



Association of Bay Area Governments

STRATEGIC PLAN

2008



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ABAG Mission Statement

ABAG is committed to enhancing the quality of life in the San Francisco Bay Area by leading the region in advocacy, collaboration, and excellence in planning, research, and member services.



Improve public understanding of ABAG

- Realize public and media recognition and understanding of ABAG's mission, work, and achievements.
 - Strategy: Develop and implement a communication strategy to reach public and private stakeholders and media outlets.
 - Identify various public and private stakeholders.
 - Conduct focus groups to measure understanding of ABAG and its scope of work and help define more effective outreach.
 - Set up editorial board meetings around the region to increase ABAG visibility and focus on ABAG issues and projects.
 - Write periodic OpEds and letters to the editor for local and regional newspapers.
 - Review ABAG publications to evaluate effectiveness and update distribution strategies.
 - Use website for more comprehensive coverage of ABAG events, publications, and initiatives.
 - Increase marketing of ABAG forums and conferences and expand outreach of ABAG specialized training for more visibility.
 - Work with project manager on issue-related public service announcements to be distributed to local cable stations.



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- Improve elected official and ABAG-member local government understanding.
 - Strategy: Raise awareness among elected officials about ABAG services and programs.
 - Schedule periodic ABAG regional presentations or special packet distribution with city councils and boards of Supervisors.
 - Host county brown bag lunch after elections for newly elected officials providing an orientation to ABAG programs, services, and resources.
- Establish a speakers bureau.
 - Strategy: Identify ABAG staff, board and committee members who are available to represent ABAG throughout the region.
 - Create a cadre of local government officials and staff to serve as Ambassadors of ABAG at local and regional events.
 - Increase presence at local events, e.g. conference of mayors, forums, conferences, town hall meetings, etc.
 - Identify and participate in regional conferences and local summits to display ABAG programs and projects.
 - Include ABAG regional information/presentation into county/local citizen academies.



- Establish measurable outcomes to evaluate results of public outreach.
 - Strategy: Quantify outreach and extent of impact.
 - Establish log-in system to track presentations, displays, media coverage, and audience reached (type and number).
 - Conduct a follow-up e-survey of ABAG members with queries on ABAG programs and ABAG visibility—asking questions about ABAG services, programs and projects they know about and/or used during the previous six months for the first time or heard more about.
 - Distribution method: use of e-mail/fax and/or Service Matters—and/or use web-link for survey.
 - Timeline: six months/annually after launch of public outreach.



Establish long-term financial stability

- **Identify reliable, predictable funding**
 - Strategy: Negotiate with MTC to increase pass-through from federal and state funding sources.
 - Strategy: Work with MTC to obtain additional funding for planning efforts related to PDAs and TOD.
 - Strategy: Seek funding from Coastal Conservancy for PCAs.
 - Strategy: Identify permanent financing opportunities for regional planning, e.g., Vehicle License Fees, etc.
 - Strategy: Seek funding from the BAAQMD to enhance planning efforts related to global warming and climate change.
- **Increase service program revenues to support core mission.**
 - Strategy: Expand marketing of FAN (conduit bond financing program).
 - Strategy: Increase client base for PLAN and ABAG POWER.
 - Strategy: Expand program scope into areas such as solar energy and other energy efficiency programs.



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- Identify reasonable risk enterprise ventures to support ABAG's core mission.
 - Strategy: Expand online training and market services worldwide.
 - Strategy: Work with CALCOG to secure state funding from Propositions 84 and 1C for regional planning programs.
 - Strategy: Advocate at state level for permanent Blueprint funding.



Attract, develop, and retain high quality employees

- Instill high staff morale and job satisfaction.
 - Strategy: Conduct an internal scan (survey) and focus groups of employees to identify areas for improvement.
 - Strategy: Prepare, with employee involvement, an internal organization development plan.
 - Strategy: Implement the plan as feasible.
- Provide salaries and benefits that are competitive in the marketplace.
 - Strategy: The extent to which this objective is achievable is highly dependent on the goal of achieving consistent and reliable funding for the agency.
 - Strategy: There is, however, some opportunity for increased commitment to this objective via increased rates in grants and proposals.



