

Plan BayArea

PUBLIC OUTREACH and PARTICIPATION PROGRAM

Volume 4

Phase Four: Draft Plan Bay Area (2013)

September 2013

APPENDIX C:

What We Heard — Plan Bay Area Town Hall



METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION



Association of
Bay Area Governments

Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter
101 Eighth Street
Oakland, CA 94607-4700

(510) 817-5700
info@mtc.ca.gov
www.mtc.ca.gov
510.817.5769

phone
e-mail
web
TDD/TTY

(510) 464-7900
info@abag.ca.gov
www.abag.ca.gov

PROJECT STAFF

Ann Flemer

MTC Deputy Executive Director, Policy

Bradford Paul

ABAG Deputy Executive Director

Patricia Jones

ABAG Assistant Executive Director
(Retired May 2013)

Randy Rentschler

Director, MTC Legislation and Public Affairs

Ellen Griffin

Manager, MTC Public Engagement

**Catalina Alvarado, Pam Grove,
Leslie Lara, Terry Lee, Craig Noble,
Ursula Vogler**

MTC Outreach Team

**Joe Curley, John Goodwin,
Brenda Kahn, Georgia Lambert**

MTC Public Information Officers

Kathleen Cha

ABAG Senior Communications Officer

JoAnna Bullock

ABAG Senior Regional Planner

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Consultant assistance from
MIG, Inc. (Berkeley, California) and
Davis & Associates Communications
(San Francisco, California).



Public Outreach and Participation Program
Phase Four: Draft Plan Bay Area (2013)

NOTE: Appendix C is bound separately from the rest of the report.

Appendix C. What We Heard— Plan Bay Area Town Hall

Plan Bay Area Town Hall allowed participants to comment on each chapter of the Draft Plan. Below are the comments received, by chapter.

	Page
Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region.....	4
Chapter 1: Setting our Sights	55
Chapter 2: The Bay Area in 2040.....	73
Chapter 3: Where We Live, Where We Work	84
Chapter 4: Investments.....	96
Chapter 5: Performance	113
Chapter 6: A Plan to Build On	122

Appendix C documents can be found immediately following this cover sheet, or online at: <http://onebayarea.org/regional-initiatives/plan-bay-area/meetings-events/What-We-Heard.html>

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

All comments sorted chronologically
As of close of comment period, May 16, 2013, 4:00 PM



Introduction

For over a decade, local governments and regional agencies have been working together to encourage the growth of jobs and production of housing in areas supported by amenities and infrastructure. Draft Plan Bay Area charts a course for accommodating projected growth in the nine- county San Francisco Bay Area while fostering an innovative, prosperous and competitive economy; preserving a healthy and safe environment; and allowing all Bay Area residents to share the benefits of vibrant, sustainable communities connected by an efficient and well-maintained transportation network.

Background

The Bay Area has made farsighted regional planning a top priority for decades. Previous generations recognized the need for modern mass transit systems, state-of-the-art bridges and an array of parks and open space that would provide a balance between urbanized areas and open space. Past generations aimed to foster a healthy environment and vibrant communities through their visionary leadership.

Plan Bay Area extends this legacy of leadership, doing more of what we've done well while also mapping new strategies to face future challenges. In 2008, California's landmark climate law — Senate Bill 375 (Steinberg) — required all metropolitan regions in the state to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from cars and light trucks and accommodate all needed housing growth within the boundaries of their region. Plan Bay Area meets this challenge head on — without compromising local control of land-use decisions.

Tell Us What You Think

This chapter is an executive summary of the elements of the draft of Plan Bay Area, highlighting the process of developing the Plan and outlining the goals and challenges we must face as a region:

- Building upon local plans and strategies;
- Setting our sights on the challenge by emphasizing an open and inclusive public process;
- Looking toward the future so that today's decisions align with tomorrow's expected transportation and housing needs;
- Building a development pattern that aligns with where we live and work; and
- Achieving key performance targets.

Read [Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for A Sustainable Region](#), and tell us what you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall.

As of May 16, 2013, 4:00 PM, this forum had:

Attendees: 347

Participants: 58

Hours of Public Comment: 2.9

29 participants posted comments

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

David Schnapf, President, Marin Conservation League inside Marin

May 16, 2013, 2:34 PM

Mr. Ezra Rapport, Executive Director
Association of Bay Area Governments
101 Eighth Street
Oakland CA 94607

May 16, 2013

SUBJECT: Comments on Plan Bay Area Draft EIR and Draft Plan

Dear Mr. Rapport:

The Marin Conservation League has been involved in land use and conservation planning throughout Marin County since our founding in 1934. MCL's efforts have contributed substantially to creating and preserving the abundance of public parks, open space lands and productive agricultural resources which attracts visitors to the County from all over the world. Marin's remarkable abundance of natural beauty and parklands is all the more significant to the region because it lies near the heart of one of the world's great metropolitan areas.

MCL has been tracking the evolution of the Sustainable Communities Strategy (Plan Bay Area, or "Plan") from the outset of the SB 375 process and has commented on previous scenarios and the scope of the DEIR. We understand that the basic mandate of SB 375 is to influence future land use development patterns, housing, jobs, and transportation investments so as to accommodate anticipated regional population and job growth in a manner that will reduce per capita greenhouse gas emissions.

We appreciate the opportunity to present, first, our general comments on the Draft Plan and planning process, followed by more detailed comments on the Draft EIR.

General Comments on Plan and Plan Process

1. MCL Applauds Plan Bay Area's Recognition That Marin Should Be a Low Growth Area. A fundamental premise of Plan Bay Area is that growth should be focused in the existing employment centers, namely, San Francisco, the South Bay (Silicon Valley) and the East Bay. This approach is supported by the fact that each of these employment centers is presently served by extensive and robust public transit systems. MCL supports the goal of focusing growth: (1) as compact infill in or near existing job centers to minimize urban sprawl, and/or (2) near major public transit systems such as BART or CalTrain. The conclusion that Marin should be a low growth area follows from this basic approach. Marin is not a major employment center and does not have a public transit network that is anywhere as robust as the other areas. In addition, we note that

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

because of its geography and water supply, Marin has limited growth potential. An important goal of SB375 is to preserve open space and parklands and this, too, supports the recognition that Marin should be a low growth area.

MCL fully recognizes that Marin County is part of a large metropolitan area and, as such, enjoys both the benefits and responsibilities of being a part of that region. MCL is particularly interested, however, in how Plan Bay Area might impact Marin County. In view of Marin's distinctive geography and the long-established resource lands that make up almost 85 percent of the County, future growth in the County is highly constrained by limited available land. Even without urban growth boundaries (Novato is the only community with an UGB), Marin's communities have little space to grow. Therefore, it is appropriate that the Plan has assigned Marin the lowest growth in jobs and households of any county in the regional planning area. This assignment recognizes that Marin is unique in that its public park and open space lands and agricultural resources benefit the entire Bay Area in environmental, economic, and equity terms. Even at that low growth rate, the employment projections for Marin exceed historic growth rates and are overly ambitious. Marin has other limits to growth: water supply is finite except where conservation and efficiency can free up in lieu supply, and extensive developed and undeveloped portions of the eastern county are susceptible to current flooding and future sea level rise.

2. Sea Level Rise. MCL is disappointed that Plan Bay Area fails to adequately address sea level rise. Despite California's leadership in attempting to address climate change, it is now clear that the sea level will rise over the next few decades and that we face storms of greater frequency and intensity. It is essential that we begin planning for this eventuality rather than defer planning to an unspecified future time. We believe it would be tragic to channel any substantial development into areas that are subject to flooding now, and are vulnerable to future flooding. This is a very critical flaw in the Plan.

3. Feasibility and Certainty of Plan Strategy. The intent of employing land use as a means to reduce dependence on cars and light trucks, and thereby reduce GHG emissions, is an admirable goal. MCL questions, however, both the feasibility and the certainty of the Plan in realizing this intent. The process for projecting growth, employment, housing and related elements based on modeling is too complex to yield meaningful results. Moreover, the modeling employed to achieve the Plan integrates assumptions having a high degree of uncertainty, particularly since they rely on actions that are beyond the control of local, regional, and State government. For example, as noted below, it appears that the population and employment growth numbers for the Bay Area are excessive and completely out of line with historical data. The consequence of using these higher numbers causes the Plan to overstate the need for housing. This, in turn, causes the Plan to open up more areas to development than will be necessary,

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

thereby putting developers in the driver's seat when it comes to deciding where development will occur.

The DEIR addresses this somewhat, but what it says is not encouraging. First, as the DEIR points out (Page ES-11), MTC and AGAB cannot assure future development patterns since they cannot regulate local land use policy or zoning. This lack of authority is also the primary reason given for finding most of the 39 potentially significant impacts in the DEIR unavoidable, in that the regional agencies cannot require local jurisdictions to impose mitigation measures. Second, even if compact development patterns do successfully bring housing, jobs, and retail in close proximity, served by transit, no one can predict with certainty the extent to which residents will occupy nearby jobs, or choose to use public transit if jobs are distant. In spite of these uncertainties and the Plan's reliance on a host of other assumptions about future conditions, the Plan is confident that the goals and targets will be met (or, in the case of several voluntary goals, not met).

The DEIR states that with Plan implementation and growth estimates, there will be a per capita decrease in Btu consumption of about 1%. While this is certainly better than an increase, we question whether the effort was worth it, given the extraordinary planning effort and funds expended by the Plan to achieve such a minor reduction.

4. Need For Better Coordination Between Land Use and Transportation Elements.

Plan Bay Area does not adequately integrate its land use planning mandates with a transportation investment strategy. These should go hand-in-hand. For example, PDA's should not be designated based on uncertain future transportation investments.

Moreover, the Plan does not appear to recognize or reconcile the process for evaluating investments in transportation projects with the process for making housing investments. The Plan often treats all public transit systems as being equal. Access to an infrequent local bus service with one route is quite different than access to BART.

5. Affordable Housing. A goal of the Plan (and requirement of SB 375) is to provide housing within the region that is affordable to all economic levels, and to better align jobs with housing supply. MCL recognizes the need for diverse and affordable housing and supports such housing if it is developed in appropriate locations, i.e., as infill, accessible to transit and services, and without impacts on sensitive resources and public facilities. We understand that RHNA numbers have an independent origin and that SB 375 simply brings them together with transportation investments and a land use strategy that attempts to incentivize the development of affordable housing in a compact pattern, primarily within PDAs. Ultimately, however, locating affordable housing will depend on the availability of sites, local planning decisions, cost considerations and funding, willing developers, and receptive neighbors – a complex set of variables. In

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

one way or another, affordable housing is typically subsidized in one manner or another – whether in the form of direct payments to the developer, tax incentives, or accepting burdens on public facilities that would otherwise not be allowed. The Plan should evaluate the availability of money to pay for these subsidies. So we question the feasibility of promising to “house 100 percent of the region’s projected growth (from a 2010 baseline year) by income level.” (Plan, Page 19.) We also question the advisability of trying to force that goal. Housing prices will continue to be high in the Bay Area, and many commuting job holders will continue to opt for more affordable housing outside the region. Moreover, many people may opt for a larger home further from work than a small unit nearby.

The Plan should expand its definition of “housing units” to be counted, given the growing population of seniors and the limited supply of senior housing. To achieve equity goals, senior, assisted, 2nd and converted units should be included in those counted by the Plan in order to provide 100% housing for this population and to allow Plan incentives to encourage their construction in addition to brand new construction of multiple unit structures.

6. Four-year Plan Review. The Plan states that it is a work in progress that will be updated every four years (Page 121), but provides no further details as to how this might occur. For example, will interim targets be set so that progress (in four years) can be measured? And if targets are not being met, will they be adjusted and require shifting commitments of funds or land use decisions? Would such adjustments require further CEQA review if new impacts are identified or known impacts made more severe? How will local jurisdictions with limited resources be expected to adjust decisions every four years, a cycle that is unique to Regional Transportation Plan process but does not correspond to RHNA or other planning cycles? The adopted Plan should outline this process more clearly.

7. The Plan as a “Platform for Advocacy” to Modernize CEQA. MTC and ABAG purport to be strong supporters of the original goals of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and yet the Plan sponsors propose to wade into current legislative debate over active CEQA bills as “advocates,” with incomplete evidence and an obvious bias. (Plan, Page 129-130.) It is enough that SB 375 has outlined mechanisms and conditions for streamlining CEQA as an incentive to promote new housing and commercial buildings. It is highly inappropriate for the Plan, whose life span is 25 to 30 years into the future, to become a “bully pulpit” for advocacy where differing legislative views are still in play.

MCL believes that, rather than weakening CEQA, current legislative efforts should focus on strengthening a number of sections of the Act. A recent analysis of California’s

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

economy since CEQA was enacted confirms that CEQA has had a positive rather than a negative effect on the economy of the State.

8. Public Outreach. Throughout the planning process, MCL has been frustrated by the apparent inability of ABAG and MTC to communicate effectively with the general public. The Plan claims to be the product of a highly collaborative process of surveys, stakeholder sessions, public workshops and meetings, and “countless other means” of communication. It is possible that the majority of these meetings involved local planning professionals and elected representatives, leaving much of the task of public outreach in the hands of local governments. Unfortunately, the opportunities for ABAG and MTC staff to hear directly from the general public have been limited to a few large, highly programmed public meetings and workshops, where listening has not been matched by responsiveness to public concerns. As a consequence, to ordinary citizens and non-profit organizations like MCL, the outcome has seemed pre-ordained from the beginning. The short time allowed to digest and to respond to the Draft Plan and a huge Draft EIR has done nothing to dispel that perception.

General Comments and Questions on Draft EIR

1. Areas of Known Controversy, and Issues to be Resolved (DEIR page ES-11 and 12)

As required by the CEQA Guidelines, the Executive Summary section of the Draft EIR provides a list of known controversial issues raised by the public and agencies, and a list of issues to be resolved. MCL agrees with the listed issues, but wishes to add several other controversial issues that have been raised by many individuals and public agencies, and/or are in need of resolution, as follows:

- The jobs, population, household, and housing numbers forecast for the Bay Area as a whole and for specific communities are considered by many to be too high. MCL continues to believe that the Plan overstates growth for the Bay Area as a whole, as well as for Marin. Inflated population growth could lead to excessive development outside PDAs and to unintended sprawl. Given the critical role that population and job growth numbers play in forecasting housing needs, it is vital that the discrepancies between ABAG forecasts, Department of Finance forecasts and historical trends be resolved before major funding or planning commitments are made, such as rezoning.
- Loss of local control over general plan policies, zoning, and community character is the most-often-cited area of controversy. This point is raised in the second bullet, Page ES-11, which acknowledges public concerns about possible conflict with existing plans and local regulations, but nowhere in the Plan is it made clear that the Plan can only recommend and offer incentives in the form of grants and CEQA streamlining, but is

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

otherwise has no authority over local land use decisions. The relationship between regional authority and local control needs to be more explicitly stated.

- Local traffic congestion is attributed to regional growth and not to transportation improvements, and is therefore considered by the DEIR to be less than significant (DEIR, Page 2.14-14). Yet this issue has been raised by the public frequently as an inherent and pervasive consequence of the Plan (i.e., as a “paradox of densification”). Notwithstanding the goal of the Plan, which is to reduce vehicle miles overall, more concentrated housing and commercial development in PDAs promoted by the Plan will increase local congestion on collectors and arterials. These local facilities are not included in regional traffic models or are unlikely to be improved through transportation investments. This will be a continuing area of controversy.

2. Use of EIR as first tier program document. Page 1.1-11 states that the EIR can be used as a first tier document for environmental review of specific development or transportation projects. Unlike typical program EIRs, such as on local general plans or on comparable projects within a region, this EIR analyzes conditions at a high level of generality and therefore misses many local and subregional contextual elements necessary for analyzing development projects in or out of a PDA. The Plan EIR provides broad cumulative analysis (it is a cumulative EIR by definition), but does not provide an adequate program coverage of most CEQA issues. Given the generality of the EIR, it should not be used as a first tier document.

3. Mitigation: The DEIR provides an abundance of mitigation measures under every topical area and admits that many are advisory, for consideration by project sponsors of individual projects – that is, MTC and ABAG cannot require local implementing agencies to adopt them. At the same time, the DEIR, Page 1.1-3, Para. 1 under Mitigation, states that in those cases where MTC and ABAG do not have regulatory or approval authority (the majority of potentially significant impacts) that Project sponsors shall (emphasis added) commit to mitigation measures at the time of certification of their project environmental review documents . . . and that these commitments obligate project sponsors to implement measures that would minimize or eliminate significant impacts pursuant to CEQA.” Para. 2 further notes that projects taking advantage of CEQA Streamlining provisions must apply the mitigation measures to address site-specific conditions” if impacts are to be reduced to levels of insignificance. Since MTC/ABAG cannot require local implementing agencies to adopt mitigation measures, the DEIR finds these impacts significant and unavoidable.

The last sentence of paragraph 1 states that “MTC shall be provided with status reports of compliance with mitigation measures.” How will MTC possibly track implementation of projects throughout the Bay Area to ensure that “status reports” are submitted? Will this

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

requirement apply only to projects that take advantage of CEQA streamlining provisions, or does it apply to myriad other projects and jurisdictions over the life of the plan? Will this be a transparent public process, and if so how will MTC report on compliance?

These two paragraphs raise a multitude of questions about whether potentially significant impacts, all of which are cumulative in nature, will be mitigated and by whom. The DEIR takes a conservative approach and identifies 39 significant unavoidable impacts, either because the regional agencies lack authority, or because the effectiveness of mitigations cannot be assured. Therefore, there is no guarantee that significant cumulative impacts will ever be mitigated.

4. Alternatives. The small differences across alternatives for many of the targets should be interpreted carefully, in that they rely on a host of assumptions about prevailing economic, political and technological conditions expected in 2040. When these assumptions are combined, the resulting lack of certainty prevents identifying clear-cut differences across the range of alternatives. DEIR ES-9 states that "Variation in impacts among alternatives are minor." Given that outcome differences are so minor, we must ask if the Alternatives offered are really alternatives, or just very minor variations on the basic Plan Bay Area theme. The FEIR should provide alternatives that are distinctly different from the Plan. MCL previously submitted comments on alternatives that it believes the DEIR should have considered, but all of the alternatives identified by MCL were ignored. Indeed, it appears that ABAG never even considered MCL's comments.

Detailed Comments on the DEIR

1. Climate Change and Sea-level Rise. The ramifications of climate change and consequent sea level rise are of central importance to the feasibility of the Plan. The Plan defers solutions to an unspecified future time. The subject receives considerable attention in the DEIR, and for that reason MCL focuses its comments on that topic.

(Page 2.5-22, et seq.) A number of existing laws and regulations are aimed at reducing GHGs, but it is not clear which of these are incorporated into the estimates for GHG reductions to be achieved by the Plan? When the reductions required by existing laws are accounted for, what is the actual reduction due to the Plan? If the Plan just acts to support enacted legislation, the FEIR should estimate the GHG reductions without that support and evaluate whether the reduction due to the Plan alone justifies the complex, expensive and ongoing implementation of the Plan.

