobilization of stakeholders to change planning discourses, and successful approaches to regional planning in politically fragmented urban areas. The major findings of this research include:

- The 2012 RTP/SCS generally promotes more principles of sustainable development, and to a stronger extent than the 2008 RTP, and includes the concept of sustainability as a primary organizing idea, whereas the preceding plan does not;
- SB 375 enhanced collaboration among stakeholders by mandating a cooperative approach to develop the regional plan and providing advocates for ecological principles discussed in Chapter Four with an overarching purpose of sustainable development under which to unite and form a coalition;
- The coalition's advocacy efforts and involvement in the regional planning process was influential in shifting the regional planning discourse from focusing on economic and conventional transportation development to one that emphasized the benefits of more sustainable approaches to development involving smart growth principles; and
- The new legislation was instrumental in changing the development process of the regional plan and makes SCAG a stronger and more active regional agency through new planning, modeling, and monitoring responsibilities.

In this chapter I use the literature to discuss the findings that support and refute the 2012 RTP/SCS as a strategy for sustainable development, the new coalition as an urban regime for sustainability, and regional planning towards a more sustainable Los Angeles region. Lastly, I

discuss my research implications and recommendations and conclude with suggestions for future research.

A Strategy for Sustainable Development?

As “a shared vision for the region’s sustainable future” (SCAG, 2012, p. 4), the 2012 RTP/SCS intends to achieve GHG emission reduction goals, as well as a variety of environmental, economic, and social co-benefits, through regional smart growth strategies. Previous research on sustainable development plans found that plans often did not promote principles of sustainability, despite the amount of verbiage about sustainability used in the plan (Berke & Conroy, 2000). With this in mind, I compared the new regional plan to the preceding 2008 RTP using criteria from three green rating systems to determine the extent to which the 2012 RTP/SCS incorporates principles of sustainable development.

The results show that in general, the 2012 RTP/SCS reflects more principles of sustainable development, and to a stronger extent than the 2008 RTP. In particular, the new regional plan includes policies that emphasize criteria associated with compact, infill, and mixed-use development, the proximity between housing and jobs, and alternative transportation modes such as biking and walking. By emphasizing these criteria, the regional plan meets the charge of SB 375, which for the first time required MPOs to integrate land use planning with transportation to reduce VMTs and GHGs.

With the intent to reduce GHG emissions, SB 375 complements California’s cleaner vehicle and fuel standards promulgated by AB 32 by directly targeting land use planning to curb VMTs from cars and light trucks. Over the past decade, a growing body of research has linked decentralized built environment with increased VMTs, higher fuel consumption, and increased carbon emissions (Boarnet, 2010; Bullard, 2007; Ewing & Cervero, 2010; Ewing et al., 2002;

Galster et al., 2001; Winkelman et al., 2010). Meanwhile, smart growth strategies have been increasingly incorporated into planning policies to encourage development patterns that are more sustainable and consume less land in contrast to low-density development and urban sprawl (Edwards & Haines, 2007; Ye et al., 2005). Although there is no consensus among scholars on a single definition of smart growth, smart growth generally refers to a planning approach that encourages compact mixed-use development, with a range of housing and transportation choices, to reduce vehicle use and protect open space and sensitive environmental areas (see Downs, 2005; Burchell et al., 2000; Ye et al., 2005).

SB 375 was built upon the state's existing blueprint programs, which support projects that address regional growth and air quality issues through smart growth. Given this, the policies included in the 2012 RTP/SCS, emphasize built form sustainable development principles such as alternative transportation options and compact, mixed-use, infill, and transit-oriented development. Additionally, the adopted regional plan also includes policies that enhance the social benefits that development and mobility linkages have for quality of life and access to jobs and open space. These findings support arguments contained in the literature, which suggest that environmental protection, economic efficiency, and social equity can be simultaneously achieved by coordinating smart growth policies (Scott, 2007).

The regional plan promotes growth within existing urban areas and on infill sites by offering incentives for the development of housing and jobs in HQTAs. In this way, the regional plan also indirectly encourages walking and biking, facilitates higher-density development, and conserves natural resources and undeveloped land. To further enhance these benefits, the regional plan includes policies for greater investment in transit and bicycle networks, brownfield redevelopment, and parking reduction strategies. Additionally, the 2012 RTP/SCS strongly

promotes the development of higher-density, small-lot, and multifamily housing to meet the anticipated demands of changing regional demographics. These findings support recent research by Garde (2008), which found evidence for a growing number of “innovative” development projects and policy initiatives that are promoting urban design characteristics, such as higher densities, mixed uses, uninterrupted streets, pedestrian-oriented environments, and a vibrant public realm in suburban areas of the Los Angeles region. The trend towards innovative projects may help explain the generally positive and widespread acceptance of the 2012 RTP/SCS found in this research, given that the sustainable development principles encouraged in the regional plan are compatible with the urban development patterns and design characteristics that are already being implemented at the local level.

According to the literature, the concept of sustainability can sometimes be subverted by planners or politicians to emphasize dominant ideologies associated with issues such as capital accumulation, consumption, and personal property (Gunder, 2006). The subversion of sustainability strengthens the prevailing expansionist perspective of planning policies and practice, which overshadow ecological perspectives and hinder sustainable development (Jepson, 2004). As discussed in Chapter Four, ecological perspectives emphasize natural resource conservation and proactive approaches to overcome the limits of technology and a free market economy to address issues of sustainability. The literature suggests that compact development policies that increase density often ignore the negative cumulative effects of population concentration, while policies promoting social equity may conflate the idea with vague notions of placemaking, diverse communities, job creation as side effects of private sector development (Neuman, 2005). Additionally, research on innovative development projects found that despite emphasizing many physical design elements, most projects did not strongly contribute to

improving social equity (Garde, 2008). In the 2012 RTP/SCS, policies in the SCAG SCS and GC SCS go beyond promoting density and specifically emphasize affordable housing for low- and moderate-income households. However, the OC SCS lacks specific policies targeted at housing low- and moderate-income households, in spite of including a standalone affordable housing strategy for sustainability.

The inconsistency between SCS sections is one result of delegation, which fragmented the 2012 RTP/SCS with relatively autonomous sub-regional plans that were required to be produced and submitted before RHNA numbers were distributed. Additionally, delegation protected sub-regional growth and land use assumptions, which would not be altered following RHNA distribution. Whereas affordable housing objectives in the GC SCS address low- and moderate-income households, policies in the OC SCS focus solely on increasing the supply and density of development as the primary method of addressing affordability and diverse housing types. Without specifying what affordability means and to whom, the housing objectives included in the OC SCS suggest a subversion of the sustainable development principle of ensuring housing affordability and variety to avoid directly addressing important equity issues.

Previous research on sustainability found that most sustainable development plans focus primarily on vague concepts of sustainability, do not take a balanced approach to guiding development, and neglect principles such as place-based economics, harmony with nature, and the preservation of natural systems (see Berke & Conroy, 2000; Gunder, 2006; Jepson, 2004). Notably, the 2012 RTP/SCS includes sustainability as one of its three key guiding principles, in conjunction with mobility and economy. It discusses the concept of sustainability in relation to the environment, economy, and equity, and it encourages more public awareness about a variety of issues that support the strategies of the regional plan. This is a promising change from the

2008 RTP, which primarily discussed sustainability as it related to the maintenance and performance of transportation systems and the continuation of funding for projects.

Although both regional plans incorporate many similar environmental policies, the 2012 RTP/SCS emphasizes conservation of natural open spaces to a stronger extent and encourages the reduction of wildfire risks through fire-resistant landscaping strategies. However, despite emphasizing sustainability in the 2012 RTP/SCS, sustainable principles such as the development of renewable energy infrastructure, the conservation of natural resources, and the mitigation of climate change impacts on the urban microclimate are neglected. These criteria deserve more attention, since regionally applicable strategies that promote shade features or high-albedo materials in transportation projects to address heat island effects for example, can contribute to energy conservation and mitigate GHG emissions (Akbari, Pomerantz, & Taha, 2001; Taha, 1997).

It is important to note that as a transportation plan, the primary purpose of the 2012 RTP/SCS is to increase the efficiency of the regional transportation system while decreasing its environmental impact and aligning it to land use. To address concerns from business and industry stakeholders, the 2012 RTP/SCS includes an unprecedented analysis of the regional plan's impact on the economic and job climate, collaboratively performed by SCAG, academic, and business economists. Having found that the 2012 RTP/SCS stimulates job growth, transportation efficiency, and the economic competitiveness of the region, through infrastructure, investment, and environmental strategies, the analysis appealed to business and industry interests and contributed to the potential of the regional plan to achieve the three E's of sustainability.

