



## Cabarrus County Government

Cabarrus County Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting  
December 13, 2011  
7:00 P.M.

Board of Commissioners Meeting Room  
Cabarrus County Governmental Center

### Agenda

1. Roll Call
2. Approval November 2011 Minutes
3. Approval of Findings Of Fact Deviations From County Design Review Standards  
Conditional Use Rezoning - Applicant: Paula Yost
4. Approval of Findings Of Fact Conditional Use Permit Portion Of Conditional Use  
Rezoning - Applicant: Paula Yost
5. Blueprinting Test Group – staffed by Centralina Council of Governments
6. Directors Report



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Mr. Todd Berg, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Members present, in addition to the Chair, were: Ms. Mary Blakeney, Ms. Brenda Cook, Mr. Eugene Divine, Mr. Larry Ensley, Mr. Danny Fesperman, Ms. Shannon Frye, Ms. Emily Knudson, Mr. James Litaker, Mr. Richard Price and Mr. Aaron Ritchie. Attending from the Planning and Development Department were, Ms. Susie Morris, Planning and Zoning Manager, Ms. Kelly Sifford, Planning and Development Director, Ms. Arlena Roberts, Clerk to the Board, Mr. Jonathan Marshall, Deputy County Manager, Mr. Larry Burrage, County Commissioner, Ms. Liz Poole, County Commissioner and Ms. Rebecca Yarborough, Mr. Jason Wager and Mr. Blair Israel from Centralina Council of Governments.

**Roll Call**

Approval of November 8, 2011, Planning and Zoning Commission Minutes.

Mr. Larry Ensley, **MOTIONED, SECONDED** by Mr. Aaron Ritchie to **APPROVE** the November 8, 2011 minutes. The vote was unanimous.

Ms. Morris said there was one revision on the design standards, by County Attorney, Mr. Koch. She said when he initially submitted it do us the parking was not included. She said there are four different standards, so parking is now addressed in there so that it is clear when the applicant records it that there are standards they will have to meet.

She said the Attorney will not be here this evening but he has gone through the minutes and he does not have any corrections to the minutes or to the findings except for this one particular section.

**Approval of Findings of Fact Deviations from County Design Review Standards – Conditional Use Rezoning**

Mr. Larry Ensley, **MOTIONED, SECONDED** by Mr. Aaron Ritchie to **APPROVE** the Findings of Fact Deviations from County Design Review Standards – Conditional Use Rezoning with the revision recommended by the County Attorney. The vote was unanimous.

**Approval of Findings of Fact Conditional Use Permit Portion of Conditional Use Rezoning**

Mr. Larry Ensley, **MOTIONED, SECONDED** by Mr. Aaron Ritchie to **APPROVE** the Findings of Fact Conditional Use Permit Portion of Conditional Use Rezoning. The vote was unanimous.

**Blueprinting**

Ms. Morris said this evening we will participate in a Blueprinting exercise. The Centralina Council of Governments (CCOG) has received a significant grant for this exercise. She said Ms. Rebecca Yarborough, Mr. Blair Israel and Mr. Jason Wager are here this evening and will be leading us in the exercise.

This exercise was done with the Planning Directors and she offered the commission up as a test group since they have some knowledge about planning, and also because some of you are in development.

Rebecca Yarborough addressed the Commission stating that the grant they received is a Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant. It is a planning grant in name because that is the way the legislation is written that funded it; it is a federal grant. We are looking upon it as a way to help communities dig down and address some of the tough issues that they have needed and wanted to address for a long time.

She said one of the big questions in this region, is how could and should the region grow. Knowing that we are going to add population, even with the economic down turn; how can we grow in a way that protects what we treasure, and how can we grow in a way that does not lead to a worsening of the situation.

She said these are some of the issues that we look at; how does your region grow? We know that based on the regional travel demand model, we are going to add 1.5 to 2 million people by 2035; we will adjust that number when the new estimates come out.

We also know that the population is changing. We are getting to be an older region and as the housing market changes, sometimes there are different housing preferences and people have different needs that are based on their particular situation in life. We also know that money has never been everywhere; but we are undergoing what everybody calls the new normal and physical constraints are great now and probably will not change in the near future.

She said there are a lot of job losses and job growth challenges, in terms of where are the jobs, where are the people, what do people have to do to get to jobs that match up with their skill set? There are also environmental concerns; in a lot of the region people are concerned about loss of open space. Virtually over 50% of the streams in the region are impaired for water quality and we have air quality challenges.

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We have vision, but we do not have a plan. We say that we want sustainable, well managed growth that protects quality of life. We say that we want a safe and healthy environment and a strong diverse economy, but the question is what does that actually look like on the ground?

She said that is part of what this exercise is designed to help figure out and that is why we ask the question, how have other regions handled this challenge? The answer is blueprinting, which is a short hand version of saying alternative scenarios analysis.

She said it started with military planning and strategic analysis and then moved into business. Then during the 1980's, some regions in the country Denver, the Kansas City region, Sacramento, the Wasatch Range and even the Urban Land Institute, which is a private sector based developers group started looking at how we could do scenario analysis to help us get a better handle on what kind of development is going to produce the long term results we want.

This process in short, is the way we go through and create several alternative patterns for growth and development and we talk about what goals we want to achieve by how we develop. Then there is an analysis piece where you really start to analyze the patterns against whatever goals have been selected and start to build consensus around what you want.

She said the big difference with blueprinting from some of the traditional processes that we use is that all the scenarios are developed by the public and it can address a lot of different things; it's not just land use. It can be open space, trails, jobs and infrastructure.

When we do the blueprinting exercise in this region, we want to do it around the concept of place based economic development. Basically, that is a short hand way of saying we want to start first by considering what kinds of jobs communities can attract, what kinds of things make sense given the work force that they have, working closely with the economic developers, what kind of facilities are available; really digging in on where the jobs go, what kind of jobs they are and then building the scenarios from that.

Ms. Yarborough said the next piece is the indicators. Indicators is just a term that means some type of performance metric that will let you know how you are doing against goals you have set. This is the piece that typically doesn't get included because it takes some sophisticated modeling that we have not had the capacity to do and this grant is going to give us the wherewithal to do it. That will allow us to take the scenarios that are created and to evaluate each scenario against what communities have indicated that they want.

We are doing this with a lot of public input because it is really important when you do one of these things, you really find out what is so important to the regions leadership and to the citizens of the region; that they actually care enough to want to track it. She said the analysis piece is the next piece of the work.

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Ms. Yarborough said the pictures that you see are from the Sacramento area which went through this process. They found that they wanted to have economic growth happening by reinvestment in their existing communities. This is another way of saying they wanted to look at the old industrial areas of their communities that were starting to be areas of disinvestment. They wanted to look at the big vacant properties, like Phillip Morris perhaps. They wanted to look at the areas that were sources of pulling down the surrounding neighborhoods and then figure out how we bring reinvestment back into them. When Sacramento went through this process they were able to identify a scenario that was going to give them those results.

We would hope to have the same kind of process where we identify the results that we want and then work until we get a scenario that looks like it is going to give us those results.

She said it was the same thing with their housing types. When Sacramento went through this process, virtually none of the housing that was being built in the market was the kind of housing that their citizens age 55 or older were going to want to live in. And yet, they had a significant part of their population that was going to be age 55 or older. This process helped them basically get on the stick and start identifying where and how they could build some of the housing that was going to meet the preferences of that part of their community so that they didn't have those people moving somewhere else or have to have additional supportive services to help them in housing that didn't meet their needs.

Finally, the last part of this is the developing consensus about which way you want to grow. She said two things are really important and because this is a process that gives people an opportunity to change things around until they get what they really want and until they get what the indicators and the analysis demonstrate are going to be the results that they want, you build consensus as you go and you are able to have discussions with better information then you would otherwise have.

