



October 20, 2015

Honorable Dave Cortese, Chair
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
101 8th Street
Oakland, CA 94607

922 Machin Avenue
Novato, CA 94945
415/899-8900
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Re: Opposition to MTC Proposal to Transfer ABAG Regional Land Use Planning Staff and Associated Funding to MTC

Mayor
Jeanne MacLeamy
Mayor Pro Tem
Pat Eklund
Councilmembers
Denise Athas
Madeline Kellner
Eric Lucan

City Manager
Michael S. Frank

Dear MTC Chair Cortese and fellow Commissioners:

The City of Novato strongly urges MTC to fully fund the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) for the entire fiscal year without any conditions and abandon efforts to transfer the ABAG land use planning staff to MTC. MTC's proposal has not been a collaborative effort between both agencies and numerous stakeholders including cities have not been afforded the opportunity to evaluate the proposal or provide alternative proposals for consideration.

ABAG's governance as a Council of Governments in the Bay Area since 1961 has served the 101 cities, towns and 9 counties well. It meets the regional planning and research needs related to land use, environmental and water resources protection, disaster resilience, energy efficiencies and hazardous waste mitigation and provides risk management financial series and staff training to numerous local governments and employees. It is, and always has been a Council of Governments, where each city and county has a voice and a vote.

The City of Novato urges MTC to restore ABAG's budget for the FY 2015-16 and adhere to the 2012 funding agreement signed by both agencies which expires in 2021. We simultaneously recommend that MTC abandon your unilateral attempt to transfer the land use planning staff and functions from ABAG to MTC.

We urge that if both the MTC and ABAG Executive Boards agree to pursue formation of one Regional agency that is the Council of Governments and the Metropolitan Planning Organization, that an independent third party consultant be retained to evaluate the existing conditions and recommend alternatives that can be discussed with the 101 cities and 9 counties of the SF Bay Area.

Fifty five years ago, the cities formed through a Joint Powers Agreement, a Council of Governments (ABAG) to ensure local control. The concept of one city, one vote; one county, one vote provides for fair representation amongst the local governments in the SF Bay Area. We are not, especially now, interested in any unilateral dismantling of ABAG by the MTC. There is far too much to accomplish within the Region that will demand the full attention of both the ABAG and MTC staff and governing bodies.

Sincerely,



Jeanne MacLeamy, Mayor
City of Novato

cc: Honorable Julie Pierce, Chair
Association of Bay Area Governments

Marc Levine, Assemblymember

Mike McGuire, State Senator

Dennis Michael, President
League of California Cities

Marin County Board of Supervisors