

MEMO

Submitted by:

  
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Subject:

Public Participation Plan for the Sustainable Communities Strategy

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### Executive Summary

MTC and ABAG have prepared an update to MTC's Public Participation Plan to include specific outreach and public meeting elements required for the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) pursuant to SB 375. These specific elements are contained in Appendix A (attached) of the plan. Each metropolitan planning organization is required to adopt a public participation plan for the SCS. In the Bay Area, MTC will revise its federally-required Public Participation Plan (Res. 3821) to reflect public engagement in the development of the SCS. The process of revising the Public Participation Plan for both the Regional Transportation Plan and the SCS is complex. MTC and ABAG staffs are working in concert to ensure all federal and state requirements are met while producing an effective plan.

Senate Bill 375 requires extensive outreach with local government officials and the public as part of the process of developing SCS. This outreach process provides the opportunity to engage communities in an important endeavor to envision and plan for communities that rely less on automobiles and create attractive, walkable, sustainable communities that can offer a higher quality of life for all. In the Bay Area, the SCS is a joint effort among the Bay Area's regional agencies (the Association of Bay Area Governments, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, the Bay Conservation and Development Commission, and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission), local jurisdictions, and numerous stakeholders.

### Stakeholders

As stated, the goal of engaging local governments and other stakeholders in the SCS process is to promote an open, transparent process that encourages the ongoing and active participation of local governments, a broad range of stakeholders, and the public.

The success of the SCS is predicated on effective partnership with local governments and public support for policies and programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Without such partnership and support no matter how great our effort, we will not achieve the highest possible outcomes.

For local governments, we will establish ad hoc advisory committees at the regional, sub-regional and county levels that ensure the existence of genuine partnership in establishing approaches to achieve and measure greenhouse gas reduction targets. In the public realm, it is imperative to conduct robust outreach and develop public education material in layman's terms so Bay Area residents understand what we are attempting to accomplish through this process and understand the policy options available to the region for achieving our goals.

### Local Agency Engagement

An extensive community engagement process is anticipated as part of the development of the Bay Area's SCS. The public engagement process will be supplemented by a partnership of local governments and regional agencies

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that will bring together a mix of elected officials, planning directors, county congestion management agencies and local transit agencies. Under this structure, the cities and counties will choose the sub-regional units they believe will best facilitate working with the regional agencies to identify places of great potential for sustainable development.

### ***Advisory Structure: Use of New and Existing Advisory Groups***

As part of the advisory structure for the SCS, staff will utilize existing advisory groups, including MTC's Policy Advisory Council and ABAG's Regional Planning Committee. New ad hoc advisory groups including the County Executives Committee, the County/Corridor leadership roundtables and staff groups, and the Regional Advisory Working Group have also been created to facilitate partnership among regional agency staff, local agencies and other stakeholders.

### ***Other Stakeholders***

In addition to the partnership among local governments (cities, counties, congestion management agencies, and transit agencies), a number of public stakeholders will be consulted, as called out in SB 375 and in federal legislation that governs regional transportation planning. These groups include:

- Other affected public agencies (such as special districts, county health officers, resource agencies, etc)
- Opinion leaders, advocacy groups (transportation and environmental advocates, others)
- Neighborhood and community groups
- Broad-based business organizations
- Affordable housing advocates, home builder representatives, homeowner associations
- Landowners, commercial property interests
- Low income communities and communities of color
- Other interested parties and the general public.

### **Stakeholder Engagement**

<b>Levels of Involvement</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Involvement Mechanisms</b>
Elected officials	Make implementation decisions	Regional Council/Policy Committees,
Regional agency staff	Attend meetings with local agency partners, prepare technical reports and provide input on framework and process issues	Advisory Committees, County/Corridor meetings,
City/County stakeholders and Interest Groups	Provide input to staff, review documents, provide feedback on SCS	Regional Advisory Working Group and Sub-Committees, County/Corridor meetings, Personalized Invitations, Organization networks
Active Citizens	Participate in workshops, focus groups and surveys	Surveys, e-newsletters
Broad Public	Receive information and provide input via OneBayArea.org	Newspaper, media coverage, email notices

## ***Participation Techniques***

The success of the SCS is dependent on all voices in the region being represented and involved. This presents an opportunity to engage residents who do not typically participate in planning efforts, and it is important that engagement efforts focus on under-represented communities. To the extent that funding allows, the public engagement efforts will include:

- Public workshops in all nine Bay Area counties (Over the course of development of the Sustainable Communities Strategy, ABAG and MTC expect to hold more than the required minimum of three workshops in each county with a population larger than 500,000; and one meeting in smaller counties.)
- Grants to community non-profit organizations in communities of concern for assistance in engaging their residents
- Use of computer simulation at public workshops to depict alternatives under consideration
- Specialized focus groups
- Statistically relevant public opinion poll (also available in languages other than English)
- A single Web site for current updates on the SCS (also accessible from the Web sites of the regional agencies)
- Interactive Web polls, kiosks, surveys, etc.
- Maintenance of a database to keep participants notified (via email or U.S. mail) of activities throughout the multi-year process
- At least three public hearings on the Draft SCS Plan, held in different parts of the region.

## ***Public Comment***

On October 15, 2010, MTC issued a revised draft of its 2010 Public Participation Plan, which lays out the steps MTC and ABAG will take to involve residents in decisions affecting the Sustainability Communities Strategy planning process and Bay Area transportation and land use policies and investments.

The revised document includes changes (indicated by strike-through or underscored text, with the exception of minor grammatical corrections) in response to comments received from numerous organizations and individuals on the first draft, which was issued in July. In particular, additional detail has been added to *Appendix A: The Public Participation Plan for the Bay Area Sustainable Communities Strategy and Regional Transportation Plan* on how to participate on the OneBayArea regional plan for sustainable communities required under state law to reduce greenhouse gases that MTC is working with ABAG.

MTC will be accepting written comments until 4 p.m. on Monday, November 29, 2010 via email: [infor@mtc.ca.gov](mailto:infor@mtc.ca.gov); mail: MTC Public Information, 101 Eighth Street, Oakland, CA 94607; or fax: (510) 817-5848. The Plan is being translated into Spanish and Chinese. To request a copy in these (or other) languages, call MTC's Public Information Office, (510) 817-5757.

## **Next Steps**

It is believed the final plan will be approved by the MTC Board in December 2011. If the plan is approved by MTC, the final plan will be presented to this body for approval in January 2011.

**Attachments:** MTC Public Participation Plan, *Appendix A: The Public Participation Plan for the Bay Area Sustainable Communities Strategy and Regional Transportation Plan*



# **MTC Public Participation Plan**

## **Appendix A**

### **A Public Participation Plan for the Bay Area Sustainable Communities Strategy and Regional Transportation Plan**

# **REVISED DRAFT**

DRAFT: July 9, 2010  
REVISED DRAFT: Oct. 15, 2010

Revised Draft released for public comment Oct. 15, 2010  
Comments due by November 29, 2010



**A Public Participation Plan for the  
Bay Area Sustainable Communities Strategy and  
Regional Transportation Plan**

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# A Public Participation Plan for the Bay Area Sustainable Communities Strategy and Regional Transportation Plan

## I. Introduction

California Senate Bill 375 (2008) aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through development of a Sustainable Communities Strategy, or SCS, which integrates transportation and land-use planning. It's a tall order, but it's also an opportunity to leave our nine-county San Francisco Bay Area in better shape for future generations. In addition to seeking to achieve a new state greenhouse gas target, the Bay Area must also continue to work together to accommodate anticipated population growth while keeping the region affordable for our residents, preserve open spaces, protect our environment, and get our residents where they need to go, when they need to get there.

The law calls upon the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), with the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), to develop a plan to involve the public in this process, which is detailed on the following pages. This plan is rooted in the principles that are included in MTC's federally required Public Participation Plan (to which this plan is appended). The goal is to promote an open, transparent process that encourages the ongoing and active participation of local governments and a broad range of stakeholders.

In developing the Bay Area's SCS, MTC and ABAG will team with two partner regional agencies — the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (Air District) and the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) — to integrate transportation and land use planning with clean air and shoreline planning. Developing the Bay Area's SCS will involve working together with local governments, county congestion management agencies, public transit agencies, along with business and community groups, nonprofits, stakeholders and interested residents to ensure that those with a stake in the outcome have the opportunity to be involved. We invite all Bay Area residents to join in the dialogue to make our region a better, more sustainable place.