Ms. Yarborough said what emerges from this is a preferred scenario. It is not mandated on anybody, but what happens is, because there's better information there's tremendous citizen involvement and what is emerging is emerging through a consensus process. A lot of these things get adopted because people find that there are certain housing preferences, they are going to be able to make money this way, and they are basically producing a long term result that the public wants to see.

We did an exercise with the regional planners on November 9, 2011. We had the maps that we are going to use tonight and we took the projections of increased population for the particular map segment that you are going to see and the projections for increased jobs. She said the real question that blueprinting tries to answer is if you have all these people coming into an area, where are you going to put them, where and how are you going to add them all to your community in a way that makes sense to you and gives you the long term results that you want to see.

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She said for this exercise you will be divided into two groups, one at each table. She said this is a very poor man's experience because we do not have the modeling to support this yet, but we can start to talk about the kinds of things that you care about and would want to see reflected in future land use plans. Then we are actually going to start placing jobs and people on the map in any way that makes sense to you.

The question that we posed to the planners and we will pose to you is what kind of development pattern is going to give you the long term results that you want to see. In particular, is going to be fiscally sustainable; meaning that you can afford to continue to serve that type of development as local government and is going to give developers a return on investment, because you have to be able to make money or nobody is going to do it and that is going to achieve other goals that you may want to achieve.

She said the benefit of going through this process is that you, as decision makers, will get better information. You will be able to talk about an analysis of tradeoffs and the public will be able to talk about that same kind of analysis; it is public education. Often times the public does not understand that if you build a development where there is no water and sewer or no road network, at some point that will have to be built and someone has to pay for it. Even if the state or developer pays for the roads in the beginning, at some point they get turned over to the state and then the state doesn't have money to keep them in repair and then they come and complain to you.

She said this will help people connect the dots, and it could also help to establish measurable benchmarks and goals. The particular software that we are getting can be used to get regional analysis; the county can use it to get county analysis and analysis on particular development proposals. It can be scaled to different geographies, so once we get it in here, it can really become a tool that anyone can use who would like to use it.

Ms. Yarborough said the Sacramento area has some of the best and most readily available information. Sacramento found that when they went through this process, they built consensus around a development pattern that saved 357 square miles of open space and working agricultural lands; which out there is a big thing because agriculture is there big business.

She said the Kansas City region identified 2.5 billion dollars in infrastructure savings in their transportation and public works planning. She mentioned the Sacramento area getting the mixed housing that they needed for their aging population. When the Denver region went through this process they found out there was a whole lot more support for transit than they thought there was and it became a way that they were able to move transit forward more rapidly.

Just about every preferred scenario that is picked reduces the rate of growth of the info-miles traveled; which is another way of saying it reduces traffic congestion. Most regions and most jurisdictions within those regions have more success bringing in any outside funding because they have a plan and they have the data to support it. We expect that our region would get a lot of the same kind of benefits, plus, we would have better

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tools for our MPO's than that are now available. We would have better tools for planning boards, better tools for planners and we think we would also have maybe a slightly raised level of perception about some of these issues.

She said the calendar for doing this is pretty busy. It will be about a 2 year process to do this part of the work. She appreciates Ms. Morris volunteering the Board to help them test this and to find out what kinds of information you wish you had as you are going through it. There would be similar maps, similar sub-regions, public processes where people start to build alternative patterns of development that then are modeled and that they can get feedback on; what is giving them the goals that they hoped to achieve.

The first thing that we want to do tonight is to answer any questions that you might have about this, and before we have a whole lot more feedback, they would like to find out what kinds of things you typically look at when putting together a land use plan or consider development decisions and what kinds of information your staff looks at. We will then do the exercise and talk a little bit about what you learned, what you don't know that you wish you knew and how we can make it better.

Ms. Yarborough asked if anyone had any questions so far.

Mr. Larry Burrage, County Commissioner, said isn't this what's putting a lot more people in smaller places.

Ms. Yarborough said, not necessarily. She thinks the real question is figuring out what people want and having them figure out and get to a point that they are happy with the results.

Mr. Burrage said it looks like you are closing it in to more people in one location and saving the farmland and all that but there will be more people in a smaller area.

She said it could be that way, but people could choose not to have that approach. What this does is it basically starts to evaluate what are some of the cost of all those decisions. Because there are cost if you move everybody in and there is cost if you leave people out.

Mr. Burrage said if you move people closer together you are going to start a pack of trouble.

Ms. Yarborough said that is why it is really important that this is locally driven. We are approaching it from the stand point of what do people really care about, then lets come up with ways to undertake this process that are going to give people the results; the long term results that they would like to see. Right now, what is happening is we tend to operate on the best information we can get from the literature. But, we do not always know exactly how that is going to play out in our own area and what kind of long term results we are going to get.

She thinks Mr. Burrage hit on critical thing, that this is locally driven.

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Mr. Jason Wager said before we get the maps out and begin the exercise, what are some things that are important to the Board when beginning a land use process? He asked what some of the things were that they treasured or that are important to them that they would want to be sure gets into to a plan.

**Treasured Values mentioned:**

Schools and educational quality  
Information and impartial feedback  
Multi-modal transportation  
Open space, both agricultural and parks  
Water supply and quality, and sewer capacity (including costs), and stormwater programs  
The Internet and technology  
Access to services  
The mix of housing types available

**Things to Avoid:**

Crime  
Being only a “bedroom community”  
Negative housing scenarios and constraints on the housing market, including affordable housing requirements  
Excessive clear-cutting of trees and excessive impervious areas in construction projects

Ms. Yarborough said if we were doing this in a public group, we would go through this same kind of process. We would capture exactly this kind of information; what do you really value, what do you care about, what do you want to avoid, and what do you want to see happen. We would then ask them to do what we are asking you do in this exercise.

For this exercise you will be given a map slice that is part of Cabarrus, Mecklenburg and Union County. By 2035, according to the regional travel model right now, there are going to be 386,810 more people moving into this area and if we figure that the average household size is about 2.8 people per household that is 138,413 houses.

We have taken the liberty of putting 279 people on a 100 acre chip, which is one unit per acre for housing. You all will be given 1,384 chips to put all those houses in. You are also given 230 chips at a 1000 jobs per 100 acres, which are going to give you the number of jobs that are going to come to this area.

Ms. Yarborough said looking at the things that you value and the things that you would like to avoid, we would like for you to decide where and how that development should happen in this exercise.

The Board participated in the exercise.

Comments made after the exercise:

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Ms. Yarborough asked what type of information the Board would want to see on the map that was not on the map or what information you would want going into it on the front end.

**Things to see on the map:**

Water and sewer infrastructure, and other infrastructure (gas, etc.) both existing and

proposed

Soil Suitability

Floodplains

Transportation Corridors

Proposed land use plans

Schools, hospitals, and other major service locations

Road Plans

Ms. Yarborough said one of the things that they proposed to do as sort of base line and to make sure the models are working as they are supposed to work is to do the existing population and model that and make sure that those results calibrate with things like a regional travel demand model so that they are really producing the same kind of information.

They also plan to model what happens with everybody's adopted existing land use plan. That will provide everybody the information about the different current adopted land use plans say.

We want to do like Sacramento did and build a model, fire wall it, and then make a part of it available to the public to play with. She said developers would be able to go in and test the numbers to see if they got the same results they used when they used their own information. She said it really helped people understand that results were consistent.

She asked the Board what information they wanted to learn.

**Things to learn:**

The levels of density that is acceptable

What kind of jobs, industry, people want and make sense

Tax base effects of development patterns

Effects on traffic of development patterns

Management of growth along roadways (discussion was about how do you do it?)

Federal funding to guide/stimulate growth

Ms. Yarborough said there is a lot of effort going into this and a lot of effort going into the economic development piece that will help us start to better align economic development work force and the land use piece. We also have a lot of effort going into the idea that as communities get to a point that they have sites that they really want to look at developing or redeveloping, that have brownfield issues or things like that, we have funding in the grant to look at how we can improve the funding and financing tools. We have just put in for a major brownfield assessment grant that would help with any of

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those areas that are potential brownfields in terms of doing some assessments on the priority sites that our communities identify.

