



Service Matters

Fall General Assembly Focuses on Regional Issues

“**U**nder Construction—Building A New Model of Comprehensive Regional Planning and Governance” was the general theme of ABAG’s Fall General Assembly on October 24th in San Francisco. The underlying refrain voiced by more than 130 speakers and attendees was the fact that areas grow and prosper when a comprehensive plan that is cooperative, collaborative, and regional is the model and guideline. ABAG President, Gwen Regalia, Mayor of Walnut Creek, set the tone for this critical discussion in her opening remarks: “This important forum is an opportunity for local governments to find new ways to address comprehensively the planning challenges and regional structure needed in our unique Bay Area.”

Christopher Gates, President of the National Civic League, began the dialogue with a historical overview of planning and governance functions and how they have evolved in stages: from early state dominance to Federal rights, to local rights in the 80s and early 90s, and now to functional regionalism. “Local governments are banning together out of necessity to find ways to work together, realizing that they can serve constituents better by working in a cooperative and collaborative way across regional lines. The underlying premise is cooperating across jurisdictional lines without giving up local autonomy and authority. Functional regionalism allows a single shared venue where you can talk about land use, economic development, and transportation.”

Assembly Member Pat Wiggins discussed the role and guidelines provided by Smart Growth in the development of a comprehensive regional plan. In particular, she referenced AB 857 and the land use priorities of promoting infill development and social equity, protecting agricultural and environmental land, and developing compactly outside infill areas that will be required in existing state planning and funding budgets. Tal Finney, Interim Director of the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR), echoed the importance of a regional approach to planning and its relationship to state planning priorities and how they are implemented. He also shared the OPR’s commitment to providing planning resources and grants to regions.

Luncheon keynote speaker, William R. Dodge, Principal, Regional Excellence Consulting, regarded as a lead thinker and facilitator of regional visioning and

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Photos (left to right): Top— ABAG President Gwen Regalia, Mayor of Walnut Creek; Alameda County Supervisor Scott Haggerty, ABAG Vice President. Middle— Christopher Gates, President, National Civic League; William R. Dodge, Principal, Regional Excellence Consulting. Bottom—Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates; Fort Worth Council Member Wendy Davis, NCTCOG; and Citrus Heights Mayor Bill Hughes, SACOG Board Chair.

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Photos (left to right): **Top Row**—Fort Worth Council Member Wendy Davis of NCTCOG; Tal Finney, Interim Director, Governor's Office of Planning and Research; ABAG Deputy Director Henry Gardner at Pardee Homes Exhibit; Mill Valley Council Member Clifford Waldeck, Nicholas Dewar of CDR Associates, ABAG Executive Director Eugene Leong, ABAG President Gwen Regalia, Mayor of Walnut Creek. **Bottom Row**—Assembly Member Pat Wiggins; Renee Kemp, KTVU Channel 2 Reporter; Contra Costa County Supervisor Millie Greenberg and Oakland Council Member Jane Brunner; Attendee; and San Jose Council Member David Cortese.

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collaboration, added to the discussion of regional communities and regional decisionmaking. "The Bay Area is not alone in struggling with these regional planning issues. Regions throughout the country are wrestling with how to best accommodate growth, shape land use and transportation decisions, and to do so collaboratively with their regional citizens," he said.

Regional Planning Models

During a panel moderated by Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates, Fort Worth Council Member Wendy Davis, Executive Board Member of the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), described how NCTCOG provides regional

services as the MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization). She referenced that when it comes to transportation planning and development, "we grade projects and allocation of transportation dollars on where it fits in sustainable development for our region." Davis added that although they have a "separate MPO policy board, the staff of the COG ensures close integration of transportation plans with the COG's work in land use, environment, health and social service programs." The NCTCOG was the first COG in Texas, created by member governments in 1966, representing 16 counties and 162 cities including the highly urbanized areas of Dallas/Fort Worth.

