

Sharing Opportunity in the Bay Area: Access to Jobs and Housing

ABAG Spring General Assembly, Thursday, April 17, 2014, 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM
Oakland Marriott City Center, 1001 Broadway (12th Street/City Center BART Station)

Please join your fellow elected officials, and business and nonprofit leaders for an exciting, insightful and action driven Spring General Assembly. Explore how the Bay Area is poised for significant growth in the coming years -- creating opportunity and prosperity for many of its residents. Examine how we can ensure that benefits reach working families and young people throughout the entire Bay Area. Hear about creative strategies unfolding that could help advance economic prosperity in struggling cities and towns and among excluded populations? This conference will cover these issues and more, focusing on regional assets and challenges and showcasing innovative strategies to enhance job and housing opportunities.

Agenda Highlights

9:05: Plenary -- Bay Area Trends: Today and Tomorrow

AnnaLee Saxenian, Professor and Dean, UC Berkeley School of Information

An examination of the Bay Area's economic health and quality of life past and present trends: focusing on the region's economic drivers of innovation, cooperation and competition, and global interactions and the impact of today's challenges in housing and transportation, environment, education, and access to jobs.

9:30-10:30: Panel 1—Economic Trends from Recovery to Prosperity

Hear expert insights and economic analysis regarding how the Bay Area is outperforming many other US regions in employment growth and investments as we recover from the recession. Expert economists will talk about how businesses are hiring and expanding; how new homes (including many rentals) are being built in major cities; restaurants and retail are flourishing; and the Bay Area continues to attract a highly educated workforce. But this growth is not without challenges and raises many questions. Hear the answers to: How does this cycle of growth compare to previous cycles? What are the leading industries and what industries are stable? Which cities are benefiting from this growth and under which conditions? Will this growth reduce the polarization of wages? How does job growth relate to housing production and affordability?

Moderator: San Francisco Supervisor Jane Kim with Jed Kolko, Trulia Chief Economist; Steve Levy, Director and Senior Economist, Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy; and Dena Belzer, President, Strategic Economics

10:45-11:45: Panel 2—Creating Economic Diversity and Sustainability

Bay Area Business and organization leaders will explore the diversity of industries that add to the Bay Area's knowledge production, high technology and media sectors, examining the ways industries are redefining production processes and products— from manufacturing to agriculture to cultural arts. Issues discussed include the need for providing new job skills training; for promoting economic, social and environmental sustainability; and addressing competing priorities and policies—from industrial to commercial office and housing needs.

Moderator: Alameda County Supervisor Nate Miley; Kate Sofis, SF Made Executive Director; Ada Chan, Advisory Committee Member, Eastside Arts Alliance; and Julien Gervreau, Jackson Family Wines Sustainability Manager.

11:45 am-noon ABAG Annual Business Meeting

Noon- 1:30pm Lunch and Presentation of Growing Smarter Together Awards

Presentation of Growing Smarter Together Awards in eight categories with award winners showcased in videos illustrating their innovative local planning and collaborative efforts to strengthen and support existing communities and create more sustainable communities.

1:30- 3:00 pm Special Breakout Sessions spotlight successful strategies emerging in the Bay Area that tackle the challenges and tap the opportunities – for towns, cities, and counties.

Session 1 - Connecting People to Local Jobs

Supporting middle income jobs is a major Bay Area challenge. Hear experts discuss growing industries that demand good jobs, the changes in industries and technology that require new knowledge and skills, and the strategies for equipping our work force with appropriate skills and effective training to meet new workforce demands.

Moderator: ABAG Vice President/Sonoma County Supervisor David Rabbitt; with **Steve Levy**, Director and Senior Economist, Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy; **Luther Jackson**, Program Manager, NOVA Workforce Development; **Rigoberto Calocarivas**, Founder and Executive Director, Multicultural Institute; **Kellie Noe**, Project Manager, Sonoma County Department of Health Services

Session 2 – Exploring New Local Affordable Housing Strategies

Bay Area economic growth is strong but uneven and is increasing economic disparities, which could ultimately undermine the economic prosperity and quality of life of the region with many global and national factors at play in shaping our regional economic trends. Access to affordable housing is one area identified as necessary to strengthen and diversify our economy, and expand opportunities for middle-income jobs to reduce economic inequality. The dramatic reduction of affordable housing funding however, has emerged as a major challenge in our efforts to house our workforce. The size of the workforce and wages are both declining while the senior population explodes further straining public coffers, and our sustainable development strategy is increasing the cost of land. This panel explores different angles that may suggest some overlooked successful strategies and discuss some “silver linings in the outlook for affordable housing.”

Moderator, Santa Rosa Councilmember Julie Combs; with **Claudia Cappio**, Director, State Department of Housing and Community Development; **Meea Kang**, President, Domus Development; and **Carlos Romero**, Urban Ecology