

**2013 Supplemental
Public Participation Plan
for the
Regional Transportation Plan and
Sustainable Communities Strategy**



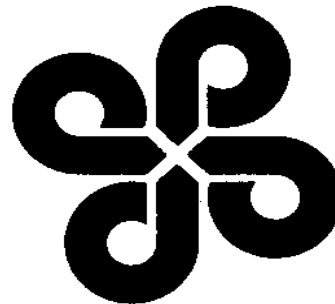
**Developed by Kings County Association of
Governments (KCAG)**

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**2013 Supplemental
Public Participation Plan**

for the

**Regional Transportation Plan and
Sustainable Communities Strategy**



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I. Introduction

This specific Public Participation Plan for the development of the 2015 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) is a Supplemental Public Participation Plan to the comprehensive KCAG Public Participation Plan (KCAG-PPP) adopted on December 7, 2011 by the KCAG Commission. The KCAG-PPP is available online at <http://www.kingscog.org/planning.html>. This document does not replace or supersede any elements in the 2011 KCAG-PPP, but should be seen as complementary. The purpose of this supplemental document is to describe how KCAG will engage the public through the 2015 RTP Update and development of the first Sustainable Communities Strategy for the Kings County region.

California's Global Warming Solution Act of 2006 (Assembly Bill 32 or AB 32), gives the California Air Resources Board (ARB) authority to regulate sources of greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change. According to the ARB, transportation accounts for 40 percent of greenhouse gas emissions, with cars and light trucks accounting for almost three-quarters of those emissions (30 percent overall).

The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 (Senate Bill 375 or SB 375), builds on the existing framework of regional planning in an effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from motor vehicle trips. SB 375 became effective on January 1, 2009 and is expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 5 million metric tons statewide.

ARB has set regional targets for reducing greenhouse gases that must be accounted for in the RTP Updates. SB 375 requires that the 18 California Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) prepare a SCS (and, if the SCS does not meet the targets, an Alternative Planning Strategy or APS) in collaboration with stakeholders in the region. Specific opportunities for input by local officials and the public are discussed in this document. KCAG is the MPO tasked with developing the RTP and SCS for the Kings County region with the 2015 update of the RTP.

In addition, SB 375 synchronizes the timing of the formerly separate RTP and Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) cycles, so that transportation decisions and housing are now coordinated together. The RHNA is a forecast of future household growth with detailed economic allocations that is given to each Council of Governments (COGs) by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to be distributed to their member jurisdictions. The RHNA distribution must be consistent with the development pattern included in the SCS. The member jurisdictions will use their share of the RHNA as the primary assumption for their respective Housing Elements, which are due 18 months after adoption of the RTP. SB 375 uses the SCS to serve as a common set of land use assumptions for both the RTP and the RHNA. KCAG is tasked with distributing the RHNA to its member agencies as part of the 2015 RTP Update and development of the SCS. COGs are encouraged to work with HCD in incorporating the appropriate RHNA within their RTP Updates.

A. Regional Transportation Plan

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is the principal long-range planning document developed by KCAG that prioritizes and guides the transportation investment in Kings County for (at least) the next twenty years. The RTP is the comprehensive plan for transportation investments (transit, highway, local roads, bicycle, and pedestrian projects) and establishes the financial foundation for how the region will invest in its surface transportation system. The RTP identifies how much money is available to address critical transportation needs and determines the policies on how projected revenues are to be spent. Therefore, the RTP establishes the region's goals, policies, and objectives for meeting current and future transportation mobility needs.

The RTP is developed in coordination with each city in Kings County, the County of Kings, Caltrans, the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, transit operators, and citizen groups. The RTP is made available for participation and comment to other federal, state, regional and local agencies through the Inter-Agency Consultation (IAC) Process. RTPs through the 2011 Update contained three basic elements: Policy Element, Action Element, and Financial Element. Beginning with the 2015 RTP Update, as required by SB 375, the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) will be developed as the fourth element of the RTP.

As required by the 2015 RTP Update, KCAG will consult with federal land use management agencies as appropriate during the development of the RTP.

B. Sustainable Communities Strategy

The Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) will describe how the Kings County region will address reducing greenhouse gas emissions from motor vehicles. The SCS is a regional growth strategy that provides the basis for the integration of the land use decisions made by our cities and county and the transportation investments in the region with a goal of reducing the greenhouse gas emission from cars and light trucks in the region. The SCS must be based on "current planning assumptions".

