



*"Small Town Atmosphere  
Outstanding Quality of Life"*

September 17, 2015

Julie Pierce, Chair  
Association of Bay Area Governments  
101 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
Oakland, CA 94607

RE: MTC proposal to transfer Regional Land Use Planning Staff and Associated Budget from ABAG to MTC

Chair Pierce and Members of the Executive Board:

Danville has been a member of ABAG since shortly after Town incorporation in 1982. From time to time, Danville has taken advantage of various programs and projects offered through ABAG to member agencies. However, like many other Bay Area communities, Danville's primary purpose and motivation for ongoing membership relates to ABAG's role as the COG for the San Francisco Bay Area, with statutory responsibility for administration of the cyclical RHNA process, the SCS and other regional planning and land use related matters.

Consistent with the principles upon which it was created, ABAG is directly accountable to the cities and counties that it represents, and operates in a manner that respects the importance of incorporating and retaining local agency input in policies and actions related to housing and land use planning. This is consistent with our belief in the need for local control over planning and land use matters that affect Danville.

Recently we became aware of an MTC proposal to transfer regional land use planning staff and associated funding from ABAG to MTC, and presumably shift all current land use planning responsibilities to MTC. Consideration of this action appears to be occurring quickly, without direct feedback from cities and counties, and quite possibly without thought to all of its ramifications. Where would such a shift leave ABAG in its role as the Bay Area COG, administration of the cyclical RHNA process and the SCS; and, where does it leave us?

Talk of a potential ABAG/MTC merger isn't new. However, as alluded to in the Executive Director's white paper prepared for your September 17, 2015 Executive Board Meeting, the two agencies operate in fundamentally different ways in relation to the Bay Area cities and counties that they serve.

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Consideration of such a fundamental restructuring represents a major paradigm shift in regional land use planning; and it's not something that either ABAG or MTC should be acting upon absent a comprehensive effort to outreach, communicate and engage with the city and county stakeholders that will be affected by it. Such a proposal should not be fast tracked. We would urge both ABAG and MTC to take the time necessary to properly engage stakeholders in a thoughtful discussion about how and whether this proposal should move forward, while employing the communication and transparency that we've come to expect at a local agency level.

Sincerely,

The Town of Danville



Mike Doyle  
Mayor

cc Town Council  
Contra Costa Mayors