

# SUMMARY MINUTES

ABAG Regional Planning Committee Meeting  
Wednesday, October 7, 2015  
Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter  
101 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Oakland, California

## 1. CALL TO ORDER

Pradeep Gupta , Vice Chair and Councilmember, City of South San Francisco, called the meeting of the Regional Planning Committee of the Association of Bay Area Governments to order at 12:35 PM

A quorum of the committee was not present.

### Members Present

### Jurisdiction

Susan L. Adams	Public Health
Desley Brooks	Councilmember, City of Oakland
Diane Burgis	East Bay Regional Park District
Paul Campos	Senior Vice President, Government Affairs, Building Industry of America
Tilly Chang	"Executive Director, SFCTA (County of San Francisco)"
Julie Combs	Councilmember, City of Santa Rosa
Diane Dillon	Supervisor, County of Napa
Pat Eklund	Mayor ProTem, City of Novato
Martin Engelmann	Deputy Executive Director of Planning, Contra Costa Transportation Agency
Pradeep Gupta	Councilmember, City of South San Francisco (Vice Chair)
Scott Haggerty	Supervisor, County of Alameda
Russell Hancock	President&CEO, Joint Venture Silicon Valley
Erin Hannigan	Supervisor, County of Solano
John Holtzclaw	Sierra Club
Nancy Ianni	League of Women Voters--Bay Area
Michael Lane	Policy Director Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California
Mark Luce	Supervisor, County of Napa
Jeremy Madsen	Executive Director Greenbelt Alliance
Eric Mar	Supervisor, City and County of San Francisco
Nate Miley	Supervisor, County of Alameda

Karen Mitchoff	Supervisor, County of Contra Costa
Julie Pierce	Councilmember, City of Clayton (ABAG President)
Harry Price	Mayor, City of Fairfield
Matt Regan	Senior Vice President of Public, Policy Bay Area Council
Katie Rice	Supervisor, County of Marin
Carlos Romero	Urban Ecology
Mark Ross	Councilmember, City of Martinez
James P. Spring	Supervisor, County of Solano
Egon Terplan	Planning Director, SPUR
Dyan Whyte	Assist. Exc. Officer, San Francisco Regional Waterboard

**Members Absent**

Dave Cortese  
Carmen Montano  
Anu Natarajan  
Laurel Prevetti  
  
David Rabbitt  
  
Pixie Hayward Schickele  
Warren Slocum  
Jill Techel  
Monica E. Wilson

**Jurisdiction**

Supervisor, County of Santa Clara (RPC Chair)  
Vice Mayor, City of Milpitas  
Director of Policy and Advocacy, MidPen Housing  
Assistant Town Manager, Town of Los Gatos (BAPDA)  
  
Supervisor, County of Sonoma (ABAG Vice President)  
  
California Teachers Association  
Supervisor, County of San Mateo  
Mayor, City of Napa  
Councilmember, City of Antioch

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public comments

Vice Chair Gupta moved the committee to Item 4

**3. APPROVAL OF REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES OF  
AUGUST 5, 2015**

**Vice Chair Gupta** recognized a motion by **Pat Eklund**, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Novato and seconded by **Karen Mitchoff**, Supervisor, County of Contra Costa to approve the committee minutes of August 5, 2015.

There was no discussion

The motion passed unanimously.

Vice Chair Gupta moved the meeting to Item 7

**4. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements

**5. SESSION OVERVIEW BY MIRIAM CHION, ABAG PLANNING AND RESEARCH  
DIRECTOR**

**Miriam Chion** highlighted agenda items in the packet and gave an overview of the meeting.

**6. PLAN BAY AREA 2040 DRAFT SCENARIO CONCEPTS WORKSHOP**

Small group sessions addressed four sets of questions to provide input on the development of three land use / transportation scenarios for Plan Bay Area 2040.

Notes from small group sessions can be found in the addendum of this document.

**The fifth set of questions was addressed by the Regional Planning Committee members:**

*After reviewing these preliminary sketches of Plan Bay Area 2040 scenarios, what do you find most promising? Most challenging? What policy strategies do you find most compelling? Most worrisome? Are there issues important to you not yet discussed?*

**Member Terplan** said this process was challenging because we were not presented with tradeoffs. In order to make better decisions we need to ask, "If we go in this direction, what are we giving up?" This forces people to make choices. What are the costs and benefits?

**Member Adams** said she likes that we are having this conversation now; how are we going to roll this out to the public? How will we ensure we have a meaningful conversation with the public? For example, where people are moving to and why is a

very important conversation to be having with the public. These scenarios have to resonate with the public. We need to look at the overarching principles: how does this look at our impact on climate change? How are we addressing other challenges, like obesity and Asthma? This is a complex web we are trying to weave. Hope that we are going to go deeper and richer on the issues when we go out to the public.

**Member Madsen** said he is glad we're having the conversation. Especially on Scenarios 2 and 3, where we talked a bit about the money required to implement this. When we move the scenarios forward, we need to look at them in a more detailed way compared to the last Plan Bay Area; we need to talk about natural resources, look at water recharge areas, wildlife corridors, etc.

