



CITY OF
HAYWARD
HEART OF THE BAY

September 21, 2015

Supervisor Dave Cortese
Chair MTC
70 West Hedding Street, 10th Floor
San Jose, CA 95110

RE: Merger of ABAG and MTC under Discussion

Supervisor Cortese:

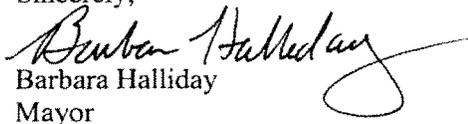
I am aware of the various discussions going on about the possible merger of ABAG and MTC. This is an action consistent with efficient and consolidated government; and, on the surface, could lead to improved regional planning. I am aware that over the past few years, the two agencies have undertaken joint or cooperative planning efforts, Plan Bay Area being one of those. However, I am concerned about the current process, or, more appropriately, lack of process being applied to this current merger discussion.

I am extremely concerned about the announcement from MTC that it intends to withhold six months of contracted and agreed upon funding from ABAG in what appears to be an attempt to force the consolidation of planning staff. I strongly encourage all parties to take a more positive, thoughtful, transparent, and inclusive approach to the potential merger as opposed to what is currently happening. Forcing this merger, which would only be a partial consolidation, leaves ABAG financially strapped and likely unable to continue on in any meaningful way over the long run.

I encourage you to consider a much more constructive approach that builds on an independent, third-party analysis of the best way to merge the two agencies so as to build on the strengths of each. The process should be transparent to member agencies and allow for an inclusionary process that considers the best interests of all parties. The draft plan for consolidation should be shared with the public prior to action and provide a process that will allow the public to understand the plan. Such a plan should describe how the mutual and separate planning responsibilities of the different agencies will be achieved. As this process is implemented, MTC should honor its funding commitment to ABAG and allow ABAG to remain strong and healthy through the merger analysis process.

As a member of ABAG and a partner with MTC, the City of Hayward looks forward to participating in the merger analysis and assisting in any way we can to assure that our community and our region has the strongest possible regional planning agency working in our favor.

Sincerely,


Barbara Halliday
Mayor

cc: Ms. Julie Pierce, President, ABAG
Steve Heminger, Executive Director, MTC
Ezra Rapport, Executive Director, ABAG
Mayors of Alameda County Cities
Alameda County Board of Supervisors
Fran David, Hayward City Manager

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