

SUMMARY MINUTES

Joint Meeting - ABAG Members & MTC Commissioners
June 26, 2002 ● MetroCenter Room 171

ABAG MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mayor Irma Anderson, City of Richmond
Ms. Maria Ayerdi, City of San Francisco
Ms. Alicia Bert, City of San Francisco
Councilmember David Cortese, City of San Jose
Mayor Mark Green, City of Union City
Councilmember Millie Greenberg, Town of Danville
Supervisor Scott Haggerty, County of Alameda
Vice Mayor Julia Miller, City of Sunnyvale
Councilmember Richard Spees, City of Oakland
Councilmember Pamela Torliatt, City of Petaluma

MTC COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Supervisor Jim Beall, County of Santa Clara
Councilmember Sharon Brown, City of San Pablo
Supervisor Steve Kinsey, County of Marin
Mr. Jon Rubin, City of San Francisco
Mayor James Spering, City of Suisun City

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting convened at 11:35 a.m. Facilitator Nick Bollman, California Center for Regional Leadership, asked each person to introduce him/herself.

2. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE ON SB1243

Robert Oakes, Communications Director for Senator Torlakson, expressed the Senator's regrets for being unable to attend due to budget meetings in Sacramento. Oakes updated participants on the progress of SB1243 and explained that Assemblywoman Patricia Wiggins, Chair of the Assembly Local Government Committee, understands and appreciates the process that we are going through and has given the bill special consideration to be put off until the first week of August. That was a big step and the Senator was happy with it. The Legislature will adjourn at the end of August, which creates a tight timeline for us.

3. PROPOSAL FOR SMART GROWTH PROJECT

At the request of Supervisor Kinsey, Bollman restated his role as facilitator and the process that has been undertaken. Kinsey announced that MTC's Commissioners had adopted an opposition position to the current legislation as amended and recommends the following changes:

- ABAG must adopt an alternative growth scenario in lieu of a current trend job/housing forecast by March 1, 2003.
- Both agencies must prepare a report to the Legislature by July 1, 2003 on the fiscal, regulatory, or other incentives needed to implement the alternative growth scenario.
- MTC must use the adopted alternative growth scenario as the basis for its 2004 update of the Regional Transportation Plan.

MTC believes that ABAG and MTC have a long tradition of working together on many things – most recently the ozone plan, our commitment to work with other regional agencies on the Regional Agency Coordinating Committee, and the significant consensus building efforts that we have underway on the Smart Growth Strategy Regional Livability Footprint Project along with other community partners and public agencies. Kinsey added that MTC believes that Senator Torlakson is seeking to commit the State to principles of smart growth and to encourage a regionalism that is organized around smart growth principles. The simple merging of the two agencies does not create any additional land use authority that would be needed to achieve many of the smart

growth principles that would tie transportation and land use together. There is not a significant overlap in either agency's budget. A merger should not be based on cost efficiency. Both ABAG and MTC have broad representation of city and county governments and regional agencies. If the Legislature wishes to alter how local land use decisions are made they should add fiscal incentives to encourage those decisions. MTC encourages the Senator to move off of an organizational or study bill and move into a process that supports the work that ABAG and MTC are already doing on the Smart Growth Strategy Regional Livability Footprint Project.

During a roundtable discussion, the participants discussed the working relationship of the two agencies and several questioned why it was necessary to merge or to legislate what we already do well together. Oakes pointed out that legislation would codify smart growth principles at the State level and give them a higher priority and that changes coming from the State will promote both practical and policy reasons for a merger. Some members present expressed hope that the Senator would endorse a bottoms-up approach and include local governments in the process. It was felt that there were few staff positions or functions that could be eliminated unless functions were discontinued. If the purpose of the legislation is to save money then it should not be undertaken; if the purpose is to achieve higher policy and better regional planning then a merger should be considered. At least one MTC Commissioner opined that unless we talk about land use authority we may not be talking about anything substantive and it is unlikely that local governments will relinquish land use control. Oakes noted that the Senator's driving force is to see policy changes and a regional vision with some cost savings. Several questioned what the vision for the region was and thought it should be defined before moving forward. A number wanted the Senator to go back to the original bill calling for a one to two year study and allow the two agencies to report back about the possibility of merging. Oakes responded to the questions about what the problem really is by saying that the system as it now stands does not work. All cities and counties have different long-term problems that need to be addressed to make the Bay Area a better place to live both now and for future generations. It was suggested that a proposal be sent to the Senator as a basis for amended legislation that would demonstrate how the agencies could work more collaboratively together to address these issues on a regional basis. Each agency could have three members, plus the three members that sit on both agencies, who would work with Robert Oakes to draft a proposal before the next meeting on July 3. Senator Torlakson will communicate to the group by letter what he believes the problems are at the beginning of the next meeting.

4. INCENTIVES

That is what the Smart Growth Strategy Regional Livability Footprint Project is all about and this group does not need to spend time on it.

5. LAND USE PROJECTS OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

No specific items were discussed.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Brief comments were made by public attendees David Schonbrunn, Ken Bukowski, and Eva Bansner who suggested that the problem we are trying to solve does need to be identified before moving ahead with conversations about merging the agencies – but a problem does exist with transportation and land use planning disconnected.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.



Eugene Y. Leong, Secretary-Treasurer