**Member Romero** said the truncated exercise forces us to come up with solutions to make all three scenarios work. The issues of social equity and inclusion are important; that last few years have shown these are a big challenge.

**Member Hancock** said housing is a battle; we need to look at the intangibles that we are going to face. The intangibles, such as the economy, are going to have more impact on the region than the Plan. The Plan needs to be viewed under an economic lens before we even put plans on paper; we need to have an experienced developer look at the plan for feasibility; we need to be mindful of the economic pressures.

**Member Eklund** said it is important to bring this out to our communities to have this type of discussion there; we need to bring it to the public before the scenarios are solidified. The scenarios do not recognize the different characters of each locality; this needs to be recognized in the scenarios; seems like some places will need to change general plans to accommodate the Plan.

**Member Whyte** said moving forward, it would be good to have more concrete, real-life examples of where some of these ideas have played out to. We could use better visualizations and information about what has worked elsewhere. The public needs more visuals to get further in being able to digest this information.

**Member Luce** said talking about realities is something we need to talk about more; there are many realities that will make this work; what should we be doing in the plan to consider this? You want the local city council to say this is where we want growth. There are a whole list of realities that we need to consider, realities that affect behavior, not just transit realities.

**Member Terplan** said bring back the puzzle pieces that were part of PBA 2013; what are the implications of this one? We need to know some of the outcomes of these ideas; "If we do this, then this will happen."

**Vice Chair Gupta** said that we should keep in mind that demographics are changing in terms of age, race, etc., but also in terms of what people's changing preferences are. Young people are not driving as much. We are going to face a problem of long-time residents versus newcomers; we have talked about income gaps and need to keep that in mind. Need to keep in mind how the transportation situation will be handled; transportation needs to be completely in cohesion with whatever scenario is chosen.

**Member Engelmann** didn't hear too much about vehicles, more about land use. The passenger car will get smarter, zero emissions, system with zero fatalities; we need to

plan for this. This will create a totally different vision than what we have today; need to take this into account.

**Member Ianni** said that we should give attention to the tech sector and its economic impacts. There are extraordinary changes in our scenarios; we need to look at what we're facing in terms of the workforce.

**Member Combs** said that rents are lower than what it costs to build in her city; development will not happen naturally due to this gap. The displacement theme is very real if we build up because it makes housing more expensive; need to think about how to incentivize construction up and how to have rents that meet median incomes; this is going to be a challenge.

**Ms. Chion** said that we have provided all of the Planning Directors with all the information you received today. We are working on comparing this Plan Bay Area Update with local Plans. Plan Bay Area 2040 will be as successful as our ability to connect with local efforts.

**Vice Chair Gupta** moved the meeting to Item 3

## **7. REPORT ON MTC PROPOSAL TO TRANSFER REGIONAL LAND USE PLANNING STAFF AND ASSOCIATED FY 2015-16 PLANNING BUDGET**

**Ms. Chion** said in the packet from this meeting are the most recent memos and previous documentation is on our website. The main purpose for this Item is to have a dialog and for President Pierce to address where ABAG is at this point, and how they are proceeding. There is a proposal from MTC to transfer the ABAG planning department staff to MTC and terminate funding for the planning department by December 2015. ABAG staff prepared a response, which are the two memos in the packet. There was a substantial discussion at the last MTC Commission Meeting; details of this meeting is also in the packet. They are proceeding with a mature conversation. ABAG staff is concerned about how they will proceed with Plan Bay Area and other land use tasks. They are hoping to get to a productive resolution, there is a lot of effort between MTC and ABAG; having a third party to address the challenges will be very important and will get them to a better platform.

**Member Pierce** said they had a lively discussion at the last ABAG Executive Board Meeting followed by the MTC Meeting. There has been a lot of discussion about this, much public comment included. What she is asking to hear from Committee members is their feedback, but what she has heard so far is that there's a lot of support for looking at how they can be more efficient as they go forward in Plan Bay Area 2.0 and that they have learned some lessons from 1.0. There is concern that just transferring planning staff to MTC perhaps is not enough to make things work more efficiently and in fact harms the entire mechanism. That they would be better served to have the continued funding and proceed expeditiously upon an examination hiring a third party to help them with the examination of how they can be more efficient, and indeed how they might merge the two agencies into one comprehensive agency that maintains the best of what both agencies do currently. ABAG has many service enterprises that are supported by that planning staff. Taking those away from ABAG and away from ABAG direction would cause severe harm to them. It is something that requires us to look nationwide,

particularly in California, at other models for how the transportation and the council of governments can work together in a more integrated fashion. She was interested in hearing their feedback. They will be having a special Executive Board meeting of ABAG next Tuesday. She would welcome any and all comments for that meeting. It will be Tuesday evening at 7:30. They will propose to take action to request that MTC continue the funding while they have a fuller dialog going forward toward full integration of the two agencies and what that might look like. That needs to have someone that is a relatively neutral partner and someone experienced with both agencies to help guide them through that process. Now that we're moving into one building the time has come to look seriously at what full merger would be, but not transferring the planning staff at this point. We welcome your comments, that's the direction I have so far from our executive board.