## **OneBayArea**

The four regional agencies — ABAG, the Air District, BCDC and MTC — each have a number of separate initiatives under way toward the goal of creating a more sustainable and livable Bay Region. To connect these efforts, a single, unifying campaign has been developed — OneBayArea. A single web portal, [www.OneBayArea.org](http://www.OneBayArea.org), provides the public with ready access to information about the joint efforts of the four agencies. Information on the Sustainable Communities Strategy is located there. To learn more and get involved, visit the [www.OneBayArea.org](http://www.OneBayArea.org) site. Interested participants are encouraged to sign up to receive updates, get meeting schedules and materials and otherwise keep up to date on progress toward a sustainable Bay Area.

## **Planning Basics**

ABAG and MTC's current land use and transportation planning efforts include three key elements, which now must be woven together under SB 375 into a single SCS planning effort.

**Projections** — ABAG prepares 25-year long-term forecasts for population, housing and employment for the region, known as Projections. These policy-based projections inform the development of required housing and transportation planning efforts.

**Regional Housing Need Allocation** — ABAG also coordinates the state-mandated Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA) process. The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) determines the region's overall housing need, then ABAG is responsible for distributing to local governments their share of housing units, including affordable units, that the Bay Area should plan for in order to accommodate future growth.

**Regional Transportation Plan** — A long-range Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is prepared and adopted by MTC every four years, taking into account population, housing and employment forecasts and the regional housing allocation process. The Regional Transportation Plan must be a financially viable plan, and also conform with clean air goals. Under SB 375, the RTP must include the Sustainable Communities Strategy for achieving the regional target for reducing greenhouse gases. (In cases where it is determined that the target cannot be achieved, an alternative planning strategy will be developed.) The RTP is slated for adoption by the spring of 2013, upon expiration of the current long-range plan, the Transportation 2035 Plan.

**Other Key Initiatives** — A number of other ongoing initiatives will also help shape development of the SCS. The FOCUS program is the regional land-use blueprint plan lead by ABAG and MTC to support voluntary, incentive-based efforts to direct development toward a more compact land use pattern for the Bay Area. Through FOCUS, local governments and regional agencies are encouraging the development of complete, livable communities in areas served by transit, and promoting conservation of the region’s most significant resource lands. MTC’s recently launched Transit Sustainability Project to ensure the long-term viability of the region’s public transit network will also help inform the SCS. Other relevant initiatives include MTC’s Climate Initiatives Program; BCDC and ABAG’s climate adaptation work to address the impacts of sea-level rise; and environmental review guidelines under consideration by the Air District to address health-based concerns over impacts of new development in certain low-income communities near transportation hubs.

## II. Developing the Sustainable Communities Strategy

The main work elements of the Bay Area's Sustainable Communities Strategy and Regional Transportation Plan will be led by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the Association of Bay Area Governments, with support from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission.

The three charts on pages 49 – 51 illustrate the expected flow of decision making for the SCS planning effort. Additional detail in two areas — scenario planning and equity review — is described below. However, the process will need to be flexible and is subject to change, as needed, to reflect and respond to the input received as we move through the steps of developing the SCS. Any changes as well as additional detail will be updated in the OneBayArea web site.

### *Scenario Planning: Options for Future Growth in the Bay Area*

MTC and ABAG will develop land use-transportation scenario(s) to determine what it will take to reach the statutory targets for greenhouse gas emissions, housing and particulate emissions. Local governments and the public will have opportunities to provide input on what these scenario(s) will look like through regional workshops, and local forums, such as county/corridor working groups conducted with assistance of county congestion management agencies).

### *Equity Considerations*

The social equity impacts of the SCS/RTP will be considered through each step of the planning effort. We envision three key milestones in this process where social equity will be considered:

1. Equity and other performance measures will be used to assess an initial scenario that can serve as a foundation for discussion of the region's "vision" for sustainable growth and development. This will begin in early 2011.

MTC and ABAG also will seek to partner with community-based organizations serving residents in low-income communities and communities of color to participate in subsequent revisions to this vision scenario and the creation of a preferred SCS scenario.

2. A detailed equity alternatives analysis will be developed based on comments received through the scenario development process, and will be open for public review and discussion beginning in the summer of 2011. This analysis will precede any Commission

decisions on a preferred alternative for the SCS. The primary forums for this discussion are expected to be MTC's Policy Advisory Council and the Regional Advisory Working Group.

MTC and ABAG also will seek to partner with community-based organizations to involve residents of low-income communities and communities of color during this phase.