Although the 2012 RTP/SCS promotes sustainable development principles to a greater extent than the preceding 2008 RTP, success with the implementation of the regional plan

requires cooperation by local governments. Previous research on mandated planning found that general state planning mandates help with coordination but do not strengthen the commitment of planners to state objectives (Dalton & Burby, 1994). While SB 375 gave SCAG new planning responsibilities and required the agency to develop the regional plan, the legislation did not give SCAG any authority at the local level, and the policies included in the regional plan do not supersede local land use and planning decisions. However, local land use planning is affected by the regional plan through the new SCS element, which influences regional transportation investments and RHNA allocations, which then impact local housing elements. For this reason, cities are encouraged to plan for development consistent with regional transportation and growth objectives, since the failure to meet the GHG goals of the region can result in state intervention into planning processes and the imposition of more stringent planning policies for GHG reductions.

Several factors contribute to the implementation of the 2012 RTP/SCS, such as incentives for projects consistent with the SCS, the collaborative approach to the development of the regional plan, the unanimous adoption of the regional plan by the RC, and the general widespread support for the regional planning effort. However, a history of political fragmentation and strong local autonomy within the Los Angeles region can potentially undermine the new collaborative vision for sustainability. Given this, the realization of the regional strategy for sustainable development will depend on whether local governments will strengthen their commitment to sustainability in the next RTP/SCS update and whether SCAG will utilize its stronger role in regional planning to encourage, facilitate, and reward commitment.

A Regional Regime for Sustainability?

The regime literature suggests that in urban environments without an overarching power structure, a primary challenge is bringing together enough cooperation among dissimilar community elements to get things done (Stone, 1989). This dissertation research found that during the development of the 2012 RTP/SCS, a group of advocates for the ecological perspective as discussed in Chapter Four formed and mobilized as a coalition to shift the regional planning discourse away from its traditionally expansionist perspective. According to Stone (1989), urban coalitions become urban regimes when they establish governance in a locality for the long-term. While it is too early to say whether the new coalition reflects a regional regime for sustainability, this research found several factors that contribute to the coalition's potential to become one. An urban regime can blend the capacities of governmental and nongovernmental actors to achieve and sustain the power to drive policy decisions (Stone, 1989). Given this, the potential for the new coalition to become a regime can also lead to more and stronger sustainable development policies for the Los Angeles region.

One of the fastest-growing metropolitan areas in the nation, the Los Angeles region is typically characterized by the sprawling auto-oriented built environment brought about by growth coalitions and the social, economic, and political conditions of the postwar era (Bottles, 1987; Fogelson, 1993; Fulton, 2001; Logan & Molotch, 1987). The prevailing pattern of growth, facilitated by highway construction at the regional scale and low-density urban development at the city scale, has contributed to a variety of cross-boundary regional planning challenges that include congestion, social inequities, and deteriorating environmental quality. Additionally, factors such as political fragmentation, strong local autonomy, and SCAG's lack of authority hinder regional approaches to sustainable development that comprehensively address

environmental, economic, and equity issues. However, this research shows that by requiring the development of a regional plan that incorporates smart growth strategies to reduce GHG emissions, SB 375 disrupted business-as-usual planning processes. Additionally, coalition involvement and advocacy from the ecological perspective shifted regional planning discourses previously dominated by expansion-oriented stakeholders such as conventional transportation, business, and industry representatives, as well as politically conservative elected officials.

According to Stone (1989) the restructuring of a regime is “a very large cognitive and motivational order, and one likely to be met under extraordinary circumstances” (p. 230). Instead of simply mobilizing opposition, restructuring a regime requires changing the relationships between individuals and groups and providing new avenues for cooperation (Stone, 1989). The findings of this research show that SB 375 called for more sustainable approaches to urban development and facilitated the coordination of stakeholders during extraordinary economic and social circumstances. In light of the great recession and subprime mortgage crisis, the new legislation mandated a new regional planning process that prompted local officials to consider the benefits of new planning approaches to address issues such as a lack of jobs and affordable housing options contributing to more VMTs, congestion, and poorer air quality.

The adoption of SB 375 gave new planning responsibilities to SCAG for the development of the 2012 RTP/SCS, promulgating new procedural rules and structures for cooperative regional planning, such as requiring outreach activities throughout all counties, conduct travel demand modeling and disseminate the information to the public, quantify the GHG reductions of the SCS, recommend regional targets to CARB, and ensure the regional plan meets all legal requirements.

Advocates supporting ecological perspectives of planning recognized the potential to link environmental and social co-benefits to new regional planning policies and utilized the opportunity provided by SB 375 to collaborate in SCAG's process of developing the regional plan. Although many of these advocates had historically perceived SCAG an ineffective agency dominated by the expansionist perspective, SB 375, the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process, and the objectives of the plan reemphasized the agency's purpose to cooperatively tackle complex issues and renewed optimism in its effectiveness. During the development of the 2012 RTP/SCS, stakeholders who were aware of each other but had not previously worked together, such as alternative transportation, environmental, and public health advocates, were able to organize as a new coalition to advocate effectively for mutually beneficial objectives and promote policy changes. By collaborating, stakeholders reinforced relationships with each other, gained exposure, and strengthened communication channels to become more effective actors in the regional planning process.

According to the literature, coalition partners form effective relationships based on trust, educate each other often about their interdependence, and exercise their power to solve collective problems instead of their power over one another (Stoker, 1995; Stone, 1989; Stone 1993). This dissertation research found that beyond merely agreeing to support each other's advocacy issues, stakeholders focused on how the issues were connected to build and mobilize around a relatively unified agenda. By combining individual resources such as capacity, connections, and expertise, coalition members made new allies, strengthened their collective power to act, and maintained camaraderie through mutual support, education, and respect.

Reflecting the characteristics of a middle-class progressive regime identified by Stone (1989) and discussed in Chapter Four, the new coalition sought environmental and social goals

through development guided by smart growth strategies. Stone (1989) argues that popular support for restructuring a regime would require a substantial body of people who:

- Believe that a sufficient alliance could be composed to constitute the new order;
- Believe that a new order of things is superior and workable; and
- Are willing to risk immediate interests in established arrangements for the sake of long-term gains from a by-no-means-assured new order.

In the development of the 2012 RTP/SCS, coalition partners focused their agenda on mutually supportive and attainable objectives and strengthened alliances. The coalition provided data and solutions to engage effectively in the regional planning process and to show that new planning approaches are necessary to address current problems. By working productively with SCAG, progressive RC members, and a variety of stakeholders from different fields, the coalition redirected the conventional regional planning discourse to emphasize the co-benefits of adopting alternative transportation and land use scenarios that promote transit, walking, and biking, as well as more compact infill development and commitments to environmental conservation.

The development of the 2012 RTP/SCS was a new planning process that involved new alliances between stakeholders and produced a workable long-term vision for future development. For these reasons, it contributed to the conditions for the potential restructuring of a business-as-usual regime into a regime for sustainable development.

The restructuring of a regime is uncommon because “realistically, we can expect that most people most of the time will not see the ‘big picture’” and choose to pursue small opportunities and respond to immediate threats instead (Stone, 1989, p. 229). However, during the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process, advocates supporting the ecological paradigm focused on broad issues to shift the discourse of regional planning away from its traditional focus on

transportation and economic development. In contrast, advocates of the expansionist paradigm perceived SB 375 and the planning process as a threat to local authority and focused on clarifying details and language within the regional plan to protect local autonomy and to ensure development flexibility.

Given that business and industry advocates attained clarity and flexibility, local governments retained local control, and ecological advocates achieved greater investments in and attention on their advocacy issues, the regional plan generally received wide support. By celebrating the region's achievement, supporters expressed that a new approach to planning had been made possible through the regional plan, which intends to address environmental and equity issues while simultaneously creating jobs and stimulating the economy. According to the literature, when confronted by a concentration of resources and cooperating stakeholders in an otherwise fragmented environment, regime opponents will likely adjust their own agendas to go along with the situation (Stone, 1989).

This research suggests that the preemptive power of the coalition was reflected in the reaction from sub-regional public officials who acknowledged the influence of advocacy groups in the regional planning process and declined to assume delegation for the 2016 RTP/SCS update. Wary of being legally challenged by stakeholders in the coalition, as well as citing a lack of resources, sub-regional planning agencies that have historically been resistant to SCAG, have chosen to cooperate directly with SCAG and coalition members on the regional SCS instead of developing their own sub-regional SCS sections. In this way, the findings suggest that the coalition's preemptive power of social production supplanted the systemic power invested in expansionist stakeholders by previous business-as-usual planning approaches.