**Member Whyte** explained that she is with the Water Quality Control Board. She wanted to highlight one of the programs that's very significant to us that we want to make sure is taken care of in whatever transition that takes place. She thinks it gets down to moving in a manner that assures the long term viability of ABAG and the San Francisco Estuary Partnership (SFEP). Many folks are not familiar with the connection or the significant role that they play as part of ABAG but there are really critical group in terms of environmental protection, outreach, and communication to Bay Area citizens. The other part that they do which is instrumental is they distribute a large amount of funds out to cities, counties, environmental groups. Right now, they've got a staff of 12 managing about \$16 million that fund water supply reliability, water quality protection, flood control projects, environmental enhancement projects. That money is critical; it needs to keep moving, it needs to be out there. It is part of what we are doing to address the drought. If there are any changes that destabilize the infrastructure behind ABAG and those contracts need to be renegotiated, you are all going to see a lot of problems starting to show up in the water supply arena.

**Member Pierce** responded that it is in one of the memos. ABAG is designated by the EPA to supervise that grant funding that goes out to the Estuary Partnership. We are the designated agency to supervise that and you're right, the planning staff is critical toward that.

**Member Madsen** said he wanted to echo that comment and making sure that there's the Estuary project, there's the Bay Trail. They saw plan Bay Area 1.0 and they are seeing it through 2.0; that they have a lot of integrated complex issues that they need to address in the holistic fashion. A degree of integration between ABAG and MTC is moving to this idea of a full merger. He thinks it is a very wise thing to be looking at. They should be careful not to squander the opportunity that might be here. The idea of effectiveness is the goal they should be aiming for and getting to a degree of great regional planning and looking at all the issue to term open space conservation, the transportation, the housing, et cetera.

**Member Adams** said she agrees with the comments that were made before, and they do a lot of work around disaster and hazard planning. They have done work around energy. It's more than just about the regional housing needs that our planners are working for us. One of the main elements of this that really bothers her is that this is the agency where we have city, town, and county people who have to actually implement these things at the local level sitting around the table. The MTC board is not made up that same way. Representation by the policy makers that are going to be implementing

whatever regional plans are coming out of these agencies needs to be a really important element of this. They were ready to have the conversation with the move to the new building. Now might be a really good time for them to sit down and talk about how they can work better together, how they can maintain their representation, how they can be more efficient.

**Member Eklund** said she was at the September 23rd MTC meeting; there were no efficiency or effectiveness issues; there were issues about substantial difference of opinion. There are some real fundamental differences between the two agencies in terms of culture. Having that third party is fine but before they even get there, they need to make sure that both parties are in agreement to having one agency.

**Member Mitchoff** said she also was at the meeting and she concur with the concerns that they all have. There is a willingness on the part of our MTC commissioners to listen to the concerns that we have shared. She would encourage the committee members to personally contact their MTC representative. She personally asks them to consider doing some RFP for an operational or management professional firm to come in and look at the various issues that both organizations deal with.

**Member Rice** said she agrees that funding needs to be restored to have a really intelligent, thoughtful conversation about planning, and examine what are some possible solutions. No matter what the outcome, counties and cities representation is very important.

**Member Terplan** said it is important to think about this in a passionate way of what is best for the region. It is very easy to get emotional about this because people's jobs and livelihoods perceived to be at stake as part of this. He is appreciative that they are raising the idea of thinking longer term about a merger and thinking about an integrated regional planning agency as an outcome to this. They define the status quo by having two agencies, two boards, a whole variety of challenges associated with that. On the flip side, does anyone acknowledge any of the benefits regionally, locally, efficiency wise of a single planning department. Why is that not being addressed as an issue? There are pros and cons to all of this, but there are certainly some pros of one department, and there are certainly some cons to the status quo.

**Member Pierce** responded they do have more reason to work together now than in the past. She is going to differ just a little bit. They have not heard any specifics about the inefficiencies. They have heard about differences of opinion, but that's not necessarily an efficiency. A full and lively discussion with our local agencies and with all of our stakeholders is a very good thing. It maybe tedious, it may take a lot of time. In the long run, if everyone contributes it's a little like what we had today. Everyone feeding different ideas into possible scenarios, which gets us to a better place for trying to decide what the ultimate scenario is. She takes great offense that a healthy discussion is a nuisance to a process. Planning is about a two-way robust discussion where everyone has some feedback into the process. If there are truly inefficiencies, she would like to know what they are specifically other than differences of opinion. Once they are in the same building with literally desk side by side to each other, it should be a whole lot easier to work together. Contact your representatives, both your ABAG reps, and your MTC reps to let them know what your opinions are, that is really important. They have to have a

good thorough discussion about this. They have to go forward in good faith to plan together.

There was public comment by Ken Bukowski.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

**Vice Chair Gupta** adjourned the Regional Planning Committee at 2:55 PM

The next meeting of the Regional Planning Committee will be on December 2, 2015.

Submitted:

Wally Charles

Date: November 20, 2015

*For information or to review audio recordings of ABAG Regional Planning Committee meetings, contact Wally Charles at (510) 464 7993 or [info@abag.ca.gov](mailto:info@abag.ca.gov).*