The SCS must identify the "general location of uses, residential densities, and building intensities" including areas sufficient to house all the economic segments of the projected regional population, while still meeting the greenhouse gas targets as set by ARB. SB 375 requires that transportation funding decisions in the RTP be consistent with the SCS. Therefore, the SCS is a fiscally constrained element of the RTP.

Because KCAG is committed to meeting the greenhouse gas emission reduction targets set by ARB with the development of a SCS for the region; throughout this document, when a reference is made to the SCS understand that this includes the development of an APS in the unforeseen event that KCAG is unable to document the required GHG reductions in the SCS – although the APS will not necessarily be mentioned at the time.

C. Alternative Planning Strategy

An Alternative Planning Strategy (APS) must be prepared if the SCS cannot meet the greenhouse gas targets set by ARB. Unlike the SCS, the APS is not fiscally constrained and is not an element of the RTP. The APS would meet the greenhouse gas targets through a combination of alternative development patterns, infrastructure investments, or additional transportation measures or policies. KCAG will strive to meet the ARB established GHG reduction targets with the development of a SCS.

II. Public Participation Plan Requirements

A. SB 375 Public Outreach Requirements

The California Transportation Commission (CTC), through its legislatively assigned authority, has provided guidance in the 2010 Regional Transportation Plan Guidelines on legal requirements applicable to development of the SCS and an APS. Accordingly, the MPO shall adopt a Public Participation Plan in advance of developing an SCS (and an APS as necessary) that should include:

- ✓ An outreach effort encouraging the active participation of a broad range of stakeholders in the planning process, consistent with the agency's adopted Federal Public Participation Plan. This includes, but is not limited to, affordable housing advocates, transportation builder representatives, broad-based business organizations, landowners, commercial property interests, and homeowner associations.
- ✓ Consultation with congestion management agencies, transportation agencies, and transportation commissions.
- ✓ Regional public workshops with information and tools providing a clear understanding of policy choices and issues. At least one workshop in each county. For counties with a population greater than 500,000, at least three workshops must be held. To the extent possible, each workshop shall include urban simulation computer modeling to create visual representations of the SCS.
- ✓ Preparation and circulation of a draft SCS (and APS, if one is prepared) not less than 55 days before adoption of a final RTP.
- ✓ For multiple-county MPOs at least three public hearings shall be held on the draft SCS in the RTP (and APS, if one is prepared). For a single county MPO, at least two public hearings shall be held. To the maximum extent feasible, the hearings shall be in different parts of the region to maximize the opportunity for participation by members of the public throughout the region.
- ✓ A process enabling the public to provide a single request to receive notices, information, and updates.

KCAG in accordance with state guidelines is developing a focused outreach strategy that will detail how KCAG will engage the public and stakeholders during the 2015 RTP Update and development of the SCS. While a separate Public Participation Plan is not required, KCAG felt that a separate and Supplemental Public Participation Plan, consistent with our adopted 2011 KCAG-PPP, would be the most efficient and user friendly format to detail the focused outreach strategy.

KCAG will continue to consult with other agencies and commissions and will actively seek public input throughout the development of the 2015 RTP Update and the development of the SCS (and APS, if applicable). Striving to create a collaborative transportation process, KCAG will consult with local elected officials as key stakeholders. The State requires that KCAG provide outreach to all local elected officials

and their member jurisdictions affected by the SCS. In preparing an SCS, KCAG shall consider spheres of influence that have been adopted by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) of Kings County. KCAG may consult with LAFCO of Kings County regarding special districts within the region that provide property-related services such as water or wastewater services, and may further consult with these regional special districts. KCAG may also consult with school districts in the Kings County region as school-related trips constitute a significant portion of all vehicle trips. If possible, KCAG may incorporate current and future school needs into the 2015 RTP Update.

Interagency Coordination

As KCAG begins the 2015 RTP Update and SCS, staff will undertake interagency coordination with both federal and state agencies and will notify all interested parties. Interagency consultation should include but not be limited to:

- Federal agencies including: Federal Highways Administration (FHWA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
- California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)
- California Air Resources Board (ARB)
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- Appropriate Resource Agencies
- Adjacent MPOs and RTPAs with which the MPO shares a significant amount of interregional travel

The California Transportation Commission (CTC) also encourages State agencies to work with KCAG to provide the best data and information available as they develop their greenhouse gas emission modeling methodology together with ARB. KCAG will also work with HCD to incorporate our appropriate Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) within our 2015 RTP Update and development of the SCS.