- **Ensure vigorous recruitment effort.**
 - Strategy: Developing and retaining existing employees is the best possible recruitment strategy. Therefore, for this objective, as well as the previous, it's critical to prepare and implement an internal organization development plan as outlined above.
 - Strategy: Utilize multiple methods and venues for dissemination of job announcements.
 - Strategy: Interview a broad range of candidates, utilizing telephone/videoconferencing options if helpful.
 - Strategy: Expand outreach to ethnic professional organizations and graduate schools to recruit minority candidates.



Increase housing supply at all income levels

- Foster the development of affordable, livable, mixed use neighborhoods in the Bay Area.
 - Strategy: Develop a regional land bank to provide for increased housing densities in the future, particularly in areas with existing or planned transit.
 - Strategy: Promote higher density development in transit-served locations.
 - Strategy: Link FOCUS Priority Development Area incentives to the provision of affordable housing.

- Work with state to reform Regional Housing Need Allocation.
 - Strategy: Promote adoption of sub-regional approach to RHNA.
 - Strategy: Create a regional affordable housing strategy.
 - Strategy: Collaborate with other regions toward the revision of RHNA toward a regional housing allocation that is more incentive-based.



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- Expand regional-level resources related to housing development.
 - Strategy: Create a regional Housing Development Corporation to provide for increased development of affordable housing in the Bay Area.
 - Strategy: Develop a regional linkage fee to fund affordable housing production.
 - Strategy: Establish a regional housing land trust.



Improve mobility through coordination of land use, transportation, and planning decisions

- Foster a regional growth pattern that creates complete communities with ready, close, and safe access to employment, shopping, amenities and services and where transit is in place, well coordinated and available.
 - Strategy: Continue to advance the multi-agency FOCUS Initiative led by the Association of Bay Area Governments.
 - Strategy: Secure adequate infrastructure funding for Priority Development Areas.
 - Strategy: Support industrial land preservation where needed, and support local jurisdictions in their efforts to identify ways for housing, commercial uses, and goods movement activities to co-exist as good neighbors.



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- Strategy: Advance recognition among transit agencies and congestion management agencies that Priority Development Areas encompass potential areas for focusing growth around transit hubs and transit arterials corridors and they serve as opportunity areas for targeted regional investments.
- Strategy: Coordinate county-level outreach efforts pertaining to land use and transportation issues in the region with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.



Conserve resources, promote sustainability, and improve environmental quality

- Reduce the Bay Area's greenhouse gas emissions.
 - Strategy: Implement regional climate change program with partner agencies.
 - Strategy: Advance development of Priority Development Areas as complete communities to reduce vehicle miles traveled.
 - Strategy: Promote policies and programs that address climate change impacts.
- Protect, conserve, and restore critical habitats, working landscapes, recreational areas and networks, and other regionally significant resource areas.
 - Strategy: Enhance the level of coordination between ABAG's conservation-related programs and departments including Land Use Planning, Land and Water Studies, and the San Francisco Estuary Project.



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- Strategy: Identify additional funding entities for the preservation of Priority Conservation Areas.
 - Strategy: Work with regional partners to secure increased conservation resources from the state for the Bay Area.
- Incorporate long-term public health impacts into land use planning.
- Strategy: Secure urban park-related funding for Priority Development Areas.
 - Strategy: Collaborate with local governments and partner regional agencies relative to mitigating public health risks within and proximate to Priority Development Areas.
 - Strategy: Link FOCUS Priority Development Areas to planning that provides for the creation of pedestrian, bicycle and transit-oriented complete communities.
- Consider water quality and quantity in land use planning.
- Strategy: Collaborate with other regional agencies to encourage the region's water agencies to integrate the region's water resources planning with land use, air quality, and transportation.
 - Strategy: Provide planning assistance that advances the incorporation of urban greening related to streetscapes and parks and green buildings in Priority Development Areas.



