

1

Setting Our Sights



Caldecott Tunnel

Karl Nielsen

Chapter 1

Setting Our Sights

Crafting a plan to meet the challenges and opportunities of the coming quarter-century is a big job. MTC and ABAG tackled this assignment with enthusiasm, emphasizing both an open, inclusive attitude and a commitment to analytical rigor.

We reached out to thousands of people from around the region, through stakeholder sessions, public workshops, telephone and internet surveys, and countless other means to involve a wide swath of the public in the development of the plan. The region's 101 cities and nine counties also participated in the development of the plan, as did our fellow regional agencies, the Bay Conservation and Development Commission and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District. Community-based organizations and advocacy groups representing the diverse interests of the Bay Area played their part, as did some three dozen regional transportation partners. The plan's outreach effort was both broad-based and deep.

At the same time, wanting to hew to strict objective standards of progress, MTC and ABAG adopted 10 specific targets against which to measure the success of the plan in achieving genuine regional benefits and required statutory goals. This chapter traces the overall development of Plan Bay Area, with special attention to the public process followed, and to the setting, adjusting and assessment of key performance objectives.

Establishing a Performance Framework

What are we aiming for in Plan Bay Area, and how can we measure our success in achieving it? New mandates answer those questions to some degree. California Senate Bill 375, enacted in 2008, requires that we plan for future housing needs and complementary land uses, which in turn must be supported by a transportation investment strategy. And we must do this in a way that reduces emissions of greenhouse gases from cars and light-duty trucks. A fully integrated land use and transportation planning approach is needed to meet these requirements, and Plan Bay Area embraces and embodies such an approach.

Combining these mandated objectives with a careful assessment of the long-range needs of the Bay Area and an understanding of the desires and aspirations of its residents — communicated loudly and diversely through the many avenues provided for public participation (see sidebar on page 28) — we can begin to structure a serious plan for the region. But before proposing a land use distribution approach or recommending a transportation investment strategy, planners must formulate in concrete terms the hoped-for outcomes we seek. For Plan Bay Area, performance targets are an essential element of this regional planning process, allowing for rational discussion of quantitative metrics. Establishing targets allows for various alternative strategies to be assessed and compared using a consistent set of metrics.

Collaborative Process

MTC and ABAG engaged a broad spectrum of regional stakeholders in order to make the targets as meaningful as possible in measuring the plan's success. This collaborative process in the latter half

of 2010 involved reviewing nearly 100 possible performance targets, which were critically examined using a set of evaluation criteria. These criteria emphasized targets that could be forecasted by modeling tools and potentially influenced by policies and investments in the future plan. After six months of discussion and debate reflecting input from local stakeholders, equity, environment and business advocates, and concerned members of the public, a list of the preferred targets took shape. These targets went beyond traditional transportation concerns, such as metrics for regional mobility, and instead embraced broader regional concerns, including land use, environmental quality and economic vitality.



Noah Berger

The Plan Bay Area targets, adopted in January 2011, reflect this plan's emphasis on sustainability. Sustainability encapsulates a broad spectrum of concerns, including environmental impacts from greenfield development and vehicle emissions, equity impacts from displacement and low-income household affordability, and economic impacts from regional competitiveness. By integrating these three E's — environment, equity and economy — throughout the targets, Plan Bay Area truly aims to measure the success of creating sustainable communities. We paid special attention to the equity component of the three E's triad, as detailed later in this chapter.

Of course, adopting these voluntary targets is not the same as achieving them. Many are extremely ambitious. But two of the targets are not only ambitious, but also mandatory and vitally important. Plan Bay Area must reduce greenhouse gas emissions by specified amounts, and it must plan for housing in a quantity sufficient for the region's population. These

targets are critical to achieving state and regional goals in combating climate change — and the plan meets those major milestones.

The Plan Bay Area targets adopted by MTC and ABAG are displayed in Table 4; information on how the plan performs against the targets can be found in Chapter 5, "Performance."

