

SB275 Summary

State law linking greenhouse gas emissions to urban planning. Key concepts include:

- reflects California's push to slash its greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent by 2020.
- gives existing and new high-density centers where people live, work and shop top priority in receiving local, state and federal transportation funds.
- sets emission-reduction targets for housing and transportation projects; by 2012, transportation subsidies will almost entirely go to projects that comply.
- reduces CEQA requirements if project meets certain criteria- i.e. is a "sustainable communities" project.

The bill addresses three key aspects in future planning -- transportation, housing, and climate change:

- Transportation - After consulting with local government, the California Air Resources Board will set regional emission reduction targets, becoming a required aspect of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTA) that comprises the long term guidelines for the region's transportation system. The resulting model will be called the Sustainable Communities Strategy
- Housing - California currently mandates the Regional Housing Needs Assessment, a process addressing housing needs and resources for local jurisdictions. Under SB375, the RHNA is adjusted based on the region's Sustainable Communities Strategy in the RTP, thus taking into account the greenhouse gas emissions reduction target set forth.
- Reforming the California Environmental Quality Act ([CEQA](#)) - Through an amendment of California's premier environmental protection statute, the environmental review process will reward projects meeting the objectives of the Sustainable Communities Strategy by easing some of the requirements of the CEQA.

To receive the benefits of the bill, local governments must demonstrate plans which promote sustainable growth (clustering homes, business, and transportation hubs together, providing citizens housing options near where they work and live). These land use plans will be submitted to the California Air Resources Board to ensure they meet regional emission reduction targets and the region's Sustainable Communities Strategy. Once plans are accepted, the local communities become eligible for state and federal transportation grants, assisting the development of sustainable regional transportation systems.

Status: Adopted by legislature, on Governor's desk waiting for signature