3. Consistent with past equity analyses for the RTP, MTC and ABAG will conduct an equity analysis to measure both the benefits and burdens associated with the SCS/RTP investments to determine that minority and low-income communities share equitably in the benefits of the investments without bearing a disproportionate share of the burdens.

The following pages include these charts:

**Chart 1: Phase 1 Detail for 2010**

**Chart 2: Phase 2 Detail for 2011**

**Chart 3: Phases 3 & 4 Details for 2012-2013**







### **III. Stakeholders**

The goal of engaging local governments and other stakeholders in the SCS planning effort is to promote an open, transparent process that encourages the ongoing and active participation of local governments, a broad range of stakeholders, and the general public.

The success of the SCS is predicated on effective partnership with local governments and public support for policies and programs to accommodate all the region's projected population growth, including all income groups, and achieve targeted reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from cars and light trucks. Without such partnership and support — no matter how great our effort — we will not achieve the best possible outcomes.

To encourage communication among stakeholders, we have established the Regional Advisory Working Group that includes representatives from local government staff and stakeholders. For local governments, county/corridor working groups will support communication at the county and sub-regional levels. To encourage participation from all stakeholders MTC and ABAG will develop material in layman's terms so Bay Area residents understand what we are attempting to accomplish through this process and the options available to the region for achieving our goals.

#### **A. Government Engagement**

In developing the Bay Area's Sustainable Communities Strategy, the regional agencies will involve both government and non-government agencies, organizations and individuals. A partnership with local governments — from elected officials to city managers, planning and public works directors, transit operators and congestion management agencies — is critical.

To launch the planning process for the Bay Area's development of a Sustainable Communities Strategy, a half-day local government summit was held on April 22, 2010, in Oakland. Local elected officials received a briefing on the requirements of Senate Bill 375 and an introduction to the planning process the Bay Area will utilize to develop the Strategy. The summit was held in conjunction with the Association of Bay Area Governments' spring General Assembly, and drew over 350 attendees. The audience included a roughly equal representation of local elected officials, government staff, and representatives from a range of interest groups (business, environment and social equity).

### **County/Corridor Meetings**

To involve local governments and transportation agencies, ABAG and MTC in the summer and fall of 2010 coordinated meetings in each county with elected officials who serve on the four regional boards and their staffs and county Congestion Management Agencies (CMAs) to map out a process within each county to partner with and actively engage elected officials, city managers, planning directors, CMAs, transit agencies and stakeholder organizations in the development of the SCS. Specific information about each county process will be posted on the OneBayArea web site as it is developed. meetings will be organized to lead discussions in each county and/or, in certain cases, along major travel routes/corridors, the regional agencies, in coordination with congestion management agencies, will convene county-level meetings in each of the nine Bay Area counties with elected leaders to determine how best to bring local government participants together in their respective counties to undertake this task.

~~The congestion management agencies will host the follow-up County/Corridor meetings — which will likely vary by county and may be based on corridors or other sub-regions — to work with the regional agencies in assigning growth. These working groups will continue with participation from city and county planning and public works directors, transit operators, as well as staff from the congestion management agencies and the four regional agencies.~~

County Congestion Management Agencies (CMAs) will work closely with elected officials, local jurisdictions and stakeholder organizations during the SCS planning effort, providing a meeting structure to discuss such issues as where new housing should be sited, how that new housing can be integrated to encourage sustainable growth and development, and how transportation investments should be prioritized to encourage and support sustainable development. MTC and ABAG will expect CMAs to, at a minimum, post notices of meetings on the OneBayArea web site, hold meetings in central locations that are accessible by public transit (to the extent feasible), notify interested parties in each county about meetings and public comment opportunities in the county/corridor by using ABAG's and MTC's contact database, and offer language translations or accommodations for people with disabilities if requested at least three days in advance.

### **SCS Executive Working Group**

An SCS Executive Working Group — including city managers, congestion management agency directors, regional agency executives, transit officials and others — will be formed to provide a forum for input on technical and policy issues surrounding the SCS. Executive Working Group meeting times/locations as well as meeting materials will be posted on the OneBayArea website.

**Additional Outreach to Government Stakeholders: Federal, State and Other Government Agencies and Native American Tribal Governments**

In addition to the local governments that will be involved in development of the Sustainable Communities Strategy, MTC and ABAG will consult with officials responsible for other types of planning activities that are affected by transportation in the area, such as federal and state conservation and historic preservation agencies. Consultation will be based on the agency's needs and interests. At a minimum, agencies will be informed about the process to develop the SCS and RTP, and will be provided an opportunity to participate.

