

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES STRATEGY

INTRODUCTION

As required by the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 (Senate Bill 375), the 2018 Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) contains a Sustainable Communities Strategy that considers both land use and transportation together in a single, integrated planning process that accommodates regional housing needs and projected growth. The 2018 RTP/SCS updates the current RTP/SCS adopted by TCAG in June 2014 and continues the planning vision for the Tulare County region laid out by the 2014 plan. As have past Regional Transportation Plans, the 2018 RTP/SCS plans how the region will invest limited transportation funds to maintain, operate and improve an integrated, multi-modal transportation system that facilitates the efficient movement of people and goods. The updated plan identifies specific strategies, policies and actions, including a list of programmed and planned transportation projects affordable within the region's anticipated reasonably available transportation funding, to achieve regional goals and priorities and meet the current and future needs of the region. The planning horizon of the 2018 RTP/SCS is 2042.

The Sustainable Communities Strategy recognizes the fundamental relationship between land use and transportation choices: the two components influence each other and neither component can be understood without reference to the other. The 2018 RTP/SCS meets the requirements of SB 375 and, in particular, demonstrates how the integrated land use and transportation plan achieves the region's mandated greenhouse gas emission targets for passenger vehicles.

In updating the plan, TCAG actively sought input from local decision-makers and communities, interested stakeholder groups, and other government agencies through an extensive public process. TCAG's 2018 RTP/SCS builds on and incorporates careful planning work at both the regional and local level. Past planning efforts by TCAG and local member agencies are on track toward regional sustainability and strive to address the region's common planning challenges. Land use changes modeled as part of the preferred scenario were developed in close coordination with TCAG member agency planning staff and build on local plan updated since the 2014 RTP/SCS was adopted, just as transportation projects were developed in close coordination with Caltrans, local public works departments, and transit providers.

The preferred scenario emerging from this development process and selected by the TCAG Governing Board is the "Blueprint" scenario. This scenario while updated and distinct, continues the strategy and vision of the adopted 2014 plan, updating it to reflect changes to land use and transportation projects in the interim. Whereas the 2014 plan incorporated a new Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) Plan and Regional Growth Forecast, the 2018 RTP/SCS utilizes the same planning assumptions with regard to housing needs as the prior adopted plan. While TCAG must update the RTP/SCS every four years, the RHNA planning process occurs every eight years, every other RTP/SCS cycle.

In planning for projected growth in the region, the 2018 RTP/SCS represents a voluntary strategy that retains local government land use autonomy. Neither SB 375 nor any other law requires local member agency General Plans or land use regulation to be consistent with the 2018 RTP/SCS. Implementation of the 2018 RTP/SCS is therefore dependent on local government policy decisions and voluntary local government action.

The 2018 RTP/SCS is also dependent on the availability of adequate funding. The plan allocates funding considered reasonably available to transportation investments over a long period.

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It includes only those projects that can be afforded within the real, expected fiscal constraints. Indeed, inclusion of projects in the 2018 RTP/SCS is a prerequisite to the use of federal funding for these projects.

In compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a programmatic environmental impact report (EIR) evaluates the environmental effects of the 2018 RTP/SCS. The EIR lays the groundwork for the environmental review of listed transportation projects and allows for the streamlined review of qualifying development projects within Transit Priority Areas as provided by SB 375.

Background

In 2005, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger created the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley. This is a partnership between state agency heads and Central Valley representatives to make recommendations to improve economic vitality and the quality of life of Valley residents.

In creating the Partnership Governor Schwarzenegger stated that the “Valley is home to the richest agricultural region in the world, a pathway for interstate commerce, and one of the fastest growing regions in our state. But this region also faces some tremendous challenges, including high levels of poverty and unemployment, some of the worst air quality in the nation, and limited access to healthcare.”

Also in 2005, the eight Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPA) of the San Joaquin Valley (SJV) jointly initiated the SJV Regional Blueprint Planning Process. The goal of the process was to address transportation and land use planning issues of the SJV cooperatively among the eight counties of the region.

AB 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act, was adopted by the Legislature in 2006. The state agency with overall responsibility for implementation of AB 32 is the California Air Resources Board (CARB). In November, 2017, CARB approved the most recent update to its Scoping Plan to implement AB 32. The Scoping Plan describes a strategy for the State to meet its AB 32 goal of reducing GHG emissions by 40 percent from 1990 levels by 2030 and substantially advance toward the goal of reducing GHG emissions by 80 percent from 1990 levels by 2050. Most of the GHG reductions from the transportation sector in the Scoping Plan come from deployment of new vehicle technologies and low carbon fuels. However, reduction in the growth of VMT is also identified as an important component. In setting the per capita GHG reduction targets from auto and light truck emissions by 2020 (5% for TCAG) and 2035 (10% for TCAG) from 2005 levels, CARB balances the reduction contribution needed from this component of the Scoping Plan with the ability of the regions to reasonably demonstrate reductions through their SCSs, which are an integral part of fiscally constrained Regional Transportation Plans.

In 2007, the member agencies of TCAG initiated the process of the Tulare County Regional Blueprint. This was motivated, in part, by the recognition that it would ultimately be up to the County and the cities to give the broad principles of the SJV Blueprint form and reality at the local level. The Tulare County Regional Blueprint process, supported by TCAG, was a vehicle of collaboration and public outreach to develop this local vision. This process included consultation with partner agencies at the regional (such as the SJV Air District), state, and federal level. The original Tulare County Regional Blueprint concept was adopted by the TCAG Governing Board in May of 2009. (See Appendix 12) This early planning effort demonstrates

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the existing, locally-based impetus for addressing transportation and land use planning issues at the regional scale.

As the result of a new California law, Senate Bill 375, the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 (SB 375), the Regional Transportation Plan for the first time in 2014 included a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) as part of the plan. With the addition of the Sustainable Communities Strategy, TCAG has integrated an analysis of population growth, land use, and housing need into the long-range transportation planning process. Thus, the combined Regional Transportation Plan & Sustainable Communities Strategy strives to address transportation planning holistically, understanding transportation patterns in the context of existing and possible future land use and housing configurations. Among other things, SB 375 requires the Regional Transportation Plan & Sustainable Communities Strategy to identify areas within the region sufficient to house the entire forecasted population of the region and to meet regional housing need for the 9.75-year period from 2014 to 2024, as allocated across the region's nine local jurisdictions. If feasible, the forecasted development pattern for the region, when integrated with the transportation network and policies, must reduce greenhouse gas emissions from passenger vehicles to achieve State-approved targets, as well as the region's own goals.

Goals And Benefits

The explicit goal of the SCS, as set forth in SB 375, is to develop a vision for future growth in the Tulare County region that will reduce per capita greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from automobiles and light trucks. However, the strategies that would implement this vision would also be part of the broader effort of the region to work together to address its many other issues and goals. These include healthier and more livable places and communities, lower costs for tax payers and households, improved access and mobility and more vital and responsive markets for housing and jobs.

At the same time that it meets the requirements of SB 375, the 2018 RTP/SCS builds on past efforts to move the region forward toward achievement of a broader range of goals related to the environment, mobility, social equity, health and safety, and economic vitality. The plan was shaped using a performance-based approach as required by federal transportation law that measures progress toward these plan goals. From the range of integrated land use and transportation planning options studied, the 2018 RTP/SCS designates a preferred future land use and transportation scenario that, applying quantifiable performance measures, best achieves the plan goals and meets the region's transportation needs. The preferred scenario represents the updated version of the scenario embraced by the adopted 2014 RTP/SCS.

CREATING THE SCS

Development of the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) involved the study of three separate land use and transportation scenarios, each analyzing different combinations of land use and transportation variables. The preferred scenario was selected from these scenario options on the basis of scenario performance as quantified by the adopted performance measures tied to the overall 2018 RTP/SCS goals. All scenarios applied the same region-wide population, employment and housing projections. Sub-regional distribution of forecast population growth varies by scenario consistent with allowable land uses, residential land use capacity and policy assumptions.

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Central to the SCS is a set of land use assumptions identifying the general location of uses, residential densities, and building intensities within the region. (See Government Code Section 65080(b)(2)(B)(i)). While there is no requirement of consistency between the 2018 RTP/SCS and local land use plans and while local jurisdictions explicitly retain land use authority under SB 375, the 2018 RTP/SCS is required to make land use assumptions and allocate forecast future growth consistent with those assumptions and the allocation of regional housing needs. Starting with land uses allowed by existing, adopted local General Plans, the land use assumptions, developed in close coordination with the planning staff of TCAG's member jurisdictions, selectively provide for intensification of residential and commercial land uses in urban areas proximate to existing transit. The intent of these changes is ultimately to shorten trip distances and reduce vehicle miles traveled by (1) directly addressing regional jobs/housing imbalance by providing more housing near areas of job growth, and (2) promoting more trips, both local and inter-city, by alternative transportation modes, especially public transit, walking and biking.

Allowable land uses in the preferred scenario are adequate to accommodate forecast population, household and employment growth and to meet identified housing need. For the preferred scenario, forecast population growth is distributed consistent with this pattern of allowable land uses. The development needed to satisfy future growth is focused within existing urbanized areas and avoids resource areas identified in the San Joaquin Valley Greenprint.