This dissertation research fills gaps in the regime and regional planning literature through insights into regional environmental planning from a regime perspective. Included in the literature on regionalism is the argument that smart growth is an operationalization of new regionalism, resulting as a pragmatic response to a lack of a regional government and facilitating the development of new alliances between diverse stakeholders (Scott, 2007). This research suggests that the formation of new alliances and coalitions do not need to be organic practical responses to regional problems. Instead, mandated cooperative planning can contribute to conditions that support an effective form of “regime regionalism.”

I argue that regime regionalism takes a middle ground between literature that supports a consolidated regional government on one hand and the complete opposition to one on the other. Most of the research on urban regimes emphasizes the role of business interests in governance at the city scale. In contrast, this dissertation research suggests that at the regional scale, a variety of non-business stakeholders are as influential in policymaking for the metropolitan area, where city-specific business interests are diffused. Nevertheless, this is not to suggest that business interests are unimportant. Indeed, the development of the 2012 RTP/SCS required clarification of its mitigation measures to reassure business advocates that economic growth and the development of projects seeking CEQA incentives would not be stifled. However, the findings suggest that regime regionalism does not need to emphasize economic interests alone, and should focus on environmental and social policies that will also support and strengthen the economy.

This research supports existing research on regime theory and sustainability, which argues that environmentalism does have the potential to impact the conditions that preserve dominant expansionist perspectives if coalition partners bridge ideological gaps by collaborating and forming new alliances (Gibbs & Jonas, 2000; Leo, 1998). In the politically fragmented Los

Angeles region, strong local autonomy hinders regional cooperation, but also hinders regionally coordinated opposition to the coalition and the regional plan. For this reason, a regime that establishes dominance and sustains long-term influence can drive future policies for more sustainable development. With an adopted 2012 RTP/SCS and newly required regional planning processes, the durability of the coalition depends on whether partners remain actively engaged in future regional planning efforts and continue to demonstrate the coalition's collective preemptive power and capacity to act.

Towards a Regional Approach to Sustainable Development?

Previous research on regional planning found that a variety of factors often challenged regional approaches to sustainable development. These factors included local autonomy, opposing central city and suburban growth agendas, and a lack of resources at the regional level (see Basolo, 2003; Berke, 2002; Bollens, 1997; Wheeler, 2000). In support of the literature, the findings of this research confirm that collaborative planning processes were hindered by local officials who were protective of their local authority and wary of SCAG and the purpose of the regional plan. Fearful of being subsumed by Los Angeles-centric decisions and resistant to sustainable development policies promoting higher density land use patterns, some local officials expressed opposition to the development of the 2012 RTP/SCS and its perceived subversive attempt to promote Agenda 21. Additionally, this research found that SCAG's lack of resources and data hindered efforts at addressing specific and localized concerns from health and equity stakeholders and attracting more participation by community advocates, although the plan includes the intent to continue to work in these areas.

According to the literature, factors such as state mandates, incentives, collaborative and voluntary planning processes, coalition building, performance standards, and the availability of technical assistance can contribute to successful regional approaches to sustainable development (Wheeler, 2000). The literature suggests that cooperative planning approaches that bring together a wide array of stakeholders diffuse conflicts, increase commitment, and result in stronger plans (Burby, 2003; Burby & May, 1997; Innes, 1992). In the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process, similar factors helped SCAG and the coalition overcome barriers to collaboration.

The process of cooperatively defining policies and developing strategies builds social, intellectual, and political capital. These forms of capital become a stronger resources for entities in planning processes that generate new forums in which issues are discussed more effectively, understood more thoroughly, and addressed more quickly (Healey, 2006). With the adoption of SB 375, SCAG was charged with the task of implementing a new regional planning process to cooperatively develop the regional plan. This dissertation research found that within the cooperative planning structure, stakeholders supporting the ecological paradigm were able to form a coalition to shift the planning discourse to include attention towards more sustainable development principles, facilitating the creation of the 2012 RTP/SCS. Furthermore, in the politically fragmented Los Angeles region, SB 375 was especially important as a state mandate. According to Leo (1998), state involvement in regional planning has been noted as essential in bridging ideological gaps, since the state is able to impose goals, provide a set of formal structures within which negotiations take place, and act as a lightning rod to shift blame away from the regional planning agency.

Research by Berke and Conroy (2000) found that to move beyond the rhetoric of sustainable development, planners can use negotiation and conflict resolution techniques during

decision making processes, emphasize state mandates when incorporating sustainability principles, and utilize evaluation techniques to examine the link between plans implementation and outcomes. Indeed, when confronted by opposition to perceived Agenda 21 objectives at a workshop with public officials, SCAG referred to the state mandate to redirect participants back to the planning task at hand. However, this research suggests that while acknowledging the state mandate shifted blame away from SCAG, it also dismissed the opposing concerns. Recent research on resistance to planning from Agenda 21 opponents found that anti-Agenda 21 policy outbreaks are likely to continue and can destabilize planning and inhibit sustainability-based plans and programs (Frick, Weinzimmer & Wadell, 2015). For this reason, dismissing anti-Agenda 21 concerns without further discussion can potentially prompt stronger and more organized opposition to future regional planning efforts intended to address sustainability issues.

Aside from mandates, successful planning requires dedicated and competent planners, as well as the provision of financial and technical assistance (Hoch, 2007; Pendall, 2001). In some instances, technical assistance and voluntary approaches may result in widespread improvements in planning instead of a hasty mandate for local planning (Pendall, 2001). As shown by this dissertation research, the 2012 RTP/SCS planning process included features of both a mandate and a voluntary planning process. While SCAG was mandated to plan, it was voluntary for cities and stakeholders to participate. However, given the connection between the regional plan with regional transportation investments, the RHNA, and development incentives, participation was highly encouraged. To fulfill its duty as a regional forum for collaboration, SCAG played a strong part in facilitating engagement by various stakeholders through outreach and working groups. Using technical tools, SCAG enabled videoconferences, distributed information, and provided scenario-planning assistance to local jurisdictions.

The use of scenario planning contributed to the development of the objectives in the 2012 RTP/SCS, since it allowed SCAG to emphasize the environmental, social, and economic linkages between communities within regions, which according to Berke (2002) and Rees (1995), is more feasible, simpler to understand, and politically easier than promoting a version of sustainable development focused on global sustainability and environmental stewardship. Additionally, city planners were also able to use scenario planning to model the effects of sustainable planning approaches on local conditions and evaluate the costs and benefits associated with different visions for the future. Beyond merely envisioning future conditions, scenario planning allows people to capture, assess, and discuss different perspectives of the future (Chakraborty & McMillan, 2015). For this reason, scenario planning facilitated the development of the 2012 RTP/SCS by first focusing the regional planning discussion on achieving interrelated benefits associated with various planning strategies that incorporate sustainable development principles, and second on addressing climate change.

According to the literature, a successful approach to sustainable development must promote confidence in people that a future shaped by comprehensive policies inclusive of sustainable development principles will be more attractive and livable than any other development approach (Rees, 1995). However, to go beyond cooperative dialogues and visioning exercises, planning requires physical plans that coordinate policy, urban growth, and illustrate visions (Neuman, 1998b). As demonstrated by this research, the 2012 RTP/SCS embodies a cooperatively produced future vision for the Los Angeles region. Building upon local sustainable development efforts, as well as growth and land use assumptions, the regional plan takes an incremental approach to regional sustainable development in the short term, while in the long term, plans for major development changes, demographic shifts, and technological innovations.

This research revealed that stakeholders from a variety of fields expressed general approval of the 2012 RTP/SCS since they perceived specific wins in the regional plan and supported what the region was able to accomplish. Although some advocates acknowledged that the regional plan might not be perfect, or believed they could have gained more from the process, stakeholders celebrated their achievements and recognized the regional plan and planning process as important first steps in collaborative regional planning for sustainability. This research suggests that the successes of SB 375 do not have to lie solely within the adopted regional plan but also with the collaborative process that created it and in the new working relationships that were built between stakeholders. Nevertheless, progressive planning exercises must continually seek to modify systems of understanding and reshape perspectives so that they do not reaffirm the status quo or fade into unproductive rituals (Healey, 2006). Given this, a successful regional approach to sustainable development in the Los Angeles region depends on enhancing local commitment to the objectives of the 2012 RTP/SCS and maintaining productive engagement by the coalition to support planning policies, technical resources, and regulatory incentives that facilitate implementation.

