STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Grand Jury Report

MEETING DATE: July 16, 2009

AGENDA ITEM: 8

STAFF CONTACTS: Michael Powers, Jim Kemp, Brian Bresolin

RECOMMENDATION:

Review and consider approval of response to FY 2008-09, Santa Barbara County Civil Grand Jury Report: “SBCAG; A Road Not Taken”

SUMMARY:

The Santa Barbara County Civil Grand Jury for 2008-09 has issued a report “SBCAG – A Road Not Taken” that pertains to SBCAG and requires responses to their specific findings and recommendations within 90 days. In general, the Grand Jury recommends an expanded role for SBCAG in the area of regional land use planning. Staff has prepared a draft response which was reviewed by TPAC at its July 2nd meeting. It is recommended that the board approve the response or provide direction on any changes required.

DISCUSSION:

The Grand Jury may investigate, evaluate and make recommendations to any city, county or special district agency that receives county funds. The Grand Jury relies on its own discretion and citizens’ suggestions to determine other issues, besides jail and detention facilities, to investigate. The Grand Jury for 2008-09 has issued a report that pertains to SBCAG and local agencies that requires a response. The report is titled “SBCAG – A Road Not Taken.” SBCAG’s draft response to their findings and recommendations is provided in this staff report. SBCAG has 90 days from the June 3rd report publication date to respond in writing to the Grand Jury.

In summary, the Grand Jury report recommends an expanded role for SBCAG in the area of regional land use planning.

The Grand Jury has required SBCAG to respond to the specific findings and recommendations listed below. SBCAG can either agree with the findings or disagree in whole or part and provide an explanation. The recommendations require an implementation, timeframe for implementation, further analysis, or it may be not warranted or reasonable with appropriate
explanation. Since each of the cities and the County are required to respond to the findings and recommendations contained in the Grand Jury report, an effort should be made to ensure that the responses by SBCAG and the local agencies are consistent. Therefore, the TPAC reviewed the draft response to the report and provided some suggested revisions.

**Proposed Response to Report Findings and Recommendations.**

This section contains detailed responses to the findings and recommendations by the Grand Jury. It is recommended that the board approve the responses and direct staff to submit them to the Grand Jury as required.

**Finding 1a**
Santa Barbara County Association of Governments has authority to do regional land use planning through its Joint Powers Agreement.

Response – Agree

SBCAG has authority in the Joint Powers Agreement, which all member agencies have signed, to address “area planning and mutual concerns.” SBCAG does have all of the powers outlined in Government Code Section 65060 et seq. and therefore, SBCAG has the power to create a true Regional Plan, if the Board so ordered.

**Finding 1b**
The staff has developed recommendations for regional land use planning approved by Santa Barbara County Association of Governments.

Response – Agree

Over the years staff has brought, in response to state law and board direction, many recommendations related to regional planning. Among these include policies in the Regional Transportation Plan, Regional Growth Forecast, Job–Housing Balance studies in 1989 and 1995, State–funded Interregional Partnership for Jobs–Housing Balance, among others that address regional land use issues.

**Finding 1c**
The regional land use planning recommendations adopted by Santa Barbara County Association of Governments have not been implemented.

Response – Partially Disagree. The Grand Jury finding does not identify the specific recommendations it is referring to. Some of the regional land use planning recommendations, adopted by the SBCAG board, have been implemented. See analysis of response to individual report recommendations in Attachment 1. The Blueprint Pilot Project has initiated the development of countywide data useful in addressing regional planning issues.

**Recommendation 1**

Recommendation: That the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments and each respective jurisdiction implement already adopted recommendations that deal with regional land use planning.
Response – The recommendation has been partially implemented. As noted under Finding 1c, some of the recommendations regarding regional planning adopted by the SBCAG board have been implemented. Many of the recommendations cannot be implemented unilaterally by SBCAG, but require the consent and cooperation of SBCAG’s member local agencies.

The SBCAG board has expressed concerns about involving itself in matters that impact local land use decisions. In addition, SBCAG does not have the authority to implement many of the recommendations since they are more appropriately addressed in the local General Plans. Local agencies have to continue to actively participate in this process, to use the growth forecasts prepared by SBCAG, to consistently evaluate their jobs housing relationship and address imbalances, among other issues. Many of these issues require local commitments and strong regional political and public support to further their development. However, many of these issues lack a strong regional planning constituency and are lighting rods for opposition. For example, affordable housing projects frequently receive strong public opposition.

Despite these challenges, the Board and local agencies will have to revisit these issues of regional development, environmental protection, and land use impacts on transportation as SBCAG develops the Community Sustainability Strategy under SB 375.

Finding 2
Santa Barbara County Association of Governments has not developed a fully integrated regional plan coordinating jobs, housing and transportation that includes all the County’s jurisdictions.

Response – Agree with finding

Recommendation 2
That the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments develop a fully integrated regional plan.

Response – The recommendation will be implemented. Over the next several years, SBCAG will be involved in responding to the state’s regional land use planning requirements imposed by SB 375. The SBCAG board authorized implementation of SB 375 in SBCAG’s FY 2009/10 Overall Work Program adopted in April 2009. This legislation will require SBCAG to prepare a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) that will address the linkage between land use, housing, and transportation. The SCS must be incorporated as the land use element of the SBCAG Regional Transportation Plan. The SCS must also address the Regional Housing Needs Allocation Plan, part of SBCAG’s existing responsibility under State Housing Element Law. Although it will take some time to develop SBCAG will be developing an integrated regional plan to the extent required by SB 375.

Finding 3
Santa Barbara County Association of Governments refused to apply for state funds for comprehensive regional planning.

Response – Partially Disagree with finding

Funds for the Regional Blueprint Planning Grant Program were first included in the FY 2005-06 state budget. On March 16, 2006, the board considered and unanimously rejected the recommendation to include the development of a Regional Blueprint Plan in the SBCAG FY
2006-07 Overall Work Program. Board members expressed concerns about regional and state agencies becoming involved in local land use planning.

However, following a discussion of the Blueprint work in San Luis Obispo County, in October 2006 the board unanimously agreed to sign a letter of support for an application for State Blueprint Planning Grant funds in 2007 by the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG), for a pilot study of the Santa Maria Valley. The grant was awarded and the study is now underway. SBCAG is a subcontractor to SLOCOG on the grant.

Recommendation 3
That Santa Barbara County Association of Governments aggressively pursue funding for comprehensive regional planning.

Response – The recommendation will be implemented.

Complying with the new regional planning requirements mandated by the state under SB 375 will require significant additional staff time by SBCAG and local agencies. The state has not yet provided the funding to Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO’s) to meet these mandates. Regrettably, due to the state budget crisis, funding may be unavailable. However, the Governor’s Strategic Growth Council is considering partial funding of MPO’s statewide to develop the Community Sustainability Strategy required by SB 375. The Council could tap regional planning funding made available from Proposition 84. In addition, legislation was introduced this year (SB 406--DeSauinier) that would give regional agencies the authority to raise vehicle registration surcharge of up to $2.00 to fund the development and implementation of regional plans to comply with SB 375. The SBCAG board has taken no position on this bill. SBCAG will pursue funding opportunities to offset the costs of complying with SB 375.