The transportation considerations of the SCS include all new programmed and planned projects, including limited new bus transit service. Additionally, continuing the approach of the 2014 plan, the SCS includes an enhanced transit strategy that creates a framework for future transit service expansion at such time as new revenue sources may become available. The enhanced transit strategy is described in greater detail in the Regional Long Range Transit Plan (Appendix 4). Recognizing the uncertain nature of future, new revenue sources, it takes a targeted, balanced and flexible approach to expanding transit service as needed in the future. Specifically, the enhanced transit strategy included in the preferred scenario commits to transit service expansion as new revenue sources become available (1) when and where transit enhancements are actually needed (defining quantitative triggers to determine when such need exists), and (2) while protecting existing funding for competing local demands, such as street and road maintenance. Because it is a general strategy, it does not change the list of fiscally constrained, programmed and planned transportation projects.

The strategies contained in the SCS for addressing the challenges of the Tulare County region are not completely new. The work started by TCAG member agencies since before 2005 has been the foundation for these ideas, and in subsequent RTPs and SCSs, TCAG has built on this foundation by coordinating with its local and regional partners on data collection and strategy development, and soliciting input from the public. One example of this is the 2016 Regional Active Transportation Plan (Appendix 3) which developed a region-wide needs analysis and project prioritization for active transportation projects.

The SCS can be thought of as including an enhanced land use forecast which addresses two major objectives of SB 375. These objectives are (1) to meet the greenhouse gas reduction targets for automobile and light truck emissions that the Air Resources Board has set for the region and (2) to promote better coordination of land use, transportation and housing planning at the local and regional level.

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Specifically, the SCS is required to:

- identify the general location of uses, residential densities, and building intensities within the region;
- identify areas within the region sufficient to house all the population, including all economic segments of the population, over the course of the planning period of the regional transportation plan;
- identify areas within the region sufficient to house an eight-year projection of the regional housing need for the region identified in the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA);
- identify a transportation network to service the transportation needs of the region;
- gather and consider best practically available information on resource areas and farmland in the region;
- set forth a forecasted development pattern for the region, which, when integrated with the transportation network, policies and measures, will reduce GHG emissions from automobiles and light trucks to achieve the GHG emissions reductions target approved by CARB;
- Provide consistency between the development pattern and the RHNA allocation; and
- Allow the RTP to achieve air quality conformity under Section 176 of the Clean Air Act.

The SCS does not regulate the use of land. It does not supersede the land use authority of cities and counties. Local agency land use plans and ordinances, including general plans, are not required to be consistent with the RTP/SCS. Govt. Code Section 65080(b)(2)(K).

Consequently, the realization of the benefits of the SCS depends upon the continued coordinated and cooperative action of the TCAG member agencies in land use decisions consistent with the SCS. It also depends on economic and social factors on a larger scale that local governments may influence, but cannot control.

Existing Land Use

Existing land uses and resource areas were integrated into the RTP/SCS in various forms compiled in geographic data that acted as constraints future growth during SCS scenario development. The SCS preferred scenario focuses new development in existing urbanized infill locations avoiding resource areas identified in the San Joaquin Valley Greenprint Project (see Appendix 13). The RTP/SCS accounts for existing land uses including the significant proportion of its land area that is in federally-owned or in agricultural uses (Table SCS-1). The RTP/SCS accounts for the land uses of the eight incorporated cities, the many thriving communities in the unincorporated areas, and the diverse rural regions (Figure SCS-1). Most of the State, Federal and Tribal lands make up the eastern half of the county, as depicted in Figure SCS-2.

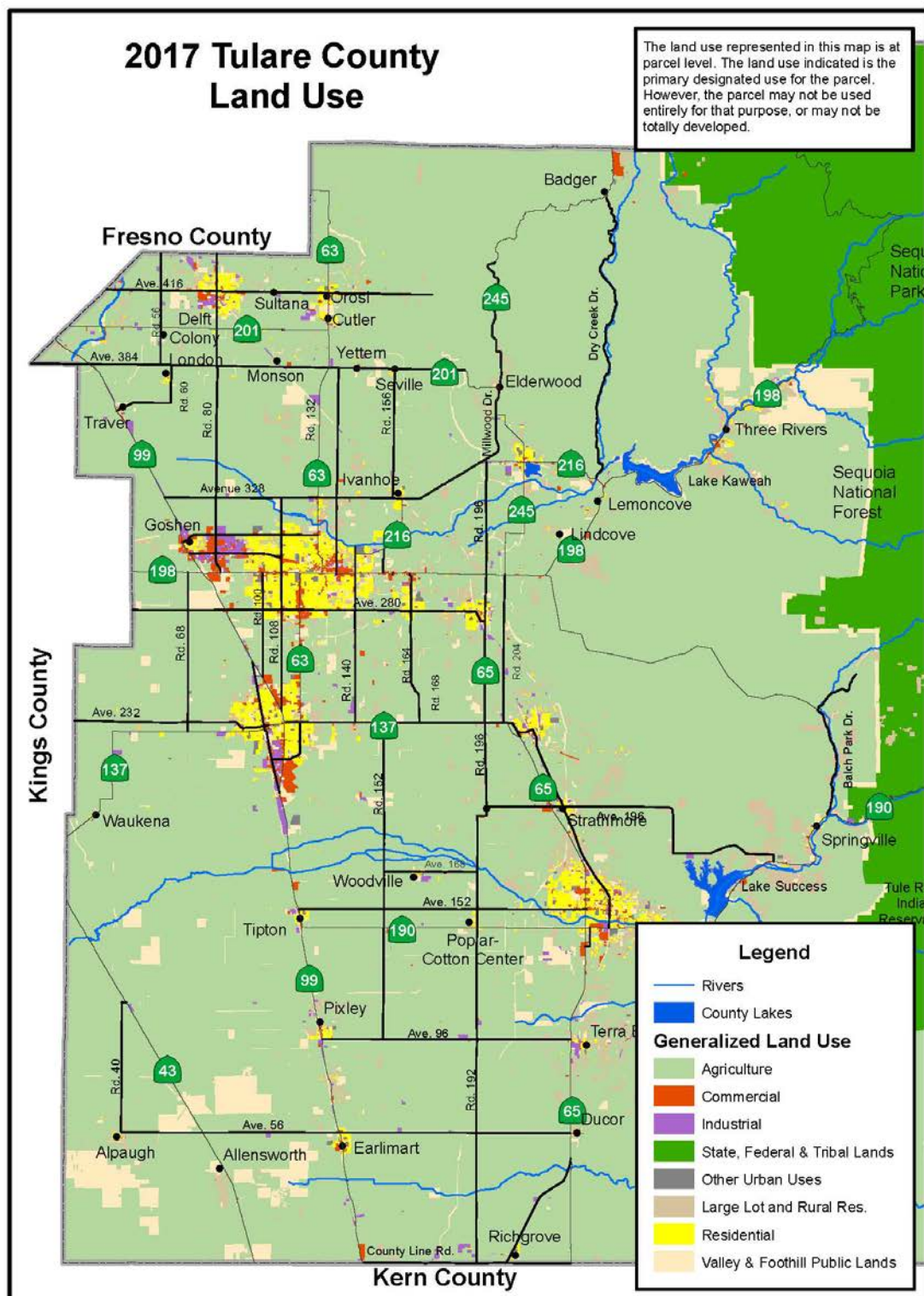
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Table SCS-1

Land Use- Tulare County, 2017	Parcels	Acres	Percentage
Agriculture	81,110	1,351,700	43.64
Commercial	7,556	10,813	0.35
Industrial	1,997	7,760	0.25
State, Federal & Tribal Lands	45,061	1,543,684	49.84
Other Urban Uses	671	3,727	0.12
Large Lot and Rural Res.	29,817	70,278	2.27
Residential	102,131	24,136	0.78
Valley & Foothill Public Lands	13,068	85,394	2.76
Total	281,411	3,097,492	

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Figure SCS-1



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Farmland

The Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) provides a comprehensive survey of important farmlands for the region. The latest year for which the survey is available is 2016; and this data was the best practically available data at the time of SCS preparation.

Important Farmland categories are defined as follows:

- Prime Farmland: Farmland with the best combination of physical and chemical features able to sustain long term agricultural production. This land has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields.
- Farmland of Statewide Importance: Farmland similar to Prime Farmland but with minor shortcomings, such as greater slopes or less ability to store soil moisture.
- Unique Farmland: Farmland of lesser quality soils used for the production of the state's leading agricultural crops. This land is usually irrigated, but may include non-irrigated orchards or vineyards as found in some climatic zones in California.

Resource Areas

Development of the RTP/SCS involved compilation and consideration of information regarding open space, habitat, farmland and other resource areas. Resource maps produced in March, 2013 as part of the SJV Greenprint provide up to date location information on critical habitats, vernal pools, and other resources on the regional scale. These resource areas were compiled as GIS layers that acted as constraints to development of land in the SCS preferred scenario. This data and was the best practically available data on these resource areas at the time of SCS preparation.