The way we are approaching this type grant is by not saying it is a planning grant and that that is all we are going to do. We are going to plan, and then as soon as communities are ready to start implementing, we are going to start working with them on going after any grant funds or alternative funding and financing tools that other states may have that we do not have in North Carolina to help accomplish the goals. What this is going to help us do we think is to help clarify some things.

Ms. Yarborough thanked the Board for participating and asked them to let Ms. Morris know if they had any additional comments, questions, concerns or if they wanted to get involved, or knew of someone who wants to get involve and she will get the information to us. This is a fully open process and they want anyone at the table would like to participate.

**Director Report**

Ms. Morris said we are still moving forward with the text amendments. The design guidelines that you all looked at for the schools are going to be on the Board of Commissioners agenda for January 2012.

We have not heard anything else on the APFO. The Supreme Court released their decisions this past week; which they normally release them at the end of the December, so she does not expect that they will do anything until the end of January.

We went to court on the Ben Small case and were successful in getting that case dismissed. She said now we will have to see what happens with the building.

There being no further discussion, it was the Consensus of the Board to ADJOURN the meeting. The meeting ended at 7:47 p.m.

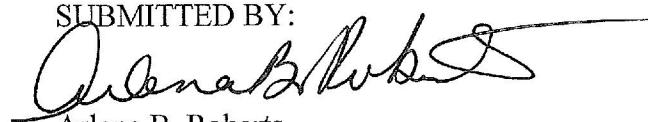
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APPROVED BY:



Todd Berg, Chairman

SUBMITTED BY:



Arlena B. Roberts

ATTEST BY:



Susie Morris  
Planning and Zoning Manager

**FINDINGS OF FACT**  
**CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT**  
**PORTION OF CONDITIONAL USE REZONING**  
**APPLICANT: PAULA YOST**  
**5605 HIGHWAY 49 EAST**  
**MT. PLEASANT**  
**RZON 2011-00004**

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

1. The use as proposed is not detrimental to the public health, safety or general welfare.

a) *The Applicant proposes to convert the existing small uninhabited early 1900's house into a law office, which use will have no adverse impact on the public health, safety or general welfare.*

b) *The proposed use adds no new additional burden to the property that would affect the public adversely.*

2. The use as proposed is appropriately located with respect to transportation facilities, water supply, fire and police protection, waste disposal, etc.

a) *The proposed law office will use a rollout container for waste disposal.*

b) *The property contains an operating well and septic system and City of Concord water is available to the property.*

c) *All other public facilities, which are not specifically required for this additional use, are located nearby.*

3. The use as proposed will not violate neighborhood character nor adversely affect surrounding land uses.

a) *The house on the property will essentially retain the look of a residence but will be updated on the outside.*

b) *The proposed use is consistent with the uses immediately adjacent to the property.*

4. The use as proposed will comply with the general plans for the physical development of the County as embodied in the Zoning Ordinance or in the area development plans that have been adopted.

a) *The proposed benign use of this parcel will allow the parcel to be productive, yet still retain the essentially rural character of this part of the County, which*

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*character is consistent with the general plans for the development of the County.*

b) *The proposed use is consistent with the uses immediately adjacent to the property.*

**FINDINGS OF FACT**  
**DEVIATIONS FROM COUNTY DESIGN REVIEW STANDARDS**  
**CONDITIONAL USE REZONING**  
**APPLICANT: PAULA YOST**  
**5605 HIGHWAY 49 E., MT. PLEASANT**  
**CASE RZON 2011-00004**

**A. GENERAL FINDINGS**

1. This property is an approximate 1.37 acre tract in a location that is essentially rural in character.
2. The existing improvements to the property consists of an early 1900's era house that is no longer occupied. The proposed use consists of a conversion of this structure to a law office while retaining the essential exterior design components of the house. Thus, the house will still retain the character of the original residence even though used for offices.

**B. CONNECTIVITY AND SIDEWALKS**

1. The above General Findings of Fact are incorporated by reference as Findings regarding this issue.
2. The Ordinance requires a minimum 5 foot sidewalk.
3. Because of the rural character of the area, there are no other sidewalks and a sidewalk near the road would not connect to anything.
4. The plans call for sidewalks adjacent to the parking area and the building.

**C. FENESTRATION**

1. The above General Findings of Fact are incorporated by reference as Findings regarding this issue.
2. The Ordinance requires that not less than 50% of the length and 25% of the surface of the structure be in public entrances or windows.
3. The Applicant is utilizing the original fenestration openings from the residence except for a subsequently enclosed porch, which is being reworked with a design consistent with the original design of the house.

**D. PARKING**

1. The above General Findings of Fact are incorporated by reference as Findings regarding this issue.

2. Although the Ordinance requires parking in the rear to screen from the road, the rear of the structure is unusable for parking because of the location of the septic tank and septic field there.

3. The location of the proposed parking is logical based on the position of the structure relative to the road and the fact that the parking will be naturally screened due to the parking area being located ten (10) feet below the grade of the road.

4. The applicant plans to install extra vegetation and landscaping to further screen the parking from the road.

Based on the foregoing Findings, the Planning and Zoning Commission as the Design Review Committee reaches the following

**CONCLUSIONS**

The deviations sought by the Applicant from the District Development Standards in Chapter 5 of the Cabarrus County Zoning Ordinance are APPROVED, because such deviations meet the following requirements of the Ordinance permitting such deviations:

1. The deviation for architectural design is compatible in relation to the surrounding neighborhood.

2. The deviation in site design is compatible with the context of the surrounding neighborhood.

## Regional Blueprinting: Some QuickFacts

### ***What types of development patterns produce the kinds of long-term results communities really want?***

That's a critical question facing cities and counties all the time, as development proposals come in, as additional people move to the area, and as jobs are grown through business start-up, expansion, or recruitment. One size does not fit all, and choice is important. What is the right mix for each area?

### ***What is Blueprinting?***

Regional Blueprinting is a publicly-driven process that helps communities and regions establish goals for their future, based on what they care about, and evaluate alternative development possibilities for their future in light of those goals. Every community, and the region as a whole, has information about its existing land uses, infrastructure, economic development resources, and has projections about how much growth will happen by some point in the future (the "horizon year"). With this information, Blueprinting is a four-step process that helps communities determine how that growth can happen in a way that meets their goals—it is ***an important tool for turning visions into plans***. The four steps are:

- Select "***indicators***"—or "performance metrics" that reflect the long-term goals the area wants to achieve, and care about enough to track. Revitalization in the downtowns of communities? Preservation of lands for agriculture or parks? Reduced energy use or "vehicle miles traveled?" More walkable communities, which have public health impacts?
- Develop, with public involvement, several ***different ways that the area COULD grow***. This can range from high density urban areas with almost no development in the suburbs or rural areas, to growth that happens almost exclusively in suburbs or rural areas, to any mix of the two. The public creates the "scenarios" for the possible alternative futures of the area.
- ***Evaluate each scenario*** in an open process in terms of how well it "performs" against the indicators that the community has determined are important to it in the long term. This is done through a modeling process, and can be done very quickly with feedback to participants so that they see the impacts of their work.
- Identify and ***build consensus*** around the proposed "alternative future," or elements of multiple alternatives, that produce the kinds of results the community wants to see.

Of course, there is a great deal of "behind the scenes" work to put together the data and modeling that can accomplish this—but once that work is done, the process can be used for communities, counties, and larger areas including regions, to help evaluate alternative growth patterns and regional, as well as local, impacts. The program can even be used to help communities assess the impacts of proposed new developments.