(Page 2.5-41) The DEIR takes the position that under the 2011 Appeals Court decision in the Ballona case, CEQA does not require analyzing the effects of the environment on the project in an EIR. We believe that this is a narrow decision and is distinguishable because placing development in an area subject to sea level rise will inexorably have an

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

environmental impact. Specifically, once sea level rises, either measures will be taken to protect the development, which measures will have environmental impacts, or the development will be abandoned, requiring the need for replacement housing, which likewise will have impacts. We anticipate that Ballona will not stand, and that the California Supreme Court or the State Legislature will have the last say on this important issue. Nonetheless, the DEIR does analyze these impacts comprehensively “for informational purposes.” It would be irresponsible not to do so, in that the low-lying areas around the Bay contain significant transportation corridors and infrastructure and are home to Bay Area residents and businesses. More than a few PDAs coincide with these areas. Planned enhancements, expansions and improvements under the proposed Plan (DEIR 2.5-49) will require some form of flood protection – whether engineered structures like a levee or flood wall, managed retreat, or other strategy. These related projects should be evaluated on a regional basis and their impacts comprehensively assessed across all CEQA topics, including cumulative impacts. The impact of repairing facilities in the event of flooding from sea level rise should also be anticipated in the EIR.

(Page 2.5-67) Recognizing the importance of this issue to the Plan, the DEIR recommends mitigations for proposed transportation projects (and land use development) subject to regular inundation by midcentury sea level rise, but these appear to be “plans to make a plan.” That is, the DEIR recommends continued collaboration with BCDC and provides a long list of adaptation strategies that might be considered in the future. In effect, it defers mitigation to project-level and/or local planning. The FEIR should provide more rigorous regional and subregional approaches that avoid or aggressively reduce project areas and transportation improvements in areas susceptible to sea level rise.

(Page 2.5-76) Further, given the likelihood of continuing sea level rise past midcentury and projected greater impacts over time, the FEIR should give a reasonable time frame in which to address sea level rise beyond mid-century, allowing sufficient time to assess and implement, the best adaptation strategy. (Page 2.5-67) The discussion of mitigations should also to assess the economic feasibility of such strategies. Otherwise, impacts from sea level rise would make significant portions of the Plan impractical.

(Page 2.5-62) Table 2.5-11 shows the percentage of proposed transportation projects that will be inundated by midcentury sea level rise. Whether it is 5% or 100% may be unrelated to the GHG emissions associated with solving the problem, including the need to reroute to avoid the area completely and/or to replace/repair affected projects. The FEIR should estimate the regional increase in GHG emissions associated with solving sea level rise inundation issues for the Plan’s proposed projects.

(Page 2.8-34) Impact 2.8-7 deals with the 100-year flood hazard zones as mapped by

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

FEMA. Do such areas account for projected sea level rise? If not, using these zones to assess impacts for a Plan that extends to 2040 is inadequate and misleading. The FEIR should describe how these zones will be changed when sea level rise is factored in and reassess the magnitude of impact for the region. Tables 2.5-16-21 show different areas affected by midcentury sea level rise inundation zone. Does the “inundation zone” account for storm surge as well as mean high tide levels? If not, the tables should be expanded to show storm surge impacts.

2. Land Use and Physical Development.

Chapter 2.3. The Tables below are provided showing the Plan’s impact on different kinds of acreage. The FEIR must provide mapping that shows where these impacted acres are located so that the public can ascertain whether they are correct. Our initial impression is that the numbers are wrong. If these numbers are found to be inaccurate, significant questions are raised about the accuracy of the numbers in the whole document, which should then be double checked. In particular, we request sources of data and mapping to support the numbers provided for Marin in the following tables:

- Table 2.3-10 – PDA & BCDC Priority Use area acres of overlap. 110 acres could be so affected in Marin.
- Table 2.3-13 - Protected Open Space acres potentially affected by Proposed Development, by County. 135 such acres could be affected in Marin.
- Table 2.3-15. Farmland acres potentially affected by proposed transportation project, by County. 88 acres in Marin could be so affected.
- Table 2.3-16 – Williamson Act acres potentially affected by proposed Transportation Projects, by County. 47 acres could be so affected in Marin.
- Table 2.3-17. Protected Open Space acres potentially affected by proposed transportation projects, by County. 31 such acres could be affected in Marin.
- Table 2.3-18: Forest & Timberland acres potentially affected by proposed development, by County. For Marin, 255 acres (19% of County forest & timberland) could be affected.

ES-23 & 2.3-51, Impact 2.3-4 discusses the conversion of substantial acres of important farm land, land under Williamson Act, and Open Space. Why not take these areas out of the Plan and eliminate these impacts? What percentage of the whole Plan acreage is involved here? What percentage of housing units and GHG emissions reductions are accounted for in the proposed use of these areas that are so vital to the continuation of local agriculture?

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Page 2.3-53. Where there is forest removal, the FEIR should provide figures showing the impact on CO2 reduction due to loss of this resource, compared to lower GHG emissions achieved by developing these areas as PDAs.

3. Biological Resources.

(Page 2.9-71, et seq.) In this section, a minimum 1:1 ratio is proposed for restoration and preservation of impacted resources, with the caveat that local policy shall prevail. Given the general rate of success of such efforts, the 1:1 ratio is inadequate. While the Plan cannot mandate local mitigations, it should recommend realistic mitigation by proposing a higher ratio.

(Page 2.9-72 & 79) Success standards are stated for some mitigations, e.g., special status communities, but not for others, e.g., trees (Page 2.9-79). The Plan should consistently state success standards for all proposed biological resource mitigations to ensure their application and subsequent monitoring that is meaningful.

4. Public Utilities and Facilities.

(Page 2.12-48) The DEIR states that, on a regional basis, the major water agencies (with the exception of Solano County Water Agency) have adequate water supplies to serve expected growth under the proposed Plan. The ability to meet demand in a single dry year varies across the region, however, with some agencies anticipating a shortage in future years that will have to be made up either through conservation or developing new supplies. MCL has a particular interest in Marin Municipal Water District, whose supply sources are limited. The availability of water in Marin limits its growth potential. The District has consistently claimed a deficit by the year 2025. The DEIR, in contrast, states that land development through 2040 served by MMWD should have adequate water supplies in both regular and single drought years. The same measures are applied to all of the major water agencies. Climate change does not enter into this discussion nor does the possibility of two or more sequential drought years. For the region, about two-thirds of water supplies originate in the Sierra Nevada and Northern California and are either diverted from, pass through, or bypass completely, the Delta. In all these cases, projected decreases in the depth and location of the snowpack will influence the timing of runoff and ultimate quantity of stored water. In Marin, the possibility of sequential drought years poses a bigger threat to future water supplies. The DEIR should add analysis in this section that anticipates the consequences of climate change on precipitation patterns, including snow fall as well as sequential drought years, and their impact on regional and local water supplies.

5. Public Services and Recreation.

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

(Page 2.14-14) The DEIR asserts that “congestion is not a result of the transportation improvement investment strategy, but rather of regional growth”...so “impacts on public services as a result of transportation improvements...are considered less than significant...no mitigation required.” By incentivizing more and denser housing and commercial space than currently allowed, the Plan is indeed responsible for some percentage of the increase in congestion across the region. The FEIR should offer mitigation. (See also Issues of Known Controversy, above).

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Very truly yours,

David Schnapf, President

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Name not shown inside San Francisco

May 14, 2013, 9:35 PM

I have attended 4 PBA town hall meetings. I have also read the Draft plan. My input is that it's not OK to skim over the particulate matter (PM) reduction targets like they didn't mean anything. MTC needs to get more aggressive in addressing SB 375 goals both in planning and projects.

The bay area transit system is uncoordinated and redundant. There needs to be one transit planning agency that responds both to people's transportation needs, and also to spending transit funds for maximum effectiveness.

Consider that the Bay Bridge had a much higher people-moving capacity before 1958, when the trains were removed from the lower deck, yet, when rail was proposed for the bridge re-build, MTC didn't pursue this, even with the possibility of high-speed rail on the visible horizon.

The best way to address equity in planning is to set targets to reduce the jobs/housing imbalance. When you eliminate the need for a poor or working family to own a car, they save \$5-8K/year. Today, many workers commute from the less expensive housing markets in the eastern counties to the richer job markets in Marin, Napa, and Sonoma Counties. This is a huge issue that needs addressing through more affordable housing developments, and making wealthier cities like Palo Alto and towns in Marin accommodate their fair share of below-market-rate housing. MTC's pandering to the NIMBY elements is not productive for anyone. Educating town populations that more density and mixed-use in their downtown areas is an asset for everyone, and supports the small businesses that give each town its character.

Freight and goods movement are a blaring omission from PBA, yet trucks are responsible for a large percentage of PM. Where is the plan to reactivate rail freight, and even electrify rail systems?

Turning HOV to HOT lanes also increases the number of cars using the freeways, and potentially slows lanes that can be used for rapid bus routes by filling them with toll-paying single-occupant cars. Why not toll the general traffic lanes instead?

This stuff moves us in a good direction, but trying to put a happy face on the plans failings insults the seriousness of the issues, and fails to address the health hazards and thousands of premature deaths resulting from PMs. The ideas presented aren't rocket science, and they are not even untried. Most European cities have had similar and stronger policies for years.

MTC needs to come up with some real solutions. The people of the Bay Area deserve a world class transportation system, and smarter planning.

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Name not shown inside San Francisco

May 13, 2013, 4:34 PM

I am personally a proud, long-time resident of the Bay Area, and happy to see that -- for the first time -- there's a comprehensive plan that looks at the entire 9-county region wholistically. We are an inter- dependent economy dependent on one environment, and I appreciate this effort to properly plan to accomodate our expected population growth in a way that provides increased housing and transportation options, but in a less consumptive land use pattern.

1 Supporter

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Name not shown inside Solano

May 10, 2013, 9:22 AM

As a service to the Bay area, Plan Bay Area fails:

- a. Plan Bay Area will support "building" more high-density housing. The fundamental problem is just it will actually be less affordable to the people who live in it based on the transfer costs involved and the larger amount of low-income funds required from recipients, fixed-in persons, etc.
- b. It is advocating 'regionalization' which takes away from the individuality of cities and towns, imposing concepts of a one-size-fits-all mentality and some idea that bigger is better. Those two concepts are flawed, unforgiving and not keeping with the spirit that is an American. Citizens' want their area uniqueness to be the draw bringing people who will enjoy, expand and advocate for something they like, relate to and desire for a future.
- c. Developers, financiers, bankers--the 1%--will get richer for building the properties, but people in poverty will be required to sink more of their limited income into transportation than they do now. The ultimate result can only be ghetto's and squalor - not the intent of the richness and diversity that is American and the 9 Bay Area counties.
- d. Given the propensity of some major 9 Bay Area cities to act as asylums for the poor and indigent aliens who cross borders without papers, the densification of housing will establish a slave corridor and those that follow it will become 'slaves' to the economic elite concocting this nonsense. The 9 Bay Area Plan needs economic development to sustain the area and importing low income, uneducated in lieu of persons who would actually have sufficient education, training and skills to advance the area is folly at best, stupidity as worst.

1 Supporter

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Darryl Yip inside San Mateo

May 2, 2013, 4:25 PM

I understand that the majority of comments for Plan Bay Area are those compelled to comment because of their resistance to change and inevitable growth of the Bay Area. I understand that there are climate change deniers, those who still live in the 1950s, and those who will "NIMBY" any proposed development for fear of the "other." However, those comments are not representative of the potential for the future of the Bay Area, and we can only anticipate changes by planning for growth in ways that are sustainable environmentally, socially, and economically to continue to make the Bay Area the best place to live.

I strongly support Plan Bay Area. I support that it prioritizes our existing transportation system, that it focuses on growth in the areas that can already support it, and that it emphasizes the One Bay Area Grant program to incentivize more transit oriented development.

I have two suggestions:

(1) I encourage the MTC to add elements of the Equity, Environment, and Jobs alternative, as it adds more homes in areas with more jobs, schools, and transportation while also focusing on a stronger public transit. Politically, this alternative is one of the most challenging, so...

(2) I encourage ABAG and MTC to find more political will from elected officials and residents who will be most affected by the plan (ie, those who will still be alive in 2040), who both have huge stakes in it. Our elected officials have the privilege to promote the plan as a more sustainable future, and the young residents have the biggest stakes for how they see the region over the next decades. Thank you.

6 Supporters

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Name not shown inside Santa Clara

April 30, 2013, 1:20 PM

I just posted this to my Nextdoor.com neighborhood blog for the San Miguel neighborhood in Sunnyvale, but it pretty much summarizes my overall view of "the plan": "Although I generally agree with the stated goals of this plan, I don't think it's a good idea for Sunnyvale to sign onto any regional "master plan" that would sacrifice local planning and oversight of development issues. My guess is that Sunnyvale will be tagged as a "high-income / high-cost" city and will thus be forced to accommodate more low-income housing at the high densities that adherence to this plan requires. Although I recognize that housing affordability is a real problem (and I'd love to see the city require more BMR units for ownership and affordable rental units mixed into new market-rate developments), I think that developing large blocks of designated low-income housing is just asking for trouble down the road. Furthermore, if you look at the areas of Sunnyvale that are being targeted in this plan, you'll see that they are talking about the North-East Sunnyvale ITR areas (i.e. OUR NEIGHBORHOOD). Unfortunately, these areas already bear the burden of supporting the highest concentrations of poverty in the city. You will not find a statistic anywhere illustrating the benefits of concentrating poverty and how much more manageable a city becomes in doing so, because in fact the truth is the exact opposite. If we're going to get involved in this level of social engineering, our focus should be on economic INTEGRATION wherever possible, not low- income CONCENTRATION; otherwise we'll just be investing in the ghettos of the future.

Another issue is that the reality of business economics in the U.S. does not support the European / Asian urban model of commercial space supported by adjoined high-density housing supplying resident shoppers. Although many "mom-and-pop" or small local-chain restaurants seem to hold their own in the Bay Area, there is no way for small businesses selling goods or groceries to compete with the mega-chains. This is unfortunate, but again it's a reality that is only getting worse. Almost every neighborhood strip mall in the valley suffers from multiple vacancies due to this problem, and one has to look no further than the Tasman Crossing area and the recent failure of "Fresh and Easy" (a fairly large international chain, no less) to illustrate how this phenomenon can send site-focused and neighborhood planning into disarray. Again, I wish this were not the case, but it is the existing reality and I fear that even the best attempts at urban planning will fall victim to it.

Also of note (pg. 108) is that this plan openly allows for REGRESSIONS rather than improvements in the areas of household income consumed by transportation and housing, fatalities and injuries due to collisions, and highway and transit maintenance. In other words they ultimately admit that in terms of overall quality-of-life, we'll just be "getting it wrong" on a grander scale. All environmental issues aside (and yes these do matter a lot to me), I think Sunnyvale is better off staying out of this mess. The more you read of this plan, the more it will reveal itself as a sweetheart deal for big developers

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

with a thin veneer of "greenwashing". "By the way, I'm a city-loving, Leaf-driving, die-hard liberal who will gladly side with the Tea Partiers and general Gov't haters on this issue. This plan is a turd in gift wrap!

2 Supporters

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Name not shown inside San Francisco

April 27, 2013, 8:30 PM

Here are several comments on “Smart Growth” in general:

Where’s the water going to come from? The Bay Area experienced a severe drought in 1997 and there’s no new supply. Residents are expected to bear the responsibility through expensive (and non- workable) solutions such as low flow toilets and shower heads and high efficiency washers.

Where’s the garbage going to go? San Francisco is already planning to export its garbage to a new landfill 100 miles north of the city.

Where’s the new transportation? Mass transit is totally inadequate for the existing population and only 9% use transit for commute travel. However the MTC has been using bridge tolls for so called “Transit Oriented Development”. But there is no effective transit to handle the growth. The remainder of the commuters use their cars and more freeways will be required to handle the growth.

High density and transit oriented development has ruined the quality of life in San Francisco and the city is becoming just another Los Angeles.

More population growth is unsustainable and any plans for managing it through Smart Growth are just plain nonsense.

3 Supporters

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Name not shown inside San Francisco

April 26, 2013, 10:15 PM

The visioning sessions for this Draft were pre-set with pre-set questions and no real or authentic citizen participation. How can the results from such sessions produce anything valuable in a Draft? Besides, the bureaucrats involved in this Plan are trying to ban any comments that really show who they are and why they are doing what they are doing. There are no "civil" or "nice" words to describe them or this Plan.

2 Supporters

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Name not shown inside San Francisco

April 26, 2013, 9:51 PM

This plan utterly violates everything I understand as my rights as an American and violates everything I understand as to what is a community. A bunch of unelected bureaucrats deciding my future, my friends' futures, my children's futures, my business, and my living conditions --- ain't anything I call American and ain't anything I want.

4 Supporters

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Roderick Llewellyn inside San Francisco

April 26, 2013, 12:04 PM

Some have complained that the MTC process is undemocratic and it is attempting to force an unwanted urban lifestyle on suburbanites. Yet, for the decades that MTC underinvested in cities and built a vast highway network coupled with a rotten transit system, we heard not a peep from these people. In other words, the issue is not "democracy"; it's about getting what you want by any means.

I've been a veteran of the MTC planning process for three decades, and I can tell you it's no more undemocratic now than it ever was; it was always undemocratic. They built a highway system largely because real-estate promoters wanted it and made clear to politicians that if they wanted to get elected, they better build what those promoters wanted. I've funneled numerous comments to MTC in countless hearings and submissions, containing many ideas including many of very low cost, as to how transportation could be improved in the Bay Area. I've been blown off every time. I'm convinced that no Commissioner has EVER read ANYTHING I wrote. In most hearings, they're barely paying attention, often playing with phones and laptops. MTC promises to respond to every communication, yet my letters are routinely ignored. If you are a commenter on this site and you think even a single commissioner or other elected official will EVER read ANY of this material, you're fooling yourself. Those constituents who really count: primarily the corporate sector such as the Silicon Valley Manufacturers Association and the like, make their desires known in let us say more private settings. You'll notice that these "workshops" never have ANY (identified anyway) corporate representatives. They know perfectly well that these workshops are a farce and that nobody is listening. So is public comment of this type. Thus, my comments here are not directed towards MTC, ABAG, etc; it's directed towards YOU.

These public workshops are invariably conducted by a consulting company whose employees know nothing about transportation; their only duty is to keep order and move the process along a pre- determined track. In that, I agree with the suburban complainers. Where we differ is that I experienced all this while supporting public transit, and those car-centric complainers on this site are whining that now THEY aren't being listened to. Great! Welcome to the club. Now you're getting some of your own medicine. How does it taste?

Now fact is that the Plan under discussion will not force zoning changes, in particular MTC promised that no single-family area will be changed (unless residents want it of course). SO what's the beef? If you want to live in auto heaven, do so. If you like sprawl'n'crawl, go ahead and crawl. So why are so many upset? First, some people disguised as "simple residents" (the "Joe the Plumbers" of the piece) are actually land developers or others who see more profit in current development patterns than in denser ones. Second, others believe sincerely, but mistakenly, that policies that go

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

against their desires constitute social engineering, but those which support their desires are "democratic" and "capitalist". This is probably due to what we might term "propinquity bias". Your friends have a life-style similar to yours, so you assume that EVERYBODY wants that life-style.