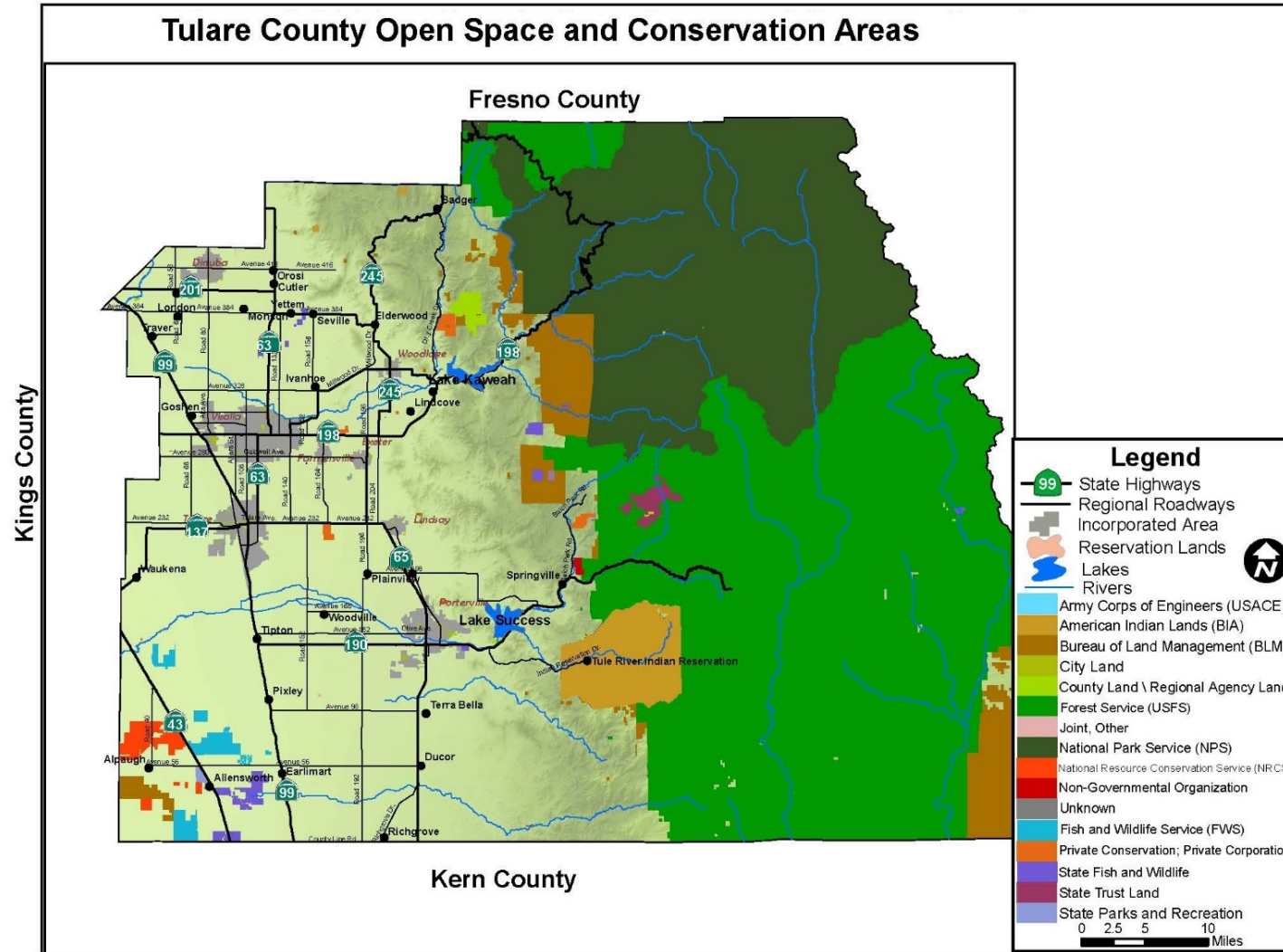
Open Space

The open space and conservation areas considered in SCS development comprise the Protected Areas Database developed by the U.S. Geological Service (PAD-US)¹ and include lands held in ownership for permanent or long-term open space use. These include national parks and forests, public lands, State and local parks and reserves, lands held by non-profit organizations, conservation easements and many other areas. The Protected Areas Database was developed with aggregated datasets from the Bureau of Land Management, the GreenInfo Network and The Nature Conservancy. Other federal, state, local, non-governmental organizations and land trusts provided data that was more limited in scope. These open space and conservation areas were compiled as GIS layers that acted as constraints to development of land in the SCS preferred scenario.

¹ <https://gapanalysis.usgs.gov/padus>, accessed on 3/27/2018

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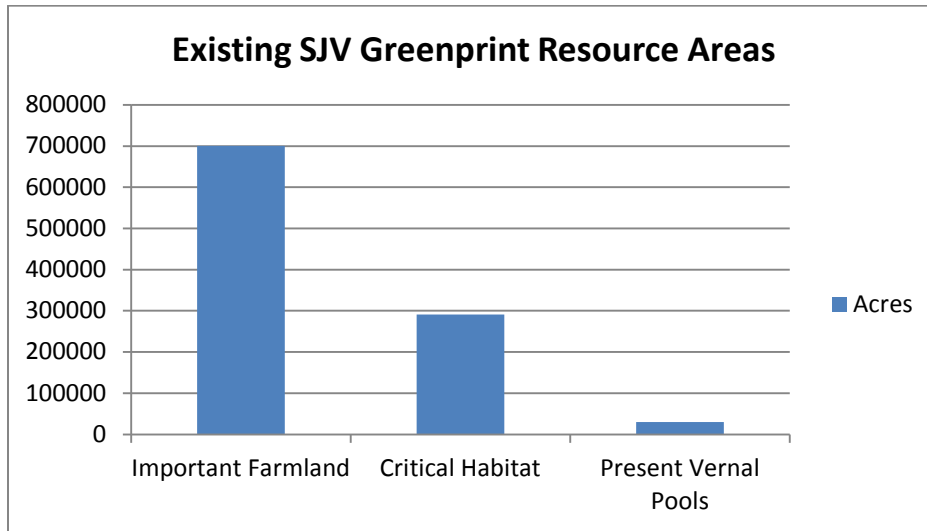
Figure SCS-2



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Existing FMMP areas and SJV Greenprint resource areas are indicated below (Figure SCS-3) in terms of important farmland and critical habitat acres with 700,181 existing acres of important farmland, 291,000 acres of existing critical habitat, and 29,929 acres of present undisturbed vernal pools.

Figure SCS-3



Important farmland under SB375 is considered prime farmland, unique farmland, and farmland of statewide importance. Critical habitat and vernal pool data was obtained from the San Joaquin Valley Greenprint, a regional resource that can inform land use decisions and project planning efforts, providing context for stakeholders and decision makers when making land use planning decisions (Appendix 13). The SJV Greenprint collects and presents information about the Valley’s resources through existing maps, resources, policies, and regulations, such as USFWS (US Fish and Wildlife Services), General Plans, Water Management Plans, Agricultural Preservation Programs, and develops new data sources where needed. Maps cover Agricultural, Biodiversity, Water, and Energy and include over 100 maps available in [the SJV Greenprint Mapping and Data Portal](http://sjvmaps.ice.ucdavis.edu).²

The species considered in the Greenprint analysis include the following that are not necessarily located in Tulare County: CA Condor, CA Gnatcatcher, Least Bells Vireo, SW Willow Flycatcher, Western Snowy Plover, Little Kern Golden Trou, Delta Smelt, Chinook (CVSR), Steelhead (CCV) Steelhead (SC), Steelhead (SCCC), Steelhead (CCC), Alameda Whipsnake, Arroyo Toad, CA Redlegged Frog, CA Tiger Salamander, Desert Tortoise, Desert Tortoise Mojave, Mountain Yellowlegged Frog, Vernal Pool Fair Shrimp, Vernal Pool Tadpole Shrimp, Buena Vista Lake Shrew, Fresno Kangaroo Rat, San Bernardino Kangaroo Rat, Sierra Nevada Bighorn Sheep, Colusa Grass, Contra Costa Goldfields, Fleshy Owls Clover, Greene’s Tuctoria, Hairy Orcutt Grass, Hoover’s Spurge, Keck’s Checkermallow, Large Flowered Fiddleneck, Monterey Spineflower, San Joaquin Orcutt Grass, and Yadon’s Piperia.