### ***What are the benefits of Blueprinting?***

Blueprinting has been used successfully in other regions to help with economic development planning, provide the types of housing communities need in the future, develop cost-effective infrastructure plans, preserve open space, and save on future infrastructure investments. It can help to avoid

unintended consequences of growth, and ensure that planning for transportation, land uses, new jobs, utility infrastructure, parks, and community facilities such as schools, etc. all works together and creates desired synergy, rather than at cross-purposes as sometimes happens. It has helped to identify potential cost savings, and has helped communities make more persuasive arguments for needed infrastructure to support the implementation of plans. Finally, it is being designed in this region to support the Regional Travel Demand Modeling process used for transportation planning.

### ***What keeps Blueprinting from being “Just Another Plan?”***

Blueprinting plans are consensus-driven, with performance metrics to support them. Some communities have established benchmarks to evaluate their own progress in meeting these metrics, which helps to ensure implementation. Some communities have found that Blueprinting has helped their private sector identify market forces that they had missed, and so created new private opportunities for job growth. Blueprinting implementation has never been mandated—but by creating an understanding of the forces and patterns of growth that support long-term community goals and values, it provides a way for the community to get what they really want. It also helps communities, and decision-makers, make better-informed decisions. It has also helped communities obtain funding for implementation, because it demonstrates communities’ seriousness about aligning plans, creating synergies, and operating efficiently to plan for the future.

### ***What terms do I need to be familiar with for Blueprinting?***

Not too many—but you’ll hear:

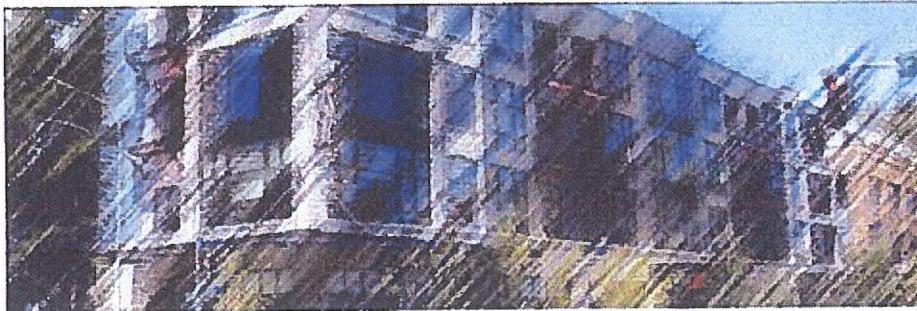
**INDICATORS:** The measures that are used to evaluate how well different publicly-created future development patterns meet community goals. An indicator might be something like, “acres of open space developed,” or “projected travel time,” or “mix of job and housing locations within a 1-mile radius.” Indicators reflect those goals that the area cares about enough to measure and want to track.

**ALTERNATIVE FUTURES SCENARIOS:** This is the technical name for the different future development patterns created by the public through workshops.

**MODELING:** There are a number of software programs available that model the projected impacts of different types of public investments, including the existing Regional Travel Demand Model and programs such as Community Viz. The software (I-Places) that is used for Blueprinting is able to evaluate a number of diverse indicators quickly, so that public workshop participants can get feedback on the results of their work quickly and start to build immediate understanding of what supports their goals, and what doesn’t.

### ***How should I prepare?***

Think about what YOU want for YOUR community for the future, and for the region. Think about what you DON’T want to have happen, what you’d like to avoid for your children, and their children. And come prepared to talk about it. Think also about what YOU would want to get out of a Blueprinting process—the questions YOU would like to have it help to answer.



Sacramento Area Council of Governments

## FACTSHEET

# Blueprint Transportation and Land Use Plan



### What is Blueprint?

The Blueprint project was initiated by the SACOG Board of Directors after it viewed regional computer modeling results showing that current growth patterns and transportation investment priorities would result in significant increases in congestion in the future. The three-year process used public input and involvement to develop the Preferred Blueprint Scenario for 2050, a voluntary framework for future growth in the region that reduces the congestion, provides for a greater range of housing choices, encourages reinvestment in already developed areas, and better integrates the location of jobs and housing.

transportation investment priorities would result in significant increases in congestion in the future. The three-year process used public input and involvement to develop the Preferred Blueprint Scenario for 2050, a voluntary framework for future growth in the region that reduces the congestion, provides for a greater range of housing choices, encourages reinvestment in already developed areas, and better integrates the location of jobs and housing.

### Public Involvement

Blueprint brought together local officials, civic groups, environmental advocates, the development community, business leaders and the public in a first-ever attempt to guide how the region grows over the next 50 years. Seeking broad input from the ground up, SACOG and civic partner Valley Vision held a series of 37 workshops in neighborhoods, cities and counties throughout the region. By the time the workshops, two Regional Forums and public opinion research had concluded, more than 5,000 participants had voiced support for the Preferred Blueprint Scenario.

### The Next Steps in Blueprint

Blueprint project research clearly shows that changes to local land use patterns could achieve significant benefits to the region's transportation system and air quality. Consequently, the MTP2035 utilizes the Preferred Blueprint Growth Scenario, as a basis for the 28-year transportation plan for the region—the first transportation plan for the region that marries land use and transportation planning.

Another outgrowth of the Blueprint process has been the Rural-Urban Connections Strategy (RUCS), a look at the region's growth and sustainability objectives from a rural perspective.

### A Changing Region

By 2050, the Sacramento region will:

- add 1.7 million residents
- add 1 million new jobs
- add 800,000 new homes

### Six Principles

The Blueprint focuses on six principles:

- Provide a variety of transportation choices
- Offer housing choices and opportunities
- Take advantage of compact development
- Use existing assets
- Mixed land uses
- Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, through natural resources conservation
- Encourage distinctive, attractive communities with quality design



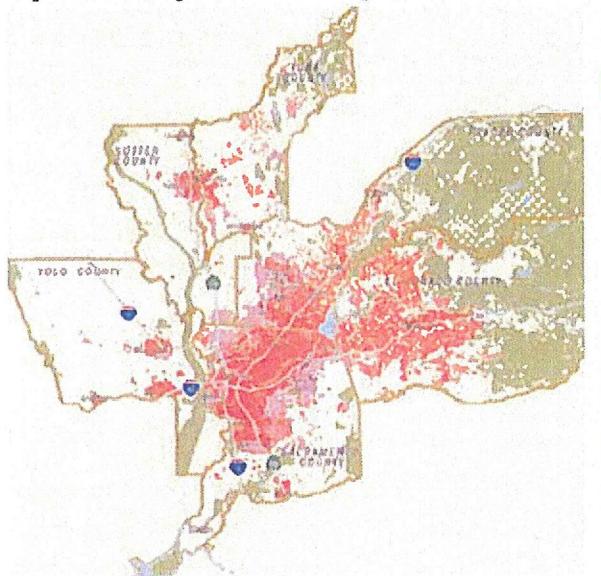
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## Preferred Blueprint Scenario

Expected Development Under Blueprint—2050



### Key to the Map

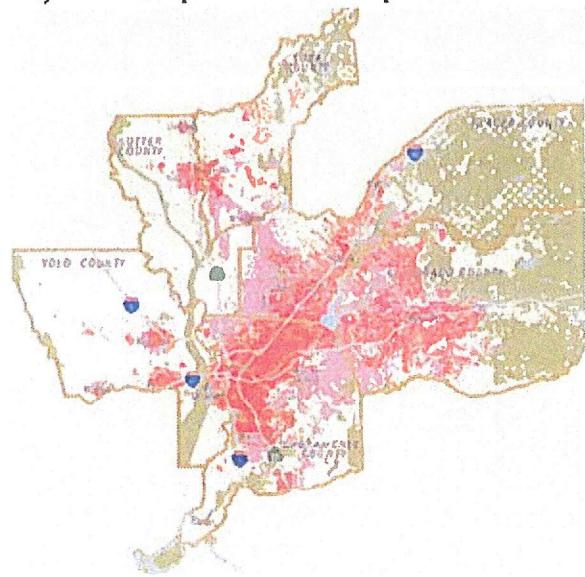
- areas of existing development
- areas of future development
- green areas (e.g., open space, parks, wetlands, vernal pools, stream corridors, hardwood stands)
- agriculture and other undeveloped lands
- rivers, streams and lakes
- city boundaries
- highways
- county boundaries

**Note:** Some vernal pools in Yuba, Sutter and southwest Placer counties are preserved, but are not shown on these maps.