Yet, why does San Francisco - home of the hated "stack'n'pack" life-style about which the car-centric set is complaining - have higher real estate prices than anywhere else in the Bay Area? Communism? Get real. It's due to a good 'ol capitalist principle: the law of supply and demand. What this means is that the demand for San Francisco life-style is not being met by the supply. Therefore, logically, we should be building more places like San Francisco. Funny how the exact same people who go on and on about capitalism don't know even the first things about its principles and reject its conclusions the moment it indicates something they don't like.

Let's deconstruct "social engineering". Once a couple decades ago I was at, guess what, an MTC hearing attended by many politicians. After putting in my two cents, strongly supporting public transit and criticizing highway construction, the mayor of San Pablo got up and said (directed to my comments): "What you are proposing is social engineering". I replied, "Yes, Mayor. Why did you offer yourself as a candidate for Mayor if you didn't want to do some social engineering? What policies are NOT social engineering?" He sat down.

Even a policy to do NOTHING is still a decision. There will always be those who object to anything. The modern crisis of America, probably most clearly seen right now in the high-speed rail debate, is the legions of do-nothing, sky-is-falling, tax-whining, we're-doomed losers who are blocking any progress at all. The result? Endless paralysis while China builds thousands of miles of high-speed rail. These do-nothings are right in one sense: America IS doomed, as long as it listens to these people who are so frightened of change that if they lived in 1900 they'd be condemning electricity. After all, weren't candles more common then, so they were the "democratic" choice?

7 Supporters

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Name not shown inside Alameda

April 25, 2013, 2:25 PM

A severally polarized debate in which both parties seem to be highly vocal minorities. For better or for worse, transportation and development policy are taken for granted or otherwise not considered very much by the general public. One possible reason for this is that they are very complicated, relatively unscientific fields which have to make great leaps toward what might happen in an unpredictable future.

Folks, this is why we elect officials to take care of these issues, and why they in turn appoint professionals to study the complexities of these systems, not simply “unelected bureaucrats.” I’m not saying the general population isn’t smart enough; they simply don’t have the time to properly educate themselves on the complex web of competing financial, economic, social and environmental concerns. It would be rather foolish to think we should all be voting directly on such a variety of policy issues.

Does MTC think they have all the answers in their plan? Certainly not. There is no “right” answer. There is no “reliable” prediction about 2040 or even 2014. Most of them are simply doing the best they can with the info they have available. They have to make some practical decisions about what’s feasible economically and politically.

Yes, I’m part of this community of professionals, a civil engineer, not a planner, though I probably am more knowledgeable on the issues (and their realities) than most. To those who figure I’m pro-MTC because I’ll benefit from their growth plans, you’re wrong. I’m needed whether we let our infrastructure fall apart around us, continue to build roads every which way, or attempt to improve on the status quo.

There is good reason to be wary of what planners tell us. They “socially experimented” with America while advocating sprawl for decades, creating the car-culture and fenced in lawn lifestyle so many defend or hate vehemently to today.

But one thing is clear to those who actually understand the costs of our infrastructure and subsequent lifestyle: it’s going to get worse if we don’t start changing direction. We’re going to be paying more for over-built, inefficient transportation (roads). We’re going to be sitting in more traffic rather than at home enjoying whatever lifestyle it is we choose. We’re going to become even more economically segregated. We’re going to do more environmental damage. And we’re going to hurt are businesses by relying on infrastructure that is falling behind the rest of the world.

Something has to be done. There are growing demographics that need better options than the current system provides. The MTC policies aren’t taking away anything from the lifestyle you’ve chosen (we can’t just remove sprawl and force people into apartments), but I should be entitled to a safe bike ride home the same way you’re entitled to a safe drive. Yes, we all have to shoulder the cost of expanding our options,

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

just like how I pay taxes toward roads and transit I don't use. Let's come together with constructive comments. Let's put some trust in the professionals who are studying the alternatives and presenting us with the ones they feel will serve the overall community best.

4 Supporters

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Charles Siegel inside Alameda

April 25, 2013, 9:34 AM

I very strongly support the overall goals of the plan - to promote smart growth, with walkable neighborhoods around transit stations. This will make cities more livable and more convenient. It will provide more transportation choices, reducing the economic burden of automobile ownership. It will reduce greenhouse-gas emissions, as required by state law.

It is unfortunate that some people are saying this is a top-down process. In reality, planning for smart growth is required by SB 375, passed by representatives of the majority of California voters. A small but very vocal minority has been attacking smart growth and attacking this planning process as undemocratic, but in reality, they are the ones who are trying to disrupt a decision that our democratically elected state government made when it passed SB 375. There is nothing democratic about a small minority that tries to disrupt and block the will of the majority.

Though I support the goals of the plan, I don't believe it goes far enough. It has two glaring defects:

-- It involves extensive highway widenings to create new HOT lanes, spending billions of dollars on new highway capacity that will only generate more traffic and weaken our attempt to control greenhouse gas emissions. Because it relies on an obsolete 1970s Caltrans policy that only allows newly added lanes to be used as HOT lanes, it also leaves gaps in the system of HOT lanes in the most congested parts of the Bay Area, which need those lanes most. Instead of building new lanes, the plan should convert existing mixed-use lanes to HOT lanes, saving billions of dollars that can be used for maintaining existing roads and providing better transit service.

-- It does not provide enough housing. MTC's goal is to build enough housing to reduce the cost of housing from the current 66% to 56% of the income of low-income families, but instead, this plan is projected to increase the cost of housing to 73% of income, putting a huge economic burden on low-income families. The plan should require more housing near transit nodes - including both affordable housing and market-rate housing. The only way to reduce the very high housing costs in the Bay Area is to build *much* *more* housing. The only environmentally sound way to build the needed housing is to locate it in walkable, transit-oriented neighborhoods.

7 Supporters

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Name not shown inside Marin

April 24, 2013, 8:05 AM

Nobody has proven anywhere that the claims made by the plan are valid. In fact, I would suggest that by moving more people into a smaller area will create WORSE problems than the ones this plan is intending to solve. Even environmentalists should be wary of this plan as eventually they will not be allowed to use the land they seek to protect! And those who live in the wide open spaces will not be allowed to. This plan is an outrage and should be cut off at the knees.

2 Supporters

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Jimmy Geraghty inside Marin

April 22, 2013, 9:14 PM

I support the Plan bay Area overall and think it can go further to provide equity for all.

Most Marin properties had this in their deeds:

"No portion of the property... shall be conveyed, transferred, let to, or held, occupied or possessed by anyone other than a person of the Caucasian or White race. This indenture is upon the further condition and covenant (independently of the preceding paragraph) that no portion of said property shall be occupied or possessed, or used as a place or residence by any person not of the Caucasian or White race, but subject to the right of any occupant to have the customary and reasonable domestic servants of other races."

Most White homeowners benefiting from wealth growth through property accumulation did so when others, mainly Black residents and Latinos didn't have the same opportunities nor were treated equally under the law. That social engineering produced residents in Marin that have and those that have not.

Clearly the existence of restrictive covenants has helped shape the demographics in Marin County today, and certainly has had much to do with the large Black population existing in Marin City.

As noted by one long time Mill Valley resident, "In Marin County, we didn't let supply and demand work fifty years ago, so now we have homes that are three times the cost of [those in neighboring counties], and now people don't want to change because they are happy with their economic position if they own a house here."

He pointed out that when people say that the expense of building affordable housing in Marin County is prohibitive so it should be built elsewhere, it is an old idea of outsourcing poverty to other areas. People employed in lower-paying jobs cannot afford to live in the area and must commute, increasing congestion.

All this, the resident claims, has profound practical and moral consequences for Marin County residents and future generations.

In our Marin County ABAG - MTC meetings we had East Bay and North Bay Tea Party interlopers agitating and spreading lies about Agenda 21 propaganda, using Tea Party Code words and phrases like Stack-n-Pack, Take Away Our cars, Force Us to Live in Apartments, Take our Homes. One of the interlopers was even in the John Birch Society's video that tried to connect sustainability and Agenda 21 to a Communist plot.

Their outbursts at our meetings actually prevented any constructive dialog and or solutions from coming forward. They just constantly were disruptive.

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Then Marin's own version of Tea Party Republicrats created a coalition of White Homeowner groups under the banner of Citizen Marin, whose membership posted racist and homophobic images and articles on their websites and social media pages as well as promoting John Birch Society and Tea Party Talking points promoted by people in the John Birch Society anti-sustainability video, <http://youtu.be/OzoN0IQsTAE>

Due to the historic racism and transference of wealth from one group to another because of being excluded from equal rights under the law, I feel the Plan Bay Area can do more in Marin county to provide opportunity to the protected classes that have been prevented from participating fully in the fruits of society. I know I'm not alone in asking for both our local officials and our regional representatives to step up and do the right thing and ignore all the right wing propoganda about Agenda 21 nonsense, we already have a dysfunctional federal government due to the Tea Party, let's not let it happen locally.

2 Supporters

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Name not shown inside Solano

April 22, 2013, 3:08 PM

I agree that these two agencies have for years thought that they should be making all decisions and that the general population is not smart enough to call a halt to all this 'pie in the sky'.

My initial reaction is that anything proposed by these agencies are not in my best interests - not in the past, not now and not in the future. Mass transit will not work for many Californians since they do not live in dense enough population centers to make it worthwhile. Explain to me the cost benefits mass transit in our agricultural areas within the nine bay area counties. As I see it, why should I pay for and be forced into an unworkable lifestyle that I don't want and is based on the wishes of a few people.

1 Supporter

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Name not shown inside Alameda

April 11, 2013, 10:22 PM

I am 100% in agreement on the goals of Plan Bay Area. I also think they are doing a terrible job on outreach. Unfortunately, people like me aren't being heard. I want and choose to live in a denser area with transit access. I would willingly give up my car if transit was more convenient. Now I regularly choose to ride transit because it is a more convenient option. If I had a family, my choice would be to live in a town home in a PDA. Some people it see s do not think I should have this choice. We have prioritized the opposite of my choice for the last 60 years. Why don't people like me have the choice to get what we want?

7 Supporters

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Alan Scotch inside Alameda

April 5, 2013, 10:40 AM

Every home will have Solar Panels and a Wind Turbine on its roof.

Battery ENERGY DENSITY will be 10 times more than it is today. Thus every single family home will be generating more electricity than consumed.

Charging the electric car every night. Home insulation will become irrelevant.

Solar panels and wind turbines on the roof of an multi-family apartment building can never be enough to meet the needs of the multi-families below and will not be ENERGY COST EFFICIENT.

But Single-family houses will be net ENERGY PRODUCERS -- when multi-family cannot.

So OneBayArea's multi-family philosophy is going to make air-pollution and Global Warming WORSE! To find out how this will also facilitate CARBON SEQUESTRATION:

http://populationalert.org/GlobalWarming/wind_solar.htm

1 Supporter

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Name not shown inside San Francisco

April 3, 2013, 2:41 AM

"Plan Bay Area" aims to convey an aura of public participation and bottom-up democracy, but that is an illusion.

Those in charge have already drawn up their plans, with the real decision-making happening behind the scenes. This whole dog-and-pony show of public hearings, opportunity to post web comments, and so on, is designed to get public buy-in for that pre-determined outcome by making us feel like there has been a process in which our voices have been heard, when in fact we have no say.

There is a method of orchestrating public meetings called the Delphi Technique. It is being used by the backers of PBA to manipulate people into believing this plan is being formulated and revised with the public's input. This video explains the technique and shows it in action, documenting how forums supposedly about planners listening to the public are not actually meant to allow any public input that would alter the plan from their pre-determined goals:

<iframe width="560" height="315" src="http://www.youtube.com/embed/-zpA1althjo" frameborder="0" allowfullscreen></iframe>

[Much more below!]

Lots of tables, confident projections of future demographics, housing needs, and so on, make the PBA materials appear impressive, but the simple truth is that predictions of who's going to live in the Bay Area decades from now, how many jobs there will be in different cities, how much housing will be needed and of what types, etc., are nothing but guesses. Yet the manner in which the information is presented is designed to give the impression that these convenient projections are factually detailing a future that is guaranteed to occur as described.

Beneath all the hype, all the lip service paid to recognizing different "stakeholders", etc., the plan is designed to push a statist agenda of more taxes, more government spending, and more top-down control.

Crucial to understanding this is to know one's history. The history of government urban planning in the United States is steeped in racism and classism. It has led to the destruction of neighborhoods and lives, disproportionately those of poor people and minorities, to benefit a wealthy and politically connected government elite. "The Tragedy Of Urban Renewal" is a short video (under 7 minutes) that tells the story of one such planning project:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mWGwsA1V2r4&feature=share&list=PL72CB73E3DA157AD6>

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

When confronted with these historical facts, government officials today will typically assure you that neighborhood-destroying government redevelopment schemes of the kind documented above were tragic mistakes that won't be repeated. Yet they show little interest in holding anyone accountable, let alone analyzing the elitist attitudes that led to these "mistakes", to make sure they aren't repeated. Justin Hermann, the man who headed the redevelopment agency that destroyed San Francisco's primary African-American neighborhood, the Western Addition, in the 1960s, today has a prominent city plaza named after him. And redevelopment continues under other names and guises (aka "planning"), using methods that are less overtly racist, classist, and statist, but ultimately no less destructive. Most government officials remain addicted to power and control, thinking they know best; the cronyism and gravy-train mentality flourishes, as the economic situation grows ever bleaker and liberty is violated more and more routinely. They defiantly refuse to acknowledge or consider the growing mountain of evidence that freedom is fairer, more harmonious, and simply works better.

If we are to stop this elitist oppression, we must demand an honest public debate about the premises underlying this latest manifestation of "urban renewal", the Plan Bay Area/Agenda 21 being pushed in this region by ABAG (the Association of Bay Area Governments), and look at some of the realities ignored by their elitist assumptions:

- Elitist ABAG premise: People making their own voluntary economic choices without government interference is bad.

---> BACK TO REALITY: Worldwide data show that countries with more economic freedom have healthier economies with more jobs on average, more prosperity on average, better environmental protection on average, etc. See among other sites <http://www.freetheworld.com/release.html> .

- Elitist ABAG premise: Government planners know how to run your life better than you do.

---> BACK TO REALITY: Individuals know more about themselves, their families, their needs, their desires, etc., than government planners do, and attempts to impose top-down, one-size-fits-all solutions in the name of making things better have in fact caused massive suffering and economic harm. Watch the video linked above if you haven't already.

- Elitist ABAG premise: Using mass transit protects the environment, so we're going to restrict your other options.

---> BACK TO REALITY: Technology is making cars more and more environmentally friendly. Along with other emerging technologies like electric bicycles, Segways, and new innovations scarcely imagined by government planners (see e.g.

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

<http://www.wired.com/autopia/2010/03/general-motors-en-v/>), this means that mass transit, with its large vehicles, sprawling stations, government control, and so on, is not necessarily going to remain more environmentally friendly than independent vehicular traffic in coming decades.

- Elitist ABAG premise: Only government can provide mass transit, so you need to pay higher taxes to fund it.

---> BACK TO REALITY: The truth is that government has effectively outlawed independent transit operators by subsidizing government-run competition to undercut their prices, burying them in bureaucratic regulations and expenses, etc. In San Francisco, MUNI essentially forced competing privately-run streetcar companies out of business in the early 20th century, and then once it had a monopoly, began jacking up rates from the 5 cents that was once the norm to \$2 a ride today. Jitneys remain banned or highly regulated.

- Elitist ABAG premise: Single-family homes create urban sprawl, so we're going to restrict your options and try to force all but the elite into what we euphemistically call "multi-family housing" (i.e. big apartment buildings) and pretend that this is the way people from non-European cultures naturally want to live.

---> BACK TO REALITY: Attempts to engage in economic engineering produce unintended consequences, resentment, and blowback from the people whose choices you are trying to manipulate and whose lives you are trying to control. There are better and more creative ways to reduce sprawl that don't rely on top-down coercion. Eliminating or reforming zoning laws, so that people can make more efficient use of existing land and buildings, including more live-works spaces, farming on unused patches of urban land, allowing people to engage in small scale manufacture or retail sales out of residences or other spaces, and allowing property owners to easily subdivide their parcels and sell off or lease out small sub-parcels without onerous government permits or bureaucracy, would be a more market-oriented and more community-minded approach. Many existing streets are far wider than they need to be; areas around freeways and government buildings are often surrounded by large amounts of unused or underused land. Letting people homestead this wasted public land and turn it into farms, gardens, parking places, art installations, small retail booths, etc., will make urban areas much more walkable, livable, and interesting, giving people more reasons to want to live and work in these urban areas instead of trying to coerce them to do so by restricting development and taking away choices.

Isn't it time we had some real transparency and accountability from the people running ABAG and coming up with all these far-reaching plans to reshape the lives of Bay Area residents? Here are a few key questions to consider, and for which to demand answers:

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

- What are their names of the planners, where do they live, what are their jobs, and how much are they being paid, including benefits?
- What are the planners' ideological biases, what special interest connections do they have, and who put them in their positions?
- Which specific decisions have been made and are being made by which specific individuals?
- How do we replace those specific individual planners if we don't like the decisions they are making?
- What is the precise nature of the connection between "Plan Bay Area" and the United Nations' "Agenda 21"? (They'll say there is no connection, or downplay it, but without verification of full disclosure, the denials fall flat.)
- When do the various communities who will be affected by all this get to VOTE on "Plan Bay Area" as a whole, and on its various components?

Let me leave you with a couple quotes:

“If the natural tendencies of mankind are so bad that it is not safe to permit people to be free, how is it that the tendencies of these organizers are always good? Do not the legislators and their appointed agents also belong to the human race? Or do they believe that they themselves are made of a finer clay than the rest of mankind?”

– Frederic Bestiat

“Most people prefer to believe that their leaders are just and fair, even in the face of evidence to the contrary, because once a citizen acknowledges that the government under which he lives is lying and corrupt, the citizen has to choose what he or she will do about it. To take action in the face of corrupt government entails risks of harm to life and loved ones. To choose to do nothing is to surrender one's self-image of standing for principles. Most people do not have the courage to face that choice. Hence, most propaganda is not designed to fool the critical thinker but only to give moral cowards an excuse not to think at all.”

– Michael Rivero

6 Supporters

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Name not shown inside Marin

April 2, 2013, 3:11 PM

I have attended a Plan Bay Area "community" meeting. It was quite obvious from the start of the meeting that the officials (!) holding the meeting weren't the least bit interested in hearing what the people of the community thought about the Plan. The officials only wanted the meeting held in order to tell all of us who attended what THEY thought about the Plan. It was a total sham and a waste of community time. I've read what others are posting about Plan Bay Area and I agree 100% with all the negative comments made. This is clearly an attempt by so-called officials to ram Plan Bay Area down the throats of the various communities. There is absolutely no regard for what the people really and truly want. No concern for freedom or Constitutional rights. In short, Plan Bay Area is all about control. Control by "officials" over the people of the communities. I have no doubt it will be pushed through. What a shame and a pity for those of us who still believe in individual choice. Good-bye America as we know and love it. Hello Big Brother.