COMMITTEE REVIEW:

As recommended at the June Board meeting, your Technical Planning Advisory Committee reviewed and commented on the draft response at its July 2nd meeting. Most of their editorial and substantive comments were incorporated into the revised draft response. No formal action or recommendation was approved by TPAC.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1  SBCAG Status Report on Regional Planning Recommendations in SBCAG Regional Publications

Attachment 2: SBCAG—A Road Not Taken, 2008/09 Santa Barbara County Civil Grand Jury Report
Attachment 1

SBCAG Status Report on Regional Planning Recommendations in SBCAG Regional Publications

Appendix IV, Grand Jury Report cites “Relevant SBCAG Regional Publications.” Specific regional land use recommendations in the subject report are highlighted and a status report is provided on their implementation.

1992 SBCAG Regional Housing Needs Study

Comment: One of the key provisions of California Housing Element Law is that each jurisdiction has the responsibility to provide housing opportunities for all income groups. State law also recognizes that the issue of affordable housing is not a process that can be accomplished by each jurisdiction in isolation. Rather, due to economic and environmental factors, and community goals this responsibility is best carried out cooperatively on a regional basis. The requirement for a Regional Housing Needs Plan is designed to bring about this cooperation at the local level.

Recommendation: Table 4, Page 13 of the report provides the local proportion of the countywide housing need. The allocation is based on addressing regional issues such as farmworker and homeless housing needs, and households overpaying for housing. The housing need is then allocated by income level, from very low, low, to moderate and above moderate.

Status: Implemented - The Regional Housing Needs allocation is developed every five years for use in the local jurisdictions housing element. The allocation is accommodated by local agency housing elements through potential land use and zoning modifications.

1995 SBCAG Jobs/Housing Study

Comment: It is important to recognize the regional impacts of local land use decisions. Local actions that influence the development of housing and employment can impact the regional transportation network. This land use-transportation connection is being recognized at the local and regional level as having impacts on urban form and our quality of life.

Recommendation: Page 46 - Continued effort is needed at developing a consistent means of evaluating the relationship in local and regional plans. Local jurisdictions will cooperate with SBCAG in the preparation and examination of alternative land use and transportation scenarios that reduce commute trips and vehicle miles travelled. This issue will be an ongoing research activity of SBCAG with the development of its transportation model.

Status: The jobs housing issue has been addressed in a number of later studies and local jurisdictions have developed policies and language addressing it in housing elements and general plan updates. However, many commuters who live in Ventura County and northern Santa Barbara County commute to the south coast for jobs.
Comment: Most recommendations address the methodology and implementation of assessing and mitigating the socioeconomic impacts of oil and gas development. However, one recommendation does relate to regional land use planning.

Recommendation (pages 107-108): Phasing of resource development activities must be used as a tool to lessen the magnitude of socioeconomic impacts since infrastructure development requires a long lead-time.

Status: Implemented - By and large, the County of Santa Barbara has served as the lead local agency in addressing the overall onshore impacts of oil and gas development. The County has consistently supported the phasing policy.

2002 SBCAG Regional Housing Needs for Santa Barbara County

Comment: The discussion of regional housing needs revolves around a number of issues that address land use and cooperation between agencies. While land use decisions are the primary responsibility of local cities and the county, many of them have regional consequences. While some of these regional impacts are positive, some can be detrimental to the region. The regional housing needs plan illustrates some of these challenges by addressing the fair share allocation of housing of all economic segments of the community. Some of these policy challenges were addressed in the development of the SBCAG Regional Growth Forecast, some will grow out of the discussions about this Regional Housing Needs Plan. The issues that have arisen in the discussions among city, county, and SBCAG planning staff are outlined below. Actions to address some of these issues were accepted by SBCAG when it adopted the Regional Growth Forecast.

Recommendations: Page 22

1. The Cities of Santa Barbara and Carpinteria, UCSB, and the County should continue to address the regional implications of additional employment in the South Coast area on the regional housing market and cities in the South Coast and north county area. The region needs to examine the impacts of high housing costs and aging workforce on the ability to sustain employment growth and accommodate increasing long distance commutes. Local jurisdictions should consider concurrent phasing of new commercial, retail, industrial development with residential development to be consistent with a balance of jobs and housing.

Status: Partially addressed – The South Coat Housing Task Force meets quarterly to address and coordinate affordable housing projects. The cities of Santa Barbara and Goleta have policies to address phasing of commercial development and housing. Based on local review, the new UCSB Long Rang Development Plan is deficient in addressing issues related to increased enrollment and employment on local communities. UCSB needs to become involved in the South Coast Housing Task Force Group.

2. Local agencies with excess commercial and industrially zoned land should evaluate their General Plans to consider the correspondence of local job development potential with regional and local resource capacity, e.g., water and housing sites, to support job growth.

Status: Local agencies should respond
3. North county jurisdictions should use housing availability as a marketing tool in economic development and consideration should be given to working with south coast agencies and businesses that cannot expand due to environmental constraints or lack of affordable housing.

   Status: Implemented, but limited success – North county jurisdictions Chamber of Commerce, Cities Economic Development Departments and their general plans economic development elements promote housing availability as an incentive to attract new employment growth. However, these agencies have had limited success in attracting south coast employers.

4. There are large institutions in the County that generate housing needs that impact local jurisdictions. UCSB, VAFB, Lompoc Federal Correctional Institute, and the Community Colleges in Santa Barbara, Lompoc, and Santa Maria are large institutions that need to address the housing impacts of their development decisions and work closely with local agencies to address the housing needs of their development. In addition, the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians Casino development has the potential for generating housing need.

   Status: Not Implemented – Most of the large institutions have not worked with local agencies in addressing their housing impacts on local jurisdictions. However, as agencies consider expansion, most of the impacts have been considered in environmental review.

Agricultural is a vital part of the economy. To ensure it retains its viability the agricultural industry needs workers. However, many agricultural workers live in cities in search of affordable housing and urban services. The responsibility for addressing the housing needs of agricultural workers needs more attention in the unincorporated area, as that is where most of the agricultural jobs are located.

   Status: Partially Implemented: – Issue of agricultural worker housing addressed in Santa Barbara County Housing Element. Ongoing tension remains between County and local cities over allocation of responsibility to address farmworker housing need.

5. The pattern of development must incorporate provisions for open space, recreation, public services, housing and other elements in a manner that protects scarce resources, such as prime farmland, and ensures the efficient delivery of urban services. Should the pattern of development grow up, with higher densities, or spread out with lower density development pattern? These challenges can only be addressed by increased cooperation among all member agencies.

   Status: Not Implemented – Density issues among the most challenging in local planning for housing and land use. Trade offs involved in as preserving the rural lands, Gaviota Coast, etc., with more dense urban development are greeted with great skepticism. Development patterns are dictated by local jurisdictions. LAFCO encourages efficient service delivery.

6. Local agencies are encouraged to use techniques to improve inter-jurisdictional coordination. Such techniques may include, but are not limited to joint city-county planning commission meetings, joint city-county specific plans, and regular referral of environmental reports and plans to adjoining agencies.

