



Service Matters

A Perspective on Land Use-Transportation and Climate Change What if?

The production and accumulation of greenhouse gasses, including carbon dioxide, are changing the Earth's climate. In the Bay Area, 50 percent of our carbon emissions come from the transportation sector with the majority of these emissions from cars. Most of us live in communities where driving is the only viable transportation option. What if things were different? What if we could re-envision our communities so that they are responsive to and resilient against the major changes expected from a growing and aging population, continued high energy prices, and most significantly global warming? Communities with viable transit, that are walkable and that have plentiful jobs, or easy access to them, are seemingly more resilient. Housing values in these areas have declined relatively less than their suburban counter-parts, or have even remained steady. When gas prices doubled, many residents simply opted to take transit, dragged their bikes out of their garage or bought a new pair of walking shoes. People of all ages walked or took transit to run their errands and visit friends. Community resilience simply comes from the development pattern, the relative location of housing and jobs, access to transit, and the walkability of the community.

These development patterns and access to transportation alternatives also reduce a community's contribution to transportation-related carbon emissions. In communities with some density, transit and jobs, average household greenhouse-gas emissions from transportation activities can be as low as 17 pounds on an average weekday. In outer,

more remote parts of the Bay Area, where travel options are limited, emissions can be as high as 53 pounds per day.

While powerful, land use changes alone will not be a sufficient strategy to achieve dramatic reductions in transportation-related emissions. Significant emissions reductions from the transportation sector will require new transportation infrastructure, like rail extensions, more buses and even freeway improvements. Reducing emissions will also require technological improvements to our cars so that they burn cleaner and use less gasoline per mile. We will also need to implement pricing measures - like parking fees, toll lane charges and bridge tolls - so that more people become inspired through their wallets to opt

for transit. In addition, a change in personal behavior, where more people simply choose to walk or take transit over driving, will be needed.

If we seriously intend to reduce this region's and our state-wide transportation carbon emissions, a combination of land use and

transportation strategies will be necessary. There is no one solution. There will be no easy answers. Land use, infrastructure, technology, pricing, and behavioral changes are highly dependent on one another for any one to succeed. For transit to succeed, sufficient densities need to be in place. If driving becomes more expensive, then we need to have affordable options available. If we want people to choose walking or transit, we have to build our communities as complete communities at a pedestrian scale that offer services to meet the day-to-day needs of residents and have real transit options.



Photo: PBIC Library, Dan Bruden

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Updating Land Use Projections 2009

This fall ABAG will update the land use Projections series for 2009. This update will be a prime opportunity for local elected leaders to focus on the role of land use, without losing sight of the other inter-dependent strategies needed to reduce transportation emissions. We will use this opportunity to have a conversation with local governments about the challenges we face in planning and developing Bay Area communities in the coming decades. As part of the conversation two alternative development scenarios will be presented. The first alternative, **Scattered**, will take the path of least resistance - a mostly "business as usual" development pattern. The second, **Focused**, will take a more proactive, progressive approach toward planning and developing a sustainable

region. For each scenario, the future will be described as forecasted, answering such questions as: How much driving will we do? What will our region-wide carbon emissions be? What will air quality be like? How many people will be able to get to work or services on foot or by public transit? Under each scenario, the question will be: what will it take, or will it even be possible to reduce the Bay Area's transportation-related emissions? We believe the answers to these questions will be both stimulating and instructive. Even more so, we hope that all will find them invaluable as local governments prepare to plan for the level of resilience we desire for our communities in these ever-changing times.

*Excerpts of a commentary from
ABAG Planning and Research/Christy Riviere.*

City of Millbrae Shows How Climate Protection Gets Smart

Around the Bay Area and beyond, people are vigilantly trying to reduce their carbon footprint and to be part of the solution to global warming. One of the programs that can help fight global warming is the ClimateSmart program developed by Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E).