The importance of integrating transportation and land use planning was also underscored by Citrus Heights' Mayor Bill Hughes who is Chair of the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG). "We've begun a new governance model to ensure very broad representation throughout the region." He added that areas that are doing the best growth planning are going to be in the best position to get transportation dollars. SACOG handles transportation planning and the regional planning

process. It has created a structure that allows every city and county to have a voting seat on the Executive Board, representing six counties with a 31-member Board of Directors.

A panel of respondents that included Contra Costa County Supervisor Millie Greenberg, Oakland Council Member Jane Brunner, San Jose Council Member David Cortese, and moderated by KTVU (Channel 2) Reporter Renee Kemp, asked many questions about other regional planning models, the process and their challenges. The phrase, "collaborate, cooperate, change" was often repeated in this dialogue and in the afternoon discussion of participant survey results facilitated by San Jose Council Member Cortese.

The survey of attendees conducted during the conference reflected agreement that there was a need for an integrated Bay Area regional plan and the need to construct a new model. There was agreement that the region needs a comprehensive plan or strategy that integrates land use and transportation and addresses housing, economic development, environment, and social equity issues. *For complete results of the survey, visit ABAG website at www.abag.ca.gov.*

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Parris Glendening



Parris Glendening, former Governor of Maryland and President of the National

Smart Growth Leadership Institute, spoke at the San Francisco Commonwealth Club on September 30th about "Achieving Smart Growth: the Leadership Challenge." Glendening stated: "The phrase "Smart growth" in Maryland became shorthand for growth that is better planned, more environmentally sensitive, and more sustainable. Virtually every project and governmental decision was viewed through a Smart Growth lens. Our efforts centered on transforming government policies that supported, even encouraged, sprawl development, to instilling a genuine sense of urgency about the need to protect and preserve our natural resources and recapture the potential of established neighborhoods." *This event was co-sponsored by Commonwealth Club, ABAG, the Greenbelt Alliance, and the East Bay Community Foundation, with funding from The Evelyn & Walter Haas, Jr. Fund, Alameda County Waste Management Authority, and Lockheed Martin Corporation.*

Make Your Media Interview Count

The Association of Bay Area Governments offers media skills training seminars to member cities and counties. The training features two half-day workshops with specialized training in media survival skills and on-camera interview experience and practice. The training benefits public managers who have extensive dealings with the public and media, as well as others that may have little contact with media. The ABAG Communications Training Team represents more than twenty-five years of professional media and training delivery experience in the public, private, and non profit sectors, with expertise in local government service delivery.

To schedule this special ABAG training, contact Patricia Jones, ABAG Assistant Executive Director, 510/464-7933, or PatJ@abag.ca.gov, or Kathleen Cha, Senior Communications Officer, 510/464-7922, KathleenC@abag.ca.gov.

"Smart Growth in the San Francisco Bay Area: Effective Local Approaches"

How to meet the dual challenge of promoting economic prosperity, while developing equitable and sustainable patterns of growth is a local and regional issue. Many in planning and development communities have looked for answers in a set of principles gathered under the phrase, Smart Growth. More than 120 local government and public agency representatives participated in two workshops in August and late September to explore Smart Growth best practices and review effective local approaches and resources in the Bay Area.

The workshops, sponsored by ABAG, Urban Land Institute, Bay Area Air Quality Management District and Metropolitan Transportation Commission allowed workshop participants to tap into smart growth resources and tools available in the Bay Area. The August 22nd workshop, "Community Involvement Techniques," examined the keys to promoting smart growth. Methods for gaining community support were demonstrated, featuring tools like charrettes, preference surveys, visioning exercises, and design guidelines. The second workshop, "Financing and Planning Strategies," held September 26, 2003, described creative approaches for financing infrastructure, a critical part of smart

growth principles. City projects and management strategies for compact, transit oriented, mixed use, and/or downtown revitalization were also reviewed. Projects from the Cities of Mountain View, Fairfield, and Hercules were examined during the session.