² <http://sjvmaps.ice.ucdavis.edu>

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Growth Forecast

A vital input to the SCS development process was an updated forecast of population, housing and jobs. TCAG developed a new forecast for the 2018 RTP/SCS based on the most comprehensive and up-to-date regional forecasts and projections available. The growth forecast for this RTP/SCS incorporates substantial data available from the 2010 census and new projections published by the California Department of Finance, Demographic Research Office (DOF) in 2017. The growth forecast, based on the DOF projection, is much more restrained than in the previous RTP. The new growth forecast is summarized in Table SCS-2 below:

**Table SCS-2
Demographic Forecast**

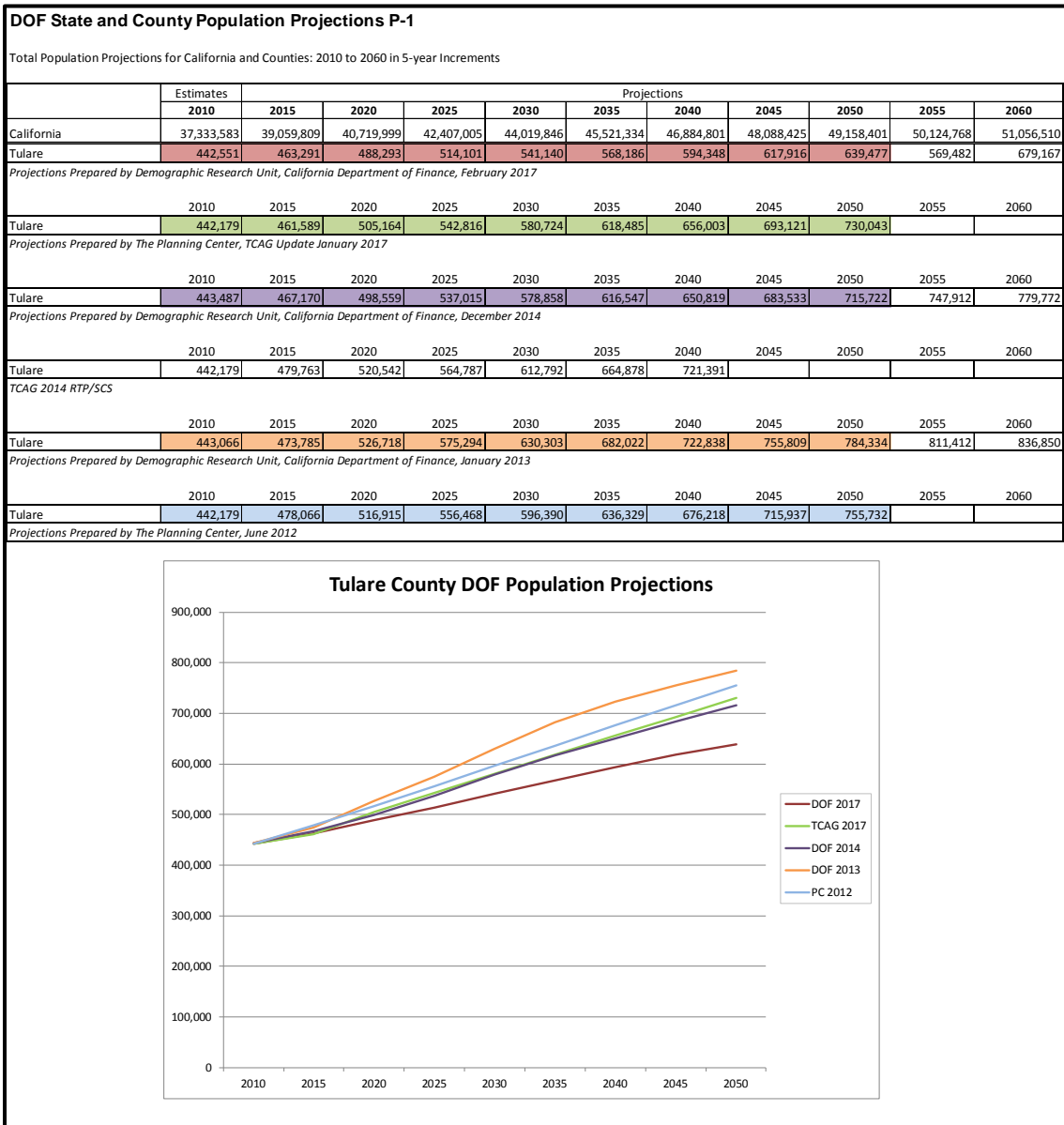
Year	Population	Housing Units	Jobs
2017	471,842	148,898	176,289
2020	488,293	153,390	181,560
2025	514,101	160,877	190,344
2030	541,140	168,364	199,128
2035	568,186	175,851	207,912
2042	604,969	186,332	220,210

The new 2017 DOF population projection for the year 2040 (594,348) is significantly lower than that of the 2013 DOF projection for the year 2040 (722,838) used for the 2014 RTP/SCS, a difference of 128,490 persons. This is due to lower birthrates consistent with the state as a whole and the fact that Tulare County is still experiencing negative net migration, (-150 persons in 2015) as opposed to the peak (+4,473 persons in 2004), as a result of the Great Recession. Figure SCS -4 shows a comparison of recent population projections for the Tulare County Region.

It is important to note that a significantly lower population projection for the year 2040 may make it more difficult to achieve GHG reduction targets and harder to implement higher density and mass transportation solutions. Notwithstanding, the 2018 RTP/SCS represent an equivalent effort in GHG per capita reductions as the 2014 RTP/SCS, considering updated demographics assumptions and updated modeling tools.

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Figure SCS-4



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Land Use Scenarios

Development of the SCS involved the study of distinct land use scenarios, each analyzing different combinations of land use and transportation variables. The preferred scenario was selected from these scenario options on the basis of stakeholder input and scenario performance measures tied to the overall RTP/SCS goals. (See Appendix 8 through 11). All scenarios applied the same region-wide population, employment and housing projections. Transportation and air quality emissions methodologies for scenario comparisons are described in the SCS Technical Methodology Paper (Appendix 43). Sub-regional allocation of forecast population growth varies by scenario consistent with allowable land uses, residential land use capacity and policy assumptions as follows:

Blueprint. The Blueprint scenario is based on the application of the development principles adopted as part of the 2009 Tulare County Regional Blueprint. Primary among these principles is an objective of 25% higher overall density for new development compared to the Trend scenario and an increased emphasis on transit and active transportation modes. A copy of the Tulare County Regional Blueprint is attached for reference. (Appendix 12)

Trend. The Trend scenario shows a land use forecast based on designations from existing local agency general plans and linear trends in growth on a sub-regional basis. This means that the projected pattern of development will be generally consistent with the development pattern seen currently. It should be noted, however, that local general plans include policies that will move the Trend scenario to some extent away from a pure extrapolation of current development types and densities. This is especially true of the most recently updated plans (City of Porterville, 2007; County of Tulare, 2012; City of Tulare, 2014; City of Visalia, 2014).

Blueprint Plus. The Blueprint Plus scenario was requested by the RTP Roundtable in 2013 to explore the ramifications of a change in future development patterns more pronounced than that envisioned by the Regional Blueprint. Blueprint Plus has an objective of overall density of new development 5% higher than Blueprint (30% higher than Trend) and a maximum feasible emphasis on transit and active transportation modes.

PREFERRED SCENARIO: BLUEPRINT

Future Land Use

At the foundation of the SCS is a land use pattern identifying the general location of uses, residential densities, and building intensities within the region (Figure SCS-5, Table SCS-4). The general distribution of land uses, that is, residential, commercial, industrial, etc., is based on the existing, adopted general plans of Tulare County and the eight cities. The horizon year of the RTP/SCS, 2042, is beyond the horizon year of all the currently adopted general plans. The current general plans have horizon years of 2030 or sooner. The principles of the preferred (Blueprint) scenario guided the allocation of future development sufficient to accommodate the forecasted growth in population, households and employment through 2042. (See Table SCS-3) Most notable of these principles is an increase in densities county-wide by 25% over the status quo densities.

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Table SCS-3

Forecast 2042			
Jurisdiction	Population	Housing Units	Employment
Dinuba	26,392	6,929	8,883
Exeter	14,500	4,848	3,463
Farmersville	14,931	3,690	2,350
Lindsay	17,281	4,500	4,607
Porterville	82,354	24,420	23,241
Tulare	92,433	28,231	27,023
Visalia	174,346	59,643	73,567
Woodlake	10,585	2,885	1,147
Unincorporated Tulare County	172,147	51,186	75,930
Tulare County (Total)	604,969	186,332	220,210

