

To: ABAG Executive Board  
From: Miriam Chion, ABAG Planning and Research Director  
Ken Kirkey, MTC Planning Director  
Re: Plan Bay Area 2040 – Draft Preferred Scenario Comments

In early September, ABAG and MTC staff released the Plan Bay Area 2040 Draft Preferred Scenario and Transportation Investment Strategy. The Draft Preferred Scenario encompasses a 2040 regional pattern of household and employment growth and a prioritized set of transportation investments comprising \$309 billion of anticipated revenues.

Staff presented the Draft Preferred Scenario at several regional board and committee meetings. Staff also presented this information to local planning directors and congestion management agencies in all nine counties. Staff invited individual jurisdictions to meet one-on-one with staff about any technical issues related to the household and employment forecasts. In late September and early October, ABAG and MTC staff met with 17 jurisdictions (Brisbane, Corte Madera, Foster City, Gilroy, Mill Valley, Millbrae, Palo Alto, Portola Valley, Saint Helena, San Anselmo, San Francisco, San Jose, San Mateo, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, South San Francisco, County of Marin, and Vacaville)

We have received substantial input from stakeholders, city staff and elected officials. Formal correspondence received since the draft preferred scenario's release can be viewed online here: <http://www.planbayarea.org/your-part/your-comments.html>. The two attached documents Plan Bay Area - Land Use Comments (Attachment 1) and Frequently Asked Questions report (Attachment 2) include responses to the questions and comments we received in September from cities, stakeholders and at various regional boards and committees presentations. This is a partial set of comments and responses. We will prepare a final comprehensive set of comments and responses after the deadline for comments on Friday, October 14, 2016,.

We have a very tight schedule to complete Plan Bay Area 2040. For the land use component, this Plan update relies on UrbanSim, a land use model, to produce the housing and job growth allocation that reflects economic and real estate trends. This model will allow the completion of the various analytical tasks (Travel model analysis, Performance Targets and Equity Measures) within the given timeframe. We will know the extent to which we are able to address comments and concerns expressed by the local jurisdictions and stakeholders that have commented on the Draft Preferred Scenario by the first week of November. In the meantime, ABAG and MTC staff will be

presenting information about likely revisions to the Draft Preferred Scenario at the ABAG Executive Board meeting on October 20<sup>th</sup>.

We are also committed to documenting the challenges and lessons learned from this iteration of Plan Bay Area and the solutions that can be incorporated as we develop the next Plan update (2021), which will parallel a Regional Housing Need Allocation.

#### Next Steps

Staff will develop a Revised Preferred Scenario, integrating feedback heard over the past month, which will be released Monday, October 31. This Preferred Scenario will be presented at the Joint MTC Planning Committee/ABAG Administrative Committee on Friday, November 4, 2016. This Preferred Scenario will be submitted for consideration and adoption by the MTC Commission and ABAG Executive Board in a Joint Meeting at the Bay Area Metro Center on November 17, 2016. Staff will also develop policy and implementation actions in early 2017 for inclusion in the Draft Plan Document, currently slated for spring 2017. Preliminary scope of those actions was presented at the September ABAG Executive Board and Regional Planning Committee meetings. (<http://abag.ca.gov/abag/events/agendas/r091416a-Item%207%20Attach%204%20-%20Plan%20Bay%20Area%20Implementation%20Actions.pdf>)

The final approval of the EIR and Plan Bay Area 2040 is slated for fall 2017

**Plan Bay Area**  
**Land Use Comments**  
September, 2016



This is a selection of responses to questions and comments presented at the ABAG Regional Planning Committee and Executive Board in September 2016. This complements the Frequently Asked Questions document. A comprehensive summary will be prepared after Friday, October 14, 2016 when all comments are received.