7 Supporters

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Name not shown inside Santa Clara

April 2, 2013, 10:30 AM

I found out about PDA after digging through the 'Sunnyvale Sustainability' website. Buried in the information was an announcement about an 'outreach' meeting. I was shocked at the plans for our cities, decided by a few, with most citizens having no knowledge of it. I have discussed PDA with my neighbors and friends - none of them have ever heard of Plan Bay Area, and all were alarmed that this plan can take place without our vote. It seems you go about your 'business' of making drastic changes to our communities without the knowledge of the citizens. We are not given the right to vote on any of it. This plan defies our Constitutional rights. I strongly disagree with Plan Bay Area overall.

6 Supporters

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Name not shown inside San Mateo

April 1, 2013, 12:08 PM

I disagree with this plan overall. Grandiose planning done by intellectuals is never a substitute for the movements and choices of a free people.

In no way can you actually know what is best for those living under your planning umbrella.

There is no need to dictate other people's life-choices and to tell others how to assemble or where to make their homes.

Whether you desire a certain outcome or not you have no right to design our lives for us.

5 Supporters

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Name not shown inside Contra Costa

April 1, 2013, 9:42 AM

I attended the MTC/ABAG visioning session in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. The goal seemingly was for public input. It did not take long to realize the public was being steered into the vision that MTC/ABAG wanted. Wishes of the public were totally ignored. Orinda citizens have been kept in the dark even though I have asked the City Council to hold Town Hall meetings to inform the electorate. Orinda has set aside a Priority Development Area (PDA) in Orinda without citizen participation. Within the past 15 months the Orinda Planning Commission has not agendized Plan Bay Area. Citizens are being denied the right to make local decisions for their communities. This MTC/ABAG rezoning without citizen input is the most important issue we have faced in Orinda. We fought England for local control. We fought other tyrannies like Hitler to prevent top down decisions, and now we have MTC/ABAG through Sacramento telling us how we should live based on their questionable figures and premises. My residential road has huge dangerous pot holes. We owe millions in unfunded liabilities for our fire district. The State owes billions in unfunded liabilities. Many actually paying taxes are moving out of state. Yet Sacramento comes up with new financial obligations for taxpayers based on ill conceived projections. Plan Bay Area is just about power, control and money. I say NO to the Plan Bay Area.

8 Supporters

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Name not shown inside Marin

April 1, 2013, 5:41 AM

I find myself in limbo with this entire philosophy. On the one hand the concept of helping lower income working families and seniors find affordable housing sounds grand. However when the concept is matched with the reality there is a major disconnect. The entire premise of supporting the lowering of GHG through high density housing is counter intuitive. I read a proposal from one resident offering a compromise of building suburban default density housing (20 units per acre plus density bonus, up to 35%) and offering an additional 10% bonus for only owning and using one vehicle per household. He was told that would be a dis-incentive to developers. So I ask if we really have such a huge need why is there no effort made to actually do anything that supports the contention? I have read numerous articles discussing this top down one size fits all plan and haven't heard a single person address the needs of the current residents. Where are the resources being supplied for this grandiose scheme? Schools struggling to stay afloat, cities and towns barely able to provide basic services being asked to stretch past the breaking point and guess what all this new housing comes with a zero contributory tax base. It seems if I read the proposal correctly most developers make their profit and the rest is filled with 100% tax deferred incentives for wealthy investors. In almost every county study the major bulk of the housing is concentrated, not where the employment base is located but rather shuffled off away from the financially affluent enclaves. In many cases, like Marin and Sonoma, there is a vacuum of mass transit options and as in most cases folks are commuting in cars from their homes to these locations. Why isn't the state participating in this exercise? Why are towns and communities being thrown under the bus by Sacramento politicians who refuse to actually deal with GHG and reasonable, sustainable, integration of working families into our communities? This plan is another pass the buck, move it down the road failure. I believe it should be scrapped and a citizens committee formed to deal with real programs, with real solutions for real lower income and seniors and actually bring real housing in a sustainable manner instead of this imaginary feel good developer/investor give away.

2 Supporters

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Name not shown inside Alameda

March 29, 2013, 7:23 PM

Plan Bay Area is based on several faulty assumptions. One assumption is that unelected bureaucrats should be making decisions regarding land use and housing that should be left to local elected officials and the free market. Another assumption is that these unelected bureaucrats are prescient enough to predict what will happen in the next 25 years.

There is no way this plan will succeed with heavy subsidies. ABAG and MTC do not respond to any feedback mechanisms. When public transit systems are a disaster, they recommend building more. When cars and roads are the preferred method of transportation they write policies to restrict parking and purposely cause congestion to "nudge" people out of their cars. When people don't want stack and pack housing in their communities, they insist that those types of units be built and punish towns by withholding road repair funds for non-compliance.

Unfortunately, this is not a Plan that will respond to public input. These arrogant bureaucrats will be forcing this down our throats and the Bay Area will become the Calcutta of California.

15 Supporters

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Name not shown inside Alameda

March 29, 2013, 12:28 PM

I've noticed a geographic contrast in attitudes toward this plan. While I support most of the tenets and proposals of the plan in its current state, many of the strongly voiced opinions I read online are not in support of it. In particular I read variations of the view that Plan Bay Area "disempowers local governments and citizens." Regional planning inherently suggests some shift from local to regional decision making. Regional planning is not undemocratic, but democracy by its nature often supports the many at the expense of the few.

As a supporter of the plan and a resident of a semi-urban Alameda County neighborhood, I am also feeling disempowered. A case in point is last fall's Alameda County transportation measure B1. That measure, related to Plan Bay Area, lost by an estimated 721 out of the 527,403 votes cast in Alameda County. However, post-election analysis revealed that cities west of the hills overwhelmingly supported the measure, while cities east of the hills did not:

<http://www.ebcitizen.com/2012/12/recount-for-measure-b1-is-short-lived.html>

While voters in Albany, Berkeley, Oakland and parts of San Leandro and Hayward easily approved the transportation tax, a large swath of the electorate in the Tri Valley and Tri Cities failed to reach even 60 percent approval.

We Alameda County residents west of the hills are almost unable to tax ourselves! Perhaps much of the tension around this plan comes from too coarse a geographic granularity.

As someone who has happily resided in dense, transit-rich cities outside of the US, I wonder about what kinds of experiences inform the Plan Bay Area opponents. There are many possibilities afforded by measured increases in density, yet most of what I read is in fear of the worst cases. We Americans are notoriously insular and poorly traveled, though we have to acknowledge that one person's feast is another's appetizer. While Paris has an estimated density five times that of Washington DC, Paris is in many ways more livable:

<http://thinkprogress.org/yglesias/2010/07/01/197745/paris-denser-than-you-think/>

Measured increases in density do not always mean misery, and a house in the suburbs does not offer unequivocal freedom.

--Happily living in semi-urban north Oakland

8 Supporters

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Name not shown inside San Mateo

March 29, 2013, 11:30 AM

These are question that need to be asked, these are from another forum. I believe this utopian plan needs this question answered before it is implemented.

1. How much is each scenario going to cost?
2. What is social equity?
3. Why are we making decisions based on race?
4. Show me where in SB375 it says that social equity is a factor in reduction of GHG emissions?
5. What does race have to do with sustainability?
6. SB375 states that race, gender, color, etc. should not be taken into consideration. This is a violation of that bill and is completely un-American.
7. Why are we using social justice? I thought our country was founded on Equal Justice?
8. Isn't justice supposed to be bind?
9. If stack and pack housing is environmentally better why are the developers going to get GHG waiver?
10. If the point of SB375 is to reduce GHG emissions why are these stack and pack developments going to get CEQA (Calif. Environmental Quality Act)?
11. I read SB375 and nowhere in that document does it say that "Social Justice" should be used as a factor for the reduction of GHG emissions.
12. Assuming you get people to live in these stack and pack villages. How are you going to force them not to use their cars?
13. How are you going to force people to work at businesses under the stack and pack housing?
14. How are you going to force companies to open up businesses on the bottom floor of these stack and pack buildings?
15. Are you going to require businesses to only employ people who live in the stack and pack buildings?

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

16. Are you going to limit how far a person can drive to a job?
17. Are you going to raise toll bridge rates and parking rates to penalize drivers?
18. Are you going to eliminate parking to try to frustrate and change the behavior of people who drive?
19. Are you going to reduce the toll prices given that you just used of it to \$179,000,000 to purchase a new building in SF for MTC and ABAG Headquarters?
20. How much money did you spend bringing President Clinton to Richmond last year? Over \$150,000. Why are you wasting our tax payer money on this type of stuff?
21. Why are you trying to dictate how and where people will live and work? Shouldn't we the people be able to choose where we live and where we work?
22. Are these stack and pack units going to be subsidized with our tax payer money?
23. What if these units are not occupied and the development goes belly up? Will the tax payers be on the hook for these losses?
24. Will tax payer money be used to bailout/guarantee there will be no loss to the developer?
25. Do your population numbers include illegal aliens?
26. Once these stack and pack units are funded and built with tax payer money will the tax payers then have to also subsidize those that live there?
27. What impact will these high density units have on the schools as well as a local jurisdictions fire and safety needs?
28. How much money will it cost the local community to house, educate and provide community services to low income families that will be occupying these new stack and pack units?
29. What happens if a local jurisdiction says no?
30. Why is there no choice for Single Family Residential units in any of these plans?
31. How are you going to build stack and pack housing in PDAs where existing neighborhoods and/or businesses exist?
32. Will you be recommending rezoning? What will that do to the property values?

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

33. Will you be recommending shrinking the urban growth boundary to keep land owners from exercising their rights to develop their own properties?

34. Open space is not public land. It is private property. You do not have a right to dictate how someone else can and should use their private property.

35. The federal govt. owns over 50% of all the land in Calif. And over 85% of the land in Nevada. Why do they keep saying that there is not enough open space?

36. When the govt (uses tax payer money) to buy private property and then converts it to open space the property taxes for that property are lost. Why would we do that in a cash strapped state?

37. Why are you pushing to spend tax payer money to purchase land that will be unused and will reduce a local jurisdictions revenues?

38. What policies are you advocating to reduce the use of cars?

a. Increased tolls? Parking? Reduce the number of parking spaces? Roundabouts? Toll roads?

39. Bicyclists do not contribute to the tax base for bicycle lanes. Gas taxes are used to repair roads. Are you suggesting that we divert gas and toll money to pay for bicycle lanes?

40. Bicycle riders make our roads more dangerous for drivers

14 Supporters

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Name not shown inside Solano

March 29, 2013, 11:29 AM

It's disingenuous to ask us what we think of the plan when there is less than zero opportunity for us to modify it. Your decisions were set in stone before you asked our opinion. As usual, the wealthy areas are spared (Oh, to live in Orinda), and the poor or badly managed areas are burdened. Just like most HUD programs, your mindset is "Housing is enough". That's not true. Your high density housing plans contain a large % of very-low and low income, but there are no services to support the poor that you force into PDA zones. One question: How many people in working at ABAG and MTC live in PDA's? That will be my question at the town hall. The answer to that question is the litmus test to my hypothesis that the this plan is ABAG's calculated move to centralize poverty.

14 Supporters

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Name not shown inside Marin

March 29, 2013, 9:16 AM

Plan Bay Area takes highly questionable assumptions and projections, then inflates these into a utopian vision. In practical terms, Plan Bay Area amounts to a persecution of the middle class suburban population with over-regulation, high taxes, and micro-management of our lifestyles. The population and job growth assumptions are obviously inflated in order to justify the whole structure. The environmental assumptions are equally questionable, since global warming theory continues to lose scientific support.

Given this kind of bureaucratic over-reach, it's no surprise that California has the worst business climate of any of the 50 states. It's estimated that 250,000 businesses have left California in the last 10 years. We're losing population, too. For the first time since statehood, California lost a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives due to out-migration. The people who leave are mostly middle class taxpayers, homeowners, and small business owners. As a result, California is becoming increasingly bi-polar, a state with a small number of very wealthy residents, a shrinking middle class, and a swelling population of low income residents who depend on taxpayer subsidies. This is unsustainable.

Plan Bay Area purports to be all about sustainability, but the exact opposite is true.

13 Supporters

Introducing Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

What do you think about the draft Plan Bay Area overall?

Name not shown inside Alameda

March 26, 2013, 9:29 AM

As much as I like the sound of the vision, the sad fact is that this plan is dis-empowering our local government and silencing the voice of it's citizens. I see this as a plan to crowd our cities and towns and remove it's historical character.

Very little consideration has been given to city/town infrastructure, with no plans to address our already over crowded schools & roads. No thoughts to over burdened city services such as water, sewage, police or fire fighters. No consideration for open space, or the impact to the environment and ever increasing traffic, noise, air or water pollution.

Where are the jobs for the proposed new residents who will occupy these compact "urban condos"? Where will their children play or attend school? How does this plan IMPROVE our quality of life?

The fact is, the wealthy will be impacted the least by this ill conceived plan to over populate our towns. Many of the wealthier Americans live on large, 1/2 acre or more plots of land outside the proposed locations for the new "stack and pack homes". Their children attend private schools. Their neighborhoods will not make room for the proposed stack and pack type housing, nor will they welcome a transit station.

I urge you to return the governance and planning of our cities and towns to it's citizens.

15 Supporters

Chapter 1: Setting Our Sights

What do you think about the "Setting Our Sights" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

All comments sorted chronologically
As of close of comment period, May 16, 2013, 4:00 PM



Introduction

For over a decade, local governments and regional agencies have been working together to encourage the growth of jobs and production of housing in areas supported by amenities and infrastructure. Draft Plan Bay Area charts a course for accommodating projected growth in the nine- county San Francisco Bay Area while fostering an innovative, prosperous and competitive economy; preserving a healthy and safe environment; and allowing all Bay Area residents to share the benefits of vibrant, sustainable communities connected by an efficient and well-maintained transportation network.

Background

MTC and ABAG tackled the assignment of crafting a draft plan to meet the challenges and opportunities of the coming quarter-century with enthusiasm — emphasizing an open and inclusive attitude and a commitment to analytical rigor. What are we aiming for in Plan Bay Area, and how can we measure our success in achieving it? The answer to this question guided our development of the draft Plan Bay Area.

Before proposing a land use distribution approach or recommending a transportation investment strategy, our planners had to formulate in concrete terms the desired outcomes we seek. Establishing these outcomes, or performance objectives, and developing the draft plan required a collaborative process.

Tell Us What You Think

This chapter traces the overall development of the draft Plan Bay Area, with special attention to the public process followed, and to the setting, adjusting and assessment of key performance objectives. MTC and ABAG engaged a broad spectrum of regional stakeholders in order to:

- make the targets as meaningful as possible in measuring the plan's success;
- evaluate quantitative measures of equity concerns; and
- identify the most promising growth scenario, especially with respect to the attainment of the statutory requirements for greenhouse gas emission reductions and for the provision of an adequate amount of housing.

Draft Plan Bay Area resulted from three rounds of scenario analyses and vigorous public outreach. Read [Chapter 1](#) and give us your comments on the [Setting Our Sights](#) chapter of draft Plan Bay Area.

As of May 16, 2013, 4:00 PM, this forum had:

Attendees: 183

Participants: 30

Hours of Public Comment: 1.5

13 participants posted comments

Chapter 1: Setting Our Sights

What do you think about the "Setting Our Sights" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Leslie Smith inside Alameda

May 13, 2013, 11:09 AM

1. I strongly support the process of regional planning in order to successfully coordinate land use and transportation planning for the Plan Bay Area. Without a coordinated approach to planning, the Bay Area will just become a chaotic group of disconnected parts. No community is isolated from another. We all need to work together. Who wants to sit in hours of traffic, heating up the planet and our tempers when we could have a modern, comfortable, efficient system of public transportation to meet everyone's needs?
2. We all need to work on reducing carbon and other emissions that worsen air quality and the impacts of climate change. The cost of increasing sea levels, worsening storms, and drought is a very high price indeed. There are solutions available to lessen the impact of climate change and to begin to move us in the right direction. The Bay Area Plan moves us in the right direction.
3. Draft Plan Bay Area places primary emphasis on maintaining the existing transportation system and its expansion. This is the correct priority, but long term commitments must be kept to communities such as Livermore while providing services to new areas such as San Jose. Expansion of in-city bus services must not be sacrificed for larger regional transportation. All communities need equitable access to high quality, accessible public transportation. If we could do it in the 30's, it seems we should be able to do it today.
4. The need for public transportation is expanding, partly do to a growing population and partly due to years of underfunding. The economy of the Bay Area is beginning to sore. Transportation and housing are core to the health of that expansion. A public education program needs to be started immediately so that the people are conversant with the issues, understand the needs, able to dream what is feasible and practicable, and want to make the investment to see it come to fruition.
5. All regional policies should support the development of the urban core rather than encouraging suburban sprawl. Decisions in the recent past to benefit small, local populations at the expense of the health, wealth, and welfare of the greater good have been unwise and destructive and must stop.
6. Four alternatives to the "preferred" draft Plan were evaluated as part of the draft EIR, and several among them include elements that perform somewhat better than the draft Plan. For example, the "Equity, Environment, and Jobs (EEJ)" alternative is judged the "environmentally preferred alternative," and the "Transit Priority Focus (TPF)" alternative

Chapter 1: Setting Our Sights

What do you think about the "Setting Our Sights" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

is judged superior for transportation. I strongly urge that the elements of the alternatives that offer superior benefits to the environment, provide robust incentives for affordable housing, and enhance the services of the transit systems be included in the draft Plan .

3 Supporters

Chapter 1: Setting Our Sights

What do you think about the "Setting Our Sights" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Aubrey Freedman inside San Francisco

May 11, 2013, 1:25 AM

Here it is May 11, and out of the 7,000,000 residents in the nine-county Bay Area, only 490 people have responded to this online survey that has been up for a few weeks. Even though this chapter says that Plan Bay Area reached out to "thousands," most people I know (including many who are college-educated and otherwise up-to-date on other newsworthy events) have never even heard of Plan Bay Area. I would say the effort to get the public involved and informed has been a total disaster--a planned disaster. Otherwise why didn't Plan Bay Area get on the radio, newspapers, and TV to get the word out? Is it possible the bureaucrats don't want the public to find out what's going on right under our noses?

Another problem I have with the "reaching out" part is why didn't they "reach out" to the most important group (as far as I see it)--the folks who will be paying the considerable bills for Plan Bay Area--the taxpayers? Many (but not all) of the public input meetings were held in the daytime when the folks who keep this economy going (the taxpayers) were at work. Shameful.