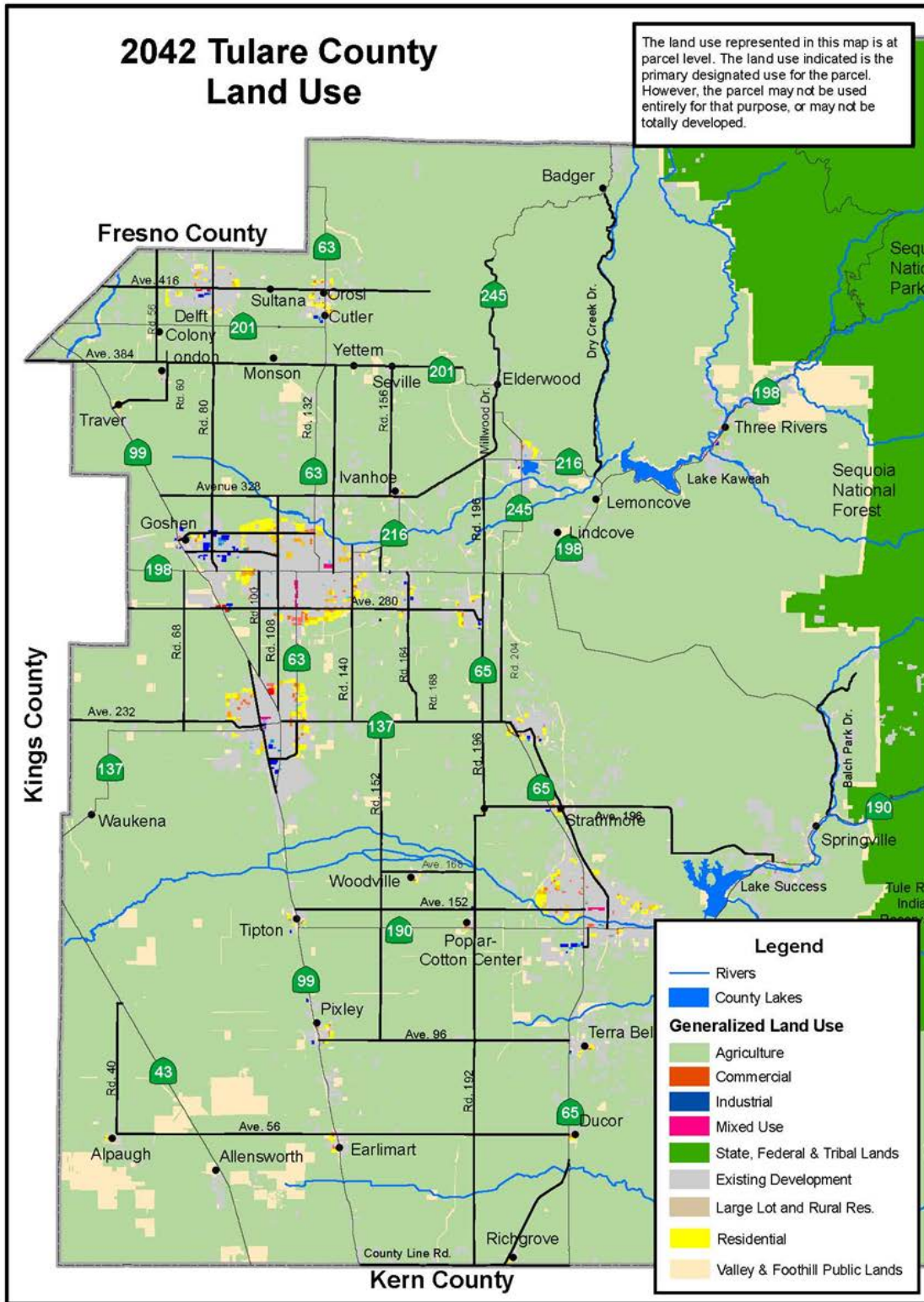
The theme of the preferred scenario continues to be that moderately higher density, applied thoughtfully as an element of urban design and development, will improve regional jobs-housing fit. This, in turn, will leverage the ability of local agencies to implement projects that achieve better air quality and improved mobility options.

Table SCS-4

Land Use- Tulare County, 2042	Acres	Percentage
Agriculture	1,347,384	43.45
Commercial	11,900	0.38
Industrial	8,480	0.27
State, Federal & Tribal Lands	1,543,684	49.78
Other Urban Uses	3,727	0.12
Large Lot and Rural Res.	70,759	2.28
Residential	30,723	0.99
Valley & Foothill Public Lands	84,415	2.72
Total	3,101,073	

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Figure SCS-5



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A comparison of FMMP Important Farmland and SJV Greenprint resource areas consumed for each SCS land use scenario is indicated below in (Figure SCS-6) for Important Farmland and (Figure SCS-7) for Critical Habitat areas. No existing areas of present undisturbed vernal pools were harmed as a result of developing this SCS.

Figure SCS-6
Important Farmland Consumed

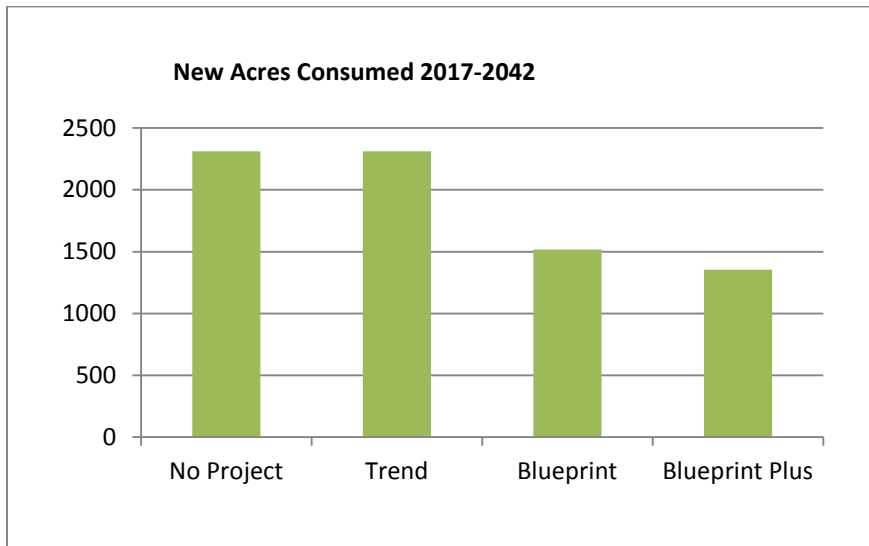
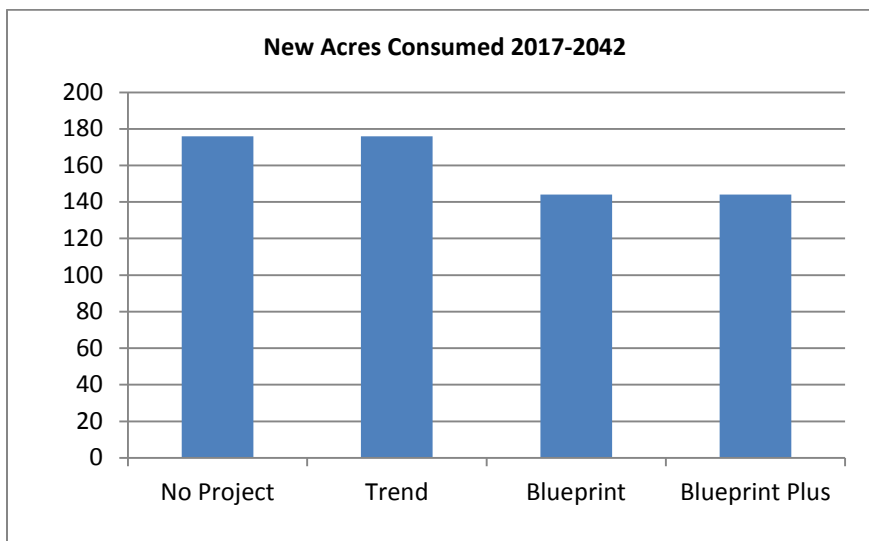


Figure SCS-7
Critical Habitat Consumed



Housing Need

In the modeling of the 2018 RTP/SCS, sufficient land use capacity was allocated to accommodate all growth in population, household and employment that has been forecast for the county. The Blueprint growth scenario for 2042 was converted to traffic model input data and

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factored in accordance with the control totals summarized in Table SCS-5 to create model input data for other scenario years as needed for SB 375 and air quality analysis. The SCS (Blueprint Scenario) identifies areas within the region sufficient to house all the population, including all economic segments of the population, through 2042.

SB 375 requires the SCS to "identify areas within the region sufficient to house an eight-year projection of the regional housing need for the region". The regional housing need projection is determined by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). Coordinating the requirements of SB 375 also means that the currently applicable projection period for the San Joaquin Valley counties has been adjusted to nine years and nine months. The RTP/SCS therefore addresses this projection period.

The SCS preferred scenario meets this requirement and supplies enough residential housing capacity by jurisdiction to meet the 9.75-year housing need of 26,910 units projected for the 1/1/2014 to 9/30/2023 period for the TCAG region by HCD. Available housing capacity in each TCAG member jurisdiction in the SCS preferred scenario is adequate to accommodate each jurisdiction's respective share of housing need as allocated by TCAG's adopted RHNA methodology. Available residential capacity in each jurisdiction is thus sufficient to accommodate at minimum that jurisdiction's share of the regional housing need and TCAG's RHNA allocation plan allocates housing units within the region consistent with the development pattern of the SCS.

Table SCS-5 shows the correspondence between modeled land use capacity for the preferred scenario and identified housing need by jurisdiction, including very low- and low-income categories. The traffic model inputs, being based on the preferred scenario, show a greater proportion of "multi-family" development. This represents a range of building types with an average density of 14 units per acre. Because the SCS is consistent with the allocation of housing units under the RHNA plan, the SCS also meets the State housing goals articulated in State housing law.

