

**To: ABAG governing board and staff, local jurisdictions  
and stakeholders**

**Fr: Julie Pierce, President, ABAG Executive Board**

**Re: Update on ABAG/MTC Merger process**

We are now entering a critical phase of the ABAG/MTC Merger discussions. Today, the packet for the April 22nd Joint MTC Planning/ABAG Administrative Committee meeting was posted on the ABAG and MTC websites. It contains Management Partners (MP) evaluation of the merger options adopted at the March meeting of the Joint MTC Planning/ABAG Administrative Committee along with Management Partners recommendations.

We are writing now to let you know the schedule going forward, when decisions will be made and when you can comment on Management Partners analysis and recommendations.

Opportunities to comment are listed below.

## Schedule of Upcoming Opportunities to Comment on Merger Options

**April 21st** [11:10-12PM] *ABAG General Assembly Panel: Future of Regional Planning/Merger.* Management Partners (MP) will summarize their role as consultant to ABAG and MTC in these current merger discussions, take questions about the process, and make note of any comments from the audience.

**April 22nd** [9-12PM] *Joint MTC Planning/ABAG Administrative Committee* will discuss MP's evaluation of options and recommendations, take public testimony and likely defer a final decision on the preferred option until MTC and ABAG's respective governing boards can discuss this in May. [View agenda and packet.](#)

**May 19th** [7-10PM] *ABAG Executive Board* will discuss and vote on option(s); after [4-6PM] *Special GA* to discuss options and inform ABAG Executive Board.

**May 25th** [9:30AM-12] *MTC* will discuss Management Partners analysis of merger options, take public testimony and vote on MP's recommendation.

**May 27th** [9AM-12PM] *MTC Planning/ABAG Administrative Committee* meeting will discuss and vote on options, and give direction to Management Partners.

**Late May through Late June** Management Partners will develop a more detailed *Merger Implementation Plan* based on the direction it gets from the May 27th *Joint MTC Planning/ABAG Administrative Committee*.

## Fundamental Principles for the Merger of MTC and ABAG

It would be helpful, at this point, if ABAG's Executive Board, MTC's Commissioners and the staff of both agencies could begin to summarize what they feel it will take to ensure a successful merger of these two agencies, one that supports the best of what each agency currently does.

To get the conversation started, here are some of the initial ideas we've heard from ABAG's Board and staff that they feel are necessary to achieve a full, high functioning merger, one that preserves both agencies core work, values, and relationships with the region's 101 cities and nine counties.

### Early Initial Principles

*For many years, the infrastructure of the Council of Governments (COG) has provided local jurisdictions with the staff support, resources, and partnerships necessary for them to feel that they have significant input in developing and implementing regional housing and land use plans, such as Plan Bay Area.*

*The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MPO) has played a similar role with regard to transportation planning and funding. Working primarily through the Congestion Management Agencies (CMAs), MTC has more recently expanded its programs and audience as a result of SB375.*

*For local buy in of regional planning, transportation and housing efforts to continue:*

- \* Cities and counties must be seen as essential partners in any new regional planning structure.*
- \* Regional planning should include a meaningful and transparent public engagement process.*
- \* Regional land use planning should continue to be vertically integrated with local jurisdictions and their land use planning and housing programs.*
- \* Regional land use planning should be horizontally integrated by incorporating all other relevant planning fields, such as water, agriculture and open space, resilience, energy efficiency, climate change adaptation and mitigation, air quality, sea level rise, housing policy, and economic development.*

*In addition, all parties involved, from MTC's and ABAG's governing boards and staff to stakeholders and local jurisdictions will be looking for assurances that a merger will be carried out in an orderly and thoughtful manner, one that respects the land use, housing and transportation work that staff is currently doing with local partners across the region.*

*Finally, participants will be looking for a merger plan that listens to and respects the input of both the MTC and ABAG governing boards and staff during and after the merger process.*

Thank you for your continued interest and participation in ABAG's work.

*Julia Pierce*

**ABAG President**

cc: Dave Cortese, MTC Chair