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**How do we address local and regional aspirations in Plan Bay Area 2040, create a better future and provide realistic and feasible steps?**

Plan Bay Area is our collective agreement on how we want to grow as a region addressing sustainability, resilience, and equity. Through it diverse communities come together to make key decisions for the future of our region rooted in their local aspirations. Cities identify the places where we want to accommodate new residents and jobs as well as areas that we want to preserve for open space and farms. Priority Development Areas and Priority Conservation Areas provide a land use framework for this substantial dialogue.

The Plan supports some of the existing trends for infill development, water conservation, and increasing use of transit and bikes. At the same time, the Plan needs to identify the areas where major efforts to adjust current trends are essential in order to meet our collective goals, such as access to housing and jobs or resilience to earthquakes and sea level rise.

The Plan needs to lay out a path for achieving long term goals for a 30-year horizon while implementing doable tasks in the short term. (See Implementation Actions, ABAG Executive Board meeting, September 2016). The Plan needs to discuss how to bring more jobs close to transit and housing in areas such as San Jose, Oakland or the East Bay Corridor. The Plan needs to identify the strategies for producing housing affordable to our future workforce, jobs that match the cost of living in the region, and infrastructure and buildings resilient to major earthquakes and flooding.

We know the implementation of some of these strategies will take more than a decade of work. While we address the long term strategies, we are also working towards several near term steps to address our most pressing housing, jobs, and congestion challenges. The designation of the Economic Development District in the region to expand middle-wage jobs, a Regional Housing Trust Fund to support housing production and rehabilitation, accessory dwelling units strategies to expand housing stock in existing units, the soft-story ordinances to improve seismic resilience, and the Green Infrastructure Program in the East Bay Corridor to address drought and water quality are some of the concrete actions under development to address our current challenges.

### **What did we learn from previous Plan Bay Area?**

Three major lessons can be highlighted for this Plan update:

1. Our first Plan Bay Area approved in 2013 showed regional agencies the importance of engaging local jurisdictions and stakeholders from the beginning. It was a major challenge to ensure local participation after the limited success of our first workshops. For this Plan update, we started with more resources and support on the design and production of public workshops, social media, and small meetings from the beginning.
2. On housing challenges, while the share of housing production in PDAs has increased compared to previous decades, additional incentives are needed to advance more infill development. We conducted a broad PDA feasibility study to understand specific challenges and strategies that informed this update. In this update, we also recognized the serious challenges of displacement and homelessness, which demand sharper strategies to support housing production and retention.
3. Major needs flagged in our first Plan include: addressing economic prosperity and resilience. In order to support our regional economic vitality, this Plan is linked to a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy report supported by cities, economic development organizations, and various stakeholders. Similarly, a resilience report addressing seismic events and climate change is being prepared by BCDC, MTC, and ABAG.

### **How would this Plan impact future RHNA numbers?**

Plan Bay Area 2040 will not be an input into the next RHNA. The next RHNA will be based on the job and household forecast that is done for the iteration of Plan Bay Area to be adopted in 2021. However, Plan Bay Area 2040 and the first Plan Bay Area will likely provide points of reference for the forecasted development pattern of the next Plan Bay Area.

Also, while the forecasted development pattern from the next iteration of Plan Bay Area will be an input into the RHNA methodology, the total amount of housing need for which the Bay Area must plan is determined by the California Department of Housing and Community Development. As the Council of Governments, ABAG is responsible for developing a methodology for allocating this total need to each jurisdiction in the region. The allocation methodology can (and usually does) change for each RHNA cycle.

### **What is the progress on our RHNA goals?**

For 2015 the region as a whole has produced almost one eighth of the needed housing for the 2015-2022 RHNA cycle. However, most housing was for the above average income households while the share of middle, low and very-low income housing was very small. For the past several decades, the Bay Area has not produced enough housing to meet residents' housing needs, particularly for low- and moderate-income households. The challenges of building affordable housing have been exacerbated by the continuing decline of federal and state funding sources, including the dissolution of local Redevelopment Agencies. Proposed local housing bonds will help provide badly-needed funding for housing, but additional steps will be needed to

address the region's housing needs. ABAG is working with local governments and other stakeholders to pursue policies to produce housing for the full range of workers within every community, preserve existing affordable homes, and protect existing residents from displacement.