**Note:** El Dorado County elected not to directly participate in this phase of the Blueprint process due to on-going issues associated with their General Plan.

## Basecase Scenario

Projected Development without Blueprint—2050



## Project Technology

The Blueprint project utilizes a web-based program known as I-PLACE<sup>3S</sup>. Working much like a computer game, I-PLACE<sup>3S</sup> is an interactive real-time modeling tool that gives community residents the ability to see how the choices that they make regarding land use and transportation will affect their communities.

It demonstrates how planning and design choices, made by a community, have impacts on development patterns, modal choices, redevelopment potential, and livability to name a few. By being aware of the consequences of different development choices, citizens can improve their economies, environments and quality of life.

## For More Information:

Information on Blueprint, and the community involvement process, are available at: [www.sacregionblueprint.org](http://www.sacregionblueprint.org). Also available online are a variety of civic engagement tools including educational videos and Powerpoint presentations, photo simulations and a planning and transportation photo database.

## **Regional Blueprinting: A Quick Summary**

### ***What types of development patterns produce the kinds of long-term results communities really want?***

That's a critical question facing cities and counties all the time, as development proposals come in, as additional people move to the area, and as jobs are grown through business start-up, expansion, or recruitment. A process called "Regional Blueprinting" can help communities answer that question. At the Planning and Zoning Board Meeting on December 13, we'll be trying a "mini-blueprinting exercise," and you are invited to participate! We'll have a brief introduction to Blueprinting, spend about 40 minutes on an exercise, and debrief and talk about what you learned and liked, and what you'd like more information about.

Some of the things you may want to think about before the exercise include: What do people really want this community, and the region, to be like long-term? What are some potential unintended consequences of growth, that they might want to avoid? How much will it cost government to serve growth, and how much will growth provide to the community in revenues? What's happening with the community's demographics—aging population? Changing cultural trends? When people say they want a "sustainable" community—what does that look like? Jobs will be coming—even with the economic downturn; where should they be located?

Decision-makers in other regions have found the Blueprinting process helpful to make better decisions on behalf of the citizens they represent, both in their own communities and in the overall metro area. We hope that this exercise will be a good introduction to the process, and fun for participants!

# **CONNECT Vision: Connecting Vision to Plan**

**OBJECTIVE:** Translate the adopted CONNECT Regional Vision (a values-based document) into an implementable planning document with performance metrics in a way that engages the full diversity of the region's population.

## ➤ **Create sustainable economies**

- That support families and communities in ways that also sustain quality of life and the environment.*

## ➤ **Build on the adopted CONNECT Vision**

- Sustainable, Well-Managed Growth for quality of life, preserving the environment and maintaining the efficiency of infrastructure investment*
- A Safe and Healthy Environment with good air and water quality*
- A Strong, Diverse Economy that provides jobs throughout the region*

## ➤ **Produce a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development**

- Ensuring that EVERYONE benefits as the region grows in a collaborative and inclusive manner*
- Building public capacity of our local governments, institutions and the public for addressing ongoing sustainability issues*
- Growing sustainably as our population increases*
- Increasing the number of desired jobs to revitalize existing communities*
- Creating multiple "wins" as we address quality of life and environmental sustainability issues*



- The CONNECT Vision reflects our shared values and aspirations
- It does not yet provide a consensus "framework" for handling growth and meeting these issues ...

## A LOOK AT OUR REGION

- Population GROWTH: 1.5 to 2 million people by 2035
- Population CHANGE: "Graying" New cultures and housing preferences
- Greater FISCAL CONSTRAINTS: Limitations on infrastructure funding and operating revenues
- Job LOSSES and job GROWTH: Where are the jobs versus where are the people? Matching up facilities, skills, and business plans?
- ENVIRONMENTAL concerns: Loss of open space Too many impaired streams Air quality challenges

*Our region has a VISION, but no regional PLAN to realize it!*

*It's time to embark on a collaborative and inclusive process called*

**“Blueprinting”**

# Blueprinting means ...

- **SELECTING** indicators that reflect the goals people want to achieve
- **CREATING** several alternative patterns for growth and development
- **ANALYZING** the patterns using the indicators
- **DEVELOPING CONSENSUS** around the pattern that produces the best results on indicators, with extensive citizen input

The regional BLUEPRINT can be used by the region, by towns, by neighborhoods

## Project Timeline

### 2012

- Public Engagement: what quantitative measurements (indicators) are most important?
- Identify & collect necessary data, line up sub-contractors & modeling software

### 2013-2014

- Model “Current Trends” Scenario
- Public Engagement: Design Alternative Future Scenarios
- Model Alternative Future Scenarios & Measure Predicted Impacts
- Public Engagement: Evaluate Scenarios & Select “Preferred” Scenario

# What IS Sustainable Growth?

## A Mini-Blueprinting Example

Per the Regional Travel Model, by 2035, the Map Area will ADD:

- **386,810 PEOPLE in 138,413 HOUSEHOLDS (2.79 people per household)**
- **230,174 JOBS**

Where will all those jobs and people go? How will the people get to the jobs to provide a reliable workforce? How will goods get to market? How can jobs be grown in a way that produces maximum benefit and minimum pain?

**How will this growth happen in a way that represents  
“SUSTAINABLE GROWTH” for the things that matter to you?**

- Air quality?
- Farmland preservation?
- Cost to serve to local gov't.?
- Water quality (runoff)?
- Walkability?
- Cost of transportation infrastructure?
- Cost of travel to citizens?
- Growing your economic base?
- “Livability?”

**Your job: Figure it out!**

**1 square covers 100 acres.**

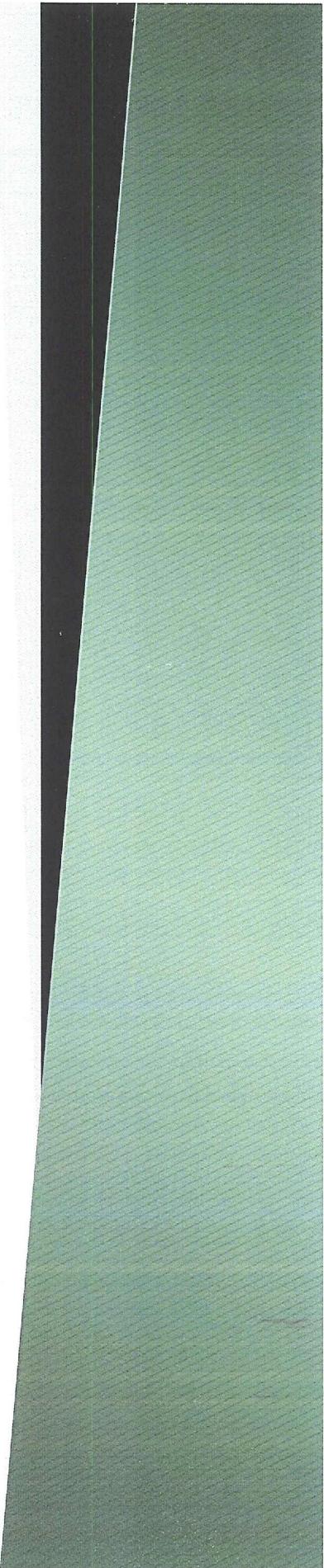
**1 HOT PINK or RED square = 100 households (one HH per acre)**