Policy Implications and Recommendations

In Southern California, factors such as political fragmentation and SCAG's lack of authority have historically hindered regional approaches to comprehensively address the three E's of sustainability. Scholars have suggested that the consolidation of governments and agencies into a single metropolitan government is one way to address regional problems and have pointed to Portland as a successful example. However, given the strong local autonomy and Orange County's proposition to secede in the 1990s, this approach would be highly unlikely to

succeed in the Los Angeles region. Additionally, locally autonomous planning and land use decisions have not contributed to a more sustainable region or adequately address the variety of interrelated and cross-boundary economic, environmental, and equity issues at the regional scale. In this context, SB 375, which mandated structures and processes to facilitate the cooperation of public and private groups and individuals, encouraged voluntary planning and created conditions for the development of regime regionalism focused on sustainable approaches to urban growth.

In order to facilitate cooperative approaches to regional planning in politically fragmented areas, policymakers can use the Los Angeles region's experience with the 2012 RTP/SCS as an example and promote the conditions that contribute to regime regionalism. This research found that a variety of stakeholder organizations had been individually addressing important sustainable development issues and achieving local and sub-regional successes. However, it was SB 375 and the mandated 2012 RTP/SCS process that provided advocates for sustainable development with the opportunity to unite, connect goals, pool resources, exchange knowledge, and influence policy at the larger regional scale. With this in mind, policymakers seeking to restructure business-as-usual planning trends can mandate cooperative planning processes focused at an alternative overarching objective, require outreach to a wide variety of stakeholder groups, and provide structures for more efficient information exchange, discussion, and collaboration.

Considering that this research has demonstrated the ability of a coalition to coordinate with each other and shift planning discourses, planners and policymakers should not underestimate the influence of alliances at the regional scale. By building upon the successful relationships that stakeholders formed through the development of the 2012 RTP/SCS, future regional planning processes can utilize coalition partners to distribute information and encourage

involvement. Simultaneously, regional planners can target outreach and education efforts at underrepresented groups, such as local community groups and small business organizations, which may have a harder time connecting regional planning to very local issues, yet have the power to pressure locally elected officials to implement the policies included in the regional plan. Successful education efforts can generate bottom-up support for the regional plan and help to mitigate opposition by anti-Agenda 21 advocates, who may perceive the regional planning process as a coercive top-down vehicle for sustainable development and the revocation of property rights.

Given that local land use decisions take precedence over the policies in the regional plan and regional transportation funding passes through CTCs, it can be easy for local governments and stakeholders to regard regional planning as irrelevant. However, the regional plan should not be dismissed, given that the SCS now sets forth a development pattern for the region, upon which the RHNA and transportation plans are based, thereby impacting local housing elements and investments to CTCs. Additionally, the MOUs between SCAG and the CTCs demonstrate joint commitments to identify initiatives that further the policies of the regional plan and are likely to impact funding for local transportation projects. To encourage commitment by local governments and support their implementation efforts, the incentives and advantages of aligning local projects and objectives with the regional plan should be emphasized. In particular, providing technical tools and training to local planners so that they can use data and modeling to visualize and measure the co-benefits and potential gains associated with significant sustainable projects and land use decisions can encourage more support for the regional plan at the local level.

As discussed earlier, the regime literature emphasizes that local development is often closely tied to relationships between local officials and business interests. This research found that business interests supported the regional plan, so long as their concerns for flexibility were addressed. In this way, this research suggests that policies for sustainable approaches can be successful if they also emphasize that local business and economic climates are not stifled. According to the sustainability literature, urban policies often first focus on strengthening the economy before including environmental and equity gains as serendipitous side effects. While previous policies in the regional plan have emphasized economic development and mobility, this research suggests that policies should focus on environmental and equity issues, followed by a thorough analysis of how economic conditions can be maintained or improved as a result. In particular, sustainable development policies should seek to make stronger links between the benefits of affordable housing for local labor pools, economic conditions, and environmental quality, as well as create regional conditions wherein green businesses, technologies, and design features are feasible or profitable.

Since the 2012 RTP/SCS concerns long-range planning, it is unlikely that the region will see immediate effects on development due to the plan. Furthermore, the fracturing of the regional plan by sub-regional SCS sections reinforces the divides in the region that have historically contributed to difficulties with regional planning. Given that the regional plan and planning process are vulnerable to perceptions of ineffectiveness and wasted effort, successful collaborative processes and achievements should be especially celebrated and promoted to remind stakeholders that their efforts are valuable and effective. This is particularly important for the 2016 update to the 2012 RTP/SCS, since this research revealed that the next update to the regional plan in 2016 will not include sub-regional SCS sections. Without sub-regional SCS

sections, the 2016 regional plan will not be fragmented by sub-plans with separate regional policies and housing assumptions that cannot be altered by SCAG. The original decision by GCCOG and OCCOG to assume delegation during the development of the 2012 RTP/SCS reflected a wariness to work with SCAG and a caution for the implications that the SCAG SCS would have on the sub-regions. By denying delegation, the sub-regions are required to work closely with SCAG, and both SCAG and sub-regions must exchange a stronger degree of trust. For this reason, successful negotiations, partnerships, and agreements should be emphasized to reinforce the trust between agencies, highlight the positive outcomes of collaboration, and prevent future fragmentation of the regional plan updates.

As discussed in this research, SB 375 does not contribute to SCAG's authority, which has been perceived as insufficient for producing meaningful planning changes. However, the legislation does make SCAG a stronger planning, policymaking, and monitoring agency. Whereas SCAG had previously been seen as an ineffective organization, in spite of its purpose to serve as a forum for cooperative regional planning, the relevance of the agency was revitalized through SB 375. Additionally, SCAG is now responsible for producing the SCS for the six-county region in the 2016 RTP/SCS, which guides future development and transportation investments. Despite a lack of control over local land use decisions, SCAG has gained stronger planning powers through more responsibilities. As a mediator between the state and sub-regional jurisdictions and agencies, cooperation with SCAG to achieve its regional planning objectives to reduce GHGs can lead to a more sustainable region and prevent direct state intervention into sub-regional planning processes and development decisions.

Suggestions for Additional Research

Mandated by SB 375, the 2012 RTP/SCS and planning process was an unprecedented effort intended to improve the mobility, economy, and sustainability of the Los Angeles region. With this in mind, additional research within the region can examine whether any development or policy changes have been influenced by the regional plan and evaluate the barriers and channels to early adoption of regulations aligned with regional objectives. Given that the regional plan is updated every four years, future research can use the same approach used in this research to examine the coalition's involvement in the planning process, as well as the extent to which sustainable policies are incorporated into subsequent regional plans.

Since SB 375 targeted MPOs throughout the state, different metropolitan areas are likely to have had unique experiences with the development of their regional plans. With this in mind, additional research within California can evaluate the similarities and differences between my research of the RTP/SCS development process implemented by SCAG, which does not have the authority of a CTC, with the process implemented by an agency that has both MPO and CTC responsibilities. Such a research project could provide further insights into a consolidation approach to regionalism as compared to a voluntary approach.

Lastly, SB 375 is the nation's first legislation to link land use and transportation to address climate change. Given the California effect, the diffusion of similar policies to other states is likely. With this in mind, additional research within the nation can examine the conditions that facilitate or hinder the adoption of similar policies in other states.

The suggested additional regional, state, and national research possibilities would build upon the findings of this dissertation research, which examined the 2012 RTP/SCS and its planning process to provide insights into regional planning and sustainable development. My

research revealed that in the politically fragmented Los Angeles region, the state mandate was critical in establishing the structures and processes that facilitated collaboration between various stakeholders. In this regional planning process, organizations guided by the ecological perspective formed a coalition and advocated for more attention on sustainable development policies in the regional plan. The coalition's advocacy, combined with extraordinary economic circumstances and data on changing demographic preferences, contributed to a shift in the regional planning dialogue away from business-as-usual planning for transportation and economic improvements. The resulting 2012 RTP/SCS generally offers something for nearly all stakeholders in the form of stronger sustainable development policies, economic and job benefits, and the preservation of local control. Widely supported and unanimously adopted, the 2012 RTP/SCS serves as an important first framework for sustainable development in the politically fragmented region. The coordination of stakeholders in the plan's development process suggests that a form of regime regionalism can succeed at addressing complex and interrelated challenges to sustainability in the Los Angeles region if partners remain committed to the shared vision and plan for the region's sustainable future.