**What are the cities with PDAs that already have an inclusionary zoning ordinance?**

The list of policy assumptions for the Draft Preferred Scenario says that the model applied inclusionary zoning in all cities with PDAs and that for-profit housing developments would make 10 percent of units deed-restricted in perpetuity. According to ABAG's most recent compilation, there are 85 jurisdictions in the Bay Area that have inclusionary housing policies. There are currently 10 jurisdictions that have PDAs that do not have an inclusionary housing policy.

**Why San Ramon is not included in Tri-Valley Key Node?**

San Ramon was not included in the key node with Pleasanton and Livermore because it is located in Contra Costa County. We can integrate San Ramon into future representations of the Tri-Valley

**What are the key comments and concerns on land use?**

A number of comments and concerns expressed by local jurisdictions can be categorized into five groups:

- Inconsistency with local zoning, general plans, and/or housing elements
- Appreciation for the transparency of the Draft Preferred Scenario relative to the affordability and equity challenges faced by the region and its communities
- Strong interest in developing an actionable implementation framework for Plan Bay Area 2040 for increasing the supply of housing, particularly housing with proximate to employment centers and affordable to low- and moderate-income households
- Interest in developing a framework for job growth in areas of the region with relatively affordable housing
- Significant difference in growth rates between neighboring cities

**What actions will help us address displacement?**

Displacement is addressed in the ABAG Housing Action Agenda. Potential strategies might include promoting Acquisition/Rehabilitation/Conservation (ARC), leveraging regional funds to expand affordable housing, and developing long-term regional housing and infrastructure funding mechanisms. (See Implementation Actions for more detail.)

**How would the Plan support job growth?**

The Economic Development Action Agenda aims to help support job growth by establishing a regional economic development district, creating a Priority Production Areas designation to support areas critical to creating middle-wage jobs, and expanding partnerships between ABAG/MTC and regional economic, business, and workforce organizations.

The job growth pattern for this plan update might not reflect the local aspirations that will require additional strategies and investments.

**Can we get a briefing on UrbanSim?**

A special UrbanSim User Meeting is scheduled at the Metro Center on November 3-4 led by Professor Paul Wadell. If interested, please register at <http://www.urbansim.com/meeting>

We could schedule a basic UrbanSim introduction for committee members if there is enough interest.

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# Frequently Asked Questions

**Forecasting the Future:** Answering Questions about the Draft Preferred Scenario  
October 2016

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In September 2016, MTC and ABAG released the Draft Preferred Scenario to the public, incorporating land use and transportation strategies from the three previously-analyzed scenarios. These strategies – ranging from inclusionary zoning to strict urban growth boundaries – influence our regional forecasts for housing and jobs. Stakeholders and jurisdictions have now had an opportunity to review detailed data tables showing forecasted growth for both housing and jobs by city and by Priority Development Area (PDA) as a result of the assumed policies in the Draft Preferred Scenario.

Staff is looking for feedback – both on the policies included or not included in the Draft Preferred Scenario and on data inputs such as General Plan zoning that form the foundation of our land use forecasting model. This document is designed to answer common questions about how those land use forecasts were developed, in addition to specific questions raised at recent meetings.

## Overall Questions

### **How were housing and jobs forecasts developed?**

All scenarios were consistently evaluated using two peer-reviewed models – UrbanSim (land use) and Travel Model One (transportation). This means that specific strategies were identified by staff based on feedback from the public, jurisdictions, and stakeholders over the course of the planning process in order to encourage housing and job growth in certain areas and discourage in other areas. A primary driver for the strategies selected is the state-mandated greenhouse gas reduction target, which rewards growth in locations close to job centers and public transit; other adopted performance targets set by MTC and ABAG were also carefully considered when identifying feasible policies for inclusion. For example, the strict urban growth boundaries in the Draft Preferred Scenario were designed to discourage low-density development at the periphery of the region and increase the attractiveness of development in Priority Development Areas for residential and commercial growth.