**1 BRIGHT AQUA square = 1,000 jobs (per 100 acres)**

**You can stack squares to add density.**

# Bluprinting

## How Should This Region Grow?

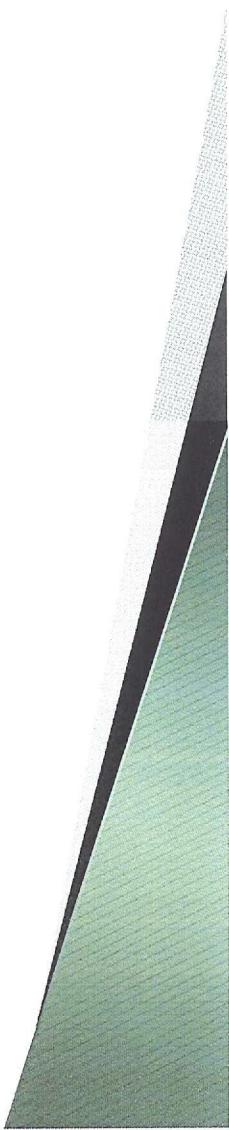


# What are the issues?

- ▶ Population GROWTH:
  - 1.5 to 2 million new people by 2035 [with new projections coming from the RTDM]
- ▶ Population CHANGE:
  - “Graying” of the population
  - Inclusion of new cultures and housing preferences
- ▶ Greater FISCAL CONSTRAINTS:
  - Limitations on infrastructure funding and operating revenues
- ▶ Job LOSSES and job GROWTH CHALLENGES:
  - Where are the jobs versus where are the people?
  - How are we doing matching up facilities, skills, and business plans?

# What are the issues?

- ▶ ENVIRONMENTAL concerns:
  - Loss of open space
  - Too many impaired streams
  - Air quality challenges
- ▶ A VISION, but no PLAN
  - The CONNECT Vision reflects our shared values and aspirations
  - It does not yet provide a consensus “on the ground framework” for handling growth and meeting these issues...



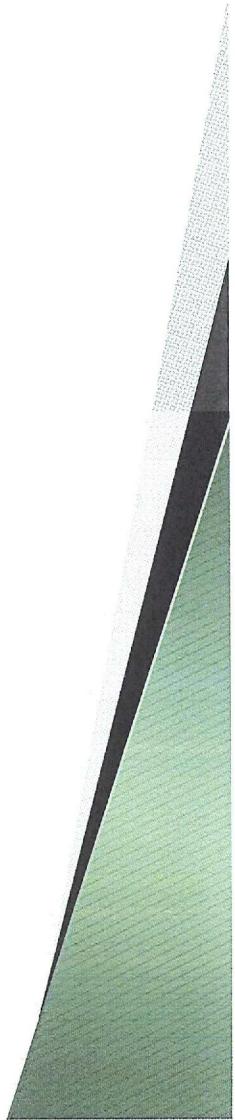
# CONNECT says:

- ▶ We value:
  - *Sustainable, Well-Managed Growth* that protects quality of life, preserves the environment, and maximizes the efficiency of infrastructure investment
  - *A Safe and Healthy Environment* with good air and water quality
  - *A Strong, Diverse Economy* that provides jobs for people throughout the region
- ▶ So what does that look like, ON THE GROUND? How does this VISION become a PLAN?

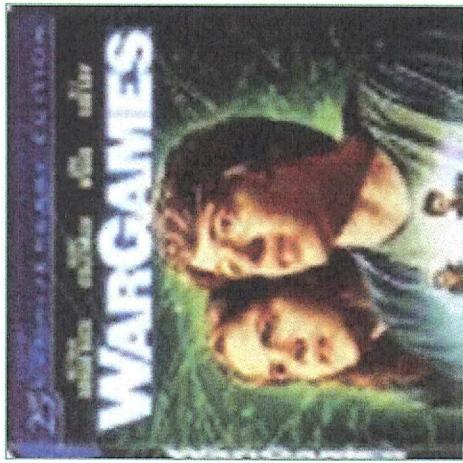
How have other regions handled  
this challenge?

## BLUEPRINTING

(Alternative Scenarios Analysis)



# Scenario Analysis History

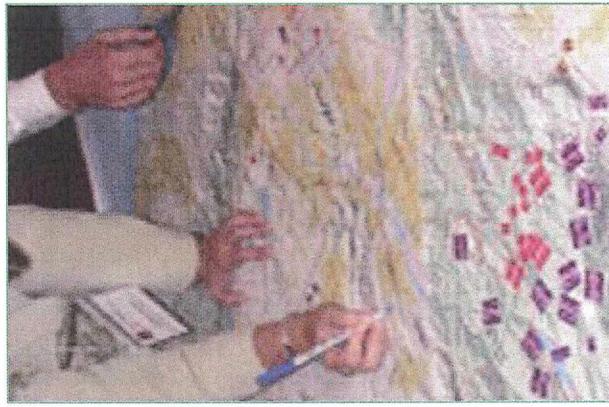


- Began with military planning and strategic analysis
- Adapted for use by businesses
- Growth planning in 1980's
  - Denver Regional COG
  - Mid-America Regional Council
  - Sacramento Area COG
  - Envision Utah
  - Multiple Urban Land Institute "Reality Checks"

# What it is

- **CREATING** several alternative patterns for growth and development
- **SELECTING** indicators that reflect the goals people want to achieve
- **ANALYZING** the patterns using the indicators
- **DEVELOPING CONSENSUS** around the pattern that produces the best results on indicators, with extensive citizen input

# CREATING alternative scenarios...

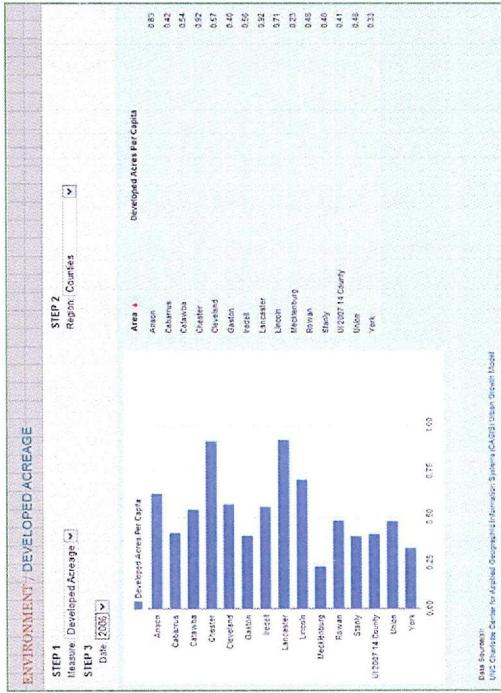


- ▶ Done by:
  - Technical Team
  - Stakeholders
  - Hands-on public engagement
- ▶ Can address land use, transportation, trails, jobs, infrastructure, open space, etc.
- ▶ May include from 3 to 30+ scenarios, ideally “hands-on”