Chapter Eleven

Epilogue

In this study I have examined a new regional approach towards sustainable development in Southern California. The state's new legislation aimed at addressing climate change through the integration of land use and transportation planning mandated an intensive cooperative planning process in the Los Angeles region to develop the 2012 RTP/SCS—a shared vision for the region's sustainable future. Prior to SB 375, SCAG had already adopted a strategy to encourage infill growth through its blueprint program, which was voluntary for local jurisdictions. The RHNA was based on demographic forecasts, the RTP was based on forecasts of traffic congestion as a result of development patterns, and the two were operating separately on different time schedules. With the adoption of SB 375, not only were the RHNA and RTP aligned to utilize one forecast for demographic changes, land development, and transportation issues, the updates now occur on the same schedule. Additionally, this research showed that the mandated SCS element introduced a stronger emphasis of policies promoting smart growth and sustainable development principles into the 2012 RTP/SCS, with attention paid to the benefits of compact transit-oriented development for quality of life, health, and access to jobs and open space.

The cooperative process to develop the new regional plan spurred engagement by a variety of stakeholder organizations, many of which had not been very involved in previous RTP planning processes. For stakeholders focused on issues such as active transportation, health, and conservation, SCAG and the regional planning process were previously seen as an ineffective arena for advocacy and dominated by conservative public officials and economic development

interests. However, the adoption of SB 375 gave SCAG additional planning responsibilities and gave stakeholders the opportunity to collaborate and advocate for new regional approaches to develop more sustainably and achieve GHG goals. The stakeholders who advocated for sustainable development issues coordinated and united as a coalition and shifted the regional planning discourse away from its traditional focus on economic development and transportation improvements. This research found that the influence of the coalition was recognized by stakeholders interested in maintaining business-as-usual planning, who have responded by making decisions for the 2016 RTP/SCS update process to prevent challenges by the coalition. The pre-emptive power of the coalition indicates a potential for the coalition to establish dominance and become a regional regime, which can work with SCAG for the long-term and drive future policies aimed to realize a more sustainable Los Angeles region.

As I complete this dissertation in the summer of 2015, the planning process for the 2016 RTP/SCS is currently underway, as SCAG conducts twenty public outreach “open houses” throughout the six-county region. In June, upon arriving at one open house conducted in Orange County, I immediately notice that the format is different from the public outreach workshops conducted for the 2012 RTP/SCS. The 2012 workshops involved much more active planning processes such as a formal presentation, small group discussions about regional issues, cooperative development of regional policies to address those issues, and electronic polling to gauge preferences for various land use and transportation choices. In contrast to the 2012 workshops, the 2015 open houses are much more passive and do not include a formal presentation, although a brief informational video is provided on loop for attendees. Participants are directed to take a self-guided tour of the issues being addressed in the 2016 plan, illustrated on large posters, and to provide feedback through survey questions displayed at kiosks (Figure

11.1). The posters and kiosks are set at six stations around the room, with a final seventh station providing comment cards (Figure 11.2). Although many SCAG staff members are available to answer questions and discuss the information provided in the posters, the open house lacks elements of collaboration and deliberation to develop the 2016 regional plan.



Figure 11.1. Posters and feedback kiosks of the 2016 RTP/SCS open houses (Source: author).

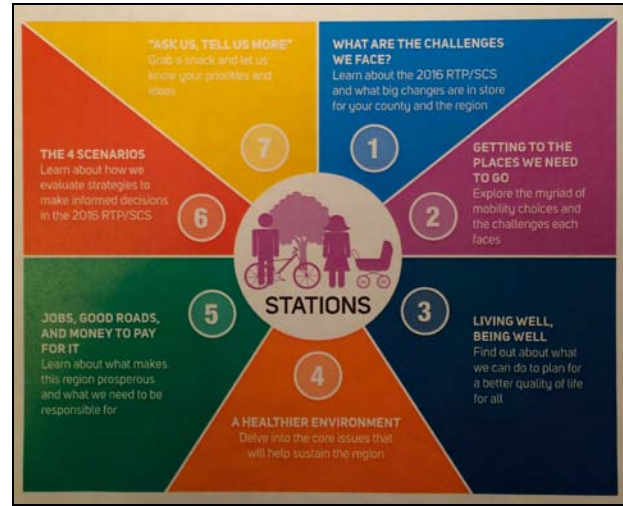


Figure 11.2. Stations of the 2016 RTP/SCS open houses (Source: SCAG)

Wary of the new outreach process for the 2016 RTP/SCS, I suspected that the coalition would have less opportunities to continue to influence the development of regional policies for sustainable development. However, my conversation with a SCAG planner at the open house revealed that this may not be the case. The SCAG planner explained that while the agency would still be using feedback from the open house to develop a preferred scenario for the draft 2016 regional plan, collaboration had already been occurring through working groups that bring together stakeholders focused on specific policy issues. Meanwhile, SCAG has been devoting more resources to improving its public health analysis and working with local jurisdictions to ensure that its housing and land use data is correct.

According to the planner, involvement by stakeholders during the 2016 planning process has been much more structured as a result of organizations pressuring SCAG to follow up on the policies included in the 2012 RTP/SCS. In particular, the working groups focus on active transportation, open space conservation, and public health. As shown in this dissertation research, these are the same issues that constituted a large part of the coalition's agenda. By emphasizing involvement and collaboration around these specific issues to develop policies for the 2016 plan, SCAG continues the trend away from regional planning's traditional focus on economic and conventional transportation issues and contributes to the potential for the coalition to establish itself as a regional regime.

During my attendance at the open house, I also met with an environmental advocate and a housing advocate, both of whom I interviewed while conducting this dissertation research. The environmental advocate stated that most stakeholders had returned to addressing issues at their own local or sub-regional level in the years since the adoption of the 2012 plan. However, recent involvement in the 2016 regional planning process has been going well, and the organization was now working with SCAG to develop the next steps for the regional advanced mitigation program as a continuation to the policies included in the 2012 plan. The housing advocate provided a less positive response, citing a lack of resources to remain engaged with coalition members or involved with the regional planning process and was attending the open house to learn about the 2016 RTP/SCS for the first time. The housing advocate believed the SCS and housing elements are too far removed from each other to result in major benefits for affordable housing and pointed to California's Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities program as providing more direct support for the development of affordable housing. Both advocates stated that they were waiting for the draft plan to be released to get a complete picture of the 2016 RTP/SCS.

The draft 2016-2040 RTP/SCS is expected to be released in the fall, with adoption anticipated in the spring of 2016. Built upon the 2012 RTP/SCS and involving focused collaboration around active transportation, open space conservation, and public health issues, it is likely that the 2016 RTP/SCS will remain on the trajectory established by the 2012 RTP/SCS. However, given that issues such as affordable housing deserved more attention in the 2012 plan, and the affordable housing advocate I spoke with had not been involved in the 2016 plan until the open house, it is also likely that this issue will not be adequately addressed by the update. However, the lack of sub-regional SCS sections may result in a more cohesive regional plan that resolves the policy discrepancies in the 2012 RTP/SCS.

In the years it has taken me to complete this dissertation, I have witnessed many changes to development throughout the Los Angeles region. Reading about transportation and development projects in regional planning documents and seeing them built has reminded me of the major role that regional plans play in urban growth. However, I am also reminded that achieving the objectives of regional planning requires a wider acceptance of and patience for a broader vision that takes time to actualize. Additionally, innovative efforts to align local planning to the regional vision will take time to diffuse as cities test and discuss the benefits of more sustainable patterns of development.

Low-density development patterns and auto-oriented travel behaviors have been a historical trend in the Los Angeles region. Conventional projects are still being developed, particularly in edge cities, and the region still ranks as one of the most congested in the nation. On one occasion during rush hour, as my leg began to cramp from constantly switching between my brake and gas pedals to inch my way from Los Angeles to Orange County, I loathed every minute of knowing how I was contributing to the traffic problem. However, I have seen the

addition of new toll lanes and high-occupancy vehicle lanes intended to facilitate more efficient travel that reduces the time spent on roadways. Bus and light rail routes have been extended to encourage transit use, and in Orange County, a new regional transportation hub is waiting for a boost in ridership and the development of high-speed rail. In more urban areas throughout the region, redevelopment efforts have resulted in more compact high-density and mixed-use development projects, which will help accommodate the increasing population and changing demographics. The region is visibly changing and the development of more innovative projects will likely make the transition to a more sustainable Los Angeles region easier and acceptable.