Building on base year parcel data and zoning information included in adopted General Plans, and then loading in strategies to shift trends going forward, UrbanSim can forecast future growth on the parcel level. This means that it repeatedly runs a simplified pro forma analysis on each Bay Area parcel to simulate the behavior of residential and commercial developers, doing so on an annual basis between 2010 and 2040. As in the real world, developers seek to maximize profit while working within the constraints of policies and strategies in place at the time. As new developments are constructed, Bay Area households and employers may choose to relocate to new locations based on the characteristics of housing and commercial space available in that year. Year 2040 forecasts reflect the cumulative impact of those shifts in the built environment and in the location of jobs and residents.

Overall regional growth projections for housing, population, and jobs (i.e., control totals) – which are distributed to parcels via UrbanSim – were developed and approved by ABAG in early 2016.

### **What type of baseline data is used as the foundation for UrbanSim?**

As noted above, UrbanSim relies on 2010 base year data as the foundation for all scenarios evaluated. Base year data includes every building present in 2010 as pulled from each county assessors' files, the Costar commercial real estate database, and several other smaller sources. This data includes building type (single-family residential, multi-family residential, office, industrial, etc.), building age, building size, and building valuation.

In addition to buildings, household and employment baseline information is needed as a starting point for UrbanSim. Household information comes from the most recent decennial Census (year 2010), and is analyzed at the block group level. This data is used to craft a synthetic population to represent each household individually as required by the model. Since block groups do not align with jurisdictional boundaries perfectly, the 2010 baseline data will differ slightly from the census count. Employment data has been updated since Plan Bay Area 2013. Baseline data was developed by taking a count of employees by industry class in each block group from the detailed Dun & Bradstreet dataset. These counts were then scaled to match ABAG's county totals by industry (based upon Bureau of Labor Statistics data). Employees could then be assigned to individual buildings within each block group. Note that due to the improved methodologies used for this cycle, baseline employment numbers may differ somewhat from Plan Bay Area.

Finally, General Plans are a critical input to UrbanSim. Apart from the new strategies included a scenario to influence its distribution of housing and jobs, it is assumed that existing policies (such as current zoning) documented in General Plans remain in effect. Staff compiled data from General Plans across all Bay Area jurisdictions and incorporated them in UrbanSim. Given that the strategies listed below are limited and focused in nature, existing local policies are a primary driver of the location of growth across all scenarios evaluated, including the Draft Preferred Scenario.

### **Which land use strategies were ultimately included in the Draft Preferred Scenario?**

The Draft Preferred Scenario includes fiscally-constrained strategies to improve the region's transportation system as well as specific strategies to influence the location of household growth. In addition to prioritizing funding for maintaining and operating the region's roadway and transit systems, and prioritizing dollars for select modernization and expansion projects, the Draft Preferred Scenario includes the following strategies specifically related to land use:

- **Preserve current urban growth boundaries.** Today's urban growth boundaries in all Bay Area counties would be assumed not to expand through year 2040 in order to encourage infill development and to prevent impacts to agricultural or environmentally-sensitive lands. This policy is critical to achieve the Open Space and Agricultural Preservation performance target, which has been included in both Plan Bay Area and Plan Bay Area 2040.