   Status: Partially implemented – Referral of reports generally occurs. However, in general there are few joint planning commission or city council and County meetings to address border issues.
7. The SBCAG Board should consider addressing growing fiscal inequities on a regional basis and range from simply monitoring state legislative proposals to mediation of disputes between member agencies such as jobs housing balance issues.
   Status: Not implemented

2003 Congestion Management Plan, November 2003

Comment: CMP Policy Recommendations, Chapter IV, Land Use Analysis Program, pages IV-9 and IV-10, address the land use/transportation connection:

Local Jurisdictions

1. Ensure that the scope of any traffic analysis performed for the environmental review process required under CEQA must include project impacts on the CMP system if total trip generation exceeds 50 peak-hour or 500 daily trips. If trip generation exceeds these CMP impact thresholds, the local agency must use the Intersection Capacity Utilization method (as specified in Appendix D) to measure signalized intersection LOS. Analysis of state highway segments should be based on the Highway Capacity Manual for two-lane, multi-lane, and basic freeway segments.
   Status: Local agencies regularly comply with this recommendation

2. Consistent with the Caltrans Guide for the Preparation of Traffic Impact Studies, local agencies must consult with Caltrans on the application of the ICU method when CEQA traffic analyses involve state facilities. The Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) Operations Method will continue to be used for Project Study Reports (PSRs) and to evaluate proposed mitigation projects on state facilities.
   Status: Local agencies regularly comply with this recommendation

3. EIRs, EA, and NDs prepared for land use projects which do not generate more than 50 peak hour or 500 daily trips, local agencies should use the Intersection Capacity Utilization method (as specified in Appendix D) to compute intersection volume/capacity and determine the intersection LOS.
   Status: Local agencies regularly comply with this recommendation

4. Local agencies must amend their current procedures for environmental assessments, as needed, to evaluate the impacts of projects on the CMP system.
   Status: Local agencies have complied with this recommendation

5. Submit documentation on proposed traffic models for the review and approval of SBCAG based on the guidelines presented in Chapter IV and Appendix F.
   Status: Local agencies have not generally complied with this recommendation

6. Project, program, and general or specific planning environmental studies must be forwarded to SBCAG by the local agencies if they exceed the above mentioned thresholds.
   Status: Local agencies generally comply with this recommendation

7. Each jurisdiction must submit in digital format where feasible an accounting of building permits it has issued on a semi-annual basis to neighboring jurisdictions and SBCAG for their use in assessing cumulative traffic impacts consistent with the CMP Land Use Data Submittal Form. Information requested includes the location (i.e., Santa Barbara Travel Model Traffic
Analysis Zone) and number of residential units approved by type (single-family, multi-family, etc); and the location and square footage (and proposed use) of commercial and industrial land uses permitted within the previous six month period. A copy of the CMP Land Use Data Submittal Form is provided in Appendix G.

Status: Local agencies regularly comply with this recommendation

8. The CEQA cumulative project analysis of traffic impacts to the CMP system must include the recently approved building permit information from the adjacent jurisdictions as well as recently approved projects in the local jurisdiction.
   Status: Unknown

9. Local agencies must require project applicants to collect data to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of project conditions or mitigations associated with impacts on the CMP system.
   Status: Unknown

10. Local agencies must submit environmental assessments to affected transit agencies when proposed projects or proposed mitigation measures could affect transit service.
    Status: Local agencies generally comply with this recommendation

11. The cities and the county will involve SBCAG in the development of traffic models having regional significance. The jurisdictions will submit these models to SBCAG for its review and approval. SBCAG will review these models using guidelines in Appendix F.
    Status: Local agencies have not generally complied with this recommendation

12. Local agencies must circulate environmental reports to adjacent jurisdictions when impacts of land development on the regional CMP system in other jurisdictions have been determined in the traffic analysis performed for the environmental report. Local agencies must actively consult with adjacent jurisdictions to identify and mitigate impacts of development. The CMA (SBCAG) will require the permitting jurisdiction to demonstrate good faith efforts to coordinate and mitigate impacts on adjacent jurisdiction.
    Status: Local agencies have generally complied with this recommendation

Congestion Management Agency, SBCAG

1. Staff will review the CEQA analysis for consistency with significance criteria outlined in Chapter IV and provide comments to the jurisdiction.
   Status: SBCAG has analyzed DEIRs consistent with this recommendation

2. SBCAG will specify guidelines for monitoring project conditions and/or mitigations to ensure impacts on the regional road system are mitigated.
   Status: SBCAG has analyzed DEIRs consistent with this recommendation

3. SBCAG will prepare travel demand forecasts to identify future deficiencies on the CMP system.
   Status: SBCAG has prepared forecasts for the RTP and specific projects

4. SBCAG will monitor adequacy of regional CMP system impact assessment and mitigation as part of the determination of conformance of jurisdictions with the CMP.
   Status: SBCAG has produced annual CMP Conformance Reports for SBCAG Board approval
The Inter-Regional Partnership for Jobs, Housing, and Mobility, July 2004

Comment: This report provides a framework to identify, evaluate and recommend strategies to improve jobs and housing imbalances in the Ventura-Santa Barbara study area. The report suggests ways to collaborate at local, regional and state levels to encourage more housing choices in areas rich in jobs and job creation and location ways to take better advantage of local skills and human resources in areas rich in housing.

This report also serves as a roadmap for future public and private leadership, collaboration and action. It focuses on collaborative regional initiatives and state legislative advocacy, as well as on common-sense local strategies that can complement existing policy and local initiatives. The strategies outlined within this document recognize that public leaders cannot accomplish this goal on their own, but can make a difference by recognizing the strengths, diversity and interests of other communities within the region.

This report also outlines next steps with regard to implementation of its recommendations and sets forth a “Framework for Action” for initiating region-wide collaboration, communication and leadership. The final section provides a roadmap for change – specific “Next Steps” that should be taken to build upon the momentum created by this process and the working relationships that have emerged between community leaders and elected officials in the region.

Recommendations: Recommendations detailed on Pages 17-24 are based on seven core policies:

1. Integrating regional thinking into job creation and economic development
   Status: Unknown, up to local redevelopment agencies.

2. Advanced housing policy that reflects regional priorities
   Status: Partially implemented – Some local housing elements address regional issues.

3. Public education and involvement opportunities
   Status: Partially implemented – Local agencies have complied with this recommendation through the public workshop process and other means of outreach in the development of specific plans, community plans and general plan updates.

4. Legislative advocacy
   Status: Some local agencies have complied with this recommendation

5. Support ongoing programs to address congestion
   Status: Local agencies have generally complied with this recommendation through compliance with the SBCAG Congestion Management Plan and project specific environmental reviews

6. Permit processing improvements and streamlining
   Status: Unknown, Up to local agencies

7. Inter-Regional communications and collaboration
   Status: Local agencies have generally complied with this recommendation through participation on TPAC, the submittal of project proposals to other
agencies, participation in affordable housing groups, and maintaining an open process in the development of community plans and general plan updates.

2030 Travel Forecast for Santa Barbara County, September 2004

Comment: The travel forecast is the document that estimates increases and change in travel demand over the long term. The forecast was integrated into the SBCAG RTP. However, as indicated above in the CMP review, local agencies have not consistently submitted their travel models for SBCAG review.

2007 Regional Growth Forecast

Comment: The purpose of the Regional Growth Forecast is to provide a consistent countywide forecast to the year 2040 for use in long range comprehensive planning. The forecast serves as input towards the development of: traffic forecasts, air quality impact analysis, housing demand for Housing Elements of General Plans, and demand estimates for sewer treatment plants and other facilities. In addition, the forecast assists in making the State Department of Housing and Community Development Regional Housing Needs allocations to the subcounty level. The housing needs by income level are required as part of each jurisdictions housing element of their general plan. Also important is the use of the forecast as a database for social service agencies, marketing studies, and for analysis of growth related issues. Recommendations are made on Page 17 of the executive summary.