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- Strategy: Support cities and counties with technical assistance pertaining to best practices to reduce water use, limit storm-water runoff and develop in a way that protects the bay, estuary, ocean and the region's watersheds.



Maintain and enhance a disaster-resistant region by reducing potential loss of life, property damage, and environmental degradation from natural and man-made disasters, while accelerating economic recovery from such disasters

- Improve and maintain Bay Area infrastructure, including transportation and utility facilities and networks.
 - Strategy: Support and encourage efforts of transportation and lifeline agencies to develop and finance seismic retrofits and other disaster mitigation.
 - Strategy: Support and encourage research on measures to further strengthen these systems so that they are less vulnerable to damage in disasters.
 - Strategy: Encourage communication between State OES, FEMA, and utilities related to disasters occurring outside of the Bay Area that can affect service delivery in the region.



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- Strategy: Develop procedures for performing a comprehensive watershed analysis to look at the impact of development on flooding potential downstream, including communities outside of the jurisdiction of proposed projects.
- Strategy: Assist, support, and/or encourage the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, various Flood Control and Water Conservation Districts, and other responsible agencies to locate and maintain funding (particularly at the regional level) for the development of flood control projects that have high benefit-cost ratios [due to risk reduction and water supply].
- Strategy: Work cooperatively with local governments, water agencies, flood control districts, Caltrans, and local transportation agencies to determine appropriate performance criteria for watershed analysis.
- Strategy: Work for better cooperation among the patchwork of agencies managing flood control issues.
- Strategy: Work on planning and risk assessment activities aimed at prioritizing projects and programs to prevent loss of life, flood damage, and other catastrophic losses related to levee and dam failures, as well as for programs aimed at local self-reliance in the event of sustained loss of infrastructure due to such failures.
- Strategy: Provide materials to the public related to family and personal planning for problems after disasters such as power outages, traffic or road closures, reductions in water supply, and contamination of that supply.



- **Raise awareness of local officials about the need to maintain resistant facilities, networks and systems after disasters.**
 - Strategy: Work to ensure that the cities and counties in the region know and work with the five Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) cities serving the region (Fremont, Oakland, Sacramento, San Jose, and San Francisco).
 - Strategy: Work to encourage cities and counties to look at the full range of medical systems in their disaster and mitigation planning (and thus include not only hospitals, but also pharmacies, medical offices, and other health care services).
 - Strategy: Monitor the efforts to plan for pandemic response.
- **Advocate for the need to have safe and disaster-resistant housing that is architecturally diverse and serves a variety of household sizes and incomes.**
 - Strategy: Work with cities and counties to adopt voluntary retrofit standards for older homes that include prescriptive plan sets and construction details for foundation bolting and bracing of outside walls of crawl spaces (“cripple” walls).
 - Strategy: Provide classes and training materials to local government building inspectors, private retrofit contractors, and private home inspectors on retrofitting of single-family homes.



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- Strategy: Provide retrofit information and workshops for homeowners.
- Strategy: Work to educate condominium and apartment owners, local government staff, engineers, and contractors on soft-story retrofit procedures and incentives.
- Strategy: Inventory existing or suspected soft-story residential structures [starting with the areas near the Hayward fault].
- Strategy: Explore and monitor development of local ordinances or State regulations to require or encourage owners of soft-story structures to strengthen them.
- Strategy: Provide information to residents of the Bay Area on interactive hazard maps using ABAG's web site.
- Strategy: Conduct workshops and/or provide other culturally appropriate outreach encouraging residents to have family disaster plans that include drop-cover-hold earthquake drills, fire and storm evacuation procedures, and shelter-in-place emergency guidelines.
- Strategy: Use disaster anniversaries to remind the public on safety and security mitigation activities.



