



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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RTP/SCS Overview

What is the RTP/SCS?

The Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS or Plan) is a long-range vision and investment plan that provides a comprehensive look at future transportation needs in San Joaquin County. The Plan considers future population growth and housing needs, as well as economic, environmental, and public health goals. The Plan maps out how the region will integrate transportation and land use, with the ultimate goal of providing transportation options to help the region grow in a financially and environmentally responsible way. It also contributes to California state goals of reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and miles driven on the road.

Why is there an RTP/SCS?

Federal and state regulations require every region in California to adopt an RTP/SCS in order for transportation projects to qualify for federal and state funding.

What is SJCOG's role in developing the RTP/SCS?

In San Joaquin County, SJCOG serves as the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) and the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). These state and federal designations give SJCOG the authority to develop, adopt, and regularly update a long-range regional transportation plan. Under these roles, SJCOG is responsible for leading the RTP/SCS process every four years to reflect emerging trends in population growth and economic development, as well as to report progress on projects and Plan performance. The current RTP/SCS was adopted by the SJCOG Board of Directors in 2018, and work is now underway for the 2022 RTP/SCS update.

What is in the 2018 RTP/SCS?

The 2018 Plan reflects a sustainability vision for the year 2042, seeking to:

- Enhance the environment for existing and future generations;
- Offer more choices for getting where we need and want to go;
- Increase safety and security;
- Preserve the efficiency of the existing transportation system;
- Support economic vitality;
- Improve public health and build on active transportation; and
- Ensure equity and access for all San Joaquin residents.

Over time, residents will see and experience incremental benefits in overall quality of life and the built environment of San Joaquin County. By planning today, we can create a region we will be proud to leave to future generations. To view the 2018 Plan, [click here](#).

What happens during the RTP/SCS development process?

The Plan consists of four main components:

1. Regional Growth: How much will the population grow? How does this translate into housing and jobs? Where will these jobs be located?
2. Transportation Options: How will the transportation system move people and goods safely and efficiently throughout the region?
3. Benefits of the Plan: What improvements will be gained in the areas of mobility, quality of life, economy and environment?
4. Funding Plan: Based on expected levels of revenue, how will the transportation projects included in the Plan be implemented?

These important questions help guide the process of planning by shaping different scenarios that combine different land use and transportation options to help meet regional goals. The public, stakeholders, and public officials will have opportunities to provide their opinions about the transportation and growth options, and overall plan goals via meetings, workshops, and/or other opportunities. The SJCOG Board of Directors will then consider public input on the scenarios to develop a preferred scenario that will be included in the draft Plan. The public, stakeholders, and public officials will have another opportunity to provide input on the draft Plan before it is finalized and adopted by the SJCOG Board of Directors. To receive updates on the RTP/SCS development process, please [sign up for notifications](#).

SB 375 & Climate Change

What is SB 375?

In 2008, California passed Senate Bill 375 (SB 375), the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act. The goal is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from passenger vehicles and light trucks through integrated transportation, land use, housing, and environmental planning. Under the law, SJCOG must develop a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) along with the RTP, and the Plan must show that it meets greenhouse gas reduction targets set by the California Air Resources Board (CARB).

What else is required in developing the SCS?

According to SB 375, "Each metropolitan planning organization shall prepare a sustainable communities strategy, including the requirement utilizing the most recent planning assumptions considering local general plans and other factors. The Sustainable Communities Strategy shall:

1. Identify the general location of uses, residential densities, and building intensities within the region;
2. Identify areas within the region sufficient to house all the population of the region, including all economic segments of the population, over the course of the planning period of the regional

transportation plan taking into account net migration into the region, population growth, household formation and employment growth;

3. Identify areas within the region sufficient to house an eight-year projection of the regional housing need for the region;
4. Identify a transportation network to service the transportation needs of the region;
5. Gather and consider the best practically available scientific information regarding resource areas and farmland in the region;
6. Consider the state housing goals specified in Sections 65580 and 65581 [Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA)];
7. Set forth a forecasted development pattern for the region, which, when integrated with the transportation network, and other transportation measures and policies, will reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from automobiles and light trucks to achieve, if there is a feasible way to do so, the greenhouse gas emission reduction targets approved by the state board;
8. Allow the regional transportation plan to comply with the Federal Clean Air Act.”