Recently, California has demonstrated continuing commitment to reducing GHGs to address climate change. Signed by Governor Schwarzenegger in 2006, AB 32 aimed to reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. This past April, Governor Brown issued an executive order to expand AB 32 and lower emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. This change will likely call for even cleaner energy and vehicle standards and stronger support for SB 375 through more attractive incentives for compact infill and transit-oriented development. This research suggests that in the Los Angeles region, there has been a shift in the regional planning trend. I have argued that this new approach emphasizes more sustainable development principles, has been shaped by influential stakeholders, and is heading in a more sustainable direction.

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Appendix A

Interview Guide

1. Please provide a general overview of how you and [your organization] were involved in the RTP/SCS planning process.
2. Were you involved with the RTP planning process in 2008?
 - a. If so, how was your involvement different this time?
3. With what other organizations were you involved during this planning process?
 - a. Did you have a prior working relationship with any of these organizations?
 - b. With what organizations did you work with for the first time?
4. What organizations led the coordination or did you coordinate others?
 - a. Or was the amount of exchange between organizations relatively even?
5. What did [your organization] want to get out of the plan?
 - a. How does the adopted plan fit with those goals or objectives?
6. How did you and other organizations collaborate over the content of a group comment letter?
 - a. Were there any items over which any organizations disagreed?
 - b. If so, how were these differences resolved or negotiated?
7. Were there any other disagreements regarding the agenda or approach of the main group?
8. Did any organizations drop out of or join the main group during the planning process?
 - a. If so, did they give any reasons for leaving or joining?
9. Please describe your working relationship with SCAG during this process.
 - a. How was the relationship, exchanges, or involvement with SCAG different this time versus in the past?

10. How did SCAG facilitate cooperation, feedback, or involvement?
 - a. How do you feel about SCAG's response to the issues in your comment letter?
11. Were there any issues in the appendices of the RTP/SCS that you feel should have been emphasized in the primary document?
12. Over the course of the planning process, how did your agenda, goals, or priorities change?
13. What objectives do you have for the next RTP/SCS?
14. How could the coordination of the main group have been improved?
 - a. How could the RTP/SCS planning process have been improved?
15. What other organizations stood out during the planning process?
 - a. Were there any organizations or fields that lacked representation during the process?
16. How have you continued to work with other organizations from the main group?
17. Were you involved in any subsequent ad-hoc follow-up committees after the adoption of the plan?
18. What was most surprising to you about the process?
 - a. What was most surprising about your involvement or what [your organization] achieved?
19. What other organizations would you recommend that I contact?

Appendix B

Comparison of Criteria in the LEED-ND, BREEAM Communities, and SITESv2 Rating Systems

Table B-1. Comparison of LEED-ND criteria to BREEAM Communities and SITES v2 criteria

LEED-ND Criteria (Weight)	Similar BREEAM Communities Criteria (Weight)	Similar SITES v2 Criteria (Weight)
Agricultural land conservation	-	Limit development on farmland
Floodplain avoidance	Flood risk assessment (1.8) Flood risk management (1.8)	Protect floodplain functions
Preferred locations (10)	Land use (2.1) Utilities (0.9)	Locate projects within existing developed areas (2)
Brownfield redevelopment (2)	Land use (2.1)	Redevelop degraded sites (3)
Locations with reduced auto dependence (7)	Transport assessment (3.2) Access to public transport (2.1)	Connect to multi-modal transit networks (1.5)
Bike network and storage (1)	Cycling network (2.1) Cycling facilities (1.1)	Connect to multi-modal transit networks (1.5) Encourage fuel efficient and multi-modal transportation (2)
Housing and jobs proximity (3)	Economic impact (8.9)	-
Steep slope protection (1)	-	-
Site design for habitat or wetland conservation (1)	Ecology strategy (3.2) Landscape (2.1)	Conserve aquatic ecosystems Conserve habitats for threatened and endangered species Control and manage invasive plants Use appropriate plants Conserve special status vegetation (2) Conserve and use native plants (3) Eliminate the use of wood from threatened tree species
Restoration of habitat or wetlands and water bodies (1)	Ecology strategy (3.2)	Restore aquatic ecosystems (3) Conserve and restore native plant communities (3) Restore soils disturbed during construction Restore soils disturbed by previous development
Long-term conservation management of habitat or wetlands (1)	Ecology strategy (3.2)	Designate and communicate vegetation soil and protection zones
Walkable streets (12)	Public realm (2.7) Safe and appealing streets (3.2)	-
Compact development (6)	-	-
Mixed-use neighborhood centers (4)	Economic impact (8.9) Delivery of services, facilities and amenities (2.7)	-
Mixed-income diverse communities (7)	Housing provision (2.7)	-
Reduced parking footprint (1)	Local parking (0.9)	Encourage fuel efficient and multi-modal transportation (2)
Street network (2)	Public realm (2.7) Safe and appealing streets (3.2)	-
Transit facilities (1)	Public transport facilities (2.1)	Connect to multi-modal transit networks (1.5) Encourage fuel efficient and multi-modal transportation (2)
Transportation demand management (2)	Transport carbon emissions (2.7)	Encourage fuel efficient and multi-modal transportation (2)
Access to civic and public space (1)	Delivery of services, facilities and amenities (2.7)	Promote equitable site use (1) Support social connection (1)
Access to recreation facilities (1)	Delivery of services, facilities and amenities (2.7)	Support physical activity (1)
Visitability and universal design (1)	Inclusive design (1.8)	Provide optimum site accessibility, safety, and wayfinding (1)
Community outreach and involvement (2)	Consultation plan (2.3) Consultation and engagement (3.5) Design review (2.3) Demographic needs and priorities (2.7)	Use an integrative design process Conduct a pre-design site assessment
Local food production (1)	Demographic needs and priorities (2.7)	Provide on-site food production (2)
Tree-lined and shaded streets (2)	Public realm (2.7) Microclimate (1.8)	Optimize biomass (3)
Neighborhood schools (1)	Demographic needs and priorities (2.7)	-

Table continues.

Table B-1 (continued). Comparison of LEED-ND criteria to BREEAM Communities and SITES v2 criteria

LEED-ND Criteria (Weight)	Similar BREEAM Communities Criteria (Weight)	Similar SITES v2 Criteria (Weight)
Construction activity pollution prevention	Resource efficiency (2.7)	Control and retain construction pollutants Protect air quality during construction (2)
Certified green building (5)	Green infrastructure (1.8) Sustainable buildings (4.1)	Communicate and verify sustainable construction practices
Building energy efficiency (2)	Energy strategy (4.1)	Use vegetation to minimize building energy use (2)
Building water efficiency (1)	Water strategy (2.7)	-
Water-efficient landscaping (1)	Landscape (2.1)	Reduce water use for landscape irrigation Reduce outdoor water use (3)
Existing building reuse (1)	Existing buildings and infrastructure (2.7)	Maintain on-site structures and paving (2)
Historic resource preservation and adaptive reuse (1)	Local vernacular (0.9)	Protect and maintain cultural and historic places (1.5)
Minimized site disturbance in design and construction (1)	Land use (2.1) Landscape (2.1)	Create and communicate a soil management plan Conserve healthy soils and appropriate vegetation (3)
Stormwater management (4)	Flood risk management (1.8) Water pollution (1.1) Rainwater harvesting (1.1)	Manage precipitation on site Manage precipitation beyond baseline (3) Conserve healthy soils and appropriate vegetation (3)
Heat island reduction (1)	Microclimate (1.8)	Optimize biomass (3) Reduce urban heat island effects (2)
Solar orientation (1)	Energy strategy (4.1)	-
On-site renewable energy sources (3)	Energy strategy (4.1)	Use renewable sources for landscape electricity needs (2)
District heating and cooling (2)	Energy strategy (4.1)	-
Infrastructure energy efficiency (1)	Energy strategy (4.1)	Reduce outdoor energy consumption (2)
Wastewater management (2)	Water strategy (2.7)	-
Recycled content in infrastructure (1)	Low impact materials (2.7) Resource efficiency (2.7)	Design for adaptability and disassembly (2) Use salvaged materials and plants (2) Use recycled content materials (2) Divert construction and demolition materials from disposal (2) Divert reusable vegetation, rocks, and soil from disposal (2)
Solid waste management infrastructure (1)	-	Provide for storage and collection of recyclables Recycle organic matter (2.5)
Light pollution reduction (1)	Light pollution (0.9)	Reduce light pollution (2)

Note. A dash indicates that the criterion is not addressed.

Criteria without weights are requirements.