Recommendation:

1. The Regional Growth Forecast 2005-2040 should be endorsed and used by SBCAG and local jurisdictions as a baseline forecast, subject to review and revision as necessary.
   Status: Partially implemented – Some local agencies use the SBCAG forecast, others do not.

2. SBCAG should take a more active role in facilitating discussion of regional growth forecasts, its issues, and if desired, policies.
   Status: In the development of the Regional Growth Forecasts, the Regional Housing Needs Allocation and the Blueprint pilot project, discussions of forecasts and their issues occurred. However, generally the SBCAG board is reluctant to engage in a discussion of regional growth issues beyond those directly related to transportation.

3. Local agencies with excess commercial and industrially zoned land should evaluate their General Plans to consider the correspondence of local job development potential with regional and local resource capacity, e.g., road capacity and housing sites, to support job growth.
   Status: Unknown, Local agencies should respond

4. The Cities of Santa Barbara, Carpinteria, Goleta, UCSB, and the County should continue to address the regional implications of additional employment in the South Coast area on the regional housing market and cities in the South Coast and north county area. The region needs to examine the impacts of high housing costs and aging workforce on the ability to sustain employment growth and accommodate increasing long distance commutes.
   Status: Partially addressed – The South Coat Housing Task Force meets quarterly to address and coordinate affordable housing projects. The cities of Santa Barbara and Goleta have policies to address phasing of commercial development and housing. Based on local review, the new UCSB Long Rang Development Plan is deficient in
addressing issues related to increased enrollment and employment on local communities. UCSB needs to become involved in the South Coast Housing Task Force Group.

5. Due to the long term jobs-housing imbalance, local and state jurisdictions in the South Coast should consider concurrent phasing of new commercial, retail, industrial development with residential development to be consistent with a balance of jobs and housing.

   Status: Partially addressed: Only, the Cities of Santa Barbara and Goleta have policies to address phasing of new commercial development and housing. However, some jurisdictions have varying definitions of what a balance of jobs and housing entails.

6. The County should study the implications of winery and greenhouse agricultural development on the housing needs of cities and unincorporated areas.

   Status: Partially Implemented: – Issue of agricultural worker housing addressed in Santa Barbara County Housing Element. Ongoing tension remains between County and local cities over allocation of responsibility to address farmworker housing need.

7. Local agencies are encouraged to use techniques to improve inter-jurisdictional coordination. Such techniques may include, but are not limited to joint city-county planning commission meetings, joint city-county specific plans, and regular referral of environmental reports and plans to adjoining agencies.

   Status: Partially implemented – Referral of reports generally occurs, and occasional joint planning. However, in general there are few joint planning commission or city council and County meetings to address border issues. However, TPAC provides additional forum for inter-jurisdictional coordination.

8. The ability of local government to accommodate forecast growth has recently become more problematic due to income shifts between the state, local government, and special districts. These income shifts result in reduced incentives to approve development, which does not generate sales tax. This may result in increased competition for those uses that generate sales taxes. The SBCAG Board should consider addressing these growing fiscal inequities on a regional basis and range from simply monitoring state legislative proposals to mediation of disputes between member agencies such as jobs housing balance issues.

   Status: Fiscal issues have not been generally addressed

SCAG Final Ventura/Santa Barbara Rail Study Report, March 2008

Comment: This rail report was prepared under the auspices of the Southern California Association of Governments at the request of the Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC). SBCAG served on an advisory committee and provided input into the technical reports and the draft and final report. The study examined potential options for initiating/improving interregional peak passenger service between Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties. The study had four recommendations:

   • Continue coordination among key stakeholders to advance and refine the service concept

   Status: SBCAG continues to work with VCTC and SCAG through LOSSAN and the development of the Congestion System Management Plan for the Highway 101 corridor

   • Refine schedule to optimize arrival and departure times and minimize train delays
Status: SBCAG has requested Caltrans Division of Rail to examine the schedule and adjust the train schedule so it is more “commuter friendly”

- Identify top tier projects based on LOSSAN North Strategic Plan
  
  Status: Additional sidings are needed between Ventura and Santa Barbara. Engineering work is needed to identify the priority location. Funding is within the RTIP to allow Caltrans Division of Rail and Union Pacific to address this issue.

- Assemble financial resources required for implementation
  
  Status: SBCAG is developing a Measure A Strategic Plan that will identify the use of $25 million in local option sales tax funding that is available to support enhanced rail. SBCAG is pressing Caltrans Division of Rail to include a Santa Barbara Rail Siding project in the California application for federal rail stimulus funds, among other efforts.

2008 Transit Needs Assessment

Comment: The Transit Needs Assessment is a report that documents SBCAG’s annual assessment of regional transit needs as required by the California Transportation Development Act. There are no comprehensive regional land use policies associated with this document.

Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) Plan 2007-14, June 2008

Comment: The discussion of regional housing needs revolved around a number of issues that address housing, employment growth, land use and cooperation between agencies. While land use decisions are the primary responsibility of local cities and the county, many of these local decisions have regional consequences. While some of these regional impacts of local decisions are positive, some impacts can be detrimental to the region. The regional housing needs plan illustrates some of these challenges by addressing the fair share allocation of housing of all economic segments of the community. Some of these policy challenges were addressed in the development and update of the SBCAG Regional Growth Forecast, some will grew out of the discussions about this Regional Housing Needs Plan.

Recommendations: Policy challenges are discussed and include the relationship between jobs and housing, institutional growth issues, low wage agricultural employment relative to housing costs, preservation of agricultural land and conflicting state policies that on one had determine the regional housing needs allocation but without recognizing the state restricted development in the coastal zone.

Status: The Regional Housing Needs Allocation process required local jurisdictions to address these issues in responding to their allocation of regional housing need. The regional allocation is currently being integrated into local housing elements and in some cases may require potential land use and zoning modifications.


Comment: The RTP is a long-range plan (covering a twenty year planning period) to improve our region’s state highways; local streets, roads, and bikeways; airports and marine facilities; transit, paratransit, and passenger rail services. A guide for the development of these facilities, the RTP describes the priorities for making investments in our region’s transportation system. Some recommendations in the RTP address the connection between land use and transportation.
**Recommendation:** Another emerging issue the County must address is integrating land use and transportation planning (Executive Summary, p. 3).

**Status:** Transportation and land use planning are not currently integrated in Santa Barbara County. SBCAG is currently examining the tools to better quantify the relationship between land use and transportation. Over the next several years, SBCAG will integrate transportation and land use planning as mandated by Senate Bill 375.

**Recommendation:** When projects have both local and regional transportation impacts, the planning process requires regional coordination. Therefore, there is a need for increased regional coordination in land use planning among local jurisdictions (p. 2-7).

**Status:** Aside from the Santa Maria Valley Blueprint Planning study, there has been little to no systematic regional coordination among local jurisdictions in land use planning. Information sharing does occur at quarterly meetings of the Technical Planning Advisory Committee.

**Recommendation:** Goal 1 – Provide for a comprehensive, coordinated, and balanced multi-modal transportation system that is safe, cost-effective, and environmentally sound, and that meets the mobility needs of individuals and business, while being consistent with the social, economic, and land use goals of the region (p. 3-1).

**Comment:** This goal is one of six plan-level goals that establish the guiding principles for the RTP as well as a framework for decision-making. Regional projects and programs are developed, funded, and implemented based on these guiding principles.