Goal/Outcome		Performance Target
Required		
Climate Protection	1	Reduce per-capita CO ₂ emissions from cars and light-duty trucks by 15 percent (Statutory requirement is for year 2035, per SB 375)
Adequate Housing	2	House 100 percent of the region's projected growth (from a 2010 baseline year) by income level (very-low, low, moderate, above-moderate) without displacing current low-income residents (Statutory requirement, per SB 375)
Voluntary		
Healthy and Safe Communities	3	Reduce premature deaths from exposure to particulate emissions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce premature deaths from exposure to fine particulates (PM_{2.5}) by 10 percent • Reduce coarse particulate emissions (PM₁₀) by 30 percent • Achieve greater reductions in highly impacted areas
	4	Reduce by 50 percent the number of injuries and fatalities from all collisions (including bike and pedestrian)
	5	Increase the average daily time walking or biking per person for transportation by 70 percent (for an average of 15 minutes per person per day)
Open Space and Agricultural Preservation	6	Direct all non-agricultural development within the urban footprint (existing urban development and urban growth boundaries) (Note: Baseline year is 2010.)
Equitable Access	7	Decrease by 10 percentage points (to 56 percent, from 66 percent) the share of low-income and lower-middle income residents' household income consumed by transportation and housing
Economic Vitality	8	Increase gross regional product (GRP) by 110 percent — an average annual growth rate of approximately 2 percent (in current dollars)
Transportation System Effectiveness	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase non-auto mode share by 10 percentage points (to 26 percent of trips) • Decrease automobile vehicle miles traveled per capita by 10 percent
	10	Maintain the transportation system in a state of good repair: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase local road pavement condition index (PCI) to 75 or better • Decrease distressed lane-miles of state highways to less than 10 percent of total lane-miles • Reduce share of transit assets past their useful life to 0 percent (Note: Baseline year is 2012.)

*Unless noted, the Performance Target increases or reductions are for 2040 compared to a year 2005 baseline.

Taking Equity Into Account

In addition to assessing Plan Bay Area’s impact on the 10 adopted targets, which collectively cover a wide range of issues and policies, MTC and ABAG also made a special effort to gauge the effects of Plan Bay Area on the region’s low-income and minority populations. Indeed, a commitment to achieving equity in the long-range planning process is a key element of Plan Bay Area’s performance-based approach. MTC and ABAG staff prepared an Equity Analysis to evaluate quantitative measures of equity concerns. Aspects of this analysis serve both to satisfy MTC’s federal requirements with respect to the metropolitan planning process, as well as Plan Bay Area’s objective to advance equity in the region.

The Equity Analysis identifies “communities of concern” in the region with concentrations of socioeconomically disadvantaged or vulnerable populations. MTC developed the definition of communities of concern in concert with key regional equity stakeholders, public agency staff, and community representatives, who also prioritized the equity measures based on what stakeholders believed were the region’s most significant equity-



Noah Berger

related issues today and in the context of future growth: affordability, equitable growth, healthy communities, access to jobs, and equitable mobility for all system users. Guided by these priorities, MTC staff developed the set of five equity performance measures displayed in Table 5.

	Equity Issue	Performance Measure
1	Housing and Transportation Affordability	% of income spent on housing and transportation by low-income households
2	Potential for Displacement	% of rent-burdened households in high-growth areas
3	Healthy Communities	Average daily vehicle miles traveled per populated square mile within 1,000 feet of heavily used roadways
4	Access to Jobs	Average travel time in minutes for commute trips
5	Equitable Mobility	Average travel time in minutes for non-work-based trips

Scenarios Take Aim at Targets

Taken together, the Plan Bay Area performance targets outline a framework that allows us to better understand how different projects and policies might affect the region’s future. We can compare conditions over the lifespan of the plan by measuring changes in the performance target metrics between 2005 and 2040. Because many of the targets are aspirational in nature, ABAG and MTC understood and made clear through the scenario-development process (described below) that some targets might not be achievable through Plan Bay Area. Also, and importantly, the targets were crafted to focus on desirable regional outcomes that did not preordain a specific land use pattern, transportation mode or investment strategy to reach that goal.