The BREEAM Communities rating system integrates requirements into its criteria.

Table B-2. BREEAM Communities and SITES v2 Criteria not emphasized in LEED-ND

Additional BREEAM Communities Criteria (Weight)	Additional SITES v2 Criteria (Weight)
Noise (1.8)	Conduct a pre-design site assessment
Adapt to climate change (2.7)	Design functional stormwater features as amenities (2.5)
Enhance ecological value (3.2)	Reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire (2)
Community management of facilities (1.2)	Use regional materials (2.5)
Local labour (5.9)	Support responsible extraction of raw materials (2.5)
	Support transparency and safer chemistry (2.5)
	Support sustainability in materials manufacturing (2.5)
	Support sustainability in plant production (2.5)
	Support mental restoration (1)
	Minimize exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (1)
	Support local economy (1.5)
	Plan for sustainable site maintenance
	Minimize pesticide and fertilizer use (2.5)
	Protect air quality during landscape maintenance (2)
	Promote sustainability awareness and education (2)
	Develop and communicate a case study (1.5)
	Plan to monitor and report site performance (2)

Appendix C

Detail of Sustainable Development Principles used for Coding

Smart Location and Linkage Category of LEED-ND

Agricultural land conservation

- SLLp4a. Site w/o agricultural preservation district
- SLLp4o1. Protect significant soil
- SLLp4o2. Infill site
- SLLp4o3. Transit-served site
- SLLp4o4. Development rights receiving area
- SLLp4o5. Site w/ significant soil: mitigate soil loss

Floodplain avoidance

- SLLp5o1. Site w/o floodplain
- SLLp5o2. Site w/ floodplain: infill site
- SLLp5o3. Site w/ floodplain: other

Preferred locations

- SLLc1o1. Infill, adjacent, or previously developed site
- SLLc1o2. Connectivity
- SLLc1o3. Designated high-priority affordable location

Brownfield redevelopment

- SLLc2o1. Brownfield site
- SLLc2o2. Designated high-priority redevelopment area

Locations with reduced auto dependence

- SLLc3o1. Transit-served location
- SLLc3o2. MPO TAZ w/ low VMT

Bike network and storage

- SLLc4a. Bike network
- SLLc4b. Bike parking/storage

Housing and jobs proximity

- SLLc5o1. Include affordable residential component in non-residential
- SLLc5o2. Include residential component in non-residential

SLLc5o3. Infill and include non-residential component in residential

Steep slope protection

SLLc6o1. Site w/o slopes or no disturbance

SLLc7o2. Site w/ slopes: previously developed and restore

SLLc7o3. Site w/ slopes: other

Site design for habitat or wetland and water body conservation

SLLc7o1. Site w/o habitat, wetlands, or water bodies

SLLc7o2. Site w/ habitat: survey and no disturbance

SLLc7o3. Site w/ wetlands or water bodies: survey and no disturbance

Restoration of habitat or wetlands and water bodies

SLLc8a. Restore site to predevelopment conditions

Long-term conservation management of habitat or wetlands and water bodies

SLLc9a. Long-term conservation plan w/ funding

Neighborhood Pattern and Design Category of LEED-ND

Walkable street features

NPDC1a. Minimize setbacks

NPDC1b. Frequent and proximal functional entries

NPDC1c. Glass façades for ground-level retail

NPDC1d. Minimize blank façades

NPDC1e. Night visibility for ground-level retail

NPDC1f. On-street parking

NPDC1g. Wide and continuous sidewalks

NPDC1h. Elevated ground level residential

NPDC1i. Active ground level use and direct access

NPDC1j. 1:3 ratio of building height to street width

NPDC1k. Reduce street speeds

Compact development

NPDC2a. Increased density

Mixed-use neighborhood centers

NPDC3o1. Walk distance to diverse uses

NPDC3o2. Clustered diverse uses

- NPDC3o3. Regional-serving retail
- Mixed-income diverse communities
 - NPDC4o1. Diverse housing types
 - NPDC4o2. Affordable housing
 - NPDC4o3. Mixed-income housing
- Reduced parking footprint
 - NPDC5a. No new off-street parking lots or locate at rear
 - NPDC5b. Minimize footprint for off-street parking
 - NPDC5c. Bike parking/storage
 - NPDC5d. Include carpool or car-share spaces
- Street network
 - NPDC6a. Intersections
 - NPDC6b. Connectivity
- Transit facilities
 - NPDC7a. Install transit shelters
 - NPDC7b. Survey for future transit stops
 - NPDC7c. Display transit information at stops
- Transportation demand management
 - NPDC8o1. Transportation demand management program
 - NPDC8o2. Transit passes
 - NPDC8o3. Developer-sponsored transit
 - NPDC8o4. Walk distance to car-share
 - NPDC8o5. Unbundled parking
- Access to civic and public spaces
 - NPDC9a. Walk distance to open space
 - NPDC9b. Min open space in large projects
- Access to recreation facilities
 - NPDC10a. Walk distance to recreation facilities
- Visitability and universal design
 - NPDC11o1. Design residential for diverse abilities
 - NPDC11o2. Retrofit non-compliant access routes for diverse abilities