Each attendee received copy of a new study, *Smart Growth in the San Francisco Bay Area: Effective Local Approaches*, commissioned by the San Francisco District Council of the Urban Land Institute (ULI). This report, issued in June 2003, is an invaluable resource for local community leaders. Gary Binger, Director of ULI's California Smart Growth Initiative, during the workshops described the study's findings on smart growth strategies that have potential for implementation and, if enacted, would have a significant impact on future growth patterns in the Bay Area. The strategies detailed include infill development, transit oriented development, inclusionary housing, mixed use development, adaptive reuse, jobs-housing balance, and compact development. The study also illustrates a number of Bay Area local best practices. *For a free downloadable copy of this timely report, go to <http://sfbayarea.uli.org>.*

ABAG Provides New Information for Residents of Earthquake Country

As we marked the 14th anniversary of the Loma Prieta Earthquake on October 17th, we were reminded that Bay Area housing is vulnerable. To combat this vulnerability, ABAG has revamped its *Earthquake Maps and Information* website, located at <http://quake.abag.ca.gov/fixit>, creating an invaluable tool for Bay Area residents and local governments. The ABAG website provides residents access to the same types of data that ABAG uses to make predictions of housing losses in earthquakes. It showcases new hands-on sections in a quiz-based information format that help residents and apartment owners "self assess" how their residence will "stand up" to an earthquake. To view the website's online earthquake simulations and experience how an earthquake impacts homes, go to <http://quake.abag.ca.gov/fixit> or contact Jeanne Perkins, ABAG Earthquake Program, at 510/464-7934.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

November 2003

November 17 9:30 a.m. November 20 3:30 p.m.
ABAG-CALFED Task Force Meeting
MetroCenter, Auditorium
Legislation & Governmental
Organization Committee Meeting
MetroCenter, ABAG Room106B

November 17 1:00 – 3:30 p.m.
California Water Plan Update
Co-hosted by ABAG and California Water Plan
Update Extended Review Forum
State Building, 1515 Clay Street
Conference Room 10, Oakland

November 20 5:00 p.m.
Finance and Personnel Committee
Meeting
MetroCenter, ABAG Room 106B

November 20 7:30 p.m.
Executive Board Meeting,
MetroCenter, Auditorium

November 21 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
ABAG-MTC Task Force Meeting
TBD

December 2003

December 17th 12 noon to 2:00 p.m. December 19 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
ABAG POWER Executive Committee
Meeting
Conference Room B
ABAG-MTC Task Force Meeting
MetroCenter, Room 171

Notable Numbers

Quake Facts on Buildings and Earthquakes

1.9 million

People live in multi-family buildings within the ten county greater Bay Area (includes Santa Cruz County), representing 25% of Bay Area residents.

160,000

Housing units will become uninhabitable in a major earthquake, according to a report by the Association of Bay Area Governments.

15,000

Apartments have parking or commercial spaces located on the first floor. When compared to other residences, these units are most susceptible to collapse in an earthquake.

\$3000 - \$9000

The estimated cost of retrofitting most apartments with parking or commercial spaces located on the first floor.

200,000

Residences have cripple walls and, if not retrofitted or braced, are vulnerable to damage and collapse in earthquakes. Homes with cripple wall were typically built before 1940 and are characterized by short wood stud walls and an enclosed crawl space under the first floor.

\$2000 - \$5000

The estimated cost of retrofitting a home with cripple walls.

Source: ABAG, Structural Engineers Association of Northern California, American Society of Home Inspectors.

November Proclaimed "BE SEWER SMART—PREVENT SEWER BACKUPS" Month

Web-based Public Education Campaign Launched by ABAG's Pooled Liability Assurance Network (PLAN) Corporation

Campaign promotes homeowner awareness of costly sewer backup risks, provides sewer backup prevention information, and makes available free backup prevention devices (BPDs) to ABAG PLAN member communities.

*For information on the campaign and
sewer backup prevention resources,
visit the website*

www.sewersmart.org



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