- **Apply inclusionary zoning policies in all cities within PDAs.** The Draft Preferred Scenario assumes that 10 percent of housing units in all new for-profit housing developments in cities with PDAs would be deed-restricted for lower-income residents. This policy slightly improves performance on the Affordable Housing target by more than mitigating the decline in naturally-affordable housing stock over the lifespan of the Plan.
- **Assign higher densities in select PDAs.** Over the course of the next two decades, it is reasonable to expect that additional localized planning in PDAs will result in upzoning of select parcels to accommodate additional growth. In locations where zoning acts as a constraint to infill development, the Draft Preferred Scenario increases the density and intensity allowed to improve the profitability of development in those locations.
- **Reduce the cost of building in PDAs and TPAs.** Senate Bill 375 includes specific provisions for limited CEQA streamlining in transit-rich locations (TPAs), which slightly reduce the cost of building and improve the ability for developments to pencil out. Similarly, cities can reduce parking minimums that currently increase the cost of development and result in higher rents or purchasing costs for homes. Both of these policies are assumed to be implemented across the region in the Draft Preferred Scenario to support the acceleration of housing growth.
- **Assume subsidies are used to stimulate development in PDAs.** Application of regional development fees would generate new revenue that could be assigned to incentivize housing and employment growth in PDAs where development would otherwise be economically infeasible. For example, subsidies might be required in PDAs in Oakland, where housing and employment growth has been quite limited in recent years compared to PDAs in San Francisco.

### **Why are the forecasts for my city/town/PDA different than the previous Plan?**

For Plan Bay Area 2040, all scenario outcomes – that is to say, the future location of jobs and housing units – were simulated using an economically-based model (UrbanSim) to test out development feasibility for every parcel in the region. Some locations that might be envisioned for future growth by local jurisdictions did not pencil out by year 2040, even with the Draft Preferred Scenario’s strategies that go beyond existing General Plans. The ultimate result is that data forecasts for a given city/town/PDA may differ from local plans and may be different from the prior Plan Bay Area. At the same time, the use of UrbanSim has helped to validate the regional growth pattern and increase the feasibility of realizing it over the Plan’s lifespan (assuming implementation of specific policies).

### **I think the amount of jobs or housing is too high (or too low) in the Draft Preferred Scenario – how can this be changed?**

The most effective way to provide comments on this topic to staff and policymakers is to identify specific regional policies that might discourage (or encourage) development in a specific location. For example, if you would like to see a higher rate of growth in several PDAs, it might be useful to suggest subsidies or upzoning to increase the viability of development on parcels within those PDAs or within certain types of PDAs.

There may also be issues with the data inputs – as noted earlier, General Plans from across the region were incorporated into UrbanSim. Data glitches are certainly possible when doing this type of analysis across a major metropolitan area. Please contact MTC staff if you identify a potential error that may be a result of baseline development, zoning, or policy inputs.

**Is PDA-specific or parcel-level data available?**

Yes. Public agency staff, stakeholders, or members of the public can request parcel-level data files to better understand the raw data that is then summarized by PDA and by jurisdiction. Note that due to the high resolution of this data, the data files are quite large and may require GIS software to review in detail.

**When are comments due on the Draft Preferred Scenario? Will additional time be provided?**

Comments on the Draft Preferred Scenario are due by Friday, October 14, 2016. This timeframe is necessary to craft a Revised Preferred Scenario for consideration for approval by MTC and ABAG in November 2016. As is customary, public comment can be accepted up until the approval of the Preferred Scenario, but comments received after October 14 may not be reviewed, summarized, and responded to in advance of the November recommendation.

Specific Questions from Recent Meetings

**How will this land use forecast for the Draft Preferred Scenario affect future RHNA numbers? Does it have any impacts on OBAG funding or OBAG criteria?**

Plan Bay Area 2040 does not incorporate an update to the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) process, as that effort is only completed once every eight years. The next long-range plan, slated for adoption in 2021, will incorporate new land use forecasts and will be linked to future RHNA allocations. Similarly, given that the One Bay Area Grant (OBAG) funding formula depends on RHNA and actual production and not Plan Bay Area, there are no impacts on OBAG funding distributions as a result of this analysis.