Lastly I found one good target of Plan Bay Area: target #10 which is to "maintain the transportation system in a state of good repair," i.e. better paved roads, decreased distressed lane-miles of state highways, and reduced share of transit assets that are past their useful life. These are functional, reasonable goals that most people would expect of government, and if MTC and ABAG had stuck to these areas, they would not have encountered the opposition they ran into. However, when they ventured into social engineering by focusing on "social equity" and "communities of concern" (by their own admission in this chapter, this part of Plan Bay Area is voluntary and not required by SB375), they're totally off base and clearly pushing income redistribution. Therefore I say the "No Project" option is best until they go back to basics.

Chapter 1: Setting Our Sights

What do you think about the "Setting Our Sights" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Alan Scotch inside Alameda

April 28, 2013, 7:09 PM

To the extent that a more realistic future might not favor MULTI-FAMILY development, please consider the following scenarios in your planning:

RESIDENTIAL ENERGY

Every home will have 2-3kw Solar Panels and a 2-3kw Wind Turbine on its roof.

Battery ENERGY DENSITY will be 10 times more than it is today. (A Berkeley company is manufacturing these batteries right now). Thus every single family home will be generating more electricity than consumed.

Charging the electric car every night.

(Using this excess electricity to indirectly manufacture these Solar Panels, Wind Turbines and Batteries).

Home insulation will become irrelevant.

Solar panels and wind turbines on the roof of an multi-family apartment building can never be enough to meet the needs of the multi-families below and will not be ENERGY COST EFFICIENT.

But Single-family houses will be net ENERGY PRODUCERS -- when multi-family cannot.

WASTE RECYCLING

Water will be stored and re-processed for reuse and for (not so greywater) irrigation.

Solid human waste and previously un-processable waste will be locally processed and put back into the ground (remember - with excess energy all things are possible) . We will no longer be wasting so much water to "flush it" to sewage treatment. (1. more research needed). Composting's methane emission - not necessarily being a better option.

This is yet another reason why the single-family detached home, with a garden, is the way of the future for CARBON SEQUESTRATION and WATER RECYCLING & STORAGE as well as ENERGY EFFICIENCY.

(Garden and roof enables drinkable rain Water Capture and storage tanks.)

Chapter 1: Setting Our Sights

What do you think about the "Setting Our Sights" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

(2-way Satellite Internet will then allow homes to be totally OFF THE GRID and can be built anywhere.)

BUSINESS OF THE FUTURE

Retail outlets like Best Buy (which is going bust right now) and even clothing and general goods retailers could be replaced by independent showrooms instead - charging admission with online purchase credits. Purchases made in these showrooms could be delivered to your door on a subsequent day. Most businesses will be online except for food, restaurants, entertainment and a few others. Deliveries being made in electric trucks.

All kinds of different businesses will share showrooms and strategically placed warehouses (to increase delivery efficiency).

Commuting will only be to these kind of jobs in businesses that do not sell much online and to manufacturing (which will continue to become more robotic).

Telecommuting will be the norm.

PLAN for an ENERGY EFFICIENT FUTURE NOW

Make land available for MANUFACTURED (cheap) detached housing -- otherwise building so much multi-family now, will create energy slums - a liability -- as living with your own energy producing roof and conserving garden will be, -- not only cheaper, -- but a source of income.

And also be "SAVE THE PLANET NECESSARY".

Keep and add to the RENEWABLE ENERGY SUBSIDIES. Lets divert money from otherwise wasted \$'s on PLAN BAY AREA transit and dense residential.

Recompense for residential excess energy production so we can have finance companies invest in energy installations on residential roof tops - now.

Alan Scotch http://populationalert.org/GlobalWarming/wind_solar.htm

Chapter 1: Setting Our Sights

What do you think about the "Setting Our Sights" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside San Francisco

April 26, 2013, 9:55 PM

I, too, attended the visioning sessions from which this Orwellian fantasy called a Draft was created, and I can tell you for sure and outright as a fact that the entire outreach to the public was rigged, had its own secret agenda and was NOT in any way a public outreach participation program. The "results" as displayed in this Draft are nothing but con-artistry.

1 Supporter

Chapter 1: Setting Our Sights

What do you think about the "Setting Our Sights" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside San Francisco

April 4, 2013, 5:24 PM

I attended 4 Plan Bay Area meetings and I thought they were quite democratic. People were informed about the costs and benefits of different scenarios and were asked to vote how they wanted growth to happen. People got to spend their "play money" on different programs and different outcomes.

The undemocratic part was being shouted down by attendees who came with their own anti-growth agenda. or paranoia about "Agenda 21." They complained about not being heard, but they didn't come to hear or learn anything, they came to shut down the conversation.

These people were stunningly ill-informed, and had no research or data to cite that would verify their predictions. Most had not even read the Bay Area Plan, let alone the full text to UN Agenda 21.

I think that if they want to have meetings to teach us about their conspiracy theories, they should go rent a hall and invite the public to attend, and buy their own sandwiches. Instead, they came and partook of MTC's hospitality and then complained about just everything.

I hope they do some homework before this next round of meetings.

1 Supporter

Chapter 1: Setting Our Sights

What do you think about the "Setting Our Sights" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Robert Means inside Santa Clara

April 1, 2013, 1:20 PM

If transportation accounts for 40% of California's CO2 emissions, why does Plan Bay Area include a reduction target for the year 2040 of only 15% instead of our state's target of reducing our CO2 emissions approximately 55% by the year 2035? (See ARB, Scoping Plan, Figure 6, at p. 118) Doesn't such lenient action on reducing transportation emissions mean that other ways of mitigating CO2 emissions must pick up the slack? Global climate change is accelerating and bringing more costly impacts as we go. Reversing that trend requires us to make major and rapid reductions in our transportation CO2 emissions.

2 Supporters

Chapter 1: Setting Our Sights

What do you think about the "Setting Our Sights" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside Marin

April 1, 2013, 6:07 AM

Setting one sights sounds like a fine sound bit. So I guess if you set a goal and ask for feedback and suggestions the assumption is there is the possibility of being a positive influence to the process. However if you are only interested is gaining consensus to support your theory and close minded to what "we the people" think this renders this debate a fraud, sham and disguised effort to pass one by us, the people, you purport to represent. There is a process that ABAG & MTC might not be aware of that could help foster understanding and encourage meaningful dialogue. In our society I believe we still call it voting. That is where the people not some bought and paid for politicians funded by the development lobby actually get an opportunity to hear, discuss and debate the merits and offer possible amending ideas and then decide the best course of action. I realize that is a tedious and often mis-used avenue to have issues that have a huge effect on their lives resolved but who knows maybe we can actually use that old fashioned democratic process as a starting point. btw I also attended one of your so-called inclusionary meetings and watched you simply ignore any statement that was inconvenient. I am sorry to say you came not for dialogue but to simply pretend to include the unwashed masses known as the working lower and middle class you claim to be there for. I have not been privy to any scoping or community outreach sessions prior to your proclamations. Perhaps before you put your crosshairs on so many communities it might be nice for you to do a little research and offer some insight into your own reasoning.

10 Supporters

Chapter 1: Setting Our Sights

What do you think about the "Setting Our Sights" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside Alameda

March 31, 2013, 9:04 PM

People who prefer to live in large cities create problems due to high density, and they should not expect smaller more rural communities to have to solve those problems in their own communities. Let each community go its own way, there may be need for coordinated transportation but not housing- preserve local regulations.

8 Supporters

Chapter 1: Setting Our Sights

What do you think about the "Setting Our Sights" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside Santa Clara

March 31, 2013, 5:34 PM

I went to numerous visioning sessions throughout the Bay Area. I went with an open mind. To keep this short - these plans were a setup. The groups involved already have plans in the works - our feedback was not taken into consideration, although they expect us to believe they are making an effort to consider our feedback. In fact, they would not answer questions from those they KNEW did not agree with them. Need I say MORE!

11 Supporters

Chapter 1: Setting Our Sights

What do you think about the "Setting Our Sights" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside Napa

March 30, 2013, 3:17 PM

First and foremost this is not a good idea. We the people like the life we live and want nothing to do with your idea of a Plan for the Bay area.

I attended the meeting here in my city and it was just like the town hall meeting with Mike Thompson, already a done deal, he never really wanted to hear our side, as his side was what he was peddling. He like most of us had no real idea just what was in the bill, but as usual they shoved it down our throats, just doing what the government thinks they know what we need better than we do. This is the same crap!!!!

I do not want stack and pack housing and live over the work place, really are they nuts??? This is not Europe(well not yet) but if all this goes thru that's just we will be like.

This plan is just another scam to take a power grab and make the fat cats fatter. Do your homework folks, they do not have our (WE THE PEOPLE) in their best interest. If you want to live close to mass transit do so, I however don't feel the need.

I also do not want to be a TEST to see just how their PLAN could or could not work. Our world right now is in such a bad place, really one I never dreamed of.

I guess we did get CHANGE and sooooo not for the better, we are a divided nation, now they want to divide us in our cities. Well I for one will not stand for this , I will fight the good fight by any means necessary I am willing to go down with the ship as they say, just what do I have to lose, because if this goes thru my god all hell will break lose. STOP and just think about the power you will be giving these un elected body of people. It's just crazy and scary, so I say the setting our sights SUCK!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

16 Supporters

Chapter 1: Setting Our Sights

What do you think about the "Setting Our Sights" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside San Francisco

March 29, 2013, 8:30 PM

I don't understand what is meant by "house 100 percent of the region's projected growth by income level". Does that mean separated by income level? Because the Bay Area has far too much of that already.

Also, I don't understand why so much is voluntary. We face enormous crises of obesity, diabetes, asthma, and global warming. Reducing injuries, deaths, pollution, and vehicle mile traveled is essential to public health, as Steinberg has said is the main focus of SB375. Public health is not optional. You can't have livable communities when people aren't safe crossing the street or when they drive to most destinations. If you're doing it right, the voluntary goals will all be side benefits of increasing walkability, density, and equity, but they should be required targets.

Chapter 1: Setting Our Sights

What do you think about the "Setting Our Sights" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside Alameda

March 29, 2013, 7:51 PM

First of all, it is not the government's business to promote jobs or housing. Those things should occur naturally through the free market. Local governments do a roll in zoning but not to the draconian extent that it is being done in the Bay Area where you are setting up urban growth boundaries and depriving people of their rights to their private property through such phony public policies as "open space".

Secondly, what has equity got to do with anything. You are promoting equal outcomes, not equal opportunity and you are hurting the very people that you purport to help.

This plan should approve Option 1 which would essentially leave control in the hands of local elected officials. MTC should stick to caring about the roads and bridges and ABAG should stick to buying group insurance. Your meddling in the area of land use and housing is positively disgusting.

16 Supporters

Chapter 1: Setting Our Sights

What do you think about the "Setting Our Sights" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside Marin

March 29, 2013, 9:39 AM

"Setting Our Sights" is one long poem of self-congratulation by the planning staff. The chapter touts the "open" and "inclusive" process through which the plan was developed. In reality, the plan ignored the torrent of negative comment that cascaded from the public in the so-called public meetings. I attended the first one in Marin County full of enthusiasm, because I've been an environmentalist for many years. I left feeling disgusted and appalled by the closed, manipulative quality of the meeting.

It was obvious that everything had been decided in advance and that public input was no more than a facade. Nothing has changed since then; in fact, the manipulation and misrepresentation have only gotten worse. The Plan Bay Area staff lives in an echo chamber, where only in-group actors such as the Marin Community Foundation actually matter. "Setting Our Sights" is also an example of circular reasoning, AKA a tautology. Goals are selected a priori: equity, environment, and economy. Then these "goals" are defined in such a way as to make central planning the only possible way to achieve them. The whole sham process of "Setting Our Sights" is a justification for transitioning the Bay Area away from local self-government to an administered region, where our votes are meaningless and everything of importance is decided by unelected bureaucrats. It is impossible to achieve a thriving economy without individual and economic freedom. Central planning leads to crony capitalism, corruption, and incompetent, abusive government. We have 100 years of evidence of this from all over the world, but the Plan Bay Area staff seems to think that once they're in charge of everything and everybody, it's all going to be perfect.

13 Supporters

Chapter 2: The Bay Area in 2040

What do you think about the "The Bay Area in 2040" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

All comments sorted chronologically
As of close of comment period, May 16, 2013, 4:00 PM



Introduction

For over a decade, local governments and regional agencies have been working together to encourage the growth of jobs and production of housing in areas supported by amenities and infrastructure. Draft Plan Bay Area charts a course for accommodating projected growth in the nine- county San Francisco Bay Area while fostering an innovative, prosperous and competitive economy; preserving a healthy and safe environment; and allowing all Bay Area residents to share the benefits of vibrant, sustainable communities connected by an efficient and well-maintained transportation network.

Background

The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) track and forecast the region's demographics and economic trends to inform and guide investments and policy decisions. These forecasts form the basis for developing the regional land use plan and transportation investment strategy for Plan Bay Area, and they reflect the best picture we have of what the Bay Area may look like in 2040 so that today's decisions align with tomorrow's expected transportation and housing needs.

Tell Us What You Think

This chapter explains the process used to develop the draft Plan Bay Area growth forecasts, and it describes the most recent planning assumptions used to develop the forecasts, including local general plans and other factors. It also looks at three main demographic categories that informed development of the plan: employment, population and housing.

Read [Chapter 2](#) and give us your comments on the [The Bay Area in 2040](#) chapter of draft Plan Bay Area.

As of May 16, 2013, 4:00 PM, this forum had:

Attendees: 118

Participants: 22

Hours of Public Comment: 1.1

7 participants posted comments

Chapter 2: The Bay Area in 2040

What do you think about the "The Bay Area in 2040" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Aubrey Freedman inside San Francisco

May 11, 2013, 3:01 AM

No one really knows what's going to happen 25 years from now. Look at all the changes that have occurred in the last 10-15 years in the areas of communication, electronics, technology, and healthcare. Things are changing very quickly, and the so-called experts who have conjured up the charts and data shown in this chapter could be completely right--or full of baloney. Plan Bay Area qualifies its predictions by saying that it will adjust and re-evaluate them every 4 years. Sounds wonderful, but what if they've already doled out millions of tax dollars to a company to start building a high rail project and then decide maybe their predictions weren't so aligned with reality after all? Too bad--those were only taxpayer dollars wasted on another government boondoggle.

Another problem I had with this chapter is the assumption that the "Bay Area and national economies will be healthy with an average unemployment rate of 5% or less." In view of what even Plan Bay Area refers to as the "Great Recession" several times in this chapter, that statement is a doozie in itself and should give pause to any credibility of the Plan Bay Area folks.

What's always been nice about the Bay Area is the variance of lifestyles within a reasonably compact area--crowded urban areas with lots of activities going on and smaller communities away from the urban centers where you can breathe a bit, live a slower pace, and have a larger piece of the pie to live on. Different strokes for different folks--something for everyone. However, clearly the Plan Bay Area planners want to limit choices for everyone. They state in this chapter, "Market demand for new homes will tilt toward townhomes, condominiums, and apartments in developed areas." How do they know where millions of individual people will choose to live and what kind of dwellings they will choose to live in? How do they know?

They don't know. No one does. Central planning hasn't worked well in other areas and there's no overwhelming reason to believe it will work here. No Project is the best option until they can prove they're smarter than the rest of us.

Chapter 2: The Bay Area in 2040

What do you think about the "The Bay Area in 2040" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside Santa Clara

April 30, 2013, 8:57 AM

I think the entire Plan Bay Area is the worst possible plan for any area. The plan basically takes away the rights of citizens to live their lives as they choose. Your plan has forgotten the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The high density housing and shopping areas that are currently built or in the process of being built have destroyed the integrity of our communities. They look like something from a third world country. The entire plan needs to be STOPPED NOW.

1 Supporter

Chapter 2: The Bay Area in 2040

What do you think about the "The Bay Area in 2040" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside San Francisco

April 26, 2013, 9:45 PM

I think the plan for 2040 is a terrible fiction and a waste of time, resources and is essentially destructive to the San Francisco Bay Area.

3 Supporters

Chapter 2: The Bay Area in 2040

What do you think about the "The Bay Area in 2040" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside Marin

April 1, 2013, 7:05 AM

Ay Ca-rumba I just read chapter 2. To say you are putting the cart before the horse is probably the kindest way of saying you are dead wrong. Your assumptions are so out of reality it is difficult to begin to critique. Ok lets say the current Bay Area population as stated is 7.2 million. The current overall unemployment rate is around 9% but let's call it 8%. In your assumptions you claim unemployment will be less than 5%. So that equates to roughly over 200,000 jobs from your forecast or about 20% being off a to growth vs. simply re-employment of current residents. oops. Your assumptions of continued historic levels of funding for public housing are well silly. Most financed Affordable Housing comes from money invested for 100% tax exchanged deferred dollars. Basically if you invest \$2 million in some AH project by a non-profit you get a \$2 million dollar tax write off good for any of your other mega earnings. With the country circling the fiscal drain these loopholes will most likely be eliminated or at least severely curtailed. ABAG refuses to explain why their forecasts are coming from a different galaxy for population growth when compared to recent CA Dep't of Finance, the gold standard forecast. ABAG claims they think that CDF is wrong and will be discussing that with them. Short of a complete change by CA Dep't of Finance ABAG is seen as manipulative and arbitrary lacking any credibility and trying to force feed from a infected data source. MTC has in many regions yet to explain exactly what they mean by mass transit. In the Northbay, Marin & Sonoma etc Counties the only mass available in transit is more than 3 people waiting at the bus stop for the incredibly under-funded Golden Gate Transit bus. The Smart Train yet to be built much less proven to have any effective impact on commuting and transit still unless I missed something connect to any real mass transit going anywhere else in the Bay Area. There is so much wrong with the premises of the draft I have to say it would be easier simply starting from reality and then attempt to forecast some type of realistic scenario rather than even begin to address this ill conceived forecast. I might add it appears it is designed to fit some alternative agenda than stated. I believe it is designed to build and simply cross ones fingers and pray for supposed non-existent jobs.

11 Supporters

Chapter 2: The Bay Area in 2040

What do you think about the "The Bay Area in 2040" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside Alameda

March 29, 2013, 7:57 PM

Your projections are way off. What are you people smoking? First of all the projections of HCD are wildly inflated in terms of growth. The Department of Finance numbers are much more reasonable reflecting very little growth. You are required by law to use the DOF numbers. Why do you insist on using the phony HCD numbers.

Secondly, what give you, the STATE and then the region, to DICTATE to local communities what housing they should be prepared to build. You are forcing many communities that are already built out to add more housing. This is unconscienable.

Where is the money coming from for this? The State is broke. The Feds are broke. You are putting unfair burdens on the local community to add this population.

Let the free market decide. No 25 year plans !!!