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**Table SCS-5
RHNA Housing Need vs. Land Use Capacity – Preferred Scenario**

Jurisdiction	Land Use Capacity		RHNA Housing Need		Land Use Capacity minus RHNA Housing Need	
	Low + Very Low	Total	Low + Very Low	Total	Low + Very Low	Total
Dinuba	794	1,181	374	965	420	216
Exeter	634	1,118	268	625	366	493
Farmersville	210	508	139	466	71	42
Lindsay	473	950	160	590	313	360
Porterville	2,732	5,280	1,199	3,196	1,533	2,084
Tulare	2,688	6,849	1,529	3,594	1,159	3,255
Visalia	5,958	12,686	4,547	10,021	1,411	2,665
Woodlake	268	585	112	372	156	213
Unincorporated	3,222	8,668	2,542	7,081	680	1,587
County Total	16,980	37,827	10,870	26,910	6,110	10,917

Transportation Network and Strategies

The SCS is required to “identify a transportation network to service the transportation needs of the region.” Consistent with federal transportation planning law, the preferred scenario models the regional transportation network, including all of the fiscally constrained programmed and planned projects listed and addressed in detail in the Action Element (Chapter B). As described in the Action Element, the 2018 RTP/SCS takes a performance-based approach to modeling and understanding diverse types of transportation investments. The transportation system and investments in the 2018 RTP/SCS include:

- Maintenance and rehabilitation of existing and future facilities;
- Continued support of the Regional Vanpool program;
- Operation and strategic expansion of public transit including:
 - Bus Rapid Transit Corridor determination & funding for ROW preservation
 - Expansion of Community College Transit Program
 - Continued transit expansion of over \$1.7 million a year with Measure R ;
- Strategic road and highway expansion and operational improvements that focus on alleviating major bottlenecks and congestion points:
 - Includes requirements to prepare Corridor plans to prioritize and rank projects within key congestion related corridors;
- Bicycle and pedestrian retrofits and new facilities:
 - Includes implementation of Visalia Waterways and Trails Plan
 - Investment of over \$70 million for bicycle/pedestrian projects over twenty years ; and

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- Programs and planning (e.g. programs and transportation system management strategies, including technology and demand management programs), which allow for greater optimization of existing transportation infrastructure.

Regional programs exist that were put in place prior to SB 375 requirements taking effect which set the Tulare County region on a course to reduce emissions from car and light truck travel and better coordinate transportation, land use and housing planning. Most notable of these regional programs is Measure R. Since 2006, the increase of transit service and construction of pedestrian/bike paths has significantly increased due to Measure R.

The specific transportation projects and improvements included in the RTP/SCS are listed in detail in the Action Element (Chapter B). The transportation system and investments in the 2018 RTP/SCS have been determined to meet the standards for emissions reduction in conformance with the federal Clean Air Act. (See Appendix 41)

Performance Results

To evaluate alternative scenarios and guide selection of the preferred RTP/SCS scenario, TCAG applied performance measures related to goal areas proposed in the Policy Element (Chapter 2). These performance measures allowed quantification, comparison and evaluation of the effectiveness of the alternative land use and transportation scenario candidates in achieving the plan goals.

The preferred RTP/SCS scenario ultimately selected by the TCAG Governing Board based on this information and public input best achieves the plan goals, performing well against every performance measure. The RTP/SCS preferred scenario also did better across virtually all performance measures and goal areas than the No Project scenario, which represents the forecast conditions that would apply if the RTP/SCS were not adopted.

Table SCS-6 lists performance results for the 2018 RTP/SCS.

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**Table SCS-6
RTP/SCS Performance Results**

Performance Measure	Units	Preferred Scenario - Blueprint	Alternative Scenario - Trend	Alternative Scenario - Blueprint Plus	Alternative Scenario - No Project
Per Capita Greenhouse Gas Reduction* * All scenarios meet -5% (2020) and -10% (2035) ARB Targets	Percentage Change CO2 Emissions (Auto & Light Truck) from 2005	2020: -13.1% 2035: -17.9% 2042: -18.6%	2020: -12.3% 2035: -16.0% 2042: -16.5%	2020: -13.3% 2035: -18.2% 2042: -18.9%	2020: -12.1% 2035: -16.1% 2042: -17.0%
Increased Urban Residential Density (25%)	2042 Gross Housing Units per Acre of New Development	6.1	4.9	6.4	4.9
Reduced Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT)	2042 VMT per Weekday, All Vehicles and Purposes (x1000)	12,699	12,848	12,657	12,758
Reduced Criteria Air Emissions** ** All Scenarios Pass Conformity	2042 NOx Tons/Weekday	2.8917	2.9256	2.8821	2.9051
	2042 ROG Tons/Weekday	0.9866	0.9982	0.9834	0.9911
	2042 PM10 Tons/Weekday	0.7457	0.7544	0.7432	0.7492
	2042 PM2.5 Tons/Weekday	0.3030	0.3066	0.3020	0.3045
Reduced Commute Times	2042 Average Trip Time (Minutes)	16.31	16.26	16.32	16.45
Proximity of Housing to Jobs	2042 Average Trip Length (Miles)	11.06	11.00	11.05	10.91

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Table SCS-6 (continued)

Performance Measure (Continued)	Units	Preferred Scenario - Blueprint	Alternative Scenario - Trend	Alternative Scenario - Blueprint Plus	Alternative Scenario - No Project
Improved Reliability of the Road System	2042 Weekday Congested VMT (All Vehicle Classes, x1000)	2,001	2,043	1,971	3,796
Increased Use of Active Transportation Modes	2042 Mode Share Bike/Ped. (Percentage of All Trips)	1.15/6.10	1.13/5.68	1.15/6.20	1.12/5.57
Expanded Use of Transit	2042 Transit Ridership	25,345	21,384	25,410	16,042
Decreased Consumption of Land	Acres Consumed 2015-2042	8,884	10,525	8,487	10,525
Decreased Consumption of Important Farmland	Acres of Important Farmland Consumed Outside SOI 2015-2042	1,518	2,311	1,353	2,311
Reduced Impact on Environmental Resources (SJ Valley Green Print)	Acres of Critical Habitat Area Consumed for New Urban Growth 2015-2042	144	176	144	176
Reduced Impact on Environmental Resources (SJ Valley Green Print)	Acres of Present Vernal Pools Area Consumed for New Urban Growth 2015-2042	0	0	0	0

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CEQA INCENTIVE

SB 375 has a policy promoting a priority on infill, enhanced by SB 226 and SB 743, allowing for CEQA streamlining. SB 226 streamlined environmental review for eligible infill projects under CEQA by broadening the definition of an infill project. Qualifying infill projects can avoid environmental review of impacts that were addressed in prior, program-level analysis or where local development standards already mitigate them. Project proponents can also analyze environmental impacts specific to the project through a more streamlined CEQA process. SB 743 paves the way to make VMT the primary measurement for CEQA review in transportation analysis, rather than LOS, with anticipated statewide implementation to occur on January 1st, 2020. Measuring VMT rather than LOS opens the door to a greater level of infill, as under current LOS CEQA measurements, a large development such a high density mixed use development would have to mitigate auto delays from their projects in the surrounding areas. Using VMT measurements, the same project may pass CEQA transportation impacts because it may reduce VMT, while still increasing auto delay.

Residential/Mixed-use Projects

Residential and mixed-use projects that are consistent with the SCS qualify for streamlined CEQA review if at least 75 percent of the total building square footage consists of residential use (or a project that is a TPP). If a project meets these requirements and is consistent with the use designation, density, building intensity and applicable policy of the SCS, any environmental review conducted will not be required to discuss growth inducing impacts; any project specific or cumulative impacts from cars and light-duty truck trips generated by the project on climate change or the regional transportation network; or a reduced density alternative addressing the effects of vehicle trips generated by the project.

Transit Priority Projects (TPP)

A Transit Priority Project (TPP) is eligible for CEQA streamlining if it is consistent with the SCS; contains at least 50 percent residential use; is proposed to be developed at a minimum 20 dwelling units per acre; and is located within ½ mile of a major transit stop or high quality transit corridor that is included in the RTP; this SCS defines such areas near transit as “Transit Priority Areas (TPAs). TPAs are mapped in Figures SCS-8 to SCS-11.

Figure SCS-10 represents existing Transit Priority Areas in the Visalia-Tulare Urban Area, with an existing high-quality transit corridor on Mooney Blvd with frequent headways, showing room for development and infill along its path. Figure SCS-8 displays existing Transit Priority Areas on a county-wide level, with the high-quality transit corridor of Mooney Blvd, along with major transit centers in the Tulare, Porterville, and Dinuba. Figure SCS-9 shows future Transit Priority Areas, on a county wide scale, with a future high-quality transit corridor extended from Visalia to Tulare with frequent headways, as well as the potential Cross Valley Corridor stops, a plan encompassing a beginning stage of BRT eventually leading to rail transit, using historically preserved right of way, and major future transit centers. Figure SCS-11 represents the future Transit Priority area of the extended Mooney transit corridor on a micro level, so show potential infill and development possibilities.