**How do future job income levels influence housing location choices?**

Similar to Plan Bay Area, the share of Bay Area households in lower-income brackets are expected to rise in Plan Bay Area 2040. This means that more residents are expected to experience the significant pressures associated with lower incomes and higher housing prices. Ultimately, this will cause some households to relocate to different neighborhoods or cities in the region, while others are expected to continue to live in their current communities.

**What assumptions were made about housing bonds currently on the ballot?**

Currently, the Draft Preferred Scenario does not assume the passage of housing bonds on fall 2016 ballots in a number of Bay Area jurisdictions. However, staff is reviewing feedback to determine whether or not these strategies – which have not yet been approved by voters – should be reflected in the Revised Preferred Scenario in November. Similarly, staff is reviewing comments indicating a preference for housing bonds as a strategy for the Revised Preferred Scenario, perhaps in lieu of inclusionary zoning as a result of short-term constraints on affordable rental housing requirements imposed by *Palmer v. City of Los Angeles*.

### **How much worse would the housing costs be without the Draft Preferred Scenario?**

As noted in the September meeting materials which provided an overview of the Draft Preferred Scenario, the share of lower-income household income spent on housing is forecasted to increase by 12 percentage points in the Draft Preferred Scenario. Other than the Connected Neighborhoods scenario, all other scenarios including No Project (i.e., status quo) increase that share by 13 percentage points. Despite the slightly better performance, the results are in the same ballpark due to the fact that the overall number of housing units constructed (i.e., the control total) is consistent across all scenarios.

Based on these results, the location of new housing units, whether in urban, suburban, or rural locations, does not result in major differences in regional affordability. Instead, the quantity of housing constructed is a more significant driver of the affordability trend. It is critical to note that the Plan's ambitious acceleration in housing production in 2020 would need to occur to achieve the above results. Otherwise, the region could become even more unaffordable than current forecasts.

### **Why are jobs in PDAs down from the last Plan?**

As noted earlier, Plan Bay Area 2040 relies on an analytical approach to forecast the year 2040 land use distribution, exploring how strategies influence market conditions for commercial development. In general, there are fewer strategies available to encourage job growth in PDAs than there are for housing. In part, this is due to the fact that cities' general plans generally provide excess zoning capacity for jobs due to the "fiscalization" of land use. Those baseline policies form the foundation of the UrbanSim model, with the included strategies unable to make significant headway in shifting employment locations.

In addition, the region has seen robust job growth and commercial development since 2010, accounting for roughly half of all job growth expected through 2040. Much of this development has been located in lower-density office complexes in Silicon Valley, rather than in PDAs. These buildings are expected to be occupied for commercial purposes through year 2040. This is a major factor in the lower share of PDA job growth when measuring between 2010 and 2040, as compared to Plan Bay Area.

### **Why are Communities of Concern performing better on select performance targets?**

As part of the Plan Bay Area 2040 equity analysis, staff explored the relative performance of select performance targets inside and outside of Communities of Concern. These equity measures showed that displacement risk and access to jobs trends were better in Communities of Concern over the Plan lifespan. With regards to displacement risk, the Draft Preferred Scenario did not concentrate growth as significantly in highly-populated Communities of Concern – such as those in East Oakland and East San Jose – as extensively as other scenarios like Big Cities. This reduced the risk of gentrification of those locations and resulted in much lower displacement risk as compared to areas outside Communities of Concern. With regards to access to jobs by car and by transit, Communities of Concern already have better access to jobs compared to the regional average as a result of the fact that many are in the region's core with a high degree of multimodal accessibility. Continued investments in those core transit assets in the Draft Preferred Scenario results in strong performance for low-income and minority communities as compared to higher-income communities.

**How can implementation actions be added to the Plan?**

Staff will be working on an implementation strategy for Plan Bay Area 2040 as part of the Plan Document process. While not every policy will necessarily be included in the ultimate Preferred Scenario, public feedback will be used to help identify policies that would support improved performance to expedite implementation – above and beyond what is reflected in the adopted Plan and its associated performance results.

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