15 Supporters

Chapter 2: The Bay Area in 2040

What do you think about the "The Bay Area in 2040" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside Marin

March 29, 2013, 5:17 PM

Chapter Two is much like Chapter One, full of circular reasoning. The only assumptions allowed are those which are compatible with the a priori goals of The Plan, which are to increase housing density by any means necessary and to move people around like pawns on the chessboard. The assumptions lead to unconvincing projections which are conjured out of thin air, and then finally to The Plan itself. What if we were permitted to start from different and more realistic assumptions? 1.) What if Bay Area population stabilizes or declines slightly, as people move out of California to states with more freedom and opportunity? We know from the 2010 US Census that people are voting with their feet, OUT of our formerly Golden State. 2.) What if the people who leave are young, entrepreneurial, and educated, leaving behind aging Boomers and poor people with low skills? Who will pay the taxes to support the ever-increasing amount of subsidized housing and subsidized transportation? We know that few of the wealthy actually pay California income taxes, since they can afford second homes in states with no income taxes, and only spend 6 months minus one day in California. Subsidized housing is exempt from property taxes for 55 years. This means that a shrinking and aging middle class will be forced to support ever more people demanding subsidized government services, plus the bureaucracy needed to administer it all. We know that California is always short of "revenue", despite ever-rising taxes, fees, and fines. We also know that even the largest and most successful businesses increasingly locate new facilities out of California. Chapter Two pretends that California is still a great place to start a business, when the opposite is true. In the

absence of a good business climate, we won't have population growth or job growth or the tax base to support Utopia. 3.) Most people want single family homes, and will buy one as soon as income permits and stay as long as age-related health issues permit. The assumption that people prefer

stack n' pack housing is simply wrong. The Plan intends to restrict built-up areas to the present urban

/ suburban footprint. Of necessity, then, the vast majority of new housing will have to be high-density and multi-family. The existing stock of single family homes will be bid up in price due to artificial scarcity. This increases the incentive to move out of California,

19 Supporters

Chapter 2: The Bay Area in 2040

What do you think about the "The Bay Area in 2040" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside Solano

March 29, 2013, 12:02 PM

The Bay Area in 2040 is a very broad chapter, which incorporates projections which are conventional and certainly easily defended as reasonable given the trends of the past decades. What seems to be missing is the acute realization that the coming 30 years will not be like the past 30 years. Listing some of the changes that we know about should begin to lend dimension to the vulnerabilities in the Plan Bay Area approach.

There is no mention of the effects sea level rise on existing housing, commercial, retail, transportation, sewage or water treatment facilities or the costs associated with mitigating and adapting to these effects. It should be noted that ABAG, after agonizing discussions, projected recognition of the need to mitigate sea level rise less than half of what environmental scientists are predicting. It has been shown that the environmental effects causing sea level rise are accelerating faster than anticipated. The draft plan assumes that everything currently in place will remain usable, with "maintenance", and the infrastructure necessary for jobs, housing and transportation will be "additive" in nature. One can find maps within Google to add sea level rise to the Bay Area, in as much detail as one wants, and examine these effects. Just as the new Bay Bridge span was planned and executed without the realization that the ramps leading to it would be periodically under water within 20 years, the One Bay Area Plan needs to realize that it would be unwise to plan to build on the existing infrastructure in a 30 year timeframe without accounting for the impacts of sea level rise. Both of our Regional Airports, as well as the transportation links leading to them, will be periodically under water. The effects of these impacts seem to be recognized nowhere in the Plan.

Additionally, there seem to be no inclusion of assumptions regarding the rise in cost, and reduction in availability of oil. This will affect anything made of oil or plastic, and any oil dependent human activity. Asphalt, plastic pipe, and the cost of all infrastructure will be affected. The Plan seems to ignore the effects of the exponential curve, and appears to create an atmosphere of false complacency by ignoring certain realities. This is not 1958, you will not be taking your Buick cross country on the interstate.

I am suggesting that it will not be business as usual, and that the provision of transportation systems which enable the single family vehicle will increasingly be provided for the wealthy, or wealthier segment of the population. Any enhancements or improvements of a Bay Area automobile transportation modality will by definition add to resource depletion, and global warming. This contradicts the directives in the Steinberg initiative. Initiatives which discourage single family auto transportation, and weaning ourselves from this model as quickly as possible, will create demand for mass transportation systems which are more egalitarian, more affordable to operate, more

Chapter 2: The Bay Area in 2040

What do you think about the "The Bay Area in 2040" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

environmentally friendly, and more sustainable. For the past 100 years, as we improve roadways, vehicles have always crowded them to over-capacity. We need to stop. We have what we have. The existing highways and transportation corridors are best used, primarily for commercial vehicles, and the public transportation system needs to receive the financial focus to allow it to absorb growth in demand.

If the focus on local job development received the attention it truly deserves, the transportation elements in the One Bay Area Plan could be reduced.

Lastly, for the plan to work as it is currently laid out, only the "outplacement" or "outmigration" of financially marginalized populations, including 70% of the Boomer population who will not be able to afford to live in the described environment, will allow the plan to work. There is a vast underestimating of social, medical, and housing needs for the Bay Area fair share of 70 million Boomers, even though your population projections show an enormous increase in this population.

Additional Concerns: Continued erosion of the standard of living, continued degradation in the value of the dollar, associated acceleration in the real costs of new construction in relation to wages and salaries, creating a nexus of unreachable costs for public projects. Critical mass, in which the shear costs of managing municipal infrastructure cannot be borne by the citizens, and all but critical priority projects will need to be abandoned. The energy and environmental costs of a hotter environment. The increased costs of water, water treatment, and water transportation in a hotter, drier California. The increasingly unsustainable costs of sewage treatment for an increased population. Increased energy costs. Impacts on the production and distribution of food. More severe weather events, flood and drought cycles.

While I agree that a plan needs to be put in place, it should be real. Generally, I see the plan as glossing over the issues required in the Steinberg initiative. Perhaps the task of the Town Hall participation should be to compare the draft plan to the goals in the Steinberg initiative.

2 Supporters

Chapter 3: Where We Live, Where We Work

What do you think about the "Where We Live, Where We Work" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

All comments sorted chronologically
As of close of comment period, May 16, 2013, 4:00 PM



Introduction

For over a decade, local governments and regional agencies have been working together to encourage the growth of jobs and production of housing in areas supported by amenities and infrastructure. Draft Plan Bay Area charts a course for accommodating projected growth in the nine- county San Francisco Bay Area while fostering an innovative, prosperous and competitive economy; preserving a healthy and safe environment; and allowing all Bay Area residents to share the benefits of vibrant, sustainable communities connected by an efficient and well-maintained transportation network.

Background

ABAG and MTC developed five land use and transportation scenarios that distributed the total amount of growth forecasted for the region to specific locations. After extensive modeling, analysis and public engagement, the five initial scenarios were narrowed down to a single preferred land use scenario. This scenario and resulting development pattern represent the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) that Plan Bay Area must include in the Regional Transportation Plan, as mandated by Senate Bill 375.

The preferred land use scenario is a flexible blueprint for accommodating growth over the long term — making Plan Bay Area the first truly integrated land use and transportation plan for the region's anticipated growth.

Tell Us What You Think

This chapter outlines the land use distribution approach, which includes the distribution of jobs and housing.

Read [Chapter 3](#) and give us your comments on the [Where We Live, Where We Work](#) chapter of draft Plan Bay Area.

As of May 16, 2013, 4:00 PM, this forum had:

Attendees:	110
Participants:	22
Hours of Public Comment:	1.1

9 participants posted comments

Chapter 3: Where We Live, Where We Work

What do you think about the "Where We Live, Where We Work" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside Alameda

May 16, 2013, 12:19 PM

Planning for where we live and where we work makes sense to me. It is about creating options for people from all income levels to afford to live closer to where they work. Too often I have seen family, friends and acquaintances move away to outer suburbs like Pittsburg and Antioch, not by choice, but because they can no longer afford to live near the city centers where cost of housing continues to rise. Moving away from their jobs, they end up spending two hours a day driving to work. This trend I've witnessed not only takes a toll on their quality of life (less time spent with family, stress from traffic, etc.), but causes detrimental effects for everyone. People living far from their jobs means increased traffic on the freeway, and of course increased pollution.

I know that some people intentionally choose to live far from where they work. Hats off to them for having the patience to endure that commute everyday. Personally, though, I don't want a long freeway commute to be part of my lifestyle. I want to continue to be able to afford a home where I can access job opportunities just a short drive or train ride away. I appreciate that the draft Plan Bay Area tries to create more of those options while considering the growth that is expected for our region.

Chapter 3: Where We Live, Where We Work

What do you think about the "Where We Live, Where We Work" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Aubrey Freedman inside San Francisco

May 13, 2013, 3:59 AM

This chapter states that "small cities, single-family neighborhoods and rural areas throughout the Bay

Area will take on a very small share of of the region's overall growth and are expected to retain the same scale and character." This is total baloney. If you have followed the battles that have ensued in East Bay cities like Dublin, Pleasanton, and Livermore, it is obvious smaller suburban cities are being forced to accept stack and pack housing in their cities, which will change their scale and character. Families move to these smaller towns to get away from the crowded congestion of cities like San Francisco, San Jose, and Oakland--why would they want a bunch of "affordable" (whatever that means) high-rise government housing in their towns? This trend has already started by the implementation of RHNA numbers and will only increase if Plan Bay Area is allowed to proceed.

Also, the "fair share" component talked about in this chapter in regard to housing is disturbing. The bureaucrats rank each city by income and even the test scores of its schools, and if it rates too rich or too high in school scores, it must bear its "fair share" of the total housing need--which means it will be forced to have its "fair share" of very-low and low income units. This is another top-down approach to taking away local control and forcing folks who have moved to the suburbs to have the quality of their towns ruined in the name of "fairness."

Furthermore what is this CEQA relief all about? I thought Plan Bay Area was supposed to be all about improving the environment and the greenhouse gases. However, the latter part of this chapter says that "certain projects consistent with the adopted plan of Plan Bay Area" can qualify for CEQA relief. In other words, if you are a large developer and build the kind of housing projects that Plan Bay Area approves of (stack and packs near mass transit), then you don't have to go through all the environmental requirements to build your projects. But isn't CEQA supposed to protect the environment? Doesn't this seem inconsistent?

Lastly, if you look at the final map in this chapter, even areas in the western half of San Francisco (the neighborhoods) have sufficient density to be areas targeted for high density housing. So even established neighborhoods of single-family homes could see stack and packs forced on their neighborhoods. With Plan Bay Area not many parts of the Bay Area will be safe from the central planners' dreams.

Chapter 3: Where We Live, Where We Work

What do you think about the "Where We Live, Where We Work" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside San Francisco

April 26, 2013, 9:57 PM

Where I live and where I work is none of your DAMN business! Who do you people think you are?

You ain't God!

3 Supporters

Chapter 3: Where We Live, Where We Work

What do you think about the "Where We Live, Where We Work" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside Santa Clara

April 13, 2013, 10:04 AM

Individual cities and towns should have control over zoning and density.

3 Supporters

Chapter 3: Where We Live, Where We Work

What do you think about the "Where We Live, Where We Work" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside San Francisco

April 11, 2013, 6:09 PM

Section 2.3 of the Draft EIR identifies potential adverse impacts due to the implementation of this proposed plan including:

- Community Disruption/Displacement

o DEIR identifies the addition of new housing units and commercial spaces in Priority Development Areas (PDAs) could stimulate demand and attract new residents and businesses, resulting in new development types, higher prices and leading to displacement of existing residents

o DEIR projects that this Plan will significantly increase the density within the Bay Area's densest urban centers impacting local land uses, desirability, and rents resulting in "permanent localized displacement and disruption."

o This Plan calls for 160 major transportation projects around the Bay Area, impacting 12,200 households. The DEIR specifically calls out the potential of this Plan to disrupt and displace communities.

- Mitigations

- Mitigations must be implemented by any project taking advantage of CEQA streamlining provisions of SB 375. However, the mitigations proposed do not go far enough to address the human impact of the proposed development in this Plan, including:

o An analysis of mitigating long term impacts of displacement and disruption of communities

o An analysis of housing affordability needs within PDAs today compared to post-Plan implementation and how increased density within PDAs will impact affordable housing needs

o An analysis of how to link housing density increases to creation of new affordable housing for low- and moderate- income people so as to offset displacement

o A principle of 1-to-1 replacement and relocation of all low-income households directly displaced by this Plan's transportation projects either on-site or off-site within a local radius at an affordable rent

Chapter 3: Where We Live, Where We Work

What do you think about the "Where We Live, Where We Work" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Paul Skilbeck inside San Francisco

April 4, 2013, 1:29 AM

Thank you MTC for your thorough and transparent approach. The work you do is commendable and

your plans seem realistic within the mandate of Senate Bill 375 and also the population growth projections.

Some people in the Bay Area wish for a lifestyle that is more akin to what they would find in Lubbock, Texas. Well maybe that's where they should be now, although ultimately change will be necessary there, too. Looking at the forecasts for increased housing and population density in the Bay Area over the next 25 years, it is clear things will change quite dramatically here. We must adopt new ways. The carefree profligate lifestyle of the 1950s and 60s USA was a hedonistic folly that is gone forever, and good riddance too. That lifestyle was unsustainable and should not be seen as a golden age, rather as one of wasteful stupidity. Our grandchildren will certainly view it that way.

We have a responsibility to future generations. Part of that is to create efficient transportation infrastructures and localized communities, with air that is fit to breathe, and sustainable systems for food, water and energy production.

These are not new ideas. Sir Richard Rogers, the great British architect, outlined a similar view in 1995 when he was commissioned to redesign the Chinese city of Shanghai. The Chinese are quickly realizing the dangers of unchecked industrial and vehicle emissions and are beginning to enact much-needed regulation. I am sure many residents there feel the need of something like SB375!

Some suburban Americans float on an ideological cloud with a belief-based system of knowledge and still live like there is no tomorrow. They have much to thank the environmentalist for. Without them we would have air quality akin to Beijing.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2013/02/28/the-most-shocking-photo-of-beijing-air-pollution-ive-ever-seen/>

Their resistance to continued progress in city planning and vehicle emissions has to stop, and I am so thankful that planners such as the MTC are now taking a more realistic view of the future. If the

people refuse to be responsible, then I am thankful the planners are taking the appropriate steps.

2 Supporters

Chapter 3: Where We Live, Where We Work

What do you think about the "Where We Live, Where We Work" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside Alameda

March 31, 2013, 9:10 PM

There are many bedroom communities in the United States- it is beyond reach of government or any planning agency to say that each town must create jobs and house its own employees.

8 Supporters

Chapter 3: Where We Live, Where We Work

What do you think about the "Where We Live, Where We Work" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside Marin

March 30, 2013, 9:29 AM

The Plan envisions high density vertical slums in PDAs, where lower income residents will be

concentrated. More than half a million new housing units (not homes, but units) will be crammed together. With the evasiveness we've learned to expect, nothing is said about whether parking facilities will be available for cars and trucks. Instead, it seems that people will be expected to live and work in one neighborhood. If they leave at all, only public transit will be available. Nothing is said

about how all this will be financed. Since all the new housing will be subsidized, and subsidized units don't pay property taxes, obviously we need a Vehicle Miles traveled tax and tax-base sharing so middle class areas can subsidize necessary services. The middle class can't bear such a huge burden. Secondly, we've seen the vertical slum movie before. It was called "public housing projects". We should have learned from hard experience that the projects were a disaster that played a role in increasing the oppression of the poor. Public housing projects lend themselves to takeover by gangs. These urban terrorists make life miserable for the law-abiding residents. For an example of where this will lead, consider Chicago, my home town. Gangs only started to take over the South and West

sides once poor but viable neighborhoods were bulldozed and the projects were erected. The people of the neighborhoods protested, but elite opinion and big redevelopment bucks were on the side of

the bulldozers. No one with power cared what the residents thought -- the best and brightest know how everyone else should live, and coercion is the default option. Eventually, the projects became such sinkholes of crime and violence that even Chicago police officers and firefighters kept their distance. Today we have 100,000 heavily armed gangsters in charge of whole sections of Chicago. Mayor Rahm Emanuel is helpless. Most of the middle class has fled Chicago, except for a few boutique neighborhoods catering to hip young singles. Chicago has a huge budget deficit, too, because when the middle class flees, business follows, and there's no one left to tax.

16 Supporters

Chapter 3: Where We Live, Where We Work

What do you think about the "Where We Live, Where We Work" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside Alameda

March 29, 2013, 8:01 PM

Are you kidding me? It is none of your business where people live and work. You should be responding to free market development not dictating it with top down central planning schemes.

And how realistic is it that you are going to be able to put housing near jobs and visa versa. You can't do that without force and coersion and that is the bottom line of what this plan is about.

13 Supporters

Chapter 4: Investments

What do you think about the "Investments" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

All comments sorted chronologically
As of close of comment period, May 16, 2013, 4:00 PM



Introduction

For over a decade, local governments and regional agencies have been working together to encourage the growth of jobs and production of housing in areas supported by amenities and infrastructure. Draft Plan Bay Area charts a course for accommodating projected growth in the nine- county San Francisco Bay Area while fostering an innovative, prosperous and competitive economy; preserving a healthy and safe environment; and allowing all Bay Area residents to share the benefits of vibrant, sustainable communities connected by an efficient and well-maintained transportation network.

Background

In crafting an investment program for Plan Bay Area, MTC and ABAG had to grapple with a number of important, but often competing, questions. How to best support the expected growth in jobs and housing over the next quarter century? How much do we invest to maintain, expand and improve the efficiency of our regional transportation system, when the needs exceed available revenue? How should we weigh specific project performance characteristics in assembling a package of investments to address the plan's economic, environmental and equity goals?

Tell Us What You Think

This chapter describes Plan Bay Area's financial assumptions and outlines a series of transportation investment strategies that will support key priorities to help our region reduce greenhouse gas emissions, deliver the long-term land use strategy, maintain the infrastructure investments made by past generations, and provide for future economic growth.

Read [Chapter 4](#) and give us your comments on the [Investments](#) chapter of draft Plan Bay Area.

As of May 16, 2013, 4:00 PM, this forum had:

Attendees:	106
Participants:	26
Hours of Public Comment:	1.3

10 participants posted comments

Chapter 4: Investments

What do you think about the "Investments" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Kirsten Spalding inside San Mateo

May 15, 2013, 2:16 PM

SMCUCA (the San Mateo County Union Community Alliance) is focused on the economic impacts of the investments that are outlined in the plan.

With \$256 billion to be invested in transportation projects alone between now and 2040, there will be approximately 7,680,000 jobs created. (Note below) Commercial and high-density residential construction in the Transit Oriented Development projects envisioned by the Plan will have similar multiplier effects. These important economic impacts should be noted in the Plan. While other sections of the plan note the impact of the proposed plan on reducing commute times for workers and thereby improving worker productivity, the primary economic impact of the plan is the direct impact of investment in local projects that will create good jobs.

As a second concern, the plan does not make any policy recommendations with respect to labor standards. In this chapter (or in other places in the plan), we should encourage (incentivize) local project sponsors to pay their workers Area Standard Wages and require local apprentices who are enrolled in State of California approved Apprenticeship Programs to be part of the construction team. (Local hire could be defined as residents who live within 25 or 30 miles of the job sites).