Consultation with the region's Native American governments also will occur. There are six federally recognized Native American tribes in the San Francisco Bay Area. MTC and ABAG will invite the tribes to participate in government-to-government consultation during development of the Sustainable Communities Strategy and the Regional Transportation Plan. The groundwork for consultation will occur early in the process of developing the regional transportation plan, and will include a "Tribal summit" for all six Tribal governments. MTC and ABAG will also conduct individual meetings at the tribe's convenience. (See also Tribal Government Consultation in the MTC Public Participation Plan.)

**Local Government Statutorily Required Input on Draft Sustainable Communities Strategy**

As required by SB 375 legislation, at least two informational meetings in each county will be held for members of the county board of supervisors and city councils, to review and discuss the Draft Sustainable Communities Strategy and consider their input and recommendations. Notice of the meeting shall be sent to each city clerk and to the clerk of the board of supervisors. One informational meeting will be conducted if attendance at the one meeting includes county board of supervisors and city council members representing a majority of the cities representing a majority of the population in the incorporated areas of that county. ABAG and MTC will strive for a robust engagement with local governments that may well go beyond the number of meetings prescribed in the legislation.

**IV. Stakeholders**

## **B. Community Stakeholder Engagement**

The regional agencies will seek the active participation of a broad range of stakeholder groups in the development of the Sustainable Communities Strategy. In addition to bringing together representatives of local government, county congestion management agencies, transit agencies and the four regional agencies as described in Section III, outreach efforts will encourage the participation of a broad range of public advocates and ~~stakeholders~~ community members. We will pay special attention to engagement efforts that focus on under-represented communities who do not typically participate in regional and local planning. The success of the SCS is dependent on all voices in the region being represented and involved, including stakeholders that are specifically identified in SB 375 and in federal legislation that governs regional transportation planning. ~~including:~~ The stakeholders in the SCS planning process include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Other affected public agencies (such as special districts, county health offices, resource agencies, etc.)
- Transportation and environmental advocates
- Neighborhood and community groups
- Broad-based business organizations
- Affordable housing advocates, home builder representatives, homeowner associations
- Landowners, commercial property interests
- Low-income communities, communities of color and limited English proficient communities
- School districts and county offices of education
- Other interested opinion leaders, advocacy groups and the general public.

### III. Participation via Policy and Advisory Committees

#### C. Joint Stakeholder Participation via Policy & Advisory Committees

Participation in regularly scheduled meetings of advisory and policy committees is one way that interested stakeholders — whether government or non-government — can get and stay involved. Meeting times and locations for these meetings will be posted on the OneBayArea website. If unable to attend, stakeholders can find meeting materials at the OneBayArea website ([www.OneBayArea.org](http://www.OneBayArea.org)) as well. The diagram below depicts the partnership that will be required to develop a successful sustainable strategy for the region.

**Table 1**  
**A Public Participation Partnership**



#### ***Policy Boards and Committees***

The **Joint Policy Committee** brings together board members of the four regional agencies (ABAG, MTC, the Air District and BCDC) and is the vehicle through which the agencies coordinate their regional planning efforts. This committee will provide oversight of the Sustainable Communities Strategy planning effort. The Joint Policy Committee meets every other month at 10 a.m. in Oakland, in the Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter.

At key points in the development of the Sustainable Communities Strategy, the full policy boards of the four agencies will discuss SCS issues at their regular board meetings. Final decisions and actions related to the SCS will be made by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the Executive Board of the Association of Bay Area Governments.

**MTC** is guided by a 19-member policy board composed of local officials from the nine Bay Area counties, including two members who represent regional agencies — ABAG and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission — as well as three nonvoting members appointed to represent the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and the California Department of Transportation. The Commission meets monthly on the fourth Wednesday of the month, at approximately 10 a.m., at MTC's offices in Oakland, in the Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter.

**The ABAG Executive Board** carries out policies established by the General Assembly, which is composed of representatives of the Bay Area's 101 cities, towns, and counties. ABAG's Executive Board makes operating decisions and controls expenditures, and acts on recommendations from other Association committees. The 38 voting memberships on the Executive Board include elected officials reflecting population size of the nine counties, with non-voting members representing state or federal agencies invited to serve at the pleasure of the Board. The Executive Committee meets the third Thursday of every other month, beginning in January, at 7 p.m. in the auditorium of the Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter.

