

Regional Planning Committee Meeting Summary Minutes

Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter – Auditorium
101 8th Street, Oakland, California
October 2, 2013

Members Present

Susan Adams, Supervisor, County of Marin
Andy Barnes, Policy Chair, Urban Land Institute
Desley Brooks, Councilmember, City of Oakland
Ronit Bryant, Councilmember, City of Mountain View
Paul Campos, Sr. Vice President of Government Affairs, BIA Bay Area
Julie Combs, Councilmember, City of Santa Rosa
Linda Craig, Bay Area League of Women Voters
Pat Eklund, Mayor, City of Novato
Scott Haggerty, Supervisor, County of Alameda
Erin Hannigan, Supervisor, County of Solano
John Holtzclaw, Sierra Club
Linda Jackson, Transportation Authority of Marin
Kristina Lawson, Councilmember, City of Walnut Creek
Mark Luce, Supervisor, County of Napa, ABAG President
Nate Miley, Supervisor, County of Alameda
Anu Natarajan, Councilmember, City of Fremont / RPC Vice Chair
Julie Pierce, Mayor, City of Clayton, ABAG Vice President
Harry Price, Mayor, City of Fairfield
Mark Ross, Vice Mayor, City of Martinez
Pixie Hayward Schickele, California Teachers Association
Carol Severin, EBRPD Board of Directors
Jim Spering, Supervisor, Solano County
Egon Terplan, Regional Planning Director, SPUR

Members Absent:

Shiloh Ballard, Silicon Valley Leadership Group
Dave Cortese, Supervisor, County of Santa Clara / RPC Chair
Diane Dillon, Supervisor, County of Napa
Michael Lane, Policy Director, Non-Profit Housing Assn. of Northern California
Jeremy Madsen, Executive Director, Greenbelt Alliance
Karen Mitchoff, Supervisor, County of Contra Costa
Vu-Bang Nguyen, Associate Director, Urban Habitat
Laurel Prevetti, BAPDA Chair
Tim Sbranti, Mayor, City of Dublin

Staff Present:

Ezra Rapport, Executive Director, ABAG
Miriam Chion, Planning and Research Director, ABAG
Laura Thompson, Bay Trail Program Manager
Gillian Adams, Regional Planner, ABAG

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1. Call to Order

Vice-Chair Anu Natarajan called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM
Vice-Chair Natarajan led the Pledge of Allegiance

2. Public Comment

3. Approval of Regional Planning Committee Meeting Minutes August 7, 2013

Minutes were unanimously approved with no abstentions or comments.

4. Oral Reports/Comments

a. Committee Members

Committee Member Holtzclaw referenced an urban design guide released by the National Association of Transportation Officials (NACTO) that could be of use to jurisdictions.

b. Staff

Ms. Miriam Chion, ABAG Planning and Research Director, responded to a question brought up by Committee Member Combs at the last meeting regarding the committee's purpose and role. She explained that initial policy proposals first go to the Regional Planning Committee (RPC), whose members represent local jurisdictions and a variety of stakeholders who provide input to plans before they are brought to the Executive Board.

Committee Member Combs thanked ABAG staff for visiting her and planning staff in the City of Santa Rosa to better explain Plan Bay Area implementation.

Vice-Chair Natarajan encouraged other jurisdictions to host such meetings.

5. INFORMATION: Plan Bay Area Implementation – Next Steps

Miriam Chion, ABAG Planning and Research Director, presented the next steps of the implementation phase of Plan Bay Area, the Bay Area's Sustainable Communities Strategy.

Ms. Chion presented current work as a preliminary framework for discussion of something that was previously brought to the Executive Board. Plan Bay Area (PBA) implementation, will be organized into four work areas: Priority Development Area (PDA) implementation, open space and farmland, housing production and affordability, economic development. Components to be refined with input from local jurisdictions.

Ms. Chion defined PDAs as areas identified by local jurisdictions for the location of new jobs, housing, and economic activity, developed in ways that preserve open space and preserve or enhance the character and qualities of neighborhoods and towns.

Ms. Chion recapped the implementation efforts described in the staff report and said the focus of today's presentation would be on the Inner Bay Corridors and the Bay Trail and Gateway Park.

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Committee Member Terplan, making reference to the Economic Prosperity Strategy, noted that as a region we have very few tools to grow the size of middle income jobs and emphasized that the plan is trying to address prosperity at large.