With the targets clearly identified, MTC and ABAG formulated possible “visioning” scenarios — combinations of land use patterns and transportation investments — that could be evaluated together to see if (and by how much) they achieved (or fell short of) the performance targets. In simplified

Plan Bay Area performance targets outline a framework that allows us to better understand how different projects and policies might affect the region’s future.

terms, if the targets delineate the plan’s aspirations, the scenarios represent possible ways to realize them. Obviously, the goal is to identify the most promising scenario, especially with respect to the attainment of the statutory requirements for greenhouse gas emission reductions and for the provision of an adequate amount of housing.

See the full Performance Assessment Report (listed in Appendix 1) for detailed information on the scenario evaluation process.



Noah Berger

MTC and ABAG staff developed a second set of scenarios, relying on input from the public, cities and counties, and transportation agencies.

Visioning Scenarios

The transportation and land use alternative included in this Plan Bay Area resulted from three rounds of scenario analyses. (For a helpful flow-chart graphic of this process, see pages 24–25.) In early 2011, two potential land use patterns were developed by ABAG staff: “Current Regional Plans,” which reflected cities’ current general plans and visions for growth; and an “Initial Vision Scenario,” a hypothetical growth pattern put forward by ABAG staff with input from local governments and county congestion management agencies. As depicted in Table 6, each land use pattern was paired with the transportation network contained in the Transportation 2035 Plan (adopted in 2009) and tested to yield a

set of both target and equity performance results. These scenario results provided a starting point for a first round of visioning conversations with local governments and Bay Area residents about where new development should occur, and how new long-term transportation investments might serve this new growth.

Alternatives to the Visioning Scenarios

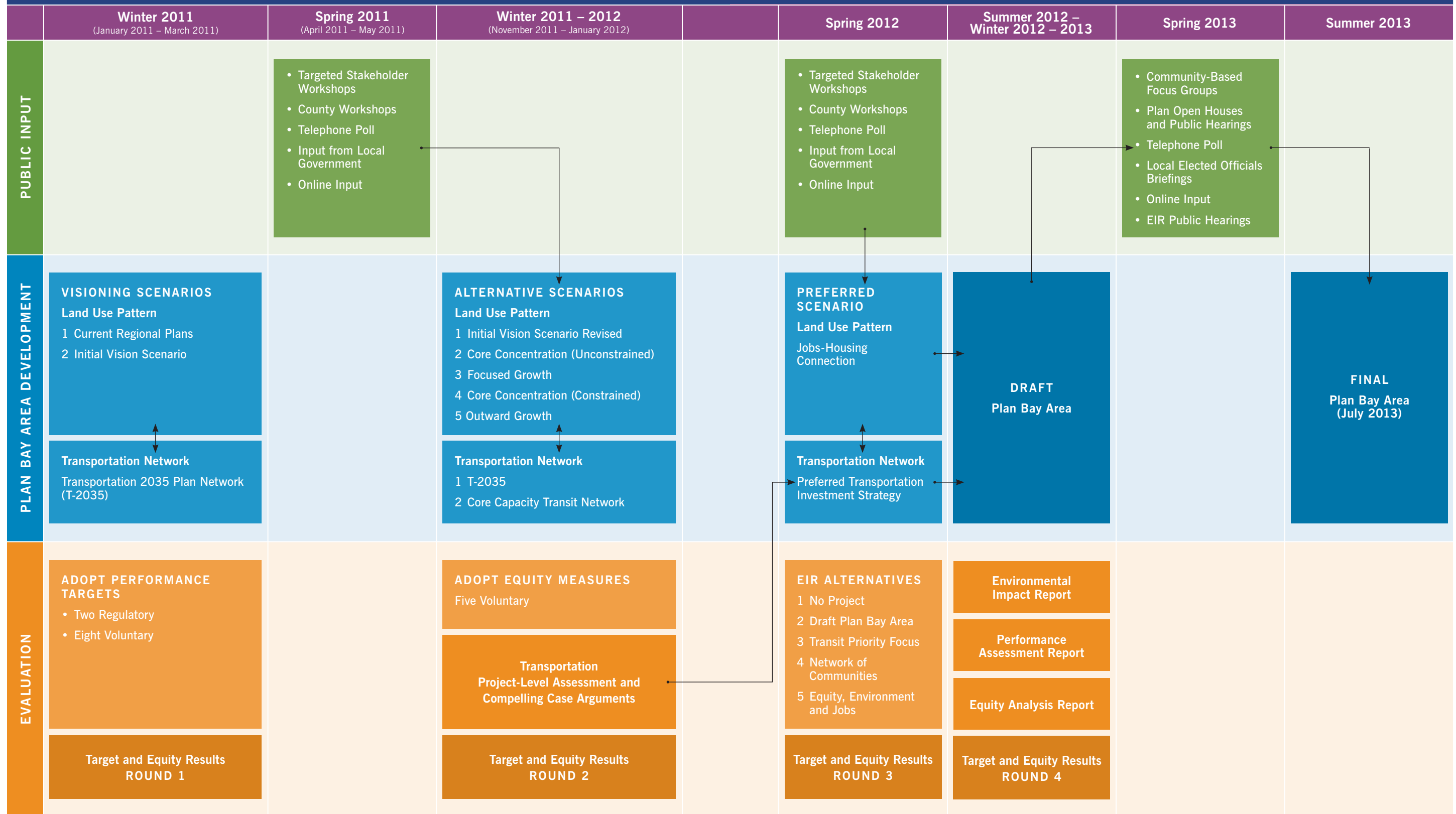
Over the winter of 2011–12, MTC and ABAG staff developed a second set of scenarios, relying on input from the public, cities and counties, and transportation agencies. These scenarios included a wider range of alternative land use patterns as the basis for expanding the regional dialogue on the type of development, planning strategies and investments that would be best for Plan Bay Area. Five land use patterns were identified, and each was matched with one of two proposed transportation networks — the Transportation 2035 Network (i.e., the 2009 long-range plan) or a Core Capacity Transit Network — based on which best supported the pattern of development. These combinations were then separately evaluated against the performance targets, and against the five social equity measures discussed elsewhere in this chapter. See Table 7 for the specific scenario pairings.