To more fully collaborate, the MTC Planning Committee and ABAG's Administrative Committee will meet jointly as needed to oversee development of the Sustainable Communities Strategy.

### ***Advisory Committees***

**The Regional Advisory Working Group:** Bay Area residents and government staff will meet jointly through a newly created *ad hoc* regional working group whose primary purpose is to provide input to regional agency staff throughout the development of the Sustainable Communities Strategy. The Regional Advisory Working Group will meet as needed. For example, during 2010, the Regional Advisory Working Group is expected to meet almost monthly during the April – December 2010 timeframe, and participants will be asked to offer feedback on regional targets, including regional housing and job targets, the “base-case” or starting point land use, alternative land use and transportation investment scenarios, and SCS-related public outreach.

The Regional Advisory Working Group will include planning staff representatives of local government, county Congestion Management Agencies, transit agencies, and stakeholder representatives. Each county is represented by at least one local planning director; representatives of various stakeholder groups (including affordable housing, business, real estate developers, equity and environmental groups) were invited to participate as well. Meeting materials will be posted on the OneBayArea website and are open to all government staff and members of the public.

**Existing MTC and ABAG advisory committees** will be utilized to garner additional input from various stakeholders. These include MTC's Policy Advisory Council and ABAG's Regional Planning Committee.

- **MTC's Policy Advisory Council** is a 27-seat advisory panel established to advise MTC on transportation policies in the San Francisco Bay Area, incorporating diverse perspectives relating to the environment, the economy and social equity. This panel will be an active participant in the development of the SCS by providing input on regional planning efforts linking transportation, housing and land use plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Policy Advisory Council meets monthly, on the second Wednesday of the month at 1:30 p.m. at MTC's offices in the Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter, Oakland.
- **The ABAG Regional Planning Committee** hears Bay Area planning issues of regional concern and makes recommendations to the ABAG Executive Board. The Regional Planning Committee includes 36 members, with a minimum of 18 elected officials from the nine Bay Area Counties, representatives of the four regional agencies, and stakeholders representing a broad range of issues, including business, economic development, recreation/open space, environment, public interest, housing, and labor, as well as representatives from ethnic minority groups and special districts. The Regional Planning Committee meets the first Wednesday; alternate months, from 1-3 p.m. in the MetroCenter Auditorium, in Oakland.

## ~~V. Public Participation Techniques~~

### D. Public Participation Techniques

Development of the Bay Area's Sustainable Communities Strategy will occur in four phases. ~~as described in the Work Plan in Introduction Section.~~ Public participation efforts for each phase will be developed in advance of each, and posted on [www.OneBayArea.org](http://www.OneBayArea.org). Detail for all phases ~~Phase One~~ is described in ~~Figure 1 below~~ the Planning Process Charts 1-3 (pages 49-51), although it is important to note that this is an iterative process that is subject to change. Throughout each phase, ABAG and MTC will use a variety of participation techniques to engage a wide range of residents, as described in this Participation Techniques section.

#### *Voices from Underserved Communities*

The success of the Sustainable Communities Strategy is dependent on all voices in the region being represented and involved. MTC and ABAG will take special effort to engage minority and low-income residents that do not typically participate in regional government planning efforts, and to work with social equity advocates to frame regional policies and investment guidelines that can result in equitable development.

In order to seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally under-represented in the planning process, including minority, low-income and limited English proficient communities, a limited number of grants will be provided to community non-profit organizations in communities of concern through a request for proposals (RFP) competitive process for assistance in engaging their residents. See MTC's *Plan for Special Language Services to Limited English Proficient (LEP) Populations* for more information on involving populations with limited English proficiency.

~~ABAG and Breakthrough Communities (a non-profit project based in Oakland), with support from MTC, submitted a transportation planning grant for funds from the California Department of Transportation to assist in engaging these special populations. The funds would allow for a more robust public engagement process in this area. Selection of the grant recipients won't be known until mid-2010.~~

MTC and ABAG have applied for a grant through the state's Strategic Growth Council to fund public participation activities in low-income communities and communities of color. Announcements on awarding of these grants were pending as this revised draft was released.