. If a project meets these criteria, it may be analyzed under a new environmental document created by SB 375, called the Sustainable Communities Environmental Assessment (SCEA), or through an EIR for which the content requirements have been reduced. Alternatively, a TPP can be considered a Sustainable Communities Project (SCP) and be eligible

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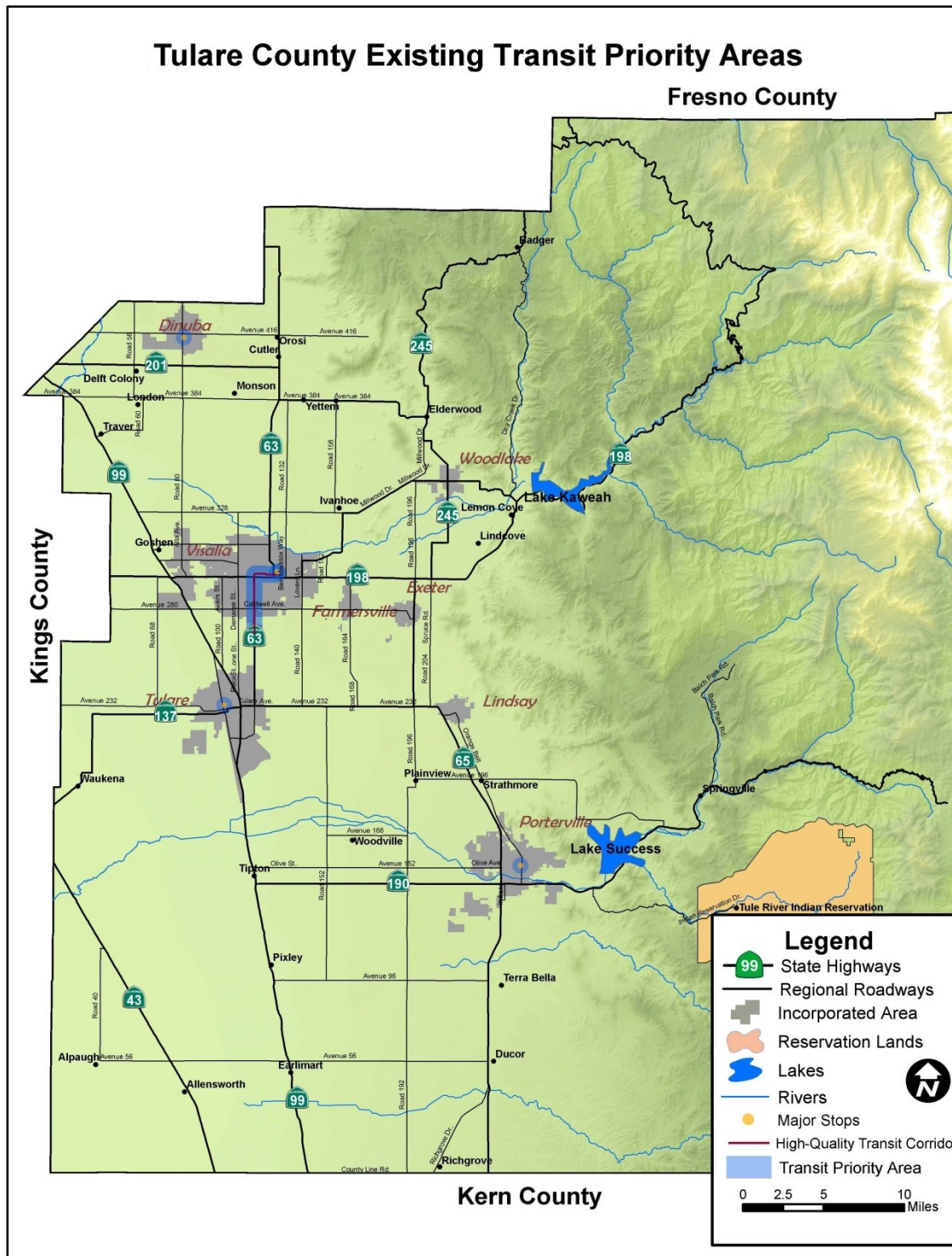
for a full CEQA exemption if it further meets the additional requirements beyond the base criteria.

The land use input for the SCS was created with the use of Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ) and housing unit and job numbers. The housing unit and job numbers used in the SCS do not represent detailed, parcel-level land use designations such as those found within a local jurisdiction's general plan, but rather represent the aggregation of multiple land uses, densities and intensities that are expected to preponderate or average out within a neighborhood-sized area by 2035. The lead agency, not TCAG, will be responsible for making the determination of consistency for CEQA streamlining purposes, pursuant to the provisions of SB 375, for any given proposed project. See Govt. Code § 65080(b)(2). One way of determining consistency is if a proposed residential/mixed use or TPP conforms with the housing unit and job numbers designated for a TAZ.

It is important to note that the housing unit and job numbers are a potential ultimate average for the TAZ—and are not an absolute project-specific requirement that must be met in order to determine consistency with the SCS. In other words, the SCS was not developed with the intent that each project to be located within any given TAZ or must exactly equal the density and relative use that are indicated by the SCS housing unit and job numbers in order for the project to be found consistent with the SCS's density, building intensity and applicable policies. Instead, any given project, having satisfied all of the statutory requirements of either a residential/mixed-use project or TPP as described above, may be deemed by the lead agency to be consistent with the SCS so long as the project does not prevent achieving the estimated average uses, densities and building intensities indicated by the housing unit and job numbers within the TAZ, assuming that the TAZ will be built-out under reasonable local planning and zoning assumptions.

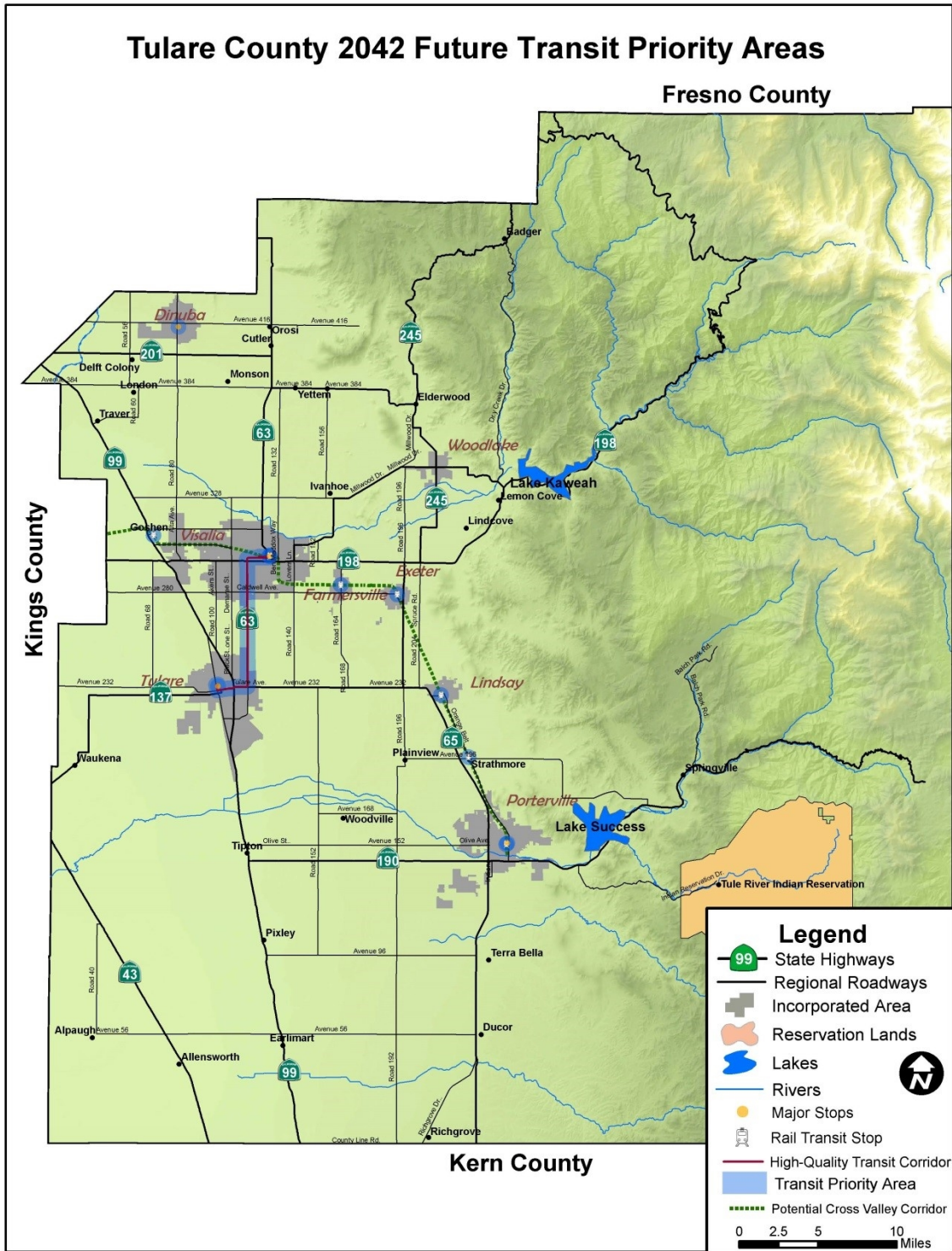
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES STRATEGY

