

How Do the Indicators Relate to the Sustainable Communities Strategy?

1. Job Density

The Sustainable Communities Strategy forecasts the location of both future housing and future jobs. The scenarios show a substantial increase in the proximity of jobs to housing. Housing growth in job-rich areas increases accessibility, benefitting both the economy and the environment.

2. Concentrations of Poverty

A primary objective of the Sustainable Communities Strategy is to ensure housing affordability and supply for Bay Area residents of income levels, while reducing concentrations of poverty and maximizing livability. ABAG and MTC are currently working to reduce concentrations of poverty by aligning the SCS with the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). An awareness of those areas in the region in which concentrations of poverty currently exist will inform regional agencies in decisions regarding the allocation of housing of various levels of affordability, and will indicate which communities may need extra support to maximize livability.

3. Housing Tenure

In areas that are primarily rental housing, changes in the real estate market can significantly impact residents and increase evictions and population displacement. However, displacement can also result from a lack of new development and housing opportunities in an attractive neighborhood with many of the amenities associated with sustainable development: jobs, transit, parks, and good schools. High rental percentages are therefore not a negative indicator, but may indicate the need for increased efforts to engage residents and improve neighborhood stability.

4. Housing Density

The number of housing units per acre in the region is a measurement of residential density. A key SCS goal is to focus growth in already urbanized areas, and to encourage sustainable communities by avoiding development outside of the existing urban footprint. This development pattern represents a more efficient use of land by utilizing existing infrastructure, and can also achieve other SCS goals: the reduction of housing and transportation costs for residents and increasing access to resources and amenities.

5. New deed-restricted affordable housing units

Ensuring housing affordability and supply for individuals of all income levels is a primary goal of the Sustainable Communities Strategy, and deed restrictions are an indicator of a more stable supply of affordable homes. Lack of affordable housing can result in either less-desirable living situations such as over-crowding, or can push people to find less expensive housing in outlying areas further from their places of employment. The resulting commutes counter the sustainability goals of the SCS, and limit workers' abilities to contribute to and benefit from diverse 'Complete Communities.' This indicator is also related to housing tenure and concentrations of poverty.

6. Race

Communities of color have faced disproportionate burdens related to poverty and air quality which should be addressed through the SCS. Regional agencies use US Census data regarding population concentration by race in the process of developing the SCS to analyze whether the benefits and burdens of new development and transit are equitably distributed or privilege one demographic group over another. An understanding of current population concentrations by race is also necessary to plan for and monitor an SCS that supports equal access to opportunity in the region.

7. School Quality

Quality childhood education is one of the most important resources to residents of the region, and successful schools add immensely to the vibrancy of the surrounding community. Attracting growth to Bay Area neighborhoods and retaining the talent of young families depends upon high quality schools in key locations for future development. An understanding of where high and low performing schools are located will instruct the development of a Sustainable Communities Strategy that supports livable neighborhoods throughout the Bay Area.

8. Resource Areas

If the region's employment and population are growing while natural habitats and resources are sustained, this indicates that development is following in-fill patterns by adapting or re-using already-urbanized lands instead of expanding into natural areas. This indicator is calculated at a large census tract geography, so growth in areas with critical habitat and farmland may not be a threat to those areas.

9. VMT Per Capita

Vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita is a measure of the average number of miles driven per person in the Bay Area during one year. This includes both commute trips and non-work related travel, such as goods movement, travel to services and amenities, and tourism. The SCS' objective to develop Priority Development Areas as complete communities, and to encourage growth in areas throughout the region that include housing, employment, services and high-quality transit, should result in decreased VMT per capita. While growth in low VMT per capita areas will help achieve SCS goals, helping other areas reduce VMT is equally important.

10. Walkability

Walkability refers to the desirability, safety, and convenience of accessing services, amenities and employment as a pedestrian. The walkability of neighborhoods throughout the Bay Area is a crucial component of supporting numerous goals of the SCS, including reducing transportation costs and improving public health and safety for residents. This indicator measures the number of destinations, such as schools, parks, and businesses, within walking distance. Those areas that are walkable and could support more housing or employment are good locations for growth, while areas that are not safe or welcoming for pedestrians should be improved.

11. Transit

The Sustainable Communities Strategy objective of increasing transit access has economic, environmental, and equitable significance. Providing the benefits of transportation to all groups across the region is vital to a sustainable and vibrant region, allowing all people ease of access to work and services is crucial to a thriving economy, and the opportunity to take transit rather than drive benefits the environment.

