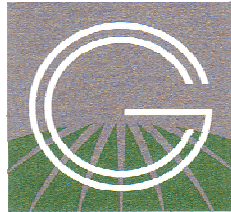


REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Gateway Cities Sustainable Community
Strategy Under California Senate
Bill 375 (2008) Initial Strategy Assessment



GATEWAY CITIES
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Gateway Cities Council of Governments

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Response Deadline:
5:00 p.m., Monday, March 2, 2009

Gateway Cities Sustainable Community Strategy under California Senate Bill 375 (2008) Initial Strategy Assessment

Introduction

In 2006 the state legislature passed and Governor Schwarzenegger signed Assembly Bill (AB) 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. This law's overall goal is to reduce the state's emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) back to 1990 levels by 2020. In Fall 2008 the legislature passed and the Governor signed Senate Bill (SB) 375, a bill that addresses the specific portion of GHG emission reductions related to the regional transportation planning process.

The AB 32 scoping plan identifies an initial statewide target of 5 million metric tons of CO₂ equivalent (MMTCO₂E) reductions from the regional transportation sector. According to the draft scoping plan, the ultimate target for this sector will be determined through the SB 375 process¹. These are reductions that would come from changes in land use planning, over and above changes to fuels, automotive operations, and automotive technology. Further, SB 375 applies to vehicle miles traveled (VMT) for cars and light trucks, but not to VMT or emissions from heavy-duty trucks.

SB 375 calls for the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) to develop a Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) that will become part of the Regional Transportation Plan. This strategy will include population, housing and employment projections and infrastructure plans closely related to elements of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA).

SB 375 allows sub-regions within the SCAG region only to undertake development of their own SCS, in collaboration with the county transportation commission (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority). On behalf of its 27 member cities, the Gateway Cities Council of Governments (COG) wishes to explore the development of a sub-regional SCS in accordance with the law's provisions.

The COG seeks consulting assistance in its initial evaluation of options for developing a sub-regional SCS. The core of this evaluation would be a comparison of the growth forecasts developed by SCAG for the 2008 Regional Transportation Plan with the aggregate growth patterns contained in the General Plans for each of the Gateway Cities. The outcome of this comparison would be a type of "gap analysis" identifying how much

¹ See footnote 38 on p. 51 of the October 2008 Climate Change Proposed Scoping Plan prepared by the California Air Resources Board for the State of California (<http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/scopingplan/document/psp.pdf>).

land use change might be required within individual Gateway Cities in order to meet regional GHG reduction targets required by SB 375. Additionally, the comparison should illuminate any mismatches between intended areas of more intense urban development and planned transportation infrastructure investments.

In summary, the consultant's analysis should be directed at helping the COG to influence the "factors considered and methodologies used for setting GHG targets." This matter is central to the mission of the Regional Targets Advisory Committee to be established by CARB under SB 375.

Scope of Work

Requested Tasks

Task 1. Initiate project and conduct a survey of Gateway member cities to identify current status of sustainability efforts.

- 1A. Attend a kick-off meeting with the Gateway Cities Planning Directors and Public Works Officers and COG staff to identify key issues for cities and help refine the project approach. This meeting will take the form of a half-day workshop designed to educate attendees about the new law and orient them to the challenges ahead.
- 1B. Develop a web-based survey asking whether cities have developed any type of "greening" or sustainability plan; whether they have quantified GHG emissions overall or from any specific sectors; whether they have taken or are taking any actions to reduce GHG emissions; what reductions are anticipated and on what time frame; whether they have registered with a GHG registry; whether they are members of ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability (a non-profit that can provide assistance to member cities); whether they are implementing any measures suggested by SCAG's Compass Blueprint plan or Regional Comprehensive Plan; what plans they have in place to do these or related things; what elements are currently included in their General Plans. The consultant will work with the Gateway Cities COG staff and specific COG committees as directed to determine the survey content.
- 1C. Administer survey via e-mail; follow up as necessary to get 90 - 100% response.
- 1D. Additionally, conduct a separate inventory of regional programs (beyond city-level) that have the potential to reduce VMT or otherwise reduce GHG emissions from light- and medium-duty vehicles. An example would be traffic signal synchronization. The consultant should review with the COG staff a proposed list of agencies to interview regarding such programs.
- 1E. Provide a technical memorandum and presentation summarizing the results of the survey (including both city and regional programs).

Target budget: 15% of total

Task 2. Assemble sub-regional General Plan database.

Obtain a copy of each member city's current General Plan and any associated population, housing, and employment database for the most recent year and for 2035 (or the latest future year if 2035 is unavailable). Compile the population, housing and employment data into a single database for the COG subregion, organized by census tract and by transportation analysis zone (TAZ) as defined by SCAG. In addition, obtain the same data and General Plan information for unincorporated Los Angeles County areas that fall within the COG boundaries. (These boundaries will be made available to the consultant.)

In addition, during the data collection effort for this task, the consultant should request specific feedback from each city regarding the accuracy of the relevant parts of the SCAG Compass Blueprint design for the Gateway Cities sub-region. These comments and corrections should be included and considered in the evaluation done in Task 3 and the recommendations in Task 5.

