



Date: January 31, 2001
To: Inter-Regional Partnership Members
From: Staff
RE: Jobs/Housing Opportunity Zone Selection & Criteria

Background

The Inter-Regional Partnership (IRP) Pilot Program allows for establishing 5 to 10 jobs/housing opportunity zones throughout the five county IRP region. By December 31, 2001, IRP members will need to make preliminary recommendations to the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) as to where these zones should be located. AB 2864, the jobs/housing legislation, articulates base criteria that a potential jobs/housing zone must meet before being selected by the IRP. The criteria defined in the legislation are correlated with the goals of the IRP. Those goals include:

- Achieve a more equitable jobs/housing balance in the region.
- Improve transportation and air quality.
- Enhance the quality of life throughout the inter-regional area.
- Pursue inter-regional economic development opportunities.
- Establish more sustainable methods of moving people between their homes and distant jobs.

In response to these goals, AB 2864 sets forth the following criteria that a potential zone must meet:

- Zones must be between 50 and 500 acres.
- Zones contain significant portions of land that are vacant, underutilized, and suitable for urban use.
- Zones are created for the purpose of either providing needed workforce housing if there is a surplus of jobs or providing jobs for the area's workers if there is a surplus of housing.
- Zones are eligible to receive incentives, subject to negotiation with appropriate resource agencies.
- Zones are serviced by adequate infrastructure and transit service, or have commitments to provide adequate infrastructure and transit service, to support significant proposed development.
- The location and development within zones will improve the jobs-housing imbalance across the five-county IRP area.

Following a process for selecting jobs/housing zones will ensure that the zones selected meet the IRP goals and legislated criteria. IRP members are asked to consider the following issues: developing an application process for selecting zones, using the minimum criteria found in the legislation as a base to build the application, and defining who may apply for a jobs/housing zone.

Discussion

Jobs/Housing Zone Selection Process

Selecting 5 to 10 jobs/housing opportunity zones in the IRP region has the potential to be an extensive process. The IRP will be responsible for ensuring that zones are equitably distributed through the region and that both the location and development projects proposed for the zone meet the minimum criteria

found in AB 2864. The zones and their proposed development must also address the jobs/housing imbalance.

To simplify and formalize the selection process, staff suggests an application procedure for selecting zones. The application will ask for detailed information about the zones and include a series of questions used to ensure the zone meets the criteria found in the jobs/housing legislation. Examples of the information requested and specific questions include:

- Provide a detailed description of the zone location and development proposal. Include total acreage, percent of land that is vacant, underutilized, and zoned for urban use. Provide a map, including a general plan and zoning map, detailing these elements.
- Describe existing or planned transit services available in the proposed zone and the service's ability to support proposed development within the zone.
- Describe existing or planned infrastructure within the proposed zone, including water, roadways, sewer, etc.

To address the jobs/housing balance component, staff proposes including a series of questions in the application. Applicants would be asked to address (at a minimum) the following:

- Describe the existing jobs/housing imbalance faced in the jurisdiction where the proposed zone is located. Address how that imbalance impacts the jurisdiction and the region, in terms of transportation, air quality, and quality of life.
- How will the proposed zone location and development within the zone address the imbalance of jobs and housing in the region?

Who May Apply For A Jobs/Housing Zone

The nature of the jobs/housing zones, 50 to 500 acre sites of commercial and/or housing development, suggests that those agencies responsible for regulating such development will make up the applicant pool. These agencies will also be responsible for ensuring that these sites are eligible to receive both fiscal and non-fiscal housing and economic development incentives. Therefore, staff suggests that applicants for a jobs/housing zone be at least one jurisdiction or more jurisdictions working in collaboration with private companies, quasi-public, or public agencies.

Actions Requested

Staff requests that the IRP direct staff to do the following:

- Develop a jobs/housing zone application that ensures zones meet the minimum criteria found in AB 2864 for jobs/housing zone site selection. To ascertain how the proposed zone and development within the zone will remedy the jobs/housing imbalance in the region, the application will include both specific and broad/open-ended questions.
- Define who may apply for a jobs/housing zone, i.e. an individual jurisdiction or one or more jurisdictions working in collaboration with an individual or multiple private, quasi-public, or non-profit developers.