# SELECTING indicators

## May include:

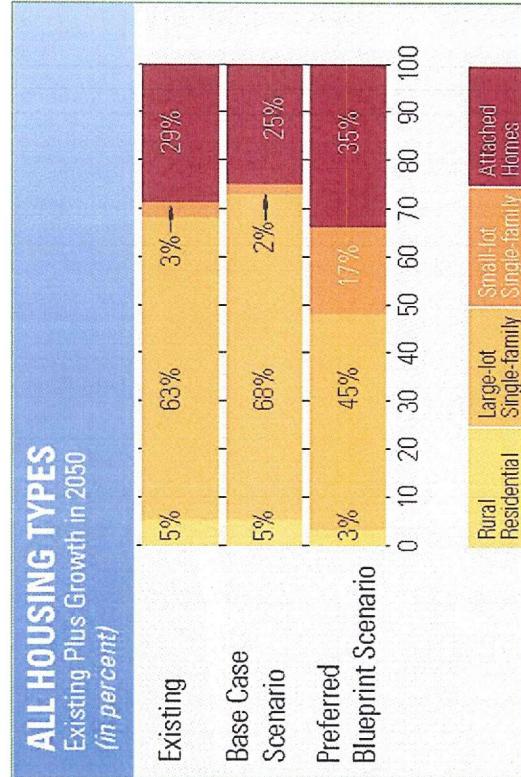
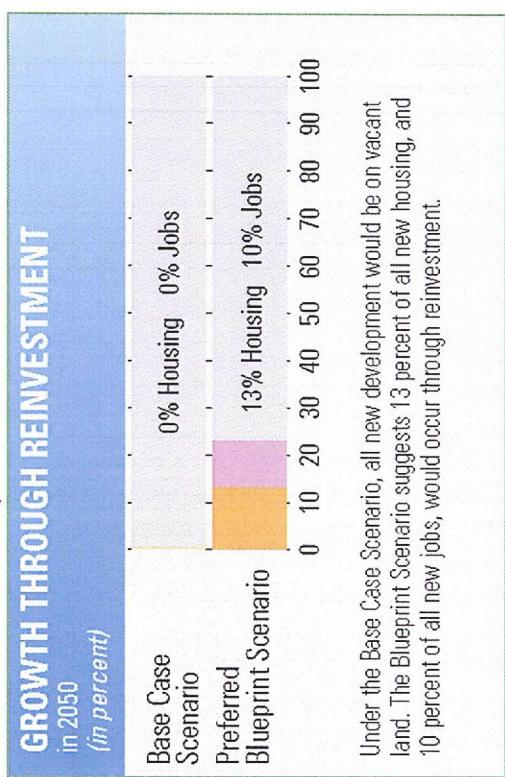
- Environmental: What is the impact on air quality?
- Fiscal: How much will it cost local government to service this development pattern? How much will transportation cost the average family?
- Spatial: Where is housing in relation to jobs?
- Social: Are pockets of poverty created or maintained?



Selected by consensus with extensive public input...what's important to the region's leadership and citizens?

# ANALYZING alternative scenarios using indicators....

- ▶ Existing Conditions
- ▶ Future Trend (based on adopted land use plans)



# DEVELOPING CONSENSUS on a preferred scenario.....

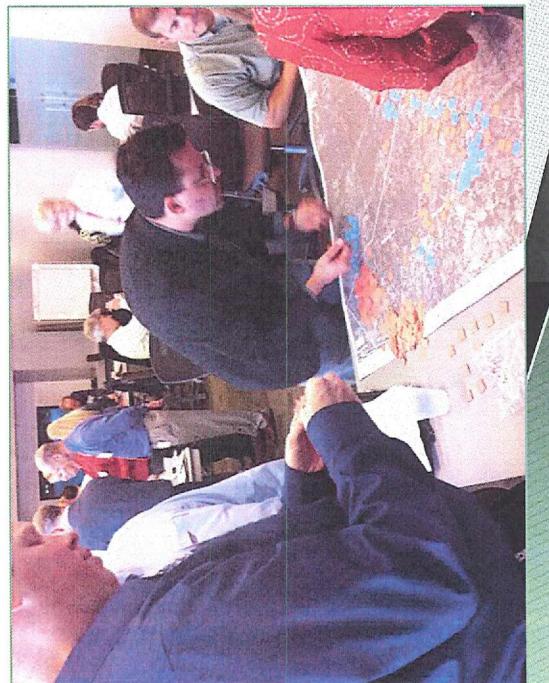
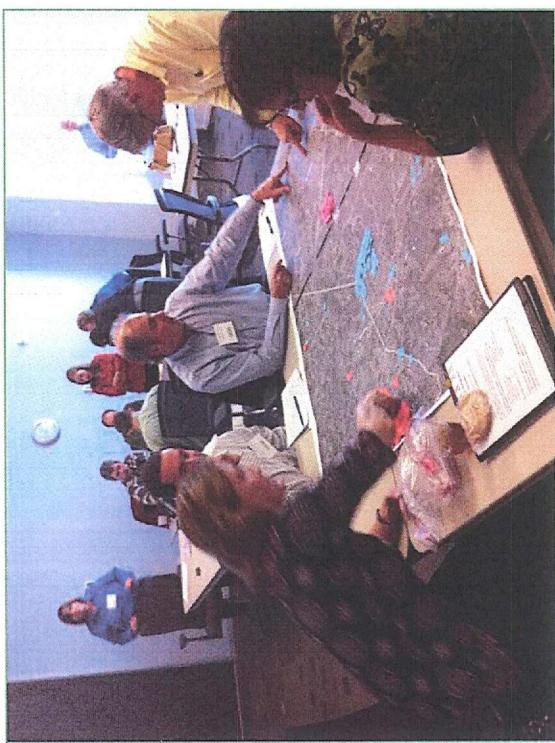
- Consensus emerges as alternative scenarios are:
  - Developed through public engagement
  - Tested against the selected indicators
- “Preferred” means preferred—not mandated
- Voluntary implementation is typically strongly supported



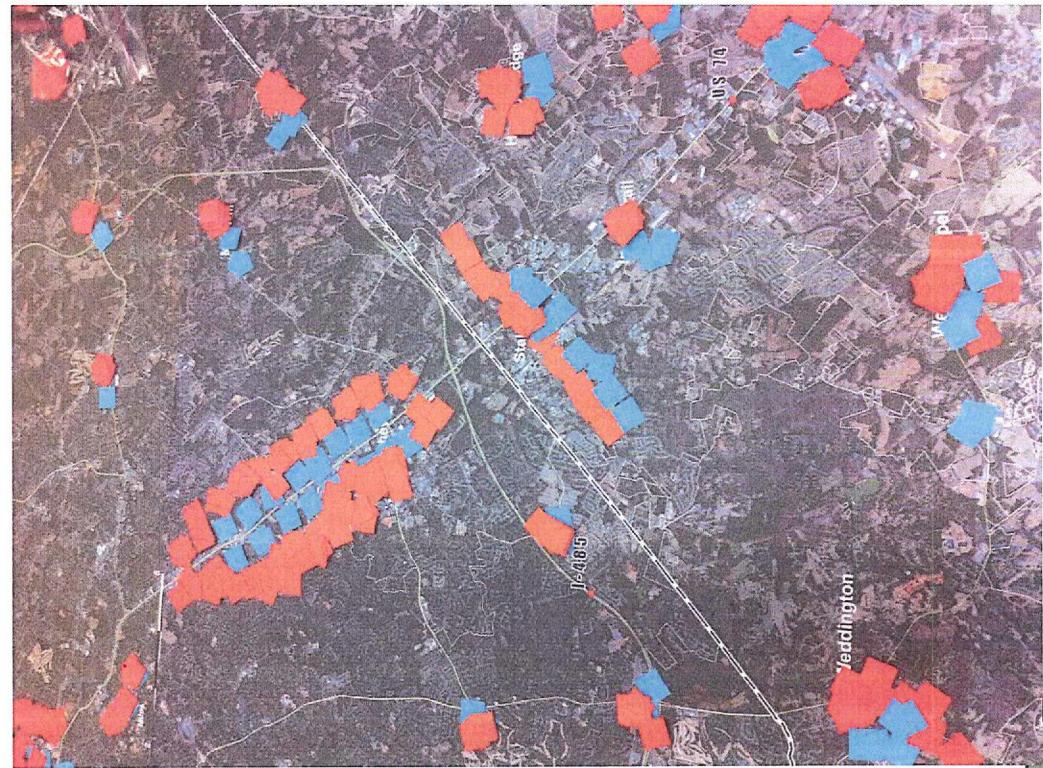
# Regional Planners' Experience

- ▶ Meeting held November 9
- ▶ Hands-On Exercise
- ▶ Map Segment of Eastern Mecklenburg, Western Cabarrus, Northeastern Union Counties
- ▶ Population projections show additional 386,810 people in 138,413 households by 2035
- ▶ 230,174 more jobs by 2035
- ▶ Where and how do they all get added?