Figure SCS-8



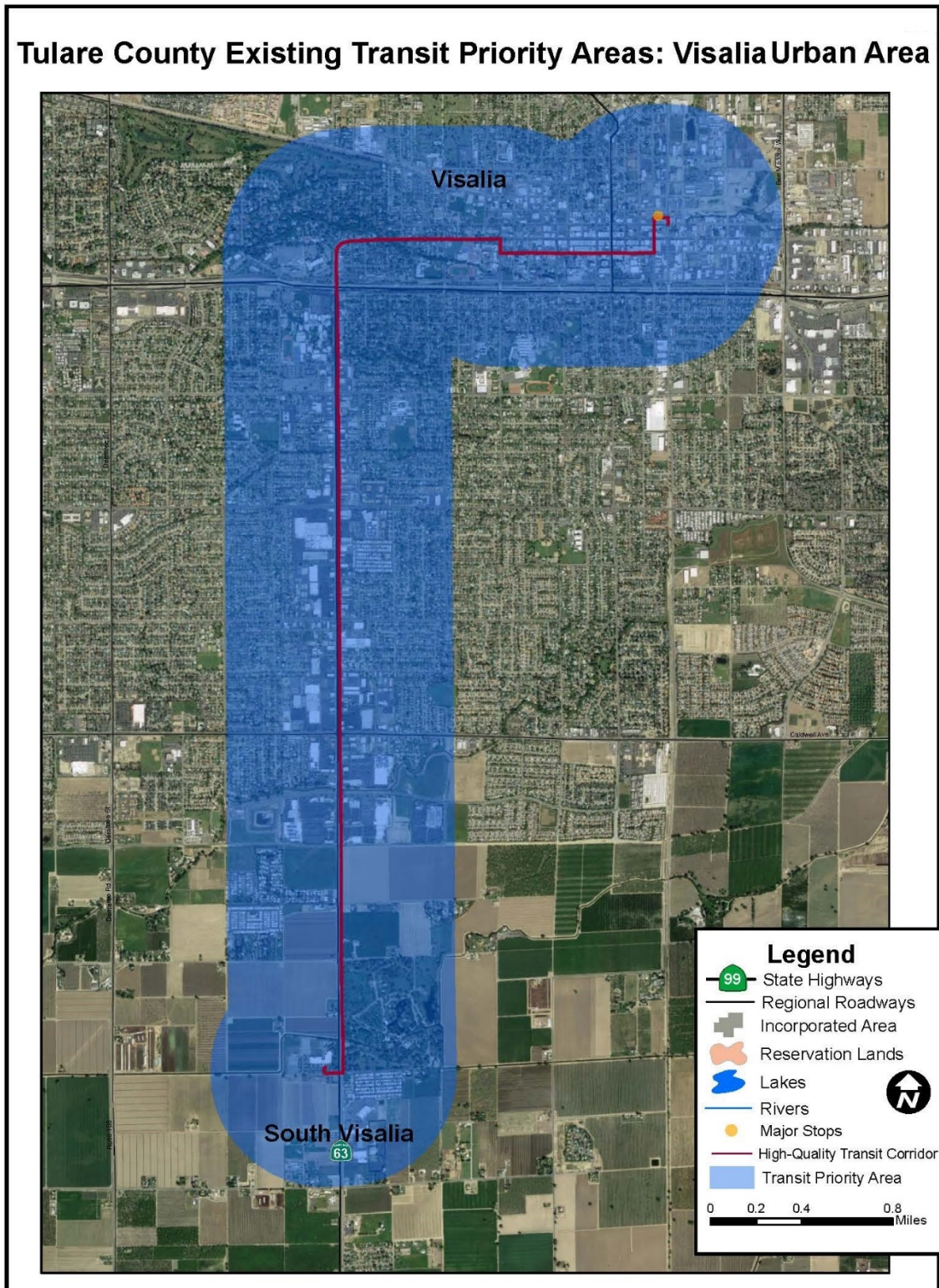
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES STRATEGY

Figure SCS-9



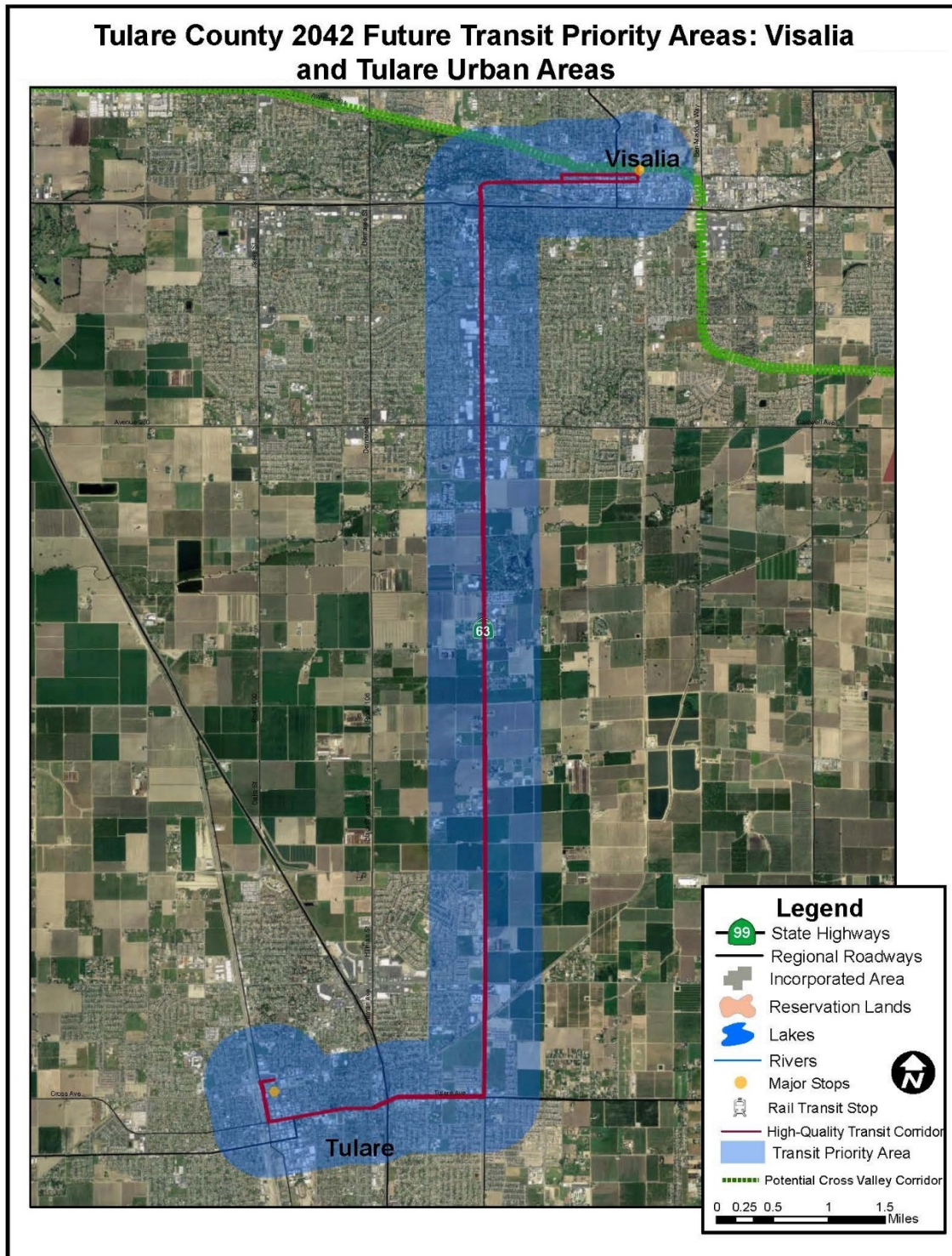
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES STRATEGY

Figure SCS-10



SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES STRATEGY

Figure SCS-11



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RTP/SCS NEXT STEPS

The 2018 RTP/SCS is first and foremost a transportation plan. However, the transportation network in the RTP/SCS and the growth patterns envisioned in the preferred scenario must complement each other. Integration of transportation and land use is essential for improved mobility and access to transportation options, as well as meeting the region's GHG reduction target.

SB 375 calls for the integration of land use policies with transportation investments, and asks that Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) identify, quantify to the extent possible, and highlight these co-benefits throughout the processes. To achieve the goals of the RTP/SCS, public agencies at all levels of government will need to implement a wide range of strategies that focus on four key areas:

- A Land Use growth pattern that accommodates the region's future employment and housing needs, and protects sensitive habitat and natural resource areas;
- A Transportation Network that consists of public transit, highways, local streets, bikeways and walkways;
- Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures that reduce peak-period demand on the transportation network; and
- Transportation System Management (TSM) measures that maximize the efficiency of the transportation network.

EVALUATION AND REVISION

TCAG will update its RTP/SCS again in 2022, in accordance with the currently applicable federal and state laws. As part of the next update, TCAG will be reviewing its progress in implementing the strategies identified in this plan. In addition, in March 2018, CARB revised TCAG's GHG emission reduction targets to -13% in 2020 and -16% in 2035; the 2022 RTP/SCS would be developed to meet these targets. ..

TCAG will also track its progress in implementing its RTP/SCS strategies in conjunction with the preparation and adoption of its Overall Work Program (OWP) and Annual Budget. The OWP / Budget process provides an opportunity for TCAG to allocate staff resources and funding to implement short-term and mid-term strategies contained within the RTP/SCS. In addition, TCAG will periodically monitor the progress being made by the State, local jurisdictions, and other agencies and entities in implementing the strategies identified in this plan.

MONITORING PROGRESS

While SB 375 places a great deal of attention on meeting GHG emission reduction targets, TCAG has also established other important goals in its RTP/SCS that will lead to overall improvement in the quality of life in the region. It will be important for TCAG to continue to improve its performance monitoring programs, to track how well the region is doing in terms of overall progress toward meeting these goals. The characteristics of the preferred scenario help to inform the planning assumptions, needs analysis and performance measures of the Action Element.