### ***Other Partnerships***

MTC and ABAG will partner with the Silicon Valley Community Foundation on an initiative known as Envision Bay Area to encourage more Bay Area residents to get involved in the Sustainable Communities Strategy. The Community Foundation, in conjunction with a range of nonprofit groups, including the Greenbelt Alliance, the Bay Area Council, and the American Lung Association, has received a Knight Foundation Grant to fund an interactive web-based tool that will help interested residents understand the implications and trade-offs associated with different housing, transportation and land-use choices.

To encourage partnerships with the many interested stakeholder groups and to help reach out to and involve individuals, local government officials and community organizations, an SCS “tool kit” will be developed. The tool kit will include information to continue discussions with other interested members of the public, publicize comment opportunities, and build general awareness for the SCS planning effort. We will build upon the networks of advisors and the work of partner agencies (such as through Community-Based Transportation Planning efforts) to utilize the tool kit.

### ***Participation Techniques***

~~To the extent that funding allows,~~ The public participation efforts will include:

#### **Advance Notice**

- Develop details for the planning process and opportunities for public engagement in advance of each phase of the SCS development — and post these details ~~a detailed Planning Process Chart~~ on [www.OneBayArea.org](http://www.OneBayArea.org).
- Maintain an updated calendar of events on the OneBayArea website. ~~accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week.~~
- Provide timely notice about upcoming meetings. Post agendas and meeting materials on the web one-week in advance of policy committee meetings or ad hoc advisory group meetings.
- Use a mailing list database to keep participants notified throughout the multi-year process (via e-mail or U.S. mail).
- Circulate a Draft Sustainable Communities Strategy or Alternative Planning Strategy, if one is prepared, for public review at least 55 days before the adoption of the Final Sustainable Communities Strategy and Regional Transportation Plan.
- Work with media outlets to encourage news coverage in advance of meetings.

### **Workshops, Presentations, Hearings**

- Provide opportunities for a discussion in each county on important issues surrounding how to create a sustainable Bay Area. Pursuant to state statute, MTC and ABAG will hold a minimum of three public workshops in Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara counties, and one or more meetings in the less populous Marin, Napa, Solano and Sonoma counties.
- Host public meetings/workshops in convenient and accessible locations and at a variety of times (evenings, weekends, as well as week days).
- Hold at least three public hearings on the Draft SCS or Alternative Planning Strategy, if one is prepared; hold the public hearings in different parts of the region to maximize the opportunity for participation by members of the public throughout the region.
- Use “visualization” techniques to communicate technical planning issues and strategies to the public, such as maps, videos, graphics, animation or computer simulation to depict alternatives under consideration.
- Conduct a public workshop on target-setting methodology (required by SB 375; held March 10, 2010 in the San Francisco Bay Area).
- Hold technical workshops to describe the methodology and key assumptions of the Bay Area travel model and ABAG’s model.
- Provide a summary of comments heard at workshops via [www.OneBayArea.org](http://www.OneBayArea.org).

### **Internet/Social Media**

- Use of a single web address — [www.OneBayArea.org](http://www.OneBayArea.org) — so members of the public have a single place to go for current updates, and to request to receive notices and information.
- Link to OneBayArea website from the individual websites of the regional agencies.
- Maintain a library of past workshop meeting materials on the OneBayArea website.
- Offer interactive web polls, surveys, etc.
- Provide timely, easy-to-understand information on a website that is accessible, per the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Explore using social media methods to reach and engage residents.

### **Media Outlets**

- Issue press releases to media outlets, including ethnic, foreign-language and community media, to keep reporters apprised of progress and generate coverage on radio, television, newspapers and the Internet.

- Pursue civic journalism partnerships for high-impact coverage of key issues; conduct media briefings for reporters, including special emphasis to ethnic, foreign-language and community media outlets.
- Translate news releases about public workshops into Spanish and Chinese, or other languages as appropriate.

#### **Outreach to targeted groups**

- Seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally under-represented in the planning process, including minority, low-income and limited English proficient communities.
- Provide grants to community non-profit organizations in communities of concern for assistance in engaging their residents.
- Conduct focus groups targeted at certain stakeholders.
- Host roundtable discussion forums periodically to consult with a range of advocacy opinion leaders to discuss key issues, priorities.
- Provide assistance, if requested, at least three working days prior to a meeting, to people with disabilities, and language assistance to people with limited English proficiency. (Five or more days' notice is preferred.) Such requests may be made through the MTC Public Information Office at 510-817-5757.
- Piggy-back on existing meetings in order to attract greater attendance and participation.