# The Process:



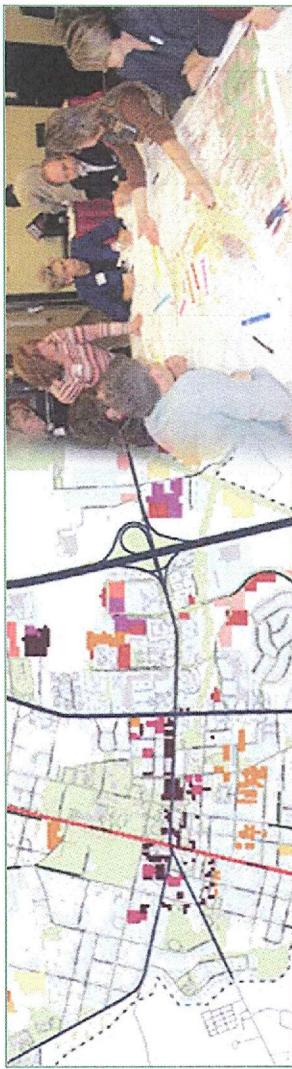
# Alternative Meck/Union Scenarios:



# Meck and Cabarrus Scenarios:



# Benefits . . .

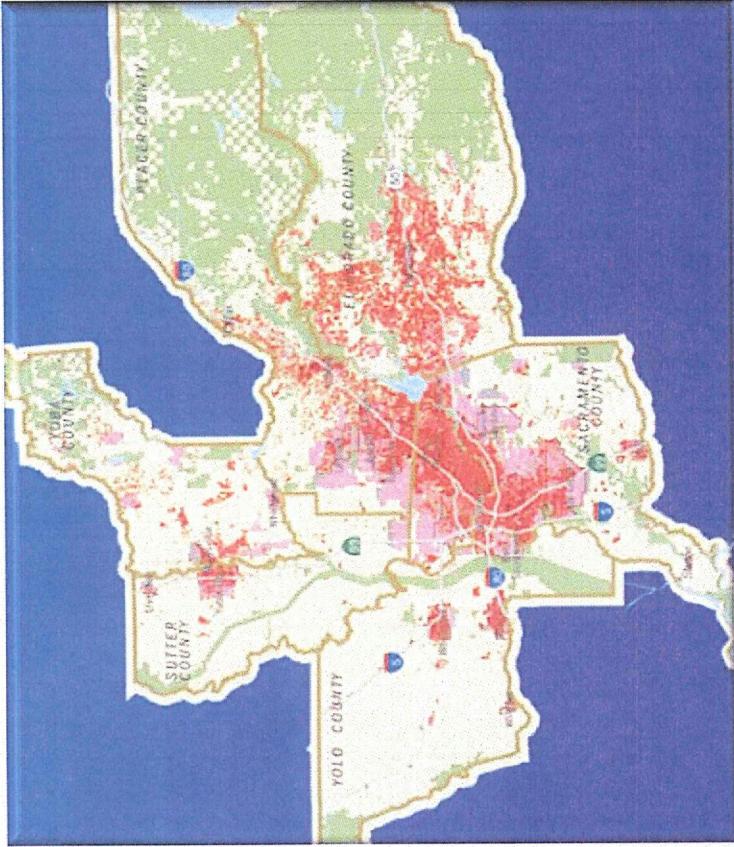


- ▶ Better information for decision-makers
- ▶ Analysis of trade-offs (What's better and what's worse under different scenarios?)
- ▶ Public engagement
- ▶ Public education
- ▶ Helps build consensus
- ▶ Helps establish measurable benchmarks and goals
- ▶ Can be used by the region, by towns, by neighborhoods

# Benefits...SACOG



## Base Case

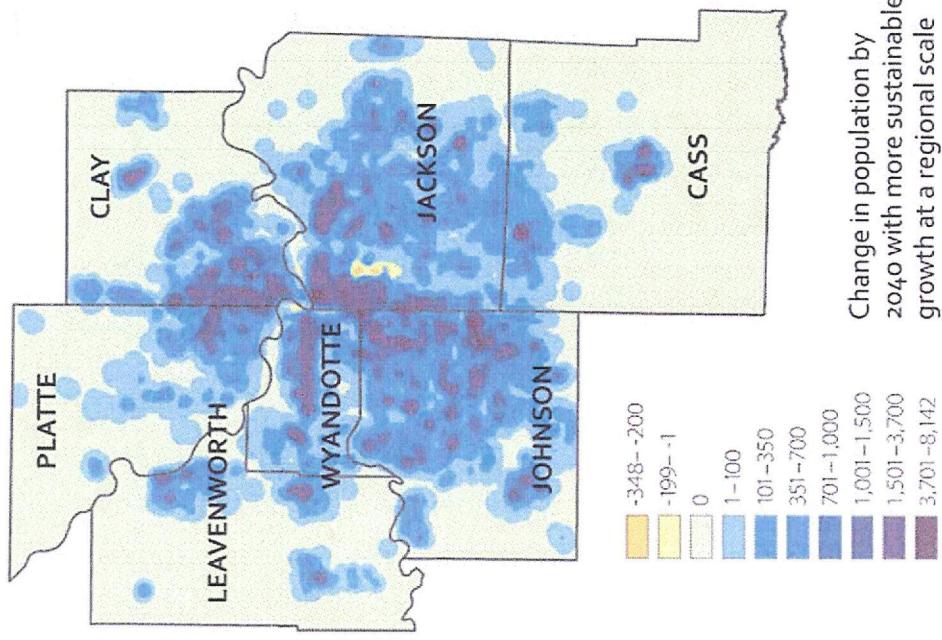


## Sustainable Growth

The Sustainable Growth Preferred Scenario saves 357 square miles of open space/agricultural lands and associated infrastructure costs.

# Outcomes...

- MARC identified over \$2.5 BILLION in infrastructure savings
- SACOG got the mix of housing they needed for their aging population
- DRCOG used to invest in FastTracks
- Most preferred scenarios lower Vehicle Miles Traveled
- Most regions have more success with grants



# What Benefits This Region Would See:

- ▶ A consensus regional growth framework
  - With measurable goals and milestones
  - Implemented as plans are updated
  - With public support because they created it
- ▶ Better planning tools for local governments, MPOs/RPOs, etc. than are available now
- ▶ Probably what other regions have seen:
  - Less loss of open space and agricultural lands, a better “mix” of housing, reduced infrastructure costs, more grants success, slower rates of VMT growth, etc.

# Calendar:

- ▶ January – June 2012:
  - Final process design
  - Public and community engagement design and planning
  - Preliminary indicator identification
  - Model procurement
  - Data collection and “normalization”
- ▶ July – December 2012:
  - Public and community engagement
  - Data loading and software testing
  - Final indicators selection
  - Planning for community engagement in scenario creation
- ▶ 2013:
  - Public and community engagement in...
  - Creation and analysis of sub-county and regional scenarios

# The First Tasks

- ▶ Answering YOUR questions
- ▶ Getting YOUR input
- ▶ Starting to think through WHERE and HOW YOU WANT TO ENGAGE...and
- ▶ Letting YOU know WHERE and HOW we will need your help

# Questions for Discussion

- ▶ What INFORMATION would you want to LEARN from the Blueprinting process?
  - As a citizen of the region?
  - As a representative of your jurisdiction/organization?
  - As a member of a Consortium Work Group with a specific focus?
- ▶ What INFORMATION could you CONTRIBUTE to the Blueprinting process?

# Questions for Discussion

- ▶ What would you want members of the public, and your constituency, to know about WHY this process is important, and why they should engage?
- ▶ What did we miss?
- ▶ What additional information can we provide to help you?