Stakeholders

There are several stakeholders that will be targeted for input during the 2015 RTP Update and development of the SCS. These stakeholders may include but are not limited to:

- Citizens
- Affected Public Agencies
- Representatives of Public Transportation Employees
- Freight Shippers/ Operators
- Private providers of transportation
- Major trucking firms
- Representatives of users of public transportation
- Representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities
- Representatives of people with disabilities

- Home Builder Representatives
- Commercial Property Interests
- Homeowner Associations
- Chamber of Commerce
- Large Employers and Business Organizations
- Federally Recognized Tribal Nation
- Affordable Housing Advocates
- Neighborhood and Community Groups
- Environmental Advocates
- Health Advocates
- Farming and Agricultural Interests

KCAG will maintain a record of its public participation efforts during the 2015 RTP Update and development of the SCS. As the KCAG region has a population of 152, 007, at least one public workshop on the draft SCS with information and tools will be held. The draft SCS (and APS, if applicable) will be circulated for a minimum of a 55 day public review and comment period, prior to adoption of the Final 2015 RTP. KCAG will also provide an option on the agency's website, www.kingscog.org for interested parties to sign up to receive notices, information, and updates on the 2015 RTP Update and development of the SCS (and APS, if applicable). As with development of this 2013 Supplemental Public Participation Plan and past updates of the RTP, KCAG staff is always available to meet with interested parties.

Meetings/ Workshops

During the development of the SCS, KCAG must conduct at least two informational meetings for members of the board of supervisors and city councils. Only one informational meeting is needed if it is attended by representatives of the county board of supervisors and city councils that represent a majority of the population in the incorporated areas of that county. The purpose of this meeting(s) shall be to discuss the SCS (and APS, if applicable), including the key land use and planning assumptions (provided by the cities and county), with the members of the board of supervisors and city council(s) and to solicit and consider their input and recommendations. Notices of these meetings will be sent to the clerks of the board of supervisors and city councils.

III. Development of the 2013 Supplemental Public Participation Plan

KCAG staff began development of the 2013 Supplemental Public Participation Plan in April of 2013. In order to get a sense of how best to engage the Kings County region in our public participation efforts, a brief six question survey was made available electronically and in hard copy format in both English and Spanish between April 8th and May 8th. In order to encourage the highest response rates the website links for both language versions (via Survey Monkey) was provided to over sixty key stakeholders in the region through email and hard copies in both English and Spanish were made available. KCAG staff encouraged interested parties to fill out the survey at the April meetings of the KCAG Technical Advisory Committee and the KCAG Commission. Hard copies of the survey were also available at these meetings. A total of 24 surveys were received at the close of the survey on May 8th. This included 23 responses from the online survey links and 1 hard copy.

Staff met with the KCAG Technical Advisory Committee and KCAG Commission during the months of April and May to discuss the Supplemental Public Participation Plan and has finalized the plan for adoption at the June KCAG Commission meeting. During development of the 2013 Supplemental Public Participation Plan, KCAG was available to meet with interested groups or individuals to discuss the Plan.

In addition, this Supplemental Public Participation Plan went through the Inter-Agency Consultation (IAC) process. The IAC provided an opportunity for regional, state, and federal agencies to provide comments on the draft document. The IAC consists of representatives from the San Joaquin Valley MPOs, Caltrans, Federal Highways, Federal Transit, Environmental Protection Agency, and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District.

A. What We Heard From the Public

During development of the Supplemental Public Participation Plan, KCAG used key survey data to provide guidance on the best methods to engage the public in the 2015 RTP Update and development of the SCS. The question and answer summaries immediately following will help guide the public participation efforts.

1. Please select the category that best describes your organization/affiliation?

The majority of survey participants noted that they were from a local governmental agency at 46%, followed next by farmer/ agricultural interests at 21%, and public transportation/ transit service responding at 2%.

2. *What is the most effective method of providing updates to you and or your organization/ affiliation on the RTP and SCS process?*

Overwhelmingly, the public told us that the most effective method to provide updates was through email. To a much lesser degree, the KCAG website and mailings of flyers or invitations were noted as the preferred methods. It was also suggested that KCAG post flyers in public areas.

3. *In your opinion, how best can KCAG advertise upcoming workshops or key meetings to the general public?*

The majority of the surveys indicated that email blasts were the preferred advertising method, followed by notices in the local paper, and on the KCAG website. Additional popular responses included mailing flyers or invitations, radio announcements, and the use of social media.

KCAG will continue to use these preferred methods and will consider the use of the additional methods as time and resources allow.