There are at least four reasons to include labor standards in the Plan:

- 1) Without labor standards clearly articulated in the Plan and EIR, the transit-oriented housing that will be developed as part of this plan will not necessarily benefit local workers or pay decent wages. Creating middle class jobs is a key to improving the health of our local communities.
- 2) Decent wages will ensure that construction workers can afford housing in the Bay Area. This will allow them to travel fewer miles per day to get to work, thereby improving their health and decreasing air pollution from vehicles.
- 3) Local hiring requirements will encourage the hiring of apprentices, thereby creating new training opportunities so that local residents will gain skills and access to careers in the construction industry.
- 4) Highly skilled and continuously trained local workers will be committed and accountable to implementing the best environmental mitigation measures envisioned by the Plan and the EIR for construction projects. The outcomes of the proposed mitigation measures in the EIR will depend on the quality and commitment of the workforce who will implement them. Project labor agreements can ensure a high quality workforce.

Chapter 4: Investments

What do you think about the "Investments" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

We appreciate the work of the MTC and ABAG staff on this plan and hope that these requests will be seen as positive policy enhancements to the final plan.

NOTE: The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) estimates of jobs supported by federal highway investments indicates that a \$1 billion expenditure on highway construction in 2007 supported a total of 30,000 jobs: 10,300 construction-oriented jobs (i.e., jobs at construction firms working on the projects and at firms providing direct inputs to the projects, such as guard rails); 4,675 jobs in supporting industries (i.e., jobs at companies providing inputs to the firms directly supplying materials and equipment used in highway construction, such as sheet metal producers who supply guard rail manufacturers); and 15,094 induced jobs (i.e., jobs dependent on consumer expenditures from the wages of workers in "construction-oriented" and "industry-supporting" jobs). (<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R42018.pdf>)

1 Supporter

Chapter 4: Investments

What do you think about the "Investments" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Marcy Berry inside San Francisco

May 14, 2013, 10:24 PM

After several minutes downloading the PDF file, I was able to read Chapter 4; except for the "Congestion Pricing" section, which would not download properly. I will simply assume Congestion Pricing in City streets will be accomplished either by surveillance cameras or transponders, both of which will track our every move.

My first reaction to Chapter 4 is "Investment?!?" The word "investment" describes risk taken by the investor. In the case on Plan Bay Area, there is no such thing. Planners will not be using their own money, nor will they be kicked out of office should their plan fail (they are not elected officials).

Funding is projected as 53% coming from local sources, such as transit fares, dedicated sales tax, and bridge tolls. The rest will come from state and federal grants, mainly derived from fuel taxes. No problem with fares and tolls, they can be increased at any time without voter approval. But not in the case of sales taxes, rendering probably the major source depending on voters' mood. Same with state and federal grants. Plan Bay Area seems to be counting on a lot of chickens before they hatch.

Local city governments decide their cities are PDA's – high density areas along transit corridors. No PDA, no money for the city; so the city either dies, or generates its own means of development. Therefore, expensive to be in Plan Bay Area as the grandiose projects experience the predictable cost overruns; and expensive not to be in Plan Bay Area due to the necessity of generating local funds for all projects.

1 Supporter

Chapter 4: Investments

What do you think about the "Investments" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Aubrey Freedman inside San Francisco

May 14, 2013, 3:00 AM

While this chapter mentions a few things that are positive like improvements to the freeway system (paid for by gas-taxes and bridge tolls, so we ought to get something useful for every gallon of gas we buy and every time we cross a bridge) and PASS (synchronizing traffic signals), I find the stated objective of Plan Bay Area to "reward jurisdictions that produce housing and jobs in PDA's through their planning and zoning policies" very troubling. This goes back to the fight that's being going on for well over a year of regional versus local control. The bureaucrats claim that local communities will have complete local control and nothing is being forced on them. Bull. Since virtually all cities and counties have all sorts of budget woes these days (due to irresponsible government spending), how likely is that cash-strapped communities will turn down the "rewards" of OBAG money? This is already happening with the RHNA allocations and "efforts to produce low-income housing." Local communities should say forget it to the carrot dangled in front of their noses, but I doubt most politicians have the spine for that.

Another area of concern in this chapter is to "purchase conservation lands for long-term protection and use by Bay Area residents." Governmental acquisition of land is not a legitimate purpose of government and the record of the government's stewardship of land is not impressive--they usually just let it go to pot and you get a bunch of forest fires. Not to mention their heavy-handed tactics to force private property owners to "donate" part of their land to the government.

Lastly, the commuter benefit ordinance mentioned in this chapter is yet another idea that will make employment in the Bay Area less attractive for employers. Sure it's great for the employees that your company will be forced to pay for employer-provided subsidies and free shuttles, but companies just might decide that the costs of employment here are too high. In this ever-changing world, companies are looking to reduce their costs to be competitive in their industry. Plan Bay Area is going to have a very high price tag, and more ordinances and constraints on businesses will cause them to move to other areas.

1 Supporter

Chapter 4: Investments

What do you think about the "Investments" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside Santa Clara

May 3, 2013, 4:17 PM

Getting peak time commuters out of cars and onto bicycles has the greatest impact at the least cost of any potential transit investment. Completing key segments of bicycle paths and routes allows cyclist to make safe and fast commutes of 3-15 miles. Shifting commuters to bicycles reduces road congestion, cost commuters less, requires little tax payer support, and improves the health and well being of the commuter and make them more productive at work. My 10 mile commute on local streets including north bound 85 and north bound 101 through Mountain View, Palo Alto and Menlo Park averaged less than 30 miles an hour so I switched to a bicycle. After a year of riding my average speed on a bike has gotten up to 18.8 mph. With the bike commute taking 32 minutes and a car commute taking 25 minutes and bus commute taking over an hour, I have become a daily bike commuter and have an extra \$200 per month to spend along with better health through daily exercise.

The investments chapter does not discuss the impact and costs of improving multi-city bike routes in key areas of congestion that would enable a large portion of people with 3-15 mile commutes to shift to bicycle commuting a few times per week. More effective programs by local cities and counties that implement safer connected bike routes that cross city lines and remove key obstacles, will attract many more people to cycling and reduce pressure on local governments to fund expensive road expansion.

Chapter 4: Investments

What do you think about the "Investments" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside San Francisco

April 27, 2013, 8:41 PM

Comments On Projected Job Growth

Just how much of the projected job growth is from private industry and how much is from an increase in government jobs and government spending?

The Bay Area economy is becoming more and more of a "Government Economy" with an increasing number of people working directly for the government or indirectly through subsidies and tax breaks or from government contracts.

In addition to local and state government spending, the Bay Area is a huge consumer of federal funding for a lot of useless transit projects. More and more government spending on huge and wasteful projects is not an investment.

The real solution is to layoff huge numbers of nonproductive government employees and cut subsidies to private industry that's feeding at the public trough.

1 Supporter

Chapter 4: Investments

What do you think about the "Investments" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside San Francisco

April 26, 2013, 10:22 PM

North Beach does NOT need a subway transit system! Polk Street needs more parking spaces!

1 Supporter

Chapter 4: Investments

What do you think about the "Investments" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Roderick Llewellyn inside San Francisco

April 12, 2013, 8:05 AM

There is definitely some strong backlash coming from the suburban car-oriented set, who are making the same old tired anti-transit anti-city arguments:

1. Claim: "Nobody wants to ride transit, everybody wants a private home": Not true. Maybe those who are commenting this way don't know of any such, but it's clearly a false statement, disproved by even a single counter-example. I offer myself as such. Saying that "anybody who could buy a private home would do so" is absurd, even if true, since many people simply can't afford one, and there are no conceivable policies that would permit that. You might as well say that everybody would prefer a helicopter ride to sitting in traffic; possibly true, but irrelevant.

2. Claim: "Subsidizing transit is socialism and social engineering. Subsidizing automobiles is capitalism and freedom": Not true. This is a long-term lie told by the auto/air/oil/sprawl industry for their own self-interest. Why is subsidizing one mode of transport any more or less "socialistic" than any other? If you park for free on a city street, YOU'RE GETTING WELFARE. You don't like the term, but that's what it is.

3. Claim: "Transit is empty while highways are full": False. People making this claim never ride transit so they're just blowing Fox News smoke. They have no idea how heavily used it is. The reason roads are full is the same reason Soviet citizens had to wait in line to buy things: under-priced road capacity. The funny thing is that this group, after whining about socialism and transit, then almost always asks for more money for roads, but refuses to support raising gasoline taxes to pay for them.

1 Supporter

Chapter 4: Investments

What do you think about the "Investments" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside Marin

March 30, 2013, 5:19 PM

It seems highly unlikely that state and Federal funds will be available at the level The Plan assumes.

California has just had a whopping tax increase on the evil rich people, plus a sales tax increase on everyone. Supposedly the tax increase will help our schools, but in reality the money will be sucked into underfunded teacher pension plans. In a similar way, City and County pension plans are also grossly underfunded, not to mention enormous hidden debts incurred by special districts. The Plan ignores competition for tax money as the debt mountain slowly collapses and crushes our economy.

Already, there are rumblings in the state Legislature about repealing Proposition 13, so there's a growing danger that we'll be taxed out of our homes. Secondly, California's highly progressive income tax system produces wildly fluctuating revenues, but The Plan ignores this fact. As for the Federal government, interest on the debt plus entitlements will eat up virtually all tax revenues. Already, with the sequester, we're seeing cuts in the rate of increase to Federal discretionary spending. We can expect high inflation, destructive asset bubbles, intense public resistance to more tax increases, the end of the US dollar as the world's reserve currency, and a fall in the US standard of living. None of these conditions will permit large investments in transportation systems. That leaves a Vehicle Miles Traveled tax and a regional income and/or sales taxes as likely default options when money from the State and the Feds isn't forthcoming. The Bay Area middle class can't support 500,000 new subsidized apartments and a new transportation infrastructure. The entire scheme is an exercise in redistribution, since some scam all the benefits while others carry all the burdens. A subsidy for A is automatically a higher cost for B.

14 Supporters

Chapter 4: Investments

What do you think about the "Investments" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside Solano

March 30, 2013, 10:55 AM

On reading the Investments chapter, I had the unerring sense that I was being sold something that had gaping flaws in its basic assumptions. One basic assumption is that the next 30 years would look like the last 30 years, and that the recession we are in, not yet recovered from, will recover completely and will not reoccur. One does not have to look too far in the world of finance to see strong evidence that contradicts this basic assumption.

I understood that this was to be a sustainable budget for a sustainable plan, yet it projects an annual inflation rate of 2.2%. The simplest research will show that the government promulgated inflation rates are fiction, just as the government promulgated rates of unemployment are fiction. Shall we base a 30 year, multi-billion dollar plan on such fictions, or shall we simply state that the "Emperor has no clothes"? Our real rate of inflation is upwards of 5%, some say 8%. Look at what you actually spend money for as a guide; medical insurance, fuel, groceries. Go shopping for groceries and ponder as you pay more for less. My family pays \$15,000 per year for medical insurance. Just because these items are removed from the "basket" used to calculate the annual inflation rate, does not mean that the costs do not exist. A plan based on artificial inflation rates is artificial, and doomed to over-runs, unanticipated, and unfunded costs. The Plan seems to turn a blind eye towards the effects of material costs in an era of dwindling resources. Either materials costs estimates need to include a factor beyond the inflation in the dollar, based on this phenomena, or an overall, dedicated percentage needs to be applied to contingency just to bridge this fact. The financial portion of the Plan states that it has shortfalls, and imagines sources of funding for these shortfalls. This is another example of magical thinking. If the Plan starts out with shortfalls, it can only get worse. Either the Plan needs to be trimmed to meet identified sources of funding, or sources need to be identified to meet the shortfalls. This is not a creative writing exercise, this is a budget.

On the Federal level, government printing presses are running day and night, printing dollars to cover budget excesses for which we cannot even make our interest payments. We are borrowing money to make our interest payments. What is wrong with this picture?

Anticipating somehow that all of this will magically go away, and that our resultant interest rate will be 2.2%, is ignoring the basic economic facts of life. If the finance plan is this unrealistic, how can anything else in the Plan be credible? This is not a "Republican" issue, or a "Tea Party" issue, or a "Democratic Party" issue, this is math. I anticipate inflation to soar above 10% for an extended period of time. This will weigh heavily on growth and profitability, jobs, and tax revenues as a result. This will point to a

Chapter 4: Investments

What do you think about the "Investments" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

inflation/recession cycle that will dog us for almost the whole period of the Plan. Costs exceeding revenue point to a failed Plan. In light of these facts, I believe the contingency built into the Plan at this stage should be 20%, after the corrections are made. This exercise may help to develop a more realistic budget.

The other fact of life is that China and India are very rapidly achieving developed nation status. Our ability to achieve the Plan's job and economic growth projections belie the fact that we have not had to compete with countries of this size in the past to market our products and services. You may note the deterioration of the Middle Class as a result of world market forces, a commonly know phenomena, yet one that is ignored in the Plan financial projections. The Plan assumes, again, some magical reversal of this trend line. This points to a tendency of the Plan authors to "pick and choose" which statistics they want to employ. I believe the Plan has to meet real world financial tests, not simply assume the trendlines of the past 30 years.

Note that the High Speed Rail System is not a done deal, and given the budgetary constraints that are likely to linger for some time, the tax constraints, the spending constraints, projects like the High Speed Rail are vulnerable for cutbacks and/or elimination. What is the Plan B? Does the One Bay Area financial Plan incorporate the real history we have experienced in the operating costs, expansion costs, maintenance costs, ticket receipts and ridership levels of BART? I see a lot of red ink here.

It is apparent that the Plan needs more than Bridge Tolls, but let's look at another assumption. Fully 26% of the Plan budget is expended for maintaining an existing roadway system that is unsustainable, polluting, and has been proven to be the main source of atmospheric pollution in the Bay Area. The Plan includes major funds to expand this type of transportation system, and does not analyze the costs to reduce these impacts by more than 6-7% over 28 years. A huge portion of the Plan income requirements are derived from gas tax funds; which means that rather than holding out alternatives to the present polluting, unsustainable stranglehold the automobile has on the Bay Area, the Plan is dependant upon it, is funded by it, and works to maintain it. Even at that, the Plan states that Bridge Tolls are not enough, and there are soft cost shortfalls that are unexplained in the Plan. Who should we trust to put such a plan into action? What will be the long term effects of another 28 years of business as usual? We have to turn the corner, and cannot spend billions of dollars propping up a personal automobile-based transportation system that is doomed to failure. For every freeway, every roadway fix that is proposed, there will be more single rider vehicles to fill it until it is no longer effective. We have seen this over the past 50 years, and every best plan for the automobile ends up the same; more pollution, more congestion, fewer parking places, longer travel times. If nothing were done to the roadways for 30 years, the resultant delays and travel times would push people into mass transit. This is where

Chapter 4: Investments

What do you think about the "Investments" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

they belong in the future. If the money spent attempting to support the automobile was spent instead on extending and improving mass transit alternatives, we may make it through the next 30 years. The roadways need to be for commercial vehicles and public services such as ambulances, police, and fire, bicycles and motorcycles.

The Plan feeds off the increases in fuel costs, to fund roadway improvements, which in turn adds to pollution and congestion, atmospheric warming of the Bay Area, more fuel use, and more fuel costs. In this sense, The One Bay Area Plan is part of the problem, not part of the solution. We are in the midst of profound global warming, and cannot afford to continue down this path. A "business as usual" approach to transportation in the Bay Area cannot be adequately funded, and cannot meet the objectives of the Steinberg initiative. The 1% allocated in the Plan for climate is wholly inadequate.

The financial plan does not take into account extraordinary costs associated with rising sea levels. Google Earth allows anyone with a desktop computer to project a sea level rise in the Bay Area, and examine in detail the impacts to our roadways, bridge ramps, Ferry Terminals, BART facilities, airports, etc. I'm thinking of Hwy 80, Hwy 101, Hwy 37, Hwy 880; over vast stretches, traveled by the Bay Area millions of trips per day; going under water periodically at high high tide, or due to storm driven tidal surges.

To say that the Financial Plan is compromised would be the mildest of statements. Given the dismissal of some of our basic facts of life as we enter into the timeframe of the One Bay Area Plan, it appears to be more of a self-serving, than an objective document. Culturally, it should make us very comfortable, adding to our collective denial. Am I to believe that the world of 2040 will operate the same as the world of 2004? We need to step outside our middle class mind-set, our bias toward normalcy, to create, and finance a plan that will provide effective transportation for our citizens in the coming 30 years. We have more knowledge about the financial world we are entering that the Plan utilizes.

The sad fact is that an increasing percentage of the Bay Area residents will not be able to afford cars, and will depend wholly on public transportation in the future. This is a transportation system that is not up to the task, and based on the financial portion of the plan, cannot grow to meet increasing ridership of an increasing population with fewer transportation options. Should we expend an extraordinary amount of the Plan finances to enable the privileged and wealthy members of our society to have a smooth commute in their personal vehicles, or should we spend ALL of the money on the public part of public transportation?

I would suggest modularizing the Plan, in which the first 5 years are projected in more finite detail, and the remaining 25 years are extrapolated from this. If there are unfunded costs, The Plan begins to lop off years at the end of the period, or adjust the scope of

Chapter 4: Investments

What do you think about the "Investments" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

the plan. I believe the Plan should work less on its scope, and more on deliverables.

10 Supporters

Chapter 4: Investments

What do you think about the "Investments" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside Alameda

March 29, 2013, 8:05 PM

The government does NOT INVEST !!! You are wasting taxpayer money on a pipe dream for an unacheivable utopia. I am not interested in seeing money squandered on public transit services that few people use and on high density, stack and pack housing that no one would want to live in if they had an option to purchase a single family home (even a modest one)

17 Supporters

Chapter 5: Performance

What do you think about the "Performance" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

All comments sorted chronologically
As of close of comment period, May 16, 2013, 4:00 PM



Introduction

For over a decade, local governments and regional agencies have been working together to encourage the growth of jobs and production of housing in areas supported by amenities and infrastructure. Draft Plan Bay Area charts a course for accommodating projected growth in the nine- county San Francisco Bay Area while fostering an innovative, prosperous and competitive economy; preserving a healthy and safe environment; and allowing all Bay Area residents to share the benefits of vibrant, sustainable communities connected by an efficient and well-maintained transportation network.

Background

At both the scenario and project levels, draft Plan Bay Area has been tested against rigorous performance targets. Plan Bay Area achieves the greenhouse gas emissions reduction target required by state law. It also achieves the housing target required by state law to provide housing for all of the region's population over the next three decades.

At the same time, the draft Plan Bay Area struggles to achieve many of the region's ambitious voluntary targets. Thanks to investments in transportation alternatives, the plan moves in the right direction when it comes to increasing active transportation and reducing the number of automobile miles driven per capita, though it falls short of the "aspirational" goals set in these areas.

Tell Us What You Think

This chapter provides a target-by-target breakdown of how well the draft Plan Bay Area performs.

Read [Chapter 5](#) and tell us what you think about the [Performance](#) chapter of draft Plan Bay Area.