**Status:** SBCAG, working with local jurisdictions, strives to meet this goal.

**Recommendation:** Goal VI – Encourage local land use decisions that shape demand for transportation services such that the services support community vitality and environmental sensitivity for current and future generations (p. 3-1).

**Comment:** This goal is one of six plan-level goals that establish the guiding principles for the RTP as well as a framework for decision-making. Regional projects and programs are developed, funded, and implemented based on these guiding principles.

**Status:** Local agencies have maintained local control over land use decisions, but SBCAG is able to share information with the agencies at Technical Planning Advisory Committee meetings.

**Recommendation:** Goal 1 – Promote a coordinated and equitable multi-modal system designed to serve the travel requirements of the region, integrating elements of systems management, technology, and land use (p. 3-2).

**Comment:** This goal is one of eight specific goals that address the six different transportation systems (roadway, bikeway, transit, rail, air, and pedestrian) as well as systems integration and funding. This goal, Goal 1, and Policies 1.1 – 1.12, some of which are listed below, address systems integration.

**Status:** SBCAG, working with local jurisdictions, strives to meet this goal.

**Recommendation:** Policy 1.1 – The planning, construction, and operation of transportation facilities and of the system as a whole shall be coordinated with land use planning and be consistent with other regional policies (p. 3-2).

**Status:** Transportation and land use planning are not currently integrated in Santa Barbara County. SBCAG is currently examining the tools to better quantify the relationship between land use and transportation. Over the next several years, SBCAG will integrate transportation and land use planning as mandated by Senate Bill 375.
Recommendation: Policy 1.6 – Emphasize the importance of land use decisions on the transportation system and include recommendations to local agencies to:

- Make land use decisions that adequately address regional transportation issues and adopt policies that are consistent with the RTP
- Require mitigation of traffic impacts of new land development through on-site and related off-site improvements for all modes of transportation, including incentives to encourage the use of alternative transportation modes
- Promote better balance of jobs and housing to reduce long distance commuting
- Consider transit availability and accessibility as an integral element prior to new development intended to serve the disabled, elderly, or other communities that may be transit dependent (p. 3-3)

Status: Local agencies have maintained local control over land use decisions, but SBCAG is able to share information with the agencies at Technical Planning Advisory Committee meetings. However, one key component of the SBCAG Congestion Management Program (CMP) is the application of CMP impact thresholds in the CEQA review process for development projects. This has been a significant achievement in addressing the link between transportation issues and land use decisions. Local agencies have now “mainstreamed” reviews of potential regional traffic impacts into their planning processes.

Recommendation: Policy 1.7 – Encourage the use of Transit-Oriented Development land use planning to facilitate walking, biking, and transit ridership by:

- Designing walkable streets that connect high-usage origins and destinations
- Concentrating residencies and commercial centers near urbanized rail stations, transit centers, and along transit development corridors (p. 3-3)

Status: Local agencies have maintained local control over land use decisions, but SBCAG is able to share information with the agencies at Technical Planning Advisory Committee meetings.
June 3, 2009

Santa Barbara Association of Governments
Executive Director James Kemp
260 North Antonio Road Suite B
Santa Barbara, California 93110

Dear Mr. Kemp:

Enclosed is the report of 2008-2009 Santa Barbara County Civil Grand Jury entitled, SBCAG – A ROAD NOT TAKEN, “If you don’t know where you’re going, you might wind up someplace else.” Yogi Berra, in which your department is named as an affected agency.

You are required to respond to each finding and recommendation contained in the report in the manner provided by California Penal Code 933.05: within 90 days of the date of receipt of this report.

Your are required to send your responses to the Honorable Judge William McLafferty and to the Grand Jury to the addresses indicated below.

To the Superior Court: your original response.

The Honorable Judge J. William McLafferty
Superior Court
1100 Anacapa Street, 2nd floor
P.O. Box 21107
Santa Barbara, CA 93121-1107

To the Grand Jury: a copy of the original and computer copy on CD-ROM disk in MSWord or PDF format.

Santa Barbara County Civil Grand Jury
Attention: Foreman
1100 Anacapa Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
The report will be released to the public not less than two working days following the date of delivery of this report to you. The report is confidential until public release.

If you have any questions, please contact me at the above address.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

Ted Sten
Foreman
Santa Barbara County Civil Grand Jury

Enclosure
SBCAG - A ROAD NOT TAKEN

"If you don't know where you're going, you might wind up someplace else.”
Yogi Berra

SUMMARY

Santa Barbara County is facing many critical challenges as it strives to maintain and improve the quality of life for all its residents. Air quality is threatened, open spaces are being challenged, agricultural land is in jeopardy and our roads are increasingly clogged. In addition, the County must face the reality of growth with a population shift to the north, parochialism significant enough to initiate a county-split referendum in 2006, a crisis in affordable housing, and a widening bifurcation of society based on wealth and age.

There is one organization in the County that has the ability to address these important issues and to develop viable solutions: the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG). The SBCAG Board is comprised of 13 members including all five Santa Barbara County Supervisors and a mayor or council member from each of the County’s eight cities. SBCAG was established “to examine common problems and suggest solutions.”\(^1\) The organization is designed to be a regional, multi-jurisdictional, forum for collaborative discussion and resolution of problems and issues.\(^2\)

The 2008-2009 Santa Barbara County Civil Grand Jury (Jury) conducted a review of SBCAG’s regional approach to its many challenges. As a point of departure, the Jury reviewed a number of planning documents and reports issued by SBCAG from 1989 to the present. While these reports thoroughly addressed individual issues, they reflect a lack of cohesion across subject areas, jurisdictions, and time. In response to these anomalies, the Jury focused its attention on the SBCAG’s approach to the overall issue of comprehensive regional planning, and in this regard identified four themes in the majority of reports approved by the SBCAG Board:

1) A recognition of the need to address countywide problems on a regional level
2) A lack of regional land use planning and coordination
3) A disproportionate emphasis on transportation
4) A reluctance on the part of the Board to address regional issues other than traffic

The State of California has offered "no strings attached" $250,000 grants to counties willing to initiate regional approaches to solving regional problems. Of the 58 counties in the State, Santa Barbara is the only county that declined the offer and refused to participate.

\(^1\) SBCAG Regional Growth Forecast 2005-2040
\(^2\) Joint Powers Agreement for Santa Barbara County, 1966
SBCAG did make a significant foray into the regional planning arena with a 2004 study, *Taking Action Regionally, The Inter-Regional Partnership for Jobs, Housing, & Mobility*. This comprehensive report addressed the need to develop tools to analyze and deal with cross-jurisdictional challenges. The report clearly stated SBCAG's understanding of the importance of a broad-based approach:

Many of the issues that face local governments and the people they serve, such as: traffic, housing, air quality, and growth, extend beyond jurisdictional boundaries. SBCAG's primary purpose is to assist local governments in solving common problems and addressing public policy issues that are regional or multi-jurisdictional. SBCAG's broad responsibilities for planning and programming ensure that it can effectively establish or influence the policy-making process within the county.