4. *What is the most convenient time of day to attend a workshop or key meeting for you and or your organization/ affiliation from Monday through Friday?*

The survey respondents equally chose morning between 9:00 a.m. – noon and afternoons between noon and 5:00 p.m. as the most convenient time of day to attend a workshop or key meeting.

5. *Would you and your organization/ affiliation like to request a face to face meeting to further discuss development of the KCAG 2013 Supplemental Public Participation Plan?*

KCAG staff contacted one interested person that left the necessary contact information. A telephone interview was conducted and the individual will continue to participate in future RTP/SCS work.

6. *Please provide any comments relative to the KCAG 2013 Supplemental Public Participation Plan. This plan will provide guidance on how KCAG will engage the public during the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Update with the newly mandated Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) element.*

Survey question six was purposely written as an open ended question to allow participants to provide additional input not confined to a specific question. The following response was provided:

“Thanks for working to better public transit for our clients.”

IV. Public Outreach Techniques

KCAG will utilize a variety of public participation strategies to communicate and encourage interaction with the public during the 2015 RTP update and development of the SCS.

A. KCAG Website

The KCAG website is located at www.kingscog.org and provides information on current activities and planning documents. A separate page devoted solely to the 2015 RTP update and development of the SCS will be made available. A feature will also be added to allow individuals to sign up to receive notifications, information, and updates on the 2015 RTP and SCS.

B. Social Media

KCAG will use social media tools to help keep the public informed on progress during the RTP update and development of the SCS. The social media site may also allow the public to make comments about the plans and processes.

C. Notifying the Public

A combination of press releases and official public notices will be used to notify the general public of upcoming meetings and/or the availability of documents for review and comment.

Throughout the project duration, press releases will be distributed through KCAG's existing media mailing list to keep the public informed about the development and progress of the 2015 RTP update and development of the SCS.

As KCAG meets with city councils and the board of supervisors in mandated SB 375 meetings, notices will be sent to the clerks of the board of supervisors and city councils. Additionally, public notices will be posted in the local newspaper to announce official actions during the 2015 RTP and development of the SCS. When the Draft 2015 RTP and SCS are made available for the mandated 55-day public review and comment period, a noticed public hearing will occur during the period. The public notice will include the beginning and ending dates of the public review period and will provide the date that the Draft 2015 RTP and SCS will be considered for adoption by the KCAG Transportation Policy Committee.

D. Public Meetings/ Workshops

KCAG will use public meetings and workshops as a forum to solicit public participation and share information during the 2015 RTP update and development of the SCS. Meeting locations and times will be scheduled in an effort to be the most convenient for stakeholders and the greater community. KCAG is open to co-hosting workshops with community groups or other governmental agencies as opportunities become available. Also, KCAG staff will take advantage of existing regularly scheduled meetings, such as City Council or Planning Commission meetings in our member agencies jurisdictions.

To inform the public of upcoming meetings and workshops press releases, public notice hearings, flyers, emails, newspaper articles, word of mouth, and direct mailings may be utilized.

KCAG regularly meets monthly for the Technical Advisory Committee (every second Wednesday at 1:30 p.m. in Lemoore) and for the KCAG Transportation Policy Committee and KCAG Commission (every fourth Wednesday at 4:30 p.m. in Hanford). These meetings are open to the public and include an opportunity for public comments. Throughout the 2015 RTP update and development of the SCS, KCAG staff will provide regular updates at these meetings. The meeting agendas are always posted at the KCAG office and available at least 72 hours in advance on the KCAG website at www.kingscog.org. In addition, the agendas for the KCAG Transportation Policy Committee and KCAG Commission meetings are also posted at the meeting room location at 1400 W. Lacey Blvd. at the Board of Supervisors Chambers.

KCAG will hold additional meetings during the 2015 RTP update and development of the SCS to share information and provide an opportunity for the public to provide input on the project. Formats for meetings may include an informal open house style or a more structured presentation manner. KCAG staff will strive to use a variety of visualization tools during these meetings that may include maps, charts, photographs, table top displays, or other illustrated formats. KCAG staff will also be available to groups or individuals who would like to have face to face meetings. KCAG staff will use workshops when there is specific input that is being requested by the public during the 2015 RTP update and development of the SCS.

When a meeting is legally required by SB 375, KCAG staff will follow all legal notification and posting requirements. KCAG must conduct at least two informational meetings for members of the board of supervisors and city councils. Only one informational meeting is needed if it is attended by representatives of the county board of supervisors and city councils that represent a majority of the population in the region.

Kings County Association of Governments
2013 Supplemental Public Participation Plan

Appendix A

Surveys

**Kings County Association of Governments
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Appendix B

Survey Results