ABAG Vice President Pierce mentioned that the Economic Prosperity Strategy is a good start but still has a long way to go. She also recommended the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) Director as an expert for goods movement.

Committee Member Combs was concerned that the North Bay was not on the map prepared for the RPC memo. Ms. Combs also stated that Santa Rosa does not have the density to meet some transportation goals in Plan Bay Area such as headways. Ms. Combs mentioned that Santa Rosa is perceived as a regional center by the far north counties outside the Bay Area and transportation plans should recognize Santa Rosa's larger role in the north.

Ms. Combs raised a number of additional concerns:

- CEQA streamlining does not apply to Santa Rosa.
- TOAH (Transportation Oriented Affordable Housing fund) does not apply because Santa Rosa does not possess the requisite transit densities.
- Rehabilitated and foreclosed properties converted to permanently affordable homes are not counted for the purposes of the Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA).
- Need better support in rural development areas for movement of goods and services.

Committee Member Eklund expressed skepticism about the housing-transit nexus in suburbia/smaller cities, using the example of the Novato Millworks Project survey which showed high car ownership rates and low transit usage, and called for performance measures for achieving VMT goals. Ms. Eklund also mentioned need to work with elected officials throughout the region to get buy-in for Plan Bay Area.

ABAG Executive Director Ezra Rapport responded that the core message of Plan Bay Area is not that transit will work in all settings, for example in the North Bay the goal of PDAs is to have neighborhood plans to implement Pedestrian Transit Oriented Development (PTOD) and compact growth in downtowns. While Plan Bay Area is focused on the inner Bay Area where most growth is occurring, it is also applicable for jurisdictions in Sonoma and Marin Counties.

Mr. Rapport mentioned that ABAG will try to provide a timeline for Plan Bay Area implementation at the next Executive Board meeting. He mentioned that there will be a series of meetings in each county with delegates to explain ABAG's role and what Plan Bay Area can do for them in general. Future work will make modifications to the process of developing the plan so it is better received in a very diverse Bay Area.

Committee Member Campos mentioned the regional need to do all we can to support PDA implementation, such as providing better information about PDA status and making an update of the PDA website a top priority.

Committee Member Ross asked that telecommuting (i.e. working from home) also be incorporated into Plan Bay Area.

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ABAG President Luce responded that people do not telecommute because they usually don't have a choice. Brought up Napa's Work Proximity Housing Program as an example.

Committee Member Holtzclaw noted the importance of relative density to reducing greenhouse gases (GHGs). Places with lower driving per capita are more dense. Downtown Santa Rosa has the lowest driving per capita for that area.

Committee Member Adams emphasized the need to think bigger picture and for better messaging. She wants to start now with outreach for work that needs to be done in 3-4 years. Thinks we need to include all the ways the region is working to decrease GHGs, not just transit, including new vehicle types, carbon offsets such as Marin's clean energy program, and use of agricultural land for carbon sequestration. The Marin County General Plan already does a lot of what Plan Bay Area calls for the whole Bay Area.

Committee Member Terplan stated PDA website should be updated.

Vice-Chair Natarajan emphasized the need to include school districts as stakeholders.

Ms. Chion summarized the concerns mentioned above.

6. INFORMATION: Plan Bay Area Implementation: Inner Bay Area Corridors

Miriam Chion, ABAG Planning and Research Director, presented information and requested committee input on the corridors' Priority Development Area strategies.

Ms. Chion provided an overview of the Inner Bay Area corridors concept. In the west bay, the effort focuses on PDAs along El Camino, in the East Bay focuses on San Pablo and International Boulevard/East 14th/Mission Boulevard. Corridors connect the three largest cities in the region and represent 2/3 of regional growth as well as major transportation investments.

ABAG will engage with jurisdictions to determine synergies that can be supported and to understand what type of development is happening. ABAG will be doing a land use analysis of the activities in each jurisdiction to better identify areas where ABAG/MTC can provide support. These meetings will define the implementation strategies that could be most effective in each PDA as each place is unique.

Committee Member Haggerty feels as if the suburbs are being abandoned, especially the major employment centers in the outer areas such as Dublin, Livermore, and Pleasanton. It is not clear how places that are neither PDAs nor PCAs are addressed in the plan.

Ms. Chion stated that places that are neither PDAs nor PCAs are addressed in a way as to retain the appropriate developmental scales and services that are already in place.

Ms. Chion and Mr. Rapport responded that the corridors are a priority because of the level of population and employment that they provide but that the Tri-Valley is also a special study area. The cities mentioned all have PDAs.