The Grand Jury agrees. Regrettably, SBCAG essentially shelved the report and its recommendations. In contrast, San Luis Obispo County, geographically and culturally similar to Santa Barbara, was an early participant and recipient of State funds to develop a regional “plan”, completed in 2008. This collaborative effort among that county, its cities and citizens, is not so much a detailed document as it is a broad overview of their region and its possible future. Their approach, including public outreach, provides a basis for collaboration among the constituent members and a framework for future planning. These documents are not a threat to county or city members' autonomy in the planning arena, since their general plans continue to define the character of those jurisdictions within the overarching framework of this regional view. This Jury concluded that if other counties can overcome their internal resistance to collaborate and plan for housing their populations and protecting their natural resources, we can, and must, do the same.

**BACKGROUND**

Many would like Santa Barbara to remain as it was when they arrived, and there have been many efforts to achieve this. For example in 1989 the City of Santa Barbara passed Measure E which placed a limit on non-residential development and thereby limited job creation and the need for more housing. It resulted in limited success as the nature of work changed, while jobs continued to grow.

The pressures to develop housing to meet the needs of those who are employed here, versus the desire of those wishing to keep the County just as it was, have resulted in a morass of ineffective planning decisions. The 10 separate planning commissions that control all development in the County have created a patchwork quilt

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3 San Luis Obispo Community 2050 Blueprint plan, Sept. 2008
4 SBCAG sponsored report, *Taking Action Regionally, The Inter-Regional Partnership for Jobs, Housing, & Mobility*, July 2004. (As used in the report the Walt Kelly quote from Pogo refers to Santa Barbara County)
of policies, ordinances, zoning regulations and enforcement procedures that lack cohesion, coordination, and create the potential for urban sprawl and its consequences.

Despite successful efforts to encourage carpooling and bus ridership, congestion continues to increase. The Jury found that there have been hundreds of dedicated individuals and numerous organizations and agencies which have proposed remedies to address this and other regional issues. Yet from these efforts there has been limited change.

Over the years the SBCAG Board has focused its attention on regional transportation issues, particularly capital roads projects, rather than integrating these with other important issues that impact transportation such as its relationship to jobs and housing. Land use planning is particularly important as it includes the concerns of open space, agriculture and the environment, in addition to jobs and housing issues. These remain unaddressed by SBCAG in any collaborative regional manner.

In 2004, SBCAG thoroughly studied the above problems and presented five key assumptions that communities and the entire region need to consider as they move toward the future:

1) Whether we like it or not, the overall area's population is increasing through both net immigration and natural increase (births over deaths). There is no local mechanism that will halt the pressure for further internal and external growth from occurring.
2) No one city or region will be able to buffer itself from the impacts of continued development and redevelopment. Nor can we "build our way out of" these growth pressures.
3) Regional problems require regional solutions.
4) Meaningful change will require the development of interregional partnerships and alliances that heretofore have not been nurtured.
5) "Big Picture" policy changes will require a regional approach that can effectively exert political influence at the state-level through strategic cooperation at the local level.

In other words, change is on the way, and the most satisfactory way to control it is through cooperative, inter-jurisdictional collaboration. SBCAG is the only entity in the county that has the authority and resources to address these issues in a comprehensive way.

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5 SBCAG sponsored report, *Taking Action Regionally, The Inter-Regional Partnership for Jobs, Housing, & Mobility*, July 2004
METHODOLOGY

The Jury reviewed legislation that pertains to housing in California, including:

- 1934 – National Housing Act: Created the Federal Housing Administration (FHA)
- 1965 – Department of Housing and Urban Development Act (HUD)
- 1969 – State Housing Element Law, Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA)
- 2002 – AB 1493: California’s Vehicle Global Warming Law
- 2005 – Regional Blueprint Program
- 2006 – AB 32: Global Warming Solutions Act
- 2008 – SB 375: Transportation planning, travel demand models, sustainable communities strategy, environmental review

Documents reviewed included:

- California Health and Safety Code, Division 13, Part 1.5, State Housing Law
- Studies from the Urban Land Institute
- Publications from the California Department of Housing and Community Development
- SBCAG reports (see Appendix IV)
- Reports by the Housing Authority of the County of Santa Barbara
- Reports by the Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara
- Studies prepared by the Santa Barbara Region Economic Community Project
- The Central Coast Survey
- Previous Santa Barbara County Civil Grand Jury reports
- Community 2050 San Luis Obispo Blueprint, Sept. 2008

The Jury interviewed SBCAG Board members and staff, present and former members of the Santa Barbara County and City planning and housing staffs, architects, industry representatives, attorneys, representatives from non-profits, and advocates for and against the development of housing in the County.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

Communities are not isolated but are interdependent within the region in terms of housing, transportation, jobs, shopping, recreation, health care, etc. Regional planning serves as a basis for county jurisdictions to work together to create a strategy that protects and enhances the communities and its residents. For instance, plans need to be developed to encourage the use of transit-oriented land use planning to facilitate walking, biking and transit ridership, thus meeting the State's mandate to reduce greenhouse gases.

California recently launched a program, with funding, to encourage counties to undertake such comprehensive regional planning. It was meant to develop a consensus between the public and regional leaders on a vision for the long-range development of their counties.
There was no mandate regarding housing, transportation patterns or environmental benchmarks. Recognizing this, SBCAG stated: “There is an overall lack of ownership (emphasis theirs) of the problem by the community at large. In spite of the existence of regional coordinating agencies, regional collaboration efforts across municipal and county lines have thus far been either non-existent or ineffective.” Nevertheless Santa Barbara County is the only county in the state that refused to participate.

The Grand Jury has reviewed the regional planning documents, which were developed by other counties and has found them to be useful and comprehensive. They not only set out land use plans, but more importantly offer all members of the community a chance to participate in shaping the future of their community.

**Legislative Initiatives**

For the past 75 years both the Federal and California governments have attempted to promote and encourage local jurisdictions to plan for their growing populations. Some legislation has provided incentives while others threatened punitive action for failure to comply. Recent significant legislation also addressed global warming, greenhouse gases and freeway congestion. This requires comprehensive planning, incorporating transportation with jobs and housing, while encouraging communities to develop their own solutions to these problems (see Appendix I). Embracing these State programs will increase the potential for transportation funds and access to State housing and other grant funds to bring about these needed changes. Santa Barbara County and its eight incorporated cities, which form SBCAG, have consistently resisted what has been perceived as State interference into local land use policies and decisions. Even voluntary State programs have been rejected by SBCAG, including one that offered $250,000 in grant money to support comprehensive regional planning.

**Jobs-Housing Imbalance**

A major quality of life issue in the county is traffic congestion. The primary cause of this congestion is due to the imbalance between the locations of jobs and housing in the region. A widely used planning technique for local governments to gauge this imbalance is the ratio of jobs to housing in a given area (the jobs/housing imbalance). The ideal would be for jobs and available housing to be roughly equal, but achieving a balance goes well beyond trying to attain numerical equality. There is a qualitative aspect to this ratio, as the goal is to make housing suitable to the lifestyles and income levels of the workforce. In 2005, Santa Barbara County hosted roughly 188,000 jobs and had 138,000 housing units, for a 1.3 job/housing ratio. The ratios within the various jurisdictions in Santa Barbara County range from 0.69 to 2.08 and directly impact regional travel patterns, work-trip lengths and congestion levels. For example, while Lompoc has a 1.0 ratio, many residents commute to jobs on the South Coast. It is apparent from the chart

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6 Ibid.
7 SBCAG Regional Growth Forecast 2000-2030
8 SBCAG Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) Plan 2007-2014
9 SBCAG VISION2030: 2008 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN, September 2008
below that SBCAG projects jobs to increase faster than population in most areas, portending even greater imbalances.