Greenhouse gas emissions – what’s that?

Gases that trap heat in the atmosphere are called greenhouse gases. The natural greenhouse effect is what enables life to flourish on our planet. Greenhouse gas emissions also enter the atmosphere as a result of human activities, such as burning fossil fuels for electricity, heat, and transportation.

Why is lowering greenhouse gas emissions important?

Lowering greenhouse gas emissions supports public health, reduces energy consumption, and protects the environment. Included in the Plan are strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by reducing miles on the road, supporting a switch to clean energy vehicles, and creating more options for how to get around – including taking public transit, walking, or using a bicycle instead of a car, when possible.

What are greenhouse gas reduction targets?

Under SB 375, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) sets regional targets for greenhouse gas emissions from passenger vehicle use. In 2019, CARB established new targets for 2020 and 2035. In San Joaquin County, these targets are currently measured against 2005 air quality levels and are as follows:

- A 12% per capita reduction target for the year 2020
- A 16% per capita reduction target by 2035

Both the SJCOG 2014 and 2018 RTP/SCS met the then required per capita reductions.

How does the Plan impact greenhouse gas emissions?

Transportation is the biggest source of greenhouse gas emissions accounting for 45 percent of overall greenhouse gas emissions, most of which comes from personal vehicles. An integrated transportation

and land use plan can help change transportation patterns by reducing how much people need to drive. In turn, this helps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality.

Some of the strategies in the Plan include:

- Encouraging development near existing and future public transit investments;
- Facilitating an improved jobs/housing balance; and
- Enhancing public health through active transportation projects.

How is the San Joaquin region doing with meeting our other air quality requirements?

Currently, the San Joaquin Valley is designated as “nonattainment” for meeting some requirements of the Federal Clean Air Act. Therefore, transportation plans and programs must satisfy Federal transportation conformity regulations, which state that:

- The RTP must pass an emissions budget test using a budget found adequate by the Environmental Protection Agency for transportation conformity;
- The latest planning assumptions and emissions models for use in conformity determination must be employed;
- The timely implementation of transportation control measures specified in the applicable air quality implementation plans; and
- Interagency and public consultation.
- To learn more, please see [Air Quality](#).

RTP/SCS & Public Participation

How does the RTP/SCS personally affect me?

A coordinated transportation and land use plan is important to you, me, and all San Joaquin residents, visitors, and businesses because:

- It can improve air quality, support public health, and reduce the need for driving;
- It can help people and goods get to where they need and want to go, safely and efficiently; and
- It can improve the quality of life and economic vitality of our region.
- In other words, the Plan will guide transportation investment (e.g. your tax dollars) for the next 20+ years in the region, which will directly impact the quality and health of the places where we and future generations will live, work, and play.

What role does the public play in developing the RTP/SCS?

SJCOG values public participation as essential to meeting the diverse transportation needs of the region. Therefore, we are committed to conducting robust public outreach and engagement to ensure that the

public has early and ongoing opportunities to provide input on the RTP/SCS.

As members of the public, your role is to show up and share your voices on the regional issues that matter most to you. Throughout the planning process, SJCOG staff will offer various opportunities to engage in the planning process, including some of the following:

- Advisory committees;
- Public workshops;
- Community-based outreach events;
- Online surveys;
- Public hearings; and more.
- For further details, please see the [RTP/SCS Public Participation Plan](#).

How do I receive information so that I can share my ideas for the 2022 RTP/SCS update?

Public engagement is important to the success of our regional planning efforts. We need the input of all stakeholders—especially those who live, work and commute in our region—to build a plan that meets our diverse needs. If you are interested in opportunities to provide input, please [sign up for notifications](#) or contact Tim at kohaya@sjcog.org or (209) 235-0389.

Helpful Links

- [2018 RTP/SCS](#)
- [California Air Resources Board](#)
- [Environmental Protection Agency -- Climate Change](#)
- [Senate Bill 375](#)