#### **Other**

- Statistically relevant public opinion poll (also available in languages other than English).
- The methods ABAG and MTC will use to report progress on the SCS planning effort will include, but not be limited to, the web, e-mail updates, electronic and print newsletters, and local media outlets.

#### **VI IV. Performance Measures for the Sustainable Communities Strategy Public Participation Plan**

MTC and ABAG commit to the following goals and performance benchmarks to measure the effectiveness of the public participation program. The agencies will report on the results in order to inform and improve future outreach and involvement programs, including future updates to the Sustainable Communities Strategy.

#### **Public Participation Goals for the 2013 Sustainable Communities Strategy**

1. *Diversity*: Participants must represent a range of socioeconomic, ethnic and cultural, geographic and user (mode) groups. They must also include a range of people with varying interests: social service, business, environment, social justice/equity, etc.
2. *Reach*: The program should make every effort to include the greatest number of people possible. Different levels of participation will make it more inviting for people with a range of involvement preferences to join the discussion.
3. *Accessibility*: Every effort should be made to engage as many participants as possible. This goal can be met by taking the participation activities to where people already are located, whenever possible. It can also be met by providing ways to participate, regardless of individuals' language, personal mobility or ability to attend a meeting, access to the Web, etc.
4. *Impact*: The feedback received through this Public Participation Plan should be analyzed and provided to policy makers wherever appropriate. Interested participants should be informed of actions by MTC and ABAG. Decisions to not incorporate recommendations should be noted, with a rationale provided and ready to be discussed.
5. *Education*: This outreach program is an opportunity for MTC and ABAG to inform a wide range of people about transportation issues in the Bay Area, as well as the link to climate change and smart growth, among other issues. Each step of the process should include an educational element, whether it is about Bay Area transportation in general, specific projects being considered for inclusion in the long-range plan or background on the outreach results to date.
6. *Participant Satisfaction*: People who take the time and energy to participate should feel it was worth their while to join in the discussion and debate. Questions, surveys or other effort to gather input will be designed to add value to the process and help inform decisions.

MTC staff devised performance measures for the above-identified goals that include quantifiable targets for performance, based on aspirations for meaningful public involvement, tempered by reasonable assumptions and time and budget constraints.

The following targeted performance measures are associated with each of the goals.

#### Diversity

- The demographics of targeted groups (age, ethnicity, income, geographic location, disability) roughly mirror the demographics of the Bay Area's population.
- Participants represent a cross-section of people of various interests, places of residence and primary modes of travel, as reported on evaluation forms distributed at meetings.

#### Reach

- 3,000 or more comments are logged.
- ~~3,000~~ 6,000 individuals actively participate in the Sustainable Communities Strategy public participation efforts as measured by survey responses and meeting attendance (excluding repeat attendance).
- There are 30,000 visits or "views" to the OneBayArea website.
- The Sustainable Communities Strategy or elements of it are mentioned in at least 70 radio or TV broadcasts, newspaper articles, editorials, commentaries, or other printed media.

#### Accessibility

- Meetings are held in all nine counties.
- 100 percent of meeting locations are accessible by transit, if available.
- Meetings are linguistically accessible to 100 percent of participants, with 3 working days' advance request for translation. (Meeting announcements offer translation services with advance request for translation services.)
- All meetings are accessible under the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

#### Impact

- 100 percent of written correspondence received is logged, analyzed, summarized and communicated in time for consideration by staff or policy board members.
- 100 percent of written correspondence is acknowledged so that the person making it knows whether his or her comments are reflected in the outcome of an MTC or ABAG action or, conversely, or why the action was different.

### Education

- 60 percent of participants “*strongly agree or agree*” with statements that indicate that participation in the outreach and involvement efforts was a good opportunity to learn more about Bay Area transportation, land use and housing issues.
  - Educational value of presentations and materials
  - Understanding of other perspectives and differing priorities
  - Clear information on OneBayArea website

### Participant Satisfaction

- 60 percent of participants “*strongly agree or agree*” with statements that rate the 2013 Sustainable Communities Strategy public participation efforts and target the participants’ personal experiences.
  - Sufficient opportunity to comment/ask questions
  - Clear information at an appropriate level of detail
  - Quality of the discussion