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- Advocate for safe, disaster-resilient, and architecturally diverse downtown commercial areas, business and industrial complexes, and office buildings.
 - Strategy: Work to educate building owners, local government staff, engineers, and contractors on soft-story retrofit procedures and incentives.
 - Strategy: Inventory non-ductile concrete, tilt-up concrete, and other privately-owned structurally suspicious buildings.
 - Strategy: Provide information to Bay Area businesses and their employees on interactive hazard maps using ABAG's web site.
 - Strategy: Conduct workshops and/or provide culturally appropriate outreach encouraging businesses' employees to have family disaster plans that include drop-cover-hold earthquake drills, fire and storm evacuation procedures, and shelter-in-place emergency guidelines.
 - Strategy: Provide outreach to Bay Area businesses on business continuity planning and earthquake hazard mitigation by using (and improving) the information on ABAG's web site at <http://quake.abag.ca.gov/business>.



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- Work with Bay Area city and county governments, and community services agencies, to identify and develop a plan for essential services during and immediately following disasters, as well as critical functions during recovery, that need to be resistant to disasters.
 - Strategy: Prepare a Recovery Plan that outlines a framework and process for pre-event planning for post-event community recovery that outlines a structure and process for policy-making involving elected officials and appointed advisory committees.
 - Strategy: Develop a business continuity plan for ABAG that includes backup storage of vital records, such as essential medical records and financial information, and that establishes a goal for resumption of ABAG services that varies from function to function.
 - Strategy: Promote information sharing among overlapping and neighboring local governments, including cities, counties, and special districts, as well as utilities.
 - Strategy: Encourage staff to participate in efforts by professional organizations to mitigate earthquake and landslide disaster losses.
 - Strategy: Conduct and/or promote attendance of elected officials at local or regional hazard conferences and workshops.



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- Strategy: Cooperate with researchers working on government-funded projects to refine information on hazards.
 - Strategy: Work with the cities, counties, and special districts in the Bay Area to encourage them to adopt the multi-jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and to assist them in integrating it into their overall planning process.
 - Strategy: Improve the risk assessment and loss estimation work in the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan related to earthquakes and weather-related disasters and begin the process of updating that plan.
- Education—Safe and disaster-resistant school, education, and childcare-related facilities are critical to the safety of our children, as well as to the quality of life of Bay Area families.
- Strategy: Work with and support efforts by schools to reach families through culturally appropriate educational materials on hazards, mitigation, and preparedness, particularly after disasters and at the beginning of the school year.



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- Encourage disaster resistance efforts that further environmental sustainability, reduce pollution, strengthen agriculture resiliency, and avoid hazardous material releases in the Bay Area.
 - Strategy: Encourage regulatory agencies to work collaboratively with safety professionals to develop creative mitigation strategies that effectively balance environmental and safety needs to meet critical wildfire, flood, and earthquake safety levels.
 - Strategy: Develop and implement a comprehensive program for watershed maintenance, optimizing forest health with water yield to balance water supply, flooding, fire, and erosion concerns.
 - Strategy: Monitor the science associated with global warming to be able to act promptly when data become available to warrant special design and engineering of government-owned facilities located in low-lying areas, such as wastewater treatment plants, ports, and airports. In particular, stay informed on emerging scientific information dealing with rising sea levels, especially on additional actions that local governments can take to mitigate this hazard.



- Promote and encourage land uses that recognize hazardous areas and discourages development in such areas.
 - Strategy: Encourage efforts by the California Geological Survey to complete the earthquake-induced landslide and liquefaction mapping for the Bay Area to ensure that new development in these hazard areas is appropriately constructed.
 - Strategy: Encourage local governments to incorporate FEMA guidelines and suggested activities for managing land use in flood hazard areas into their plans.
 - Strategy: In an effort to promote smart growth and sustainability, as well as revitalize urban areas, prioritize retrofit of infrastructure that serves urban areas over constructing new infrastructure to serve outlying areas.



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