ClimateSmart is a first-of-its-kind, voluntary program that allows PG&E

customers to balance out the greenhouse gas emissions associated with their energy use by adding a small amount (as little as \$5) to their utility bill based on their energy consumption. PG&E invests 100 percent of

these contributions into new environmental projects that absorb or reduce greenhouse gases.

The **City of Millbrae** has stepped forward and signed up all of its eligible electric and natural gas metered accounts, including the water pollution control plant, City Hall, the library, the recreation center, and the corporation yard. That's enough to offset more than 2.8 million pounds of CO2 every year or more than 7,878 pounds every day. The

ClimateSmart program is using City of Millbrae's contribution along with contributions from other participants to help protect the 23,780-acre Garcia River Forest in Mendocino County and 202 acres in the Lompico Headwaters Forest in the Santa Cruz Mountains, with more projects in the works. *For more information on the ClimateSmart program, visit www.pge.com/climatebiz3 or call 1-877-353-8676. Enrollees receive a membership kit with a certificate showing support of California green initiatives. ClimateSmart dollars are eligible for a tax deduction as charitable contributions.*

ABAG 2008 Fall General Assembly All about Water, Land Use and the Delta



Join elected officials, regional agencies, and business and community leaders to discuss
"Regional Water-Land Use Planning: The Delta Connection"
Friday, October 24th, 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Oakland Marriott City Center
Topics explored will include water-land conservation, efficiency, sustainability, and the resilience of our Delta and water system infrastructure. Invited speakers include Senate President pro Tempore-elect Darrell Steinberg.
Program agenda mailed and posted online mid-September. Online registration available then with an October 20th final registration deadline.
For more information, call 510/464-7922.



Taking Green Buildings to the Residential Level

Build It Green's GreenPoint Rated Endorsed

At the July 2008 meeting, ABAG's Executive Board encouraged Bay Area cities and counties to adopt comprehensive green building programs that include GreenPoint Rated (GPR) as a verification system for residential projects. GPR is a third-party rating system that allows builders and contractors who construct green homes to brand their products with a recognizable, trustworthy seal of approval developed by Bay Area-based Build It Green, a professional non-profit membership organization founded to promote energy and resource-efficient buildings in California. GPR was endorsed in January 2008 by the Homebuilders Association of Northern California (HBANC), the first of its kind in the nation and opens the door for widespread adoption of regionally-consistent green building programs. The Board's vote caps a similar action taken in June by ABAG's Regional Planning Committee and directs ABAG staff to identify opportunities to incorporate green building criteria in relevant program activities, including FOCUS, and to cooperate with Build It Green, StopWaste.Org and other partners in providing information about the advantages of comprehensive green building programs to ABAG members.

Green building practices emphasize sustainable site selection and design, energy and water-efficient construction, and use of natural and non-toxic materials which reduce greenhouse gas emissions. They complement efforts to promote "smart growth," reduce the amount of waste generated during construction and throughout the life of a building, and provide better indoor air quality to building occupants. Dozens of Bay Area jurisdictions have introduced voluntary educational or incentive-based programs to promote green building in the private-sector.



Affordable Green Homes

New GreenPoint Rated homes for low and moderate income families have been unveiled by a partnership led by the **City of Alameda** with Alameda Development Corporation and Habitat for Humanity East Bay. The eight-unit complex has been built using environmentally sustainable methods and will be certified through the GreenPoint Rated program. Green features include the use of fly ash in the concrete, engineered lumber, low VOC paints, and formaldehyde free insulation.

The development also features solar powered systems provided by PG&E as part of their "Solar Habitat" program that provides solar panels to all new Habitat homes in Central and Northern California. The homes are being sold at various affordability levels, including very-low, low-and moderate-income to first-time homebuyers. For more information or to learn more about Alameda housing programs, visit <http://www.ci.alameda.ca.us> or call 510/747-7400.