### Population and Employment – 2000 to 2030

<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Coast</td>
<td>201,000</td>
<td>240,300</td>
<td>+20%</td>
<td>108,207</td>
<td>155,331</td>
<td>+44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Maria &amp; Cuyama</td>
<td>118,200</td>
<td>177,800</td>
<td>+50%</td>
<td>41,508</td>
<td>60,927</td>
<td>+47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lompoc</td>
<td>58,300</td>
<td>75,200</td>
<td>+29%</td>
<td>20,202</td>
<td>28,283</td>
<td>+40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Ynez</td>
<td>21,800</td>
<td>27,400</td>
<td>+26%</td>
<td>8,528</td>
<td>12,249</td>
<td>+44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Total</td>
<td>399,300</td>
<td>521,700</td>
<td>+31%</td>
<td>180,445</td>
<td>258,820</td>
<td>+43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Housing starts on the South Coast have been curtailed in large part due to the public pressure on appointed and elected officials. Various planning commissions have reduced the density of developments, thereby escalating housing costs, leaving urban areas underutilized and perpetuating urban sprawl. If the increase of jobs, population and commuting continues without establishing collaborative regional planning, the quality of life in the community of Santa Barbara as we know it will deteriorate, and it will continue to have the least affordable housing in the nation.¹¹

### The Human Cost of Commuting

The principal impact felt by the residents of the County resulting from the job/housing imbalance is the continuing increase in traffic congestion. A common lament is that there are too many people in the area. The reality is that traffic congestion results from more workers commuting to their workplaces. Analysis of traffic statistics shows that commuting in the County increased 800% between the years of 1960 and 2000.¹² And yet the SBCAG Board continues to back away from addressing this congestion in a regional manner. It is estimated that more than 10,000 workers commute daily from residences in the North County to the South Coast. Between 1990 and 2000 the traffic from Ventura increased 61% and today it is estimated that there are 15,500 daily commuters from Ventura. Traffic from Ventura is projected to increase 51% during the next 20 years. Commuters from San Luis Obispo County has increased 36% during this same period and is expected to increase 74% during the next 20 years.

> "A one-hour daily commute between Santa Maria and Santa Barbara equates to 500 hours of time spent in traffic over a year’s time, which is 25% of a normal work year, and equivalent to 12.5 weeks of vacation."

SBCAG's VISION2030: 2008 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

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¹⁰ 2002 UCSB Economic Outlook Project Report (Report totals)
¹¹ Ibid.
¹² SBCAG VISION2030: 2008 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN, September 2008
The number of trips per household, minutes per trip, trip distances and vehicle miles traveled are all projected to increase significantly. SBCAG found that:

*Week to week and month to month, residents of Northern Santa Barbara County, (and) Santa Barbara South Coast... are confronted with more time-consuming commutes, as well as higher costs of home ownership and rental housing. The result is a shrinking middle class. Major employers close their doors and move away; service workers are forced to find housing in distant towns; people who can’t afford to commute double up in a shrinking supply of homes, cottages and apartments. Health and safety organizations are increasingly challenged to hire and keep qualified personnel, jeopardizing health care services at the most basic level.*

As an example, the Jury’s investigation found that 35% of our safety officers do not live in the County. While the majority of out-of-County workers commute from Ventura and San Luis Obispo, some live as far away as San Bernardino and Fresno. As described in the 2008 Regional Transportation Plan, the Board has the responsibility to “…encourage local land use decisions that shape demand for transportation services.”

The Board has concentrated on transportation issues including carpooling, express lanes, and the creation of regional bikeway networks. However, a major unaddressed task before SBCAG, and not to be understated, is the need for regional land use planning which would reduce urban sprawl and promote worker housing near job centers. If implemented, these improvements would, at the very least, work in conjunction with recent State laws requiring, among other things, the reduction in greenhouse gases.

**SBCAG**

**Board of Directors and Staff**

SBCAG was established in 1966 under a Joint Powers Agreement executed by Santa Barbara County and each of its cities. SBCAG is an agency now governed by a 13-member Board of Directors consisting of all five county supervisors and one city council member from each of the other jurisdictions.

SBCAG currently operates with a budget in excess of $33 million, including $2.4 million for salaries and benefits, and is administered by a staff of 20 responsible to the Board of Directors. The majority of funds are used for capital transportation projects. Two professional standing committees, in turn, support this staff: the 11-member Technical

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13 Ibid.
14 SBCAG sponsored report, *Taking Action Regionally, The Inter-Regional Partnership for Jobs, Housing, & Mobility, July 2004*
Planning Advisory Committee (TPAC) and the 13-member Technical Transportation Advisory Committee (TTAC) (see Appendix II).

SBCAG’s annual 2008 Overall Work Program states: “Many of the issues that face local governments and the people they serve, such as traffic, housing, air quality, and growth, extend beyond jurisdictional boundaries…” It is clear from the partial list of its functional responsibilities (see Appendix III) and publications (see Appendix IV), that the organization has chosen to concentrate principally on capital projects related to transportation issues.

**SBCAG Board and Staff Disconnect**

The high quality of the numerous studies, reports and plans produced by the SBCAG staff with the support of the advisory committees is undeniable. These documents are routinely reviewed and approved by the Board. The documents feature a consistent theme – the need for a multi-jurisdictional focus on the issues facing the County. Nonetheless, the message of the need for collaboration on a regional basis appears to have been lost on the SBCAG Board.

> "The South Coast is a geographic and economic region…. Its residents drink from the same water supply, breathe the same air, ride on the same highways, and do much of their shopping in the same stores… It makes no sense for a region such as ours to adopt a piecemeal approach to the future.” (emphasis theirs)

*Impacts of Growth Study, 1974*

The SBCAG staff is aware of the problems facing the County and has stated repeatedly “…regional problems require regional action”, yet the Board refuses to take on the responsibility for cooperative, collaborative planning. We are now behind every other county in the State in acquiring the technology and establishing the groundwork to address our problems collectively. The Jury confirmed this defensive approach by reviewing Board minutes and videos of Board meetings.

At its monthly meetings, members generally face an agenda laden with complex subjects, staff presentations, and background issues. Thirteen members with localized views respond individually to issues of growth, transportation, water, affordable housing, farm-worker housing, urban density, protection of open spaces, State intrusion on self-determination, etc. There is no existing, documented, overarching framework to guide or anchor the decision-making process. In its review of SBCAG meeting videos and minutes, the Jury confirmed reluctance on the part of the Board to adopt a collaborative approach to countywide problems. Rather than treating issues as opportunities for collective decision-making, the typical approach has been to frame them as threats to local autonomy, particularly if the State was involved. Every city, plus the unincorporated county, has its own General Plan which serves as the backdrop to the SBCAG’s deliberations. The staff has on more than one occasion proposed a regional planning approach to the Board. The Board has rejected it – repeatedly and emphatically.

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16 Ibid.

2008-2009 Santa Barbara County Civil Grand Jury
CONCLUSION

Over the years efforts have been made by many in the community to tackle the problems of growth within our County. We want to maintain and enhance the beauty of Santa Barbara County. Change is inevitable, but change with proper planning can be used to improve what we all treasure.

If we are to have more effective livable communities, then jobs, housing, and transportation must be integrated into the planning process. If open space is to be preserved, it must be identified and prioritized. Housing must be planned so it does not encroach on productive agricultural land. Solutions will cross jurisdictional lines. Cooperation and collaboration among and between SBCAG Board members and their constituents can make this happen.