Target budget: 20% of total

Task 3. Compare sub-regional General Plan database with SCAG growth scenarios analyzed for 2008 Regional Transportation Plan.

In the course of developing the 2004 and 2008 Regional Transportation Plans (RTP), SCAG has analyzed both "business-as-usual" growth patterns, and alternative growth patterns designed to reduce VMT by assuming denser land use patterns. These analyses are conducted at the TAZ level and aggregated to a county and regional level for purposes of plan evaluation, environmental impact reporting, and plan adoption.

In its initial evaluation of the impact of SB 375 on the RTP process, SCAG has estimated that implementing an alternative growth scenario could reduce regional GHG emissions by 5.45 MMTCO₂E in 2035, compared with the adopted plan. (Note that the initial statewide target of 5 MMTCO₂E reduction is for 2020.)

In this task the consultant will be asked to obtain the TAZ-level databases from SCAG for population, housing, and employment distribution in the Gateway Cities sub-region for the following 2035 scenarios analyzed during development of the 2008 RTP:

- Baseline (adopted) forecast
- Draft policy growth forecast
- Envision scenario forecast.

Each of these forecast scenarios should be compared with the aggregated General Plan database for the Gateway Cities sub-region and differences highlighted by scenario and by city (and unincorporated area). In addition, the areas intended for more intense urban development should be compared with the planned transportation system investments and any mismatches identified. The consultant will also need to consider how these plans

relate to the provision of affordable housing as directed by the RHNA process. The consultant will be asked to prepare a technical memorandum reporting on the observed differences, as well as a presentation.

Target budget: 30% of total

Task 4. Track and report on state and regional developments.

The consultant will be asked to provide bi-weekly e-mailed reports on relevant meetings and decisions of the California Air Resources Board, the South Coast Air Quality Management District, SCAG, and the Regional Targets Advisory Committee, as well as legislative developments relevant to SB 375. In performing this work, the consultant will coordinate with COG staff to avoid duplication of efforts. Reports should be prepared in a format suitable for forwarding to city staff.

Target budget: 10% of total

Task 5. Prepare issue paper with strategy analysis and recommendations for whether and how to develop sub-regional SCS.

Based on the results of prior tasks, the consultant will be asked to prepare a policy paper of approximately 10 – 20 pages, as needed, to provide the COG staff with an analysis and recommendations for further steps to respond constructively to SB 375. The paper should address at least the following areas:

- 1) Legislative background and current legislative status (e.g., “cleanup” legislation for SB 375)
- 2) Status of the COG member cities and unincorporated areas with respect to SCAG’s view of needed land use changes to achieve potential regional GHG reduction targets under SB 375 (i.e., various planning scenarios for 2008 RTP)
- 3) Likely GHG impact of making these changes
- 4) “Fair share” distribution of regional targets and the technical tools used to determine this distribution
- 5) Relevance of South Coast AQMD Proposed Rule 2301 to SB 375
- 6) Possible strategies open to the COG and their ramifications, such as:
 - allow SCAG to prescribe the SCS for the sub-region;
 - create our own sub-regional SCS;
 - likelihood of needing to develop a regional or sub-regional Alternative Planning Strategy or APS;
 - seek a different strategy, such as legislative change.
- 7) Suggested strategies for assessing, tracking, and reducing GHG from all activities within the COG (not just those covered by SB 375). This aspect of the report should be as detailed and extensive as possible within the given budget. The goal of this analysis is to position the COG to make the most cost-effective possible response to the state’s overall requirements to reduce GHG emissions.

- 8) Potential sources of funding for the COG to pursue any of the strategies discussed in the paper (SB 732, other state funds, federal funds, grants, non-profit assistance, etc.)

Target budget: 25% of total

Summary of Contract Deliverables

- Survey questions (web-based instrument)
- Technical memorandum and presentation on survey results
- Unified sub-regional population, housing & employment database for all cities and unincorporated areas (current and 2035 or future year forecast)
- Technical memorandum and presentation on “gap analysis” comparing sub-regional database to five SCAG growth scenarios
- Bi-weekly e-mails on CARB & AQMD activities
- Policy/strategy memorandum

Schedule

The schedule in SB 375 calls for the MPO to recommend a regional GHG reduction target by June 30, 2010. This action is not mandatory, but SCAG is likely to recommend a target. The suggested schedule below reflects the need to quickly assess our initial approach to a sub-regional SCS. However, it could be extended in light of the legislative deadline. SCAG staff points out that the SB 375 schedule does not take into account the development of subregional SCS. The SB 375 schedule calls for the development of a draft regional SCS – or Alternative Planning Strategy, if an SCS is not expected to be able to reach the regional target – by September 2011.

Given these schedule issues, the consultant should expect to begin work in early 2009 as the California Air Resources Board appoints a Regional Targets Advisory Committee and SCAG convenes a similar region-level working group.

Tentative Proposed Project Schedule

Task 1 (city survey) – complete by end May 2009.

Task 2 (GP database) – concurrent: complete by end May 2009.

Task 3 (comparison or “gap analysis”) – complete by end August 2009.

Task 4 (tracking of agency actions) – ongoing throughout project.

Task 5 (policy/strategy analysis) – complete by end October 2009.