Community outreach and involvement

NPDC12o1. Community outreach

NPDC12o2. Charette

NPDC12o3. Local endorsement

Local food production

NPDC13a. Covenant for growing produce

NPDC13o1. Neighborhood farms and gardens

NPDC13o2. Community-supported agriculture

NPDC13o3. Walk distance to farmers' market

Tree-lined and shaded streets

NPDC14a. Certify planting details for tree health

NPDC14o1. Tree-lined streets

NPDC14o2. Shaded streets

Neighborhood schools

NPCc15a. Walk distance to schools

NPCc15b. School campus size

Green Infrastructure and Building Category of LEED-ND

Construction activity pollution prevention

GIBp4a. Erosion, sedimentation, and dust control plan

Certified green building

GIBc1o1. Green building certification

Building energy efficiency

GIBc2a. Energy efficient building design

Building water efficiency

GIBc3a. Water efficient building design

Water-efficient landscaping

GIBc4a. Outdoor water efficient design

Existing building reuse

GIBc5a. Reuse existing buildings

GIBc5b. Preserve historic buildings

Historic resource preservation and adaptive reuse

GIBc6a. Preserve historic buildings

Minimized site disturbance in design and construction

GIBc7a. Survey for trees and preserve

GIBc7o1. Previously developed site

GIBc7o2. Undeveloped land: no disturbance

Stormwater management

GIBc8a. Retain on-site rainfall

Heat island reduction

GIBc9o1. Non-roof measures

GIBc9o2. Roof measures

Solar orientation

GIBc10o1. Block orientation

GIBc10o2. Building orientation

On-site renewable energy sources

GIBc11a. On-site nonpolluting energy generation

District heating and cooling

GIBc12a. Energy from district plant

Infrastructure energy efficiency

GIBc13a. Install new infrastructure for energy efficiency

Wastewater management

GIBc14a. Retain and reuse on-site wastewater

Recycled content in infrastructure

GIBc15a. Use recycled and reclaimed materials

Solid waste management infrastructure

GIBc16a. Solid waste management and recycling

Light pollution reduction

GIBc17a. Motion sensor lights

GIBc17b. Dusk/dawn sensor exterior lights

GIBc17c. Minimize light pollution

GIBc17d. Covenants for light pollution

Additional Criteria from BREEAM Communities and SITES v2 Rating Systems

Adaptation to climate change

Case study development and communication

Enhancement of ecological value

Local and regional labor and resources

Reduction of wildfire risk

Sustainability awareness and education

Appendix D

Planning Scenario Outcomes for 2035

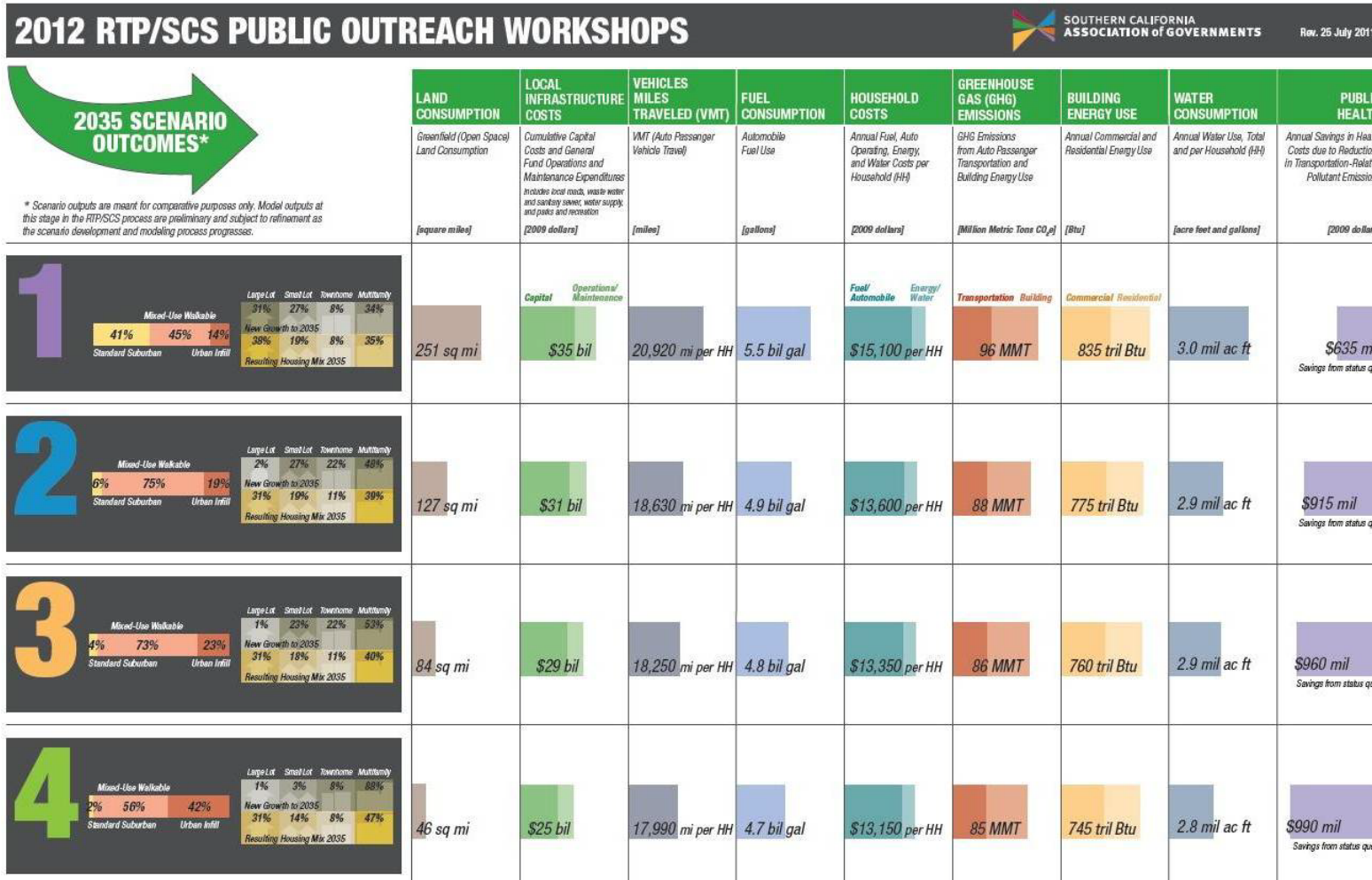
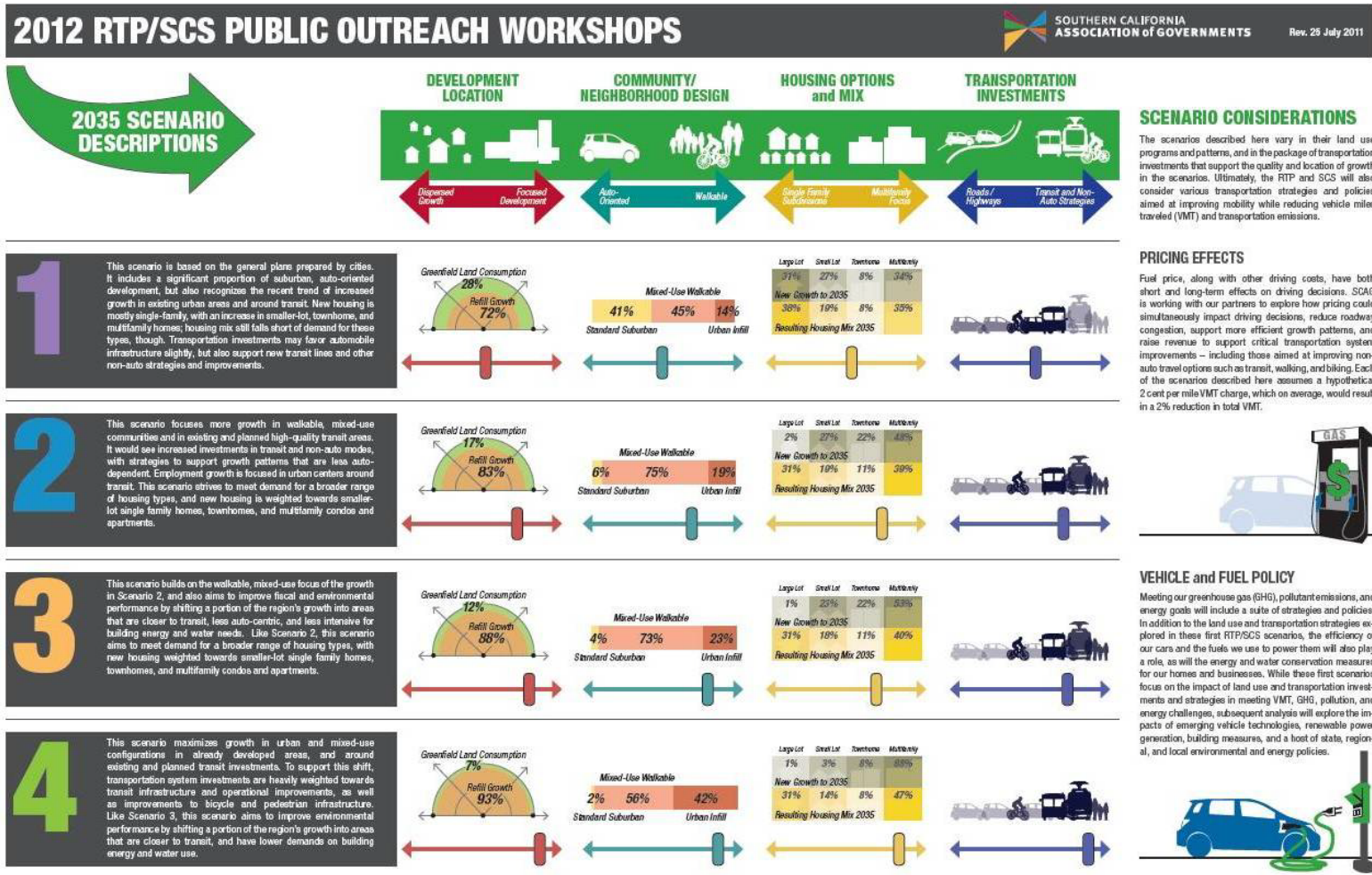


Figure D-1. Full presentation of scenario outcomes and co-benefits for 2035. Source: SCAG (2011).

Appendix E

Planning Scenario Descriptions for 2035



SCENARIO CONSIDERATIONS

The scenarios described here vary in their land use programs and patterns, and in the package of transportation investments that support the quality and location of growth in the scenarios. Ultimately, the RTP and SCS will also consider various transportation strategies and policies aimed at improving mobility while reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and transportation emissions.

PRICING EFFECTS

Fuel price, along with other driving costs, have both short and long-term effects on driving decisions. SCAG is working with our partners to explore how pricing could simultaneously impact driving decisions, reduce roadway congestion, support more efficient growth patterns, and raise revenue to support critical transportation system improvements – including those aimed at improving non-auto travel options such as transit, walking, and biking. Each of the scenarios described here assumes a hypothetical 2 cent per mile VMT charge, which on average, would result in a 2% reduction in total VMT.

VEHICLE and FUEL POLICY

Meeting our greenhouse gas (GHG), pollutant emissions, and energy goals will include a suite of strategies and policies. In addition to the land use and transportation strategies explored in these first RTP/SCS scenarios, the efficiency of our cars and the fuels we use to power them will also play a role, as will the energy and water conservation measures for our homes and businesses. While these first scenarios focus on the impact of land use and transportation investments and strategies in meeting VMT, GHG, pollution, and energy challenges, subsequent analysis will explore the impacts of emerging vehicle technologies, renewable power generation, building measures, and a host of state, regional, and local environmental and energy policies.

Figure E-1. Full presentation of scenario descriptions for 2035. Source: SCAG (2011).