



Service Matters

The Delta Connection: Balancing Water-Land Use Demand and Supply with the Ecosystem

More than 140 Bay Area elected and regional leaders participated in ABAG's Fall General Assembly on October 24th to discuss regional water-land use and Delta connection planning challenges. Keynote speaker State Senate pro Tempore elect Darrell Steinberg posed the critical interlinking dilemma: "How do we best manage our water, our land, and our infrastructure?" He discussed the recent passage of his bill SB 375, which focuses on the integration of land use and transportation planning in sustainable communities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and minimize our carbon footprint. Integrating problem-solving water policy into this planning is the next step and will be one of the top issues addressed during his term as Senate President pro Tem.

Policymakers and leading researchers discussed the state and regional landscape of water-land use policies and the Delta crisis. This included panel-wide analysis of the newly adopted Delta Vision plan which aims to balance the need for a reliable water supply for California with protection of the Delta ecosystem challenged by rising sea levels, permanent levee failures, and new invasive species. Antioch Councilmember Arne Simonsen and ABAG Representative to the Delta Protection Commission and the Delta Vision Stakeholders and Coordination Group provided a brief overview of the Delta Vision goals to establish a new governance structure and build facilities to improve existing conveyance system. Public Policy Institute of California Director of Research Ellen Hanak shared findings about different water export strategies, such as building a peripheral canal to balance economic and environmental objectives, and actively managing the

changing Delta. EBMUD Board of Directors' Vice President Doug Linney discussed the issue of levee failure and threats to water supply, in context of current critical projects to improve water export, the protection of fish, and prioritizing levee improvement. Jonas Linton, Planning and Conservation League Water Policy Adviser, reminded that solutions need to address how communities have unsustainably over-borrowed from our environment, and state agencies have over-allocated water supplies.

Luncheon speaker Sacramento Bee columnist Dan Walters put these statewide water-land use discussions in context of California's long time water wars, stalemates, and critical need for collaboration.

A panel of Bay Area elected officials discussed how their jurisdictions were tackling the complex issue of water quality and supply and sustainable growth for homes and businesses. Panelists discussed attaining water neutrality in emerging development, achieving this by a combination of strong water efficiency measures in

new developments coupled with community-wide measures to reduce overall water consumption. Recommendations for making existing homes and buildings in the area more water efficient included requiring water efficiency improvements within existing developments on resale.

Panelists identified other best practices that could be implemented regionwide. San Jose has used education campaigns, tiered water rates, installation of low flush toilets within multi-family residential units, and myriad recycling and water conservation plans. Sonoma County has crafted planning and development standards, and implemented an urban water management plan and County



ABAG President Rose Jacobs Gibson, San Mateo County Supervisor, and keynote speaker Senator Darrell Steinberg, State Senate President pro Tempore-elect

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ABAG Fall General Assembly, Focus PDA's & TODcasts

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Innovation Council focused on developing integrated solutions for continued economic vitality in a resource limited future. Besides countywide conservation plans, Solano County has implemented in past years capital facilities fees from developers to support water supply and demand infrastructure. Pleasanton has adopted Bay Friendly landscape policies, launched community-wide campaigns to voluntarily reduce consumption, and is working toward making the water element part of the General Plan.



(Top Row) Luncheon Keynote speaker Dan Walters, Sacramento Bee Columnist • Union City Mayor Mark Green, ABAG Vice President • Audience
(Center) Panelists: Vice President Doug Linney, EBMUD Board of Directors, and Antioch Councilmember Arne Simonsen, Delta Vision Stakeholders and Coordination Group • Ellen Hanak, Public Policy Institute of California Director of Research • Jonas Minton, Planning and Conservation League Water Policy Adviser
(Bottom Row) Panel Moderator Jeffrey Schaub, KPIX-TV Environment/Green Beat Reporter



Panelists discussing water-land use best practices: from left Solano County Supervisor Barbara Kondylis, Sonoma County Supervisor Mike Kerns, Moderator Napa County Supervisor Bill Dodd, Pleasanton Mayor Jennifer Hosterman, and San Jose Vice Mayor Dave Cortese.

Call to Action—Next Steps

ABAG President and San Mateo County Supervisor Rose Jacobs Gibson concluded the forum with a call to action to put in place regional water and land-use plans to meet the long-term challenges posed by the drought and Delta crisis and levee-flood risk management. In summary, she said, “ABAG will continue to work with local governments to find a nine-county perspective on water, land use, and transportation issues and provide information, tools, and resources to advance local initiatives that address these regional issues. This forum reflects that ongoing commitment.”

TODcasts Available Online

TODcasts feature “complete communities” in action. TODcasts, recently released by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and ABAG, are a series of five narrated audio tours of transit-oriented developments (TODs) and public transit corridors around the region. Each of the available audio tours focuses on what makes transit-oriented development work, and features interviews with the planners, developers, and others who shaped the character of each neighborhood or transit corridor. The TODcasts illustrate how TODs, also referred to as transit villages or simply as walkable neighborhoods, make communities—and the region—more dynamic and livable by clustering homes, services, and shops in a way that encourages walking, bicycling, and public-transportation use.

The “TODcasts” or audio tours are available free of charge through iTunes or other “podcatching” software and can be found on the MTC web site at http://www.mtc.ca.gov/planning/smart_growth/TODcast/ and will be available indefinitely.

Web Showcase of FOCUS Priority Development Areas

New ABAG web pages showcase what each Bay Area community with a Priority Development Area is doing: www.bayareavision.org/pda or www.bayareavision.org/showcase or www.abag.ca.gov (click on FOCUS). This informative website:

- Highlights local planning efforts to create complete communities in their Priority Development Areas.
- Demonstrates the variety of communities throughout the Bay Area pursuing transit-oriented development.
- Provides key facts, maps, implementation needs, and a description of the goals and vision for each Priority Development Area.