“...The absence of an area-wide policy is thus, itself a form of policy: if the jurisdictions of the regions do not form a common compact charting a common future, they will be left to mean-spirited squabbles in which each tries to gain at the expense of the others – and to the detriment of all.”

Impacts of Growth Study, 1974

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding 1a
Santa Barbara County Association of Governments has authority to do regional land use planning through its Joint Powers Agreement.

Finding 1b
The staff has developed recommendations for regional land use planning approved by Santa Barbara County Association of Governments.

Finding 1c
The regional land use planning recommendations adopted by Santa Barbara County Association of Governments have not been implemented.

Recommendation 1
That Santa Barbara County Association of Governments and each respective jurisdiction implement already adopted recommendations that deal with regional land use planning.

Finding 2
Santa Barbara County Association of Governments has not developed a fully integrated regional plan coordinating jobs, housing and transportation that includes all the County's jurisdictions.

Recommendation 2
That Santa Barbara County Association of Governments develop a fully integrated regional plan.
Finding 3
Santa Barbara County Association of Governments refused to apply for State funds for comprehensive regional planning.

Recommendation 3
That Santa Barbara County Association of Governments aggressively pursue funding for comprehensive regional planning.

REQUEST FOR RESPONSE

In accordance with California Penal Code Section 933.05, each agency and government body affected by or named in this report is requested to respond in writing to the findings and recommendations in a timely manner. The following are the affected agencies for this report, with the mandated response period for each:

Santa Barbara County Association of Governments – 90 days
Findings 1a, 1b, 1c, 2, 3
Recommendations 1, 2, 3

First District Supervisor – 90 days
Findings 1a, 1b, 1c, 2, 3
Recommendations 1, 2, 3

Second District Supervisor – 90 days
Findings 1a, 1b, 1c, 2, 3
Recommendations 1, 2, 3

Third District Supervisor – 90 days
Findings 1a, 1b, 1c, 2, 3
Recommendations 1, 2, 3

Fourth District Supervisor – 90 days
Findings 1a, 1b, 1c, 2, 3
Recommendations 1, 2, 3

Fifth District Supervisor – 90 days
Findings 1a, 1b, 1c, 2, 3
Recommendations 1, 2, 3

Mayor, City of Buellton – 90 days
Findings 1a, 1b, 1c, 2, 3
Recommendations 1, 2, 3
Mayor, City of Carpinteria – 90 days
  Findings 1a, 1b, 1c, 2, 3
  Recommendations 1, 2, 3

Mayor, City of Goleta – 90 days
  Findings 1a, 1b, 1c, 2, 3
  Recommendations 1, 2, 3

Mayor, City of Guadalupe – 90 days
  Findings 1a, 1b, 1c, 2, 3
  Recommendations 1, 2, 3

Mayor, City of Lompoc – 90 days
  Findings 1a, 1b, 1c, 2, 3
  Recommendations 1, 2, 3

Mayor, City of Santa Barbara – 90 days
  Findings 1a, 1b, 1c, 2, 3
  Recommendations 1, 2, 3

Mayor, City of Santa Maria – 90 days
  Findings 1a, 1b, 1c, 2, 3
  Recommendations 1, 2, 3

Mayor, City of Solvang – 90 days
  Findings 1a, 1b, 1c, 2, 3
  Recommendations 1, 2, 3
APPENDIX I

Recent Legislation Regarding Planning Issues

1. California Regional Blueprint Planning Program[^17] – A grant program sponsored by the California Business, Transportation and Housing Agency to promote regional planning. The program was intended to foster a more efficient land use pattern that:
   1) supports improved mobility and reduced dependency on single-occupant vehicle trips
   2) accommodates an adequate supply of housing for all incomes
   3) reduces impacts on valuable habitat, productive farmland, and air quality
   4) increases resource use efficiency
   5) results in safe and vibrant neighborhoods

2. California Assembly Bill 32 – Global Warming Solutions Act: “Establishes first-in-the-world comprehensive program of regulatory and market mechanisms to achieve real, quantifiable, cost-effective reductions of greenhouse gases (GHG).”[^18] This legislation requires the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to:
   1) Establish a statewide GHG emissions cap for 2020
   2) Adopt a plan by January 1, 2009 indicating how emission reductions will be achieved from significant GHG sources via regulations, market mechanisms and other actions
   3) Adopt a list of discrete, early action measures by July 1, 2007 that can be implemented before January 1, 2010 and adopt such measures

3. California Senate Bill 375 – SB 375 integrates the three major planning activities currently conducted by SBCAG, 1) Regional Growth Forecast, 2) Regional Transportation Plan, and 3) Regional Housing Needs Assessment. More importantly SB 375 provides the opportunity for Santa Barbara County and city planners to incorporate into the planning process (Housing Element) the means to provide for:
   1) Residential development near job cores and along transportation corridors and/or transit centers
   2) Integration of zoning for housing, commercial and industrial clusters as “villages”
   3) Maximization and encouragement of walking or cycling to work, and increasing housing density levels, for all income levels
   4) Reduction of commuter miles driven
   5) "Sustainable Communities Projects" with relaxed CEQA requirements

[^17]: http://calblueprint.dot.ca.gov/
[^18]: California Air Resources Board, Fact Sheet (http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/factsheets/ab32factsheet.pdf)
APPENDIX II

SBCAG Advisory Committees

Technical Planning Advisory Committee (TPAC) consists of 11 professional members:
- Eight members, one from each of the cities
- One member from the County
- One member representing the Air Pollution Control District (APCD)
- One SBCAG staff representative (Deputy Director, Planning)
- Selected ex-officio members

TPAC is SBCAG’s regional planning advisory committee serving as a communication link between SBCAG and all planning agencies in the County.

Technical Transportation Advisory Committee (TTAC) consists of 13 professional members:
- Eight members, one from each of the cities
- One member from the County
- One member representing the Air Pollution Control District (APCD)
- One member representing the Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District (MTD)
- One representative from CALtrans District V
- One SBCAG staff representative (Deputy Director, Planning)

TTAC serves as a communication link between SBCAG and all transportation agencies in the County. TTAC reviews and makes policy recommendations on fiscal matters, fund allocations, special studies, and planning documents for submittal to the SBCAG Board.

APPENDIX III

SBCAG “What We Do”19

- Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
- Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA)
- Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC)
- Local Transportation Authority (LTA)
- Congestion Management Agency (CMA)
- Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE)
- Inter-Regional Partnership Project (IRPP)

19 http://www.sbcag.org
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

APPENDIX IV

Relevant SBCAG Regional Publications

- 1992 SBCAG Regional Housing Needs Study
- 1995 SBCAG Jobs/Housing Study
- Tri-County Socioeconomic Monitoring and Mitigation Program, June 2000
- 2002 SBCAG Regional Housing Needs for Santa Barbara County
- The Inter-Regional Partnership for Jobs, Housing, and Mobility, July 2004
- 2030 Travel Forecast for Santa Barbara County, September 2004
- 2006 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP), January 2006
- 2007 Federal Transportation Improvement Program, September 2006
- Regional Growth Forecast, 2005-2040, August 2007
- SCAG Final Ventura/Santa Barbara Rail Study Report, March 2008
- VISION2030: 2008 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN, September 20 2008

For a complete list of SBCAG publications go to the SBCAG Website at http://www.sbcag.org.