Land Use Patterns	Transportation Network
<p>Current Regional Plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally reflects cities’ current general plans for lower amounts of growth. Growth includes 634,000 new housing units and 1.1 million new jobs. 	<p>Transportation 2035 Plan Network (T-2035)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Network is the multimodal investment strategy in the Transportation 2035 Plan. Contains significant funding for operations and maintenance of the existing system; limited expansions of highway and transit networks.
<p>Initial Vision Scenario</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth pattern developed with input from local governments and county congestion management agencies. Land uses based on Priority Development Areas and Growth Opportunity Areas. Growth includes 902,000 new housing units and 1.2 million new jobs. 	

TABLE 7: Alternatives to the Visioning Scenarios

Land Use Patterns	Transportation Networks
<p>Initial Vision Scenario Revised</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concentrates housing and job growth in Priority Development Areas (PDAs). 	<p>Transportation 2035 (T-2035) Plan Network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Network is the multimodal investment strategy in the Transportation 2035 Plan. Contains significant funding for operations and maintenance of existing system; limited expansions of highway and transit networks.
<p>Core Concentration (Unconstrained)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concentrates housing and job growth in locations served by frequent transit service, and/or in core Bay Area locations within a 45-minute transit commute area of downtown San Francisco, downtown Oakland or downtown San Jose. Scenario is “unconstrained” due to the high levels of population and job growth that were assumed. 	
<p>Core Concentration (Constrained)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Similar to unconstrained version above; housing and job growth is distributed to selected PDAs in the inner Bay Area, focusing on major downtowns and areas along the region’s core transit network. Scenario is “constrained” with lower levels of population and job growth relative to Initial Vision Scenario (Revised) and Core Concentration (Unconstrained). 	<p>Core Capacity Transit Network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significantly increases transit service frequencies along core transit network. Keeps T-2035 investment levels for maintenance and bike/pedestrian projects; reduces T-2035 roadway expansion investments. Requires additional capital and operating funds to pay for major expansion of transit services.
<p>Focused Growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth is distributed more evenly along transit corridors and job centers, with emphasis on development in PDAs and Growth Opportunity Areas (potential locations for focused growth outside already established PDAs). 	
<p>Outward Growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distributes greater amounts of growth to the inland Bay Area, with some emphasis on focused growth near suburban transit hubs. Scenario is closer to historical trends than the other land use options considered. 	
	<p>T-2035 Network</p> <p>See description above.</p>

FIGURE 3: Plan Bay Area Development Process





Noah Berger

Preferred Scenario

In the spring of 2012, after conducting a second round of outreach to the public, local transportation agencies, cities and counties, and other stakeholders, ABAG and MTC developed the Jobs-Housing Connection Strategy. This land use scenario placed 78 percent of residential growth and 62 percent of job growth in Priority Development Areas throughout the region.