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Committee Member Campos wants to ensure continued eligibility for PDA funding is based on entitlement and production progress, not just plans.

Committee Member Bryant questioned the viability of the transit corridors unless adequate attention is paid to the quality of the public realm especially open spaces.

Committee Member Terplan asked that in the future if addressing something that is going on in a specific part of the region start with a regional map then zoom in, incorporate the actual growth numbers on the map to provide justification for focusing on this area.

Committee Member Ross expressed concern that light industrial space in PDAs is being removed and converted to residential and commercial. Individuals working in these areas (i.e. plumbers) are living farther out and getting into their cars to make service calls.

Committee Member Eklund mentioned how Inner Bay Area discussions prioritize planning staffs and CMAs of jurisdictions along those corridors. Recommends that ABAG meet with elected officials to talk about Plan Bay Area, lessons learned, suggestions for improvement and explain the inner bay area corridors to talk about what they like and what they'd like to change. Mentioned that there is growing dissent among elected officials. Also need to engage more with the union trades along those corridors to assess impact on commute times.

Committee Member Holtzclaw supported Committee Member Bryant's concerns for adequate parks of different types and scales citing San Francisco Transbay Plan as a good example.

Kara Vuicich, ACTC mentioned that ACTC just completed their call for projects for their PDA Planning grants and received a great application from the Tri-Valley Area. The CMAs are looking forward to working with ABAG and MTC on Plan Bay Area implementation and figuring out where to focus efforts and how those complement what the regional agencies are working on. Wants to use CMA PDA Investment and Growth strategies to support the development efforts of the inner bay corridors and suburban areas.

Committee Member Combs wants to better understand the water component of Plan Bay Area implementation. Mentioned how Santa Rosa feels locked out of meaningful inclusion in Plan Bay Area because they don't have the sufficient density or the location.

Committee Member Spering stated the 580 Corridor is also a very unique corridor that requires special recognition. We need to be able to measure successes. Would like to clarify what people think Plan Bay Area is doing to them and what it is they would like to see from the plan.

Vice-Chair Natarajan asserted how we move forward is important for how people understand the concept of what makes a place livable. Place making needs to be an integral component to everything we have talked about. The ABAG General Assembly did a good job starting those conversations.

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Committee Member Haggerty stated it would be good for RPC to make a recommendation to develop a comprehensive website for Plan Bay Area that includes performance measures.

Ms. Chion stated that at future RPC meetings ABAG will report back on the website upgrade and will address place making.

7. **INFORMATION: Gateway Park**

Laura Thompson, Bay Trail Project Manager, introduced the Gateway Park in the context of the Bay Trail. Peter Lee, Bay Area Toll Authority (BATA), presented an overview of the Gateway Park design and planning process.

Ms. Thompson stated that the new regional park at the foot of the Bay Bridge is a story of regional cooperation to create a popular new destination along the shoreline.

Mr. Lee stated that they completed a project concept report last year, secured funding through the state T-grant program, now on project approval and environmental documentation phase.

Francis Lowell, consultant to BATA, stated the project started as mitigation for transportation projects in the area (including Cypress Freeway, army base transfer, Bay Bridge). Park is intended to be a public-private partnership, leveraging public funds to attract philanthropic and private dollars to have more features in the park. The park is a halfway point in the Bay Trail before people go on the Bay Bridge. They are anticipating the project be constructed in phases as money and land become available. Provided overview of location of the site.

Sarah Kiehl, consultant to BATA, added that the park connects to bikeways in Mandela and Grand in Oakland. The park will have plants that improve air quality, use of historic Herbies Building (a former Key System building) for artist residencies and/or a for-profit use. The park will also include a visitors' center, playground, picnics areas, and kayak launch. There could also be larger industrial-sized recreational equipment. Careful care has been taken not to disrupt sensitive habitats.

Mr. Lowell stated that the project is expected to complete engineering work in 2015. Start phased construction in 2017. Completion of the initial phases in 2019 and 2020.

8. **INFORMATION: Guidelines for Adding, Removing, or Changing a PDA**

Tabled till next RPC on December 4, 2013.

Vice-Chair Natarajan thanked Dayle Farina for all of her work with the committee as this would be her last meeting.

ADJOURN

Meeting adjourned at 3:02pm. Next meeting: Wednesday, December 4, 2013

Submitted by:
Pedro Galvao
Regional Planner, ABAG