As of May 16, 2013, 4:00 PM, this forum had:

Attendees:	73
Participants:	16
Minutes of Public Comment:	48

6 participants posted comments

Chapter 5: Performance

What do you think about the "Performance" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Aubrey Freedman inside San Francisco

May 10, 2013, 4:44 AM

Plan Bay Area sounds scarier the more you read about it. "Increase the average daily time walking or biking per person for transportation by 70% (for an average of 15 minutes per person per day)." So now it's the purpose of government to get all of us off our behinds and exercising so many minutes per day? If this isn't 1984, then I don't know what is.

Then there's a lot of talk in this chapter of "communities of concern." This is absolutely disgusting-- class warfare and nothing more. If the bureaucrats behind Plan Bay Area really wanted to help "communities of concern," they would be encouraging less governmental regulation and red tape so more folks could start businesses of their own. Instead they propose to create urban ghettos of poor folks living in high rise tenements near freeways and mass transit (and a lot of pollution). And what jobs will there be in these urban ghettos? What businesses would be stupid enough to open up shop in an environment with high taxes (and even higher taxes proposed by Plan Bay Area in this chapter such as a VMT tax, congestion pricing taxes, and higher bridge tolls)? The inevitable higher taxes of Plan Bay Area will encourage more businesses to leave the Bay Area.

Lastly this chapter also talks about transit assets past their useful life. By Plan Bay Area's own estimates, the percentage of mass transit assets past their useful life will increase from 13% in 2012 to 24% in 2040. So they force us out of our cars either through higher gas taxes, new or higher tolls, or reduced parking spaces, and what will we have to look forward to? Crowded buses or trains that either can't stick to a normal schedule (SF's Muni nightmare) or break down a lot. And will break down a lot more. This is an improvement of quality of life?

The No Project Option is the best option at this point.

Chapter 5: Performance

What do you think about the "Performance" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside San Francisco

April 26, 2013, 10:03 PM

No government has ever "encouraged" job growth successfully to the point of actually creating jobs and it never will. This Chapter can't wash over that truth, even though it tries. The drafters of this chapter are career bureaucrats who know nothing about job creation, never worked at job creation, and on-the-job training is not available or affordable. So I think the "Performance" chapter is flaccid.

3 Supporters

Chapter 5: Performance

What do you think about the "Performance" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside Alameda

April 2, 2013, 10:47 AM

Many may disagree about the global climate change theory, but I doubt that anyone would argue that we are drastically using up precious resources and polluting the planet at an ever increasing rate.

The answers to the pollution problem do not reside with a dictatorship forcing middle class and low income families into stack and pack slums. Everyone sees where this government fantasy is heading: the elimination of a middle class.

The government will soon repeal Prop 13, they will punish commuters with a miles traveled tax & gas tax will go way up. We will be taxed into submission!

Rather than punishing citizens, how about focus efforts on improving public education at every level. The US education system cannot compete with most Asian or European countries.

3 Supporters

Chapter 5: Performance

What do you think about the "Performance" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside Marin

April 1, 2013, 2:48 PM

The "Performance" chapter is an exercise in science fiction, though not as much fun as the real thing, since the text doesn't include any space travel or telepathic aliens. It's absurd to think that the planners can predict Bay Area housing and transportation needs 25 years hence, especially not in such micro detail. If we think back to predictions made twenty five years ago, back in 1998, do you remember anyone whose crystal ball revealed the rise of China, the rise of political Islam, billions of cheap mobile phones, the rise of the Internet, the US shale gas boom, the Crash of 2008, or the shakiness of the European Union? None of this was imagined by anyone. In its usual reality-challenged fashion, Plan Bay Area demands gigantic public investment based on projections that are almost certainly wrong, especially since the underlying assumptions are wrong. In order to have a more viable future, the first step would be to repeal SB375. Global warming theory -- ops! "climate change" -- is coming under more and more skeptical criticism. Even the United Nations now agrees that there's been no evidence of global warming for 20 years. Global warming theory is being revealed as a dog's breakfast of measurement errors, inadequate theoretical understanding of atmospheric physics, poorly constructed computer models, dishonest statistical manipulation (as in the East Anglia University email scandal), cherry-picking of only the most supportive data, and censorship of scientifically sound alternative explanations. Fluctuations in climate are a normal part of the Earth system and have gone on for billions of years. In the historical record, we find much evidence of major fluctuations from colder to warmer than today, including the Roman Climate Optimum, the Medieval Warming, and the Little Ice Age of the 17th century. If the computer models favored by climate alarmists are run backward, none of these well documented climate fluctuations are "discovered" by the model. Therefore, the model is wrong, the date set is wrong, and the theory is wrong. Huge public investments should not be made on the basis of junk science.

3 Supporters

Chapter 5: Performance

What do you think about the "Performance" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside San Mateo

April 1, 2013, 12:28 PM

BEHOLD: EVIDENCE CONTINUES TO MOUNT THAT GLOBAL WARMING IS NOT HAPPENING "Over the past 15 years air temperatures at the Earth's surface have been flat while greenhouse-gas emissions have continued to soar.

Temperatures fluctuate over short periods, but this lack of new warming is a surprise. Ed Hawkins, of the University of Reading, in Britain, points out that surface temperatures since 2005 are already at the low end of the range of projections derived from 20 climate models (see chart 1). If they remain flat, they will fall outside the models' range within a few years."

Source: The Economist, Mar 30th 2013

"Since Sir David's [The government's chief scientific officer] exhortations, some 250,000 Brits have died from the cold, and 10,000 from the heat. It is horribly clear that we have been focusing on the wrong enemy. Instead of making sure energy was affordable, ministers have been trying to make it more expensive, with carbon price floors and emissions trading schemes.

Much political attention is still focused on global warming, and while schemes to help Britain prepare for the cold are being cut, the overseas aid budget is being vastly expanded. Saving elderly British lives has somehow become the least fashionable cause in politics. "

Source: The Telegraph, Apr. 1 2013

PLEASE STOP THIS HORRIBLE PLAN, it is based on FALSE SCIENCE

2 Supporters

Chapter 5: Performance

What do you think about the "Performance" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside Alameda

March 29, 2013, 8:08 PM

You put numbers in these plans to give the appearance of "scientific" legitimacy when all you are doing is making stuff up. Your projections are wrong, your underlying assumptions are wrong. This is a wrong headed plan developed by unelected bureaucrats who have nothing better to do but collect large salaries and force the rest of us who work for a living to pay for your unrealistic pipe dreams. Enough !!!

13 Supporters

Chapter 6: A Plan to Build On

What do you think about the "A Plan to Build On" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

All comments sorted chronologically
As of close of comment period, May 16, 2013, 4:00 PM



Introduction

For over a decade, local governments and regional agencies have been working together to encourage the growth of jobs and production of housing in areas supported by amenities and infrastructure. Draft Plan Bay Area charts a course for accommodating projected growth in the nine- county San Francisco Bay Area while fostering an innovative, prosperous and competitive economy; preserving a healthy and safe environment; and allowing all Bay Area residents to share the benefits of vibrant, sustainable communities connected by an efficient and well-maintained transportation network.

Background

No single level of government can be expected to address all the critical components needed to create a stronger and more resilient Bay Area. It will take a coordinated effort among diverse partners to promote regional economic development, adapt to climate change, prepare for natural disasters, get creative about how to provide affordable housing for all Bay Area residents, ensure clean and healthy air for our communities, and prepare for emerging technologies that will change the way people work and get around.

Tell Us What You Think

This chapter identifies the most important challenges for implementing Plan Bay Area's policies and programs and proposes steps to address them. These complementary initiatives include legislative advocacy objectives and updated regulations that seek to increase additional resources, promote a vibrant economy, clean our air and address climate change and sea level rise.

Read [Chapter 6](#) and tell us what you think about the [A Plan to Build On](#) chapter of draft Plan Bay Area.

As of May 16, 2013, 4:00 PM, this forum had:

Attendees: 94

Participants: 22

Hours of Public Comment: 1.1

10 participants posted comments

Chapter 6: A Plan to Build On

What do you think about the "A Plan to Build On" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Aubrey Freedman inside San Francisco

May 15, 2013, 2:40 AM

The first part of this chapter sounds reasonable talking about positive steps like ride-sharing networks, corporate shuttles getting folks to and from work, improving efforts to get ready for natural disasters, and even streamlining the CEQA process which it correctly declares to be a "major impediment to infill development in the Bay Area...often lengthy project entitlement process...increases Bay Area housing prices which rank among the highest in the nation." However, skip to the last two or three pages of this chapter and you will see what Plan Bay Area is really all about---taxes, taxes, and more taxes. Under the heading Support Local Self Help (which sounds innocuous enough), "MTC and ABAG will strongly support efforts to lower the vote threshold for local and regional transportation tax measures from two-thirds to 55%." And, "a 55% voting standard also could aid the passage of a regional gasoline tax that MTC is already authorized to place on the ballot." The 2/3 requirement of Prop 13 that has saved the taxpayers millions of dollars over the years is a menace to governmental bureaucrats who just can't wait to get their grubby hands on all that extra "revenue source."

Another thing mentioned in this chapter is "newly authorized tax-increment financing," which is a fancy name for another tax scheme. I saw a memo written by Steve Heminger, head of the MTC, less than a year ago regarding this same subject. Here's the link: http://apps.mtc.ca.gov/meeting_packet_documents/agenda_1883/6_SB214.pdf. Please note, "Eliminate the voter approval requirements to create the district." In reality they don't even want the 55% requirement! How inconvenient to ask the voters to approve something they'll have to pay for. They also talk about 100% of the new housing in the Bay Area being high-density and mixed use, so I wonder just where that leaves single-family home neighborhoods that don't want stack and packs to change the character of their areas.

Plan Bay Area is a disaster from beginning to end. I'd like to see the taxpayers get a chance to vote on it, not just self-serving central planners.

Chapter 6: A Plan to Build On

What do you think about the "A Plan to Build On" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Tom Willging inside Alameda

May 14, 2013, 7:45 PM

Thank you for the opportunity to participate--and for the amazing effort you have put into this draft plan.

First, I must say that I am very disappointed with my fellow citizens' comments. Most appear to disagree with the premise that we should plan rationally for the future and take into account our best available knowledge and information about patterns of growth and development. Once that premise is discarded we are left to the whims of the marketplace that created the serious problems we face. We have to build and rebuild an infrastructure for growth (including the basics of streets, roads, utilities, public safety, and such); to identify and perhaps thereby avoid the full impact of present and impending environmental challenges that scientists have documented; and to integrate all citizens into the process of rebuilding our communities.

That said, I applaud the proposals you have identified for addressing these major problems and I have a suggestion for identifying linkages that I did not see addressed. In general, you link housing, transportation and economic development in a thoughtful way. I especially appreciate your specific support for transportation enhancements such as bike sharing, electric vehicles, driverless cars, and corporate shuttles. I also appreciate your proposal to change the transportation funding formulas for local transportation funding approval. The two-thirds majority rule applied to the recent Alameda County Measure B-1 denied a basic democratic right of the vast majority of taxpayers in AC, almost two-thirds of whom voted to tax themselves to repair our streets and roads and improve our transportation options. Your proposed plan identifies another cause of our crumbling transportation infrastructure--the failure to index the gasoline tax to inflation. Now that we face crumbling streets and roads, the resources to accomplish the needed rebuilding have declined. In these ways, funding for transportation basics have decreased just when our needs have increased.

The plan concentrates on traditional planning variables--land use, transportation, housing, environment, and economic development. These are no doubt major variables that affect overall community development. Yet they fail to link other variables on which the success of the plans depend. For example, economic development is tied to land use and the identification of preferred development areas (PDAs). Missing from the picture, however, is the development of employment opportunities that will contribute to the success of the PDAs. Employment of local residents in the housing, transportation, and economic development projects funded in whole or part by the public sector can improve both the economics of the PDA and the safety of the environment.

It appears that public safety is not a variable that planners generally incorporate into their methodology, but our current public safety crises call for attention to the need for

Chapter 6: A Plan to Build On

What do you think about the "A Plan to Build On" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

policies that draws young people away from street crime and into the social and economic community envisioned in the plan. The need to rebuild our infrastructure and create new employment opportunities sets up the occasion for including those who have been to date excluded from the prosperity that the majority experiences. Specifying policies designed to share and distribute fairly the wealth created by our public infrastructure will inure to the benefit of all. Linking employment of local residents to the development of our PDAs is one specific step in that direction.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Tom Willging

Oakland

2 Supporters

Chapter 6: A Plan to Build On

What do you think about the "A Plan to Build On" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Sherman Lewis inside Alameda

May 8, 2013, 4:47 PM

What do I think about "A Plan to Build On"?

Not much. I support the EEJ alternative. I would prefer an even stronger "growth without growth" alternative.

Chapter 6: A Plan to Build On

What do you think about the "A Plan to Build On" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside San Francisco

April 26, 2013, 10:24 PM

San Francisco is already built on silt and sand. This Plan doesn't even have THAT much grounding to it.

Chapter 6: A Plan to Build On

What do you think about the "A Plan to Build On" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside San Francisco

April 26, 2013, 10:07 PM

You can deny it all you want, but this plan is Agenda 21-influenced and is overseen by ICLEI. If I wanted Bolsheviks to run my life, I'd take a time machine back to Russia, 1911.

3 Supporters

Chapter 6: A Plan to Build On

What do you think about the "A Plan to Build On" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside San Francisco

April 26, 2013, 9:42 PM

I think the plan is terrible. I think it lacks vision for all your "vision planning." It's a draconian waste of money and resources.

4 Supporters

Chapter 6: A Plan to Build On

What do you think about the "A Plan to Build On" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Alan Scotch inside Alameda

April 10, 2013, 11:26 AM

RESIDENTIAL ENERGY

Every home will have 2-3kw Solar Panels and a 2-3kw Wind Turbine on its roof.

Battery ENERGY DENSITY will be 10 times more than it is today. (A Berkeley company is manufacturing these batteries right now). Thus every single family home will be generating more electricity than consumed.

Charging the electric car every night.

(Using this excess electricity to indirectly manufacture these Solar Panels, Wind Turbines and Batteries).

Home insulation will become irrelevant.

Solar panels and wind turbines on the roof of a multi-family apartment building can never be enough to meet the needs of the multi-families below and will not be ENERGY COST EFFICIENT.

But Single-family houses will be net ENERGY PRODUCERS -- when multi-family cannot.

WASTE RECYCLING

Water will be stored and re-processed for reuse and for (not so greywater) irrigation.

Solid human waste and previously un-processable waste will be locally processed and put back into the ground (remember - with excess energy all things are possible) . We will no longer be wasting so much water to "flush it" to sewage treatment. (1. more research needed). Composting's methane emission - not necessarily being a better option.

This is yet another reason why the single-family detached home, with a garden, is the way of the future for CARBON SEQUESTRATION and WATER RECYCLING & STORAGE as well as ENERGY EFFICIENCY.

(Garden and roof enables drinkable rain Water Capture and storage tanks.)

BUSINESS OF THE FUTURE

Retail outlets like Best Buy (which is going bust right now) and even clothing and general goods retailers could be replaced by independent showrooms instead - charging admission with online purchase credits. Purchases made in these showrooms could be

Chapter 6: A Plan to Build On

What do you think about the "A Plan to Build On" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

delivered to your door on a subsequent day. Most businesses will be online except for food, restaurants, entertainment and a few others. Deliveries being made in electric trucks.

All kinds of different businesses will share showrooms and strategically placed warehouses (to increase delivery efficiency).

Commuting will only be to these kind of jobs in businesses that do not sell much online and to manufacturing (which will continue to become more robotic).

Telecommuting will be the norm.

PLAN for an ENERGY EFFICIENT FUTURE NOW

Make land available for MANUFACTURED (cheap) detached housing -- otherwise building so much multi-family now, will create energy slums - a liability -- as living with your own energy producing roof and conserving garden will be, -- not only cheaper, -- but a source of income.

And also be "SAVE THE PLANET NECESSARY".

Keep and add to the RENEWABLE ENERGY SUBSIDIES. Lets divert money from otherwise wasted \$'s on PLAN BAY AREA transit and dense residential.

Recompense for residential excess energy production so we can have finance companies invest in energy installations on residential roof tops - now.

TODAY'S PLANNER THINKING:

people will NOT continue to use their cars for most trips, when they will.

it is better to raise children on condominium balconies (next to freeway noise and pollution) than with gardens.

herding millions into densely packed urban corridors won't make traffic even worse.

can increase transit's share of travel to more than a measly 4% (from its current tiny 2%) when they can't.

http://populationalert.org/GlobalWarming/wind_solar.htm

Chapter 6: A Plan to Build On

What do you think about the "A Plan to Build On" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside Contra Costa

April 6, 2013, 6:38 PM

I consider these plans social engineering. It is reason enough for me to stop paying taxes in California and leaving the state. I am not a proponent of socialism.

3 Supporters

Chapter 6: A Plan to Build On

What do you think about the "A Plan to Build On" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside Marin

April 1, 2013, 2:11 PM

In "A Plan to Build On", the section about streamlining building permits actually means that crony capitalist affordable housing developers will get automatic approval, while cities and towns are stripped of control over their own planning and zoning. The section of legal and regulatory reform actually means higher taxes, imposed by a new and unelected regional government. The section on prosperity actually means central planning of the regional economy, with bureaucrats picking winners and losers. The more socialist an economy, the greater the corruption and malinvestment. Winners are picked according to their political correctness and influence-peddling skills, so a closed system of favoritism is constructed, with politicians, crony capitalists, and bureaucrats all scratching each others backs. Hard experience from all over the world has proven time and again that over-centralization of this kind is a recipe for poverty and social instability. It is also profoundly undemocratic. We have already experienced the arrogant elitism exhibited by ABAG and MTC planners, who ignore public criticism, refuse to answer valid questions, and communicate mainly with big money insiders such as the Marin Community Foundation, the San Francisco Foundation, and the Silicon Valley Foundation. California has changed completely since the state's glory years in the 1960s. Then the great governor Pat Brown built the infrastructure that supported a strong free market economy and also advanced the middle class. Today, California is run for the benefit of the public employees unions, the very rich, and the very poor, in that order. The middle class no longer matters. Plan Bay Area is based on the unstated assumption that there's always more blood in the turnip. The planners seem to think that the Bay Area middle class can be squeezed, micro-managed, and taxed ad infinitum. Reality is not like that. California lost 4% of its population between 2000 and 2010, mostly middle class taxpayers and business owners. The only state that lost more population was New York, which lost 9%. No doubt, Plan Bay Area will be adopted as written, to the sound of loud hosannas. It's going to be one more nail in California's coffin. Texas or bust!

5 Supporters

Chapter 6: A Plan to Build On

What do you think about the "A Plan to Build On" chapter of draft Plan Bay Area?

Name not shown inside Alameda

March 29, 2013, 8:12 PM

Your "plan to build on" should be scrapped. This is completely unrealistic. People who understand what you are really trying to do, which is control the population and force us in to stack and pack housing and out of our cars, are NOT in favor of this plan. You had a lot of opposition in the last set of visioning sessions and instead of listening to the people you conducted a false and disingenuous marketing survey to make it look like people wanted this plan.

Stop wasting our money. Let the local city elected officials figure out what they want to do in their towns and let the chips fall where they may. That is the free market and the most efficient way to handle these issues.

14 Supporters