Eighteen jurisdictions have adopted mandatory green building programs, and more than twenty-five are actively developing comprehensive mandatory programs. *For green building information and resources, including sample policies and ordinances, visit Build It Green's website at <http://www.builditgreen.org>.*

ABAG PLAN's 2008 Sewer Smart Summit

Disaster Mitigation and Recovery of Sewer and Water Systems

Public works directors, city engineers, sanitary districts operators, water district operators, city and county elected representatives, and others will join together on **Thursday, October 9th, ABAG/Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter Auditorium, Oakland** to explore infrastructure hazard mitigation and recovery from earthquakes and disasters. Model sewer district plans for disaster recovery and 2008's best practices and strategies for preventing backups and backflows will be featured. The conference sponsored by ABAG PLAN (Pooled Liability Assurance Network) will focus on the planning needed for mitigating damage to sewer systems, for assessing sewer and water system vulnerability, and for maximizing recovery from damage and disruption. Attendees will learn how natural disasters -

earthquakes, global warming and rising water levels - impact sewer lines and treatment facilities, and what jurisdictions need to do now to qualify for FEMA and local financial support in the face of a potential natural disaster. Case studies from earthquake and flood disasters will illustrate lessons learned and speakers and panels will also highlight how to easily develop a business continuity disaster plan and define communications plans needed.

The conference will start at noon with lunch. Presentations and panels will be held throughout the afternoon, and culminate in a reception and exhibit at 5 p.m. The conference is free, but pre-registration is required at <http://www.sewersmart.org/register.html>.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

September 2008

September 18

Legislation & Governmental Organization Committee 3:30 pm
MetroCenter, ABAG Conference Rm. B

Finance & Personnel Committee 5:00 pm
MetroCenter, ABAG Conference Rm. B

ABAG Executive Board 7:00 pm
MetroCenter, Auditorium

September 19

ABAG / BAAQMD / MTC Joint Policy Committee 10:00 am
MetroCenter, Auditorium

September 26

Regional Airport Planning Committee (RAPC) 9:00 am
MetroCenter, Auditorium

FOCUS Conference Series: 2008 TOD Marketplace 8:00 am
The Green Room, War Memorial Veterans Building
401 Van Ness Ave (at McAllister), San Francisco

October 2008

October 1

Regional Planning Committee (RPC) 1:00 pm
MetroCenter, Auditorium

October 9

Bay Trail Steering Committee 1:30 pm
MetroCenter, ABAG Conference Rm. B

October 19

Housing Methodology Committee 10:00 a.m.
BCDC, McAteer Petric Conference Room
50 California Street, Suite 2600, San Francisco

October 24

ABAG Fall General Assembly 8:30 am
Oakland Marriott City Center
1001 Broadway

Regional Airport Planning Committee (RAPC) 9:00 am
MetroCenter, Auditorium

October 30

ABAG POWER Annual Board Meeting 12:00 pm
MetroCenter, Auditorium

Notable Numbers

Green Buildings

70 percent

of electricity consumption, 39 percent of energy use, and 12 percent potable water consumption are attributed to buildings nationwide.

40 percent

of raw material's usage, 30 percent of waste output, and 39 percent of associated greenhouse gases (CO2) are attributed to buildings nationwide.

15 percent

reduction in energy use will be required for builders to meet the new voluntary statewide Green Building Standards Code, effective July 1, 2009, in California.

20 percent

reduction in water use and 50 percent landscape water conservation for buildings is called for in California by the new voluntary statewide Green Building Standards Code.

Numbers from State of California Flex Your Power

Celebrate National Estuaries Day

Oakland's Jack London Square
Broadway/Water side
Sunday, September 28, 2008
10 am to 2 pm

The ABAG San Francisco Estuary Project and the Teleosis Institute sponsor displays and handouts on water quality, water pollution prevention, water conservation, and the environmental impacts of drugs in our waters. Provides opportunity for public to drop off and dispose of old and unused medicines as part of the medicine take-back program.

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