Drawing on the same outreach process and the results of a project-level transportation performance

assessment (see Chapter 5), the two agencies also developed the Preferred Transportation Investment Strategy. The Jobs-Housing Connection Strategy and the Preferred Transportation Investment Strategy (displayed in Table 8) combined to form the draft Plan Bay Area, which was released in March 2013. The final Plan Bay Area was adopted by MTC and ABAG in July 2013. The main components of the plan are described in detail in chapters 3 and 4. The Plan Bay Area performance results are presented in Chapter 5.

TABLE 8: Preferred Scenario (Plan Bay Area)

Land Use Pattern	Transportation Network
<p>Jobs-Housing Connection Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses 78 percent of new housing and 62 percent of new jobs in Priority Development Areas. • Reduces greenhouse gas emissions, limits growth outside of the region's core, and preserves natural resources and open space. 	<p>Preferred Transportation Investment Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devotes 87 percent of funding to operate and maintain existing transportation network. • Directs remaining funding to next-generation transit projects and other high-performing projects; to programs aimed at supporting focused growth and reducing GHG emissions; and to county-level agencies for locally designated priorities.



Karl Nielsen

Plan Bay Area Prompts Robust Dialogue on Transportation and Housing

Developing a multibillion dollar, long-range plan for the nine-county San Francisco Bay region is not a simple task. It is a three-year process involving four regional agencies, nine counties, 101 towns and cities, elected officials, planners, community-based organizations, the public and other stakeholders. The many moving parts include statutory and voluntary requirements, goal-setting, financial projections, calls for projects, project evaluation, forecasting, measuring, methodologies and more. Despite all this complexity, public participation is critical to ensure an open, democratic process, in which all interested residents have the opportunity to offer input and share their vision for what a vibrant, livable Bay Area will look like decades from now.

Early on in the development of Plan Bay Area, MTC and ABAG set benchmarks for involving a broad cross-section of the public. With hundreds of meetings completed and thousands of comments logged, the agencies can point to a number of indicators that show an active process. Full details are included in supplementary reports, *Plan Bay Area Public Outreach and Participation Program* (multiple volumes, listed in Appendix 1) and *Government to Government Consultation with Native American Tribes*.

- Three statistically valid telephone polls conducted in 2011, 2012 and 2013 reached out to some 5,200 Bay Area residents from all nine counties.
- Twenty-nine well-attended public workshops or hearings (at least three in each Bay Area county) attracted over 3,000 residents. A vocal contingent of participants at the public meetings expressed strong opposition to regional planning in general and to Plan Bay Area in particular.
- Eight public hearings were held in 2012 and 2013 in conjunction with development and review of the companion Plan Bay Area Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) and drew another 400 participants.
- MTC and ABAG developed partnerships with community organizations in low-income communities and communities of color to conduct community surveys (1,600 completed surveys in spring 2011; 10 focus groups with 150 participants in winter 2012; and an additional 12 focus groups conducted in the spring of 2013 with 180 participants).
- Throughout the planning process, ABAG and MTC hosted meetings with local elected officials, local planning directors and officials from congestion management and transit agencies.
- An active web and social media presence resulted in some 356,000 page views by 66,000 unique visitors to the OneBayArea.org website since its launch in April 2010, and some 1,300 individuals participated in a January 2012 “virtual public workshop.” Another 90 comments were submitted on the draft plan via an interactive online comment forum.
- Release of the draft plan and DEIR drew 1,250 residents to county-based meetings that included an “open house” where participants could view displays and ask questions, followed by a public hearing. A total of 385 people spoke, and another 140 completed comment forms provided at the public hearings.
- A total of 587 letters and emails were submitted on the draft plan and DEIR. All correspondence, public hearing transcripts and comment forms can be viewed at OneBayArea.org.