12. Crime

Bay Area communities will not be able to achieve goals of quality neighborhoods that are pedestrian and bicycle friendly and in which businesses thrive without addressing issues of crime and fear of violence. Crime data is reported nationally for cities overall and by size of population. Design techniques such as the use of walkways, landscape and lighting, as well as incorporating a mix of commercial and residential building types, can encourage continuous use and reduce criminal activity.

13. Pedestrian/Bicycle Safety

A reduction in fatal and injury collisions is crucial to the goal of the SCS to promote increased quality of life via healthier and safer communities. Improving neighborhood safety by reducing collisions improves public health, both directly by reducing injuries and also indirectly by encouraging residents to use walking and biking as a means of transportation, which improves health outcomes.

BayArea Plan REGIONAL INDICATORS

Plan Bay Area Indicators are snapshots of current regional characteristics, including housing, jobs, demographics, farmland, schools, crime, and "walkability" (how easy it is to walk to local businesses and services.) These quality-of-life factors can have a big impact on future growth and individual and household choices in the year 2040.

Each indicator is mapped and then compared geographically to future growth projections for households and jobs. The summary table shows how closely aligned each indicator is with regional growth in four alternative scenarios: Revised Vision Scenario, Focused Growth, Core Growth and Outward Growth. While the variation between the alternative scenarios for each indicator is relatively small, the indicators vary substantially in terms of their potential impact on our future growth pattern. For example, future job distributions closely follow current job locations, with the majority of new job

growth occurring in locations is in areas that already have an above-average density of jobs. Little growth is anticipated in areas with prime farmland or critical habitats (5-7%) or areas with a high number of traffic collisions (1-2%).

The indicators suggest policies and strategies that the SCS may want to address to maximize the potential benefits of new transportation investments and land use development. Initial analysis has revealed the following high priority issues:

1. Reducing auto-related injuries and increasing walkability.
2. Improving school performance in growth areas.
3. Preserving and increasing affordable housing in growth areas.

A full set of Indicator Maps is available at http://onebayarea.org/plan_bay_area/targets.htm



Scenarios were assessed to determine how future development might relate to current conditions. This table shows how each scenario performs with regard to a set of current sustainability indicators related to equity, the economy, and the environment.

INDICATORS ▼													
	JOB DENSITY Percent of New Housing Growth in areas with existing job densities above 5 jobs per acre (Mean Job Density = 5.)	POVERTY Percent of New Household Growth in areas with high Poverty Concentration (greater than 30% double national poverty rate.)	HOUSING TENURE Percent of New Household Growth in Census Tracts that are Majority Rental	HOUSING DENSITY Percent of New Household Growth in areas with existing housing densities above 6 units/acre (Mean Housing Density = 6)	AFFORDABILITY Percent of New Household Growth in areas where more than 8% of housing stock is Deed-Restricted Affordable Housing	RACE Percent of New Household Growth in areas that are Majority People of Color (greater than 70%).	SCHOOL QUALITY Percent of New Household Growth in areas with a mean School API less than 800 (CA State standard.)	RESOURCE AREAS Percent of New Household Growth in areas with Prime Farmland or Critical Habitat	VMT PER CAPITA Percent of New Household Growth in areas with lowest current VMT per Capita (10 miles or less per day.)	TRANSIT Percent of New Household Growth in areas with highest access to Frequent Transit (20 minutes or less)	WALKABILITY Percent of New Household Growth in areas that are currently considered Walkable (6+ Businesses within one mile)	CRIME Percent of New Household Growth in areas with Highest Violent Crime rates (800+ annual per 100,000 pop.)	PEDESTRIAN/ BICYCLE SAFETY Percent of New Household Growth in areas with historically high fatal or severe injury collisions (per 100 people).
SCENARIOS ▼	25% ↔ 75%	0% ↔ 50%	25% ↔ 60%	25% ↔ 50%	0% ↔ 30%	0% ↔ 40%	40% ↔ 60%	0% ↔ 10%	0% ↔ 20%	10% ↔ 25%	15% ↔ 25%	10% ↔ 15%	0% ↔ 5%
1 Existing Conditions	36%	25%	36%	40%	22%	24%	42%	7%	11%	13%	17%	11%	2%
2 Core Concentration	62%	38%	50%	47%	25%	37%	55%	5%	17%	23%	22%	12%	2%
3 Focused Growth	61%	37%	47%	41%	24%	32%	55%	5%	18%	21%	22%	12%	1%
4 Constrained Core Concentration	67%	39%	51%	45%	27%	34%	56%	5%	20%	24%	24%	12%	1%
5 Outward Growth	56%	34%	43%	37%	21%	29%	54%	7%	15%	19%	21%	11%	2%