And there’s more to come: A special section showcasing Priority Conservation Areas is in progress and will be online at the end of December.

ABAG Releases Bay Area's Long-Term Disaster Recovery Planning Report

While hazard mitigation is essential to minimize the damage of disasters to communities, having a comprehensive plan for the long process of recovery after a disaster is often overlooked. Hurricane Katrina's aftermath clearly shows the consequences of not preparing for recovery. New Orleans is still struggling to rebuild its communities more than three years later. To address this critical part of disaster preparedness, ABAG released in October, "**Status Report – Long-Term Disaster Recovery Planning by Local Governments in the San Francisco Bay Area.**" This report is part of ABAG's Long-Term Disaster Recovery Initiative that has identified four areas related to long term recovery planning. In advance before any disaster, jurisdictions need to be prepared to finance recovery, expedite long-term housing recovery, support recovery of downtown businesses and the local economy, and ensure that their own facilities and services recover smoothly.

To assess the status of Bay Area cities and counties in their long-term disaster recovery planning and at the request of ABAG's Regional Planning Committee, ABAG conducted a first-of-its-kind survey to identify what long-term disaster recovery plans are and are not in place in Bay Area jurisdictions. Long-term recovery refers to the repair and rebuilding process that government departments, such as planning, finance, housing, public works/building, redevelopment, and emergency management, will need to carry out to start restoring their community after an earthquake or other catastrophic disaster.

Ninety of the 101 cities and nine counties in the region participated in the survey. This extremely high survey response rate (83%) and participation by elected officials and Bay Area jurisdictions reflect the regionwide support and commitment to more effective disaster response and recovery.

The Survey's summary report documents the areas of recovery planning in which local governments are making significant progress, have mixed levels of progress, and where they need to make improvements. This report examines the collective sum of information and analyzes the status of recovery efforts throughout the Bay Area as a whole, rather than focusing exclusively on what individual jurisdictions have done. The reasoning is that a catastrophic disaster is not localized, but affects the whole region.

Report co-author Jeanne Perkins, ABAG Earthquake and Hazards Program Consultant, emphasized this regional view when she shared the report in Hayward at the recent Third Conference on Earthquake Hazards in the Eastern San Francisco Bay Area - Science, Hazard, Engineering and Risk. "Just as few of us both live and work in the same city—Recovery must be an effort undertaken by all the region's cities and counties collectively. If just one city along the Hayward fault has a plan for providing long-term housing but its neighbors do not, the city is not much better off because it will be impacted by neighboring cities' recovery problems," Perkins stressed. *Both an executive summary and the full survey report, Status Report – Long-Term Disaster Recovery Planning by Local Governments in the San Francisco Bay Area, are available at <http://quake.abag.ca.gov/recovery>.*

Some Sample Surey Findings from 23 Topic Areas:

- 92% of the survey respondents have designated a department/agency to oversee the FEMA claims reimbursement process, primarily the finance department, which will help expedite the process and increase the likelihood of receiving FEMA funds.
- 76% have back-ups of key records and other documents—having back-ups of key records at an alternate location aids resumption of services.
- 70% have a General Plan that is up-to-date and consistent with local zoning ordinances for residential and commercial areas. When the General Plan's Safety and Land Use Element is current, a blueprint for how to rebuild exists and eliminates a protracted consensus building process post disaster, since it will have been already completed.
- 62% have alternative procedures or plans in place for making payments to employees, vendors, and social service recipients.
- 57% have established an emergency fund. In most cases, jurisdictions are relying on their General Fund reserves to function as an emergency fund. The recommendation is that jurisdictions designate a substantial fund to make purchases necessary for recovery, especially since claims submitted to FEMA may take many months to process and are paid as a reimbursement.
- 52% allow the city or county manager to make emergency purchases over \$100,000. Of these 44 jurisdictions, 19 indicated that there is, in theory, no dollar limit specified for emergency purchases. Having no limit builds far more flexibility into the recovery process.
- 36% have documented pre-existing conditions of facilities. Documenting pre-existing conditions of sewers and government-owned buildings, for example, greatly facilitates the FEMA reimbursement process because "pre-existing conditions" is the standard used to pay for claims.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

November 2008

November 20

**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

December 2008

December 3

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

December 17

**ABAG POWER Executive
Committee** 12:00 pm
MetroCenter, ABAG Conference Rm. B

*Holiday Greetings from the
Association of Bay Area Governments*

*An example of sustainable best practices
cities and counties are adopting:*



BAY-FRIENDLY
LANDSCAPING & GARDENING

**Helping Plants
and People Thrive.
Naturally.**

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*A public resource
for sustainable landscaping
and gardening.*

Notable Numbers

Bay-Delta Water Facts

25 million

people receive their water supply from the Delta. This includes parts of Alameda, Contra Costa, Napa, Santa Clara, and Solano counties.

1,100 miles

of levees span the Delta which includes parts of Contra Costa, Napa, and Solano counties.

738,000 total acreage

of the Delta is devoted to agriculture producing crops such as asparagus, pears, corn, grain and hay, sugarbeets, and tomatoes, bringing in over \$500 million annually.

57

major reclaimed islands and numerous unveeved channel islands make the Bay-Delta the West Coast's largest estuary.

500 species of wildlife

including 20 endangered species live in the Delta which serves as a vital migration path for salmon traveling to and from their home streams and to the Pacific Ocean.

5 rivers

flow into the Delta: Sacramento, San Joaquin, Mokelumne, and Cosumne—combined their tributaries carry about half of the State of California's total annual runoff.

*Source: Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force
and the California Department of Water
Resources – State Water Project*

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