

Plan BayArea

TO: MTC Planning Committee, ABAG Administrative Committee

DATE: November 2, 2012

FR: Executive Director, MTC
Executive Director, ABAG

RE: Plan Bay Area Schedule Update

The MTC and ABAG boards approved the initial Plan Bay Area (Plan) schedule in December 2010. The initial schedule called for final adoption of the Plan in April 2013. This memo provides an update on work completed since your July approval of the alternatives for the programmatic Environmental Impact Report (EIR), and the overall schedule. The revised schedule calls for release of the Draft EIR and Draft Plan in March, with board adoption of the Final EIR and Final Plan in June 2013. The full schedule of milestones is provided in Table 1, attached to this memorandum.

This new schedule moves final approval of the Plan and EIR two months past the initial project schedule for several reasons. This is the region's first Sustainable Communities Strategy, with transportation investments and land use patterns being developed and evaluated together. Throughout the past two years, staff has been directed to provide for more extensive discussions with local jurisdictions regarding the land use element of the plan or input from local communities and stakeholders related to the development of the alternative land use scenarios that informed the preferred scenario adopted in July. We added multiple rounds of scenario analysis combined with extensive public input prior to presenting recommendations of the Preferred Scenario and EIR alternatives. In contrast to past Regional Transportation Plans, the EIR is evaluating five alternatives, two of which were developed by stakeholders and required significant staff work to finalize before beginning the modeling work using two updated modeling tools. Finally, for Plan Bay Area we are conducting an Economic Impact Analysis for the first time.

EIR Alternatives and Model Development

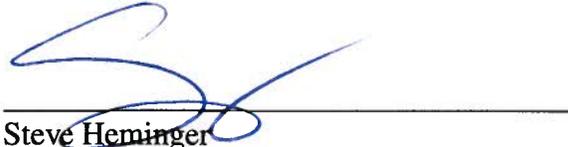
In July, the MTC and ABAG boards approved the alternatives to be analyzed in the programmatic EIR. The Draft EIR will evaluate the preferred land use and transportation investment strategy adopted by the MTC and ABAG boards at your joint meeting in July as well as a range of reasonable alternatives. Since July, MTC and ABAG staffs have worked to refine the details of the alternatives approved by the boards, develop the model inputs, and conduct the technical modeling analysis. Staff worked throughout the summer with representatives of the business community and equity stakeholders to finalize the details of alternatives four (Enhanced Network of Communities) and five (Environment, Equity, and Jobs) respectively. This included identifying specific policy assumptions for each alternative, such as land use densities, fee/tolling structures, and specific transportation investments. Once the alternatives were finalized in August, staff began the technical work of coding the land use assumptions, transportation investments, and policies for all five alternatives included in the environmental analysis.

At your September meeting, MTC and ABAG staff presented an overview of the agencies' modeling technologies, including the activity-based Travel Model One and the new spatially-explicit economic and land use model known as UrbanSim. As required by SB 375, these tools take an integrated approach to the analysis and help us examine the connections between transportation investments and land use patterns. Past plans did not require this analysis, which is taking longer than anticipated in the initial schedule. While the complexity of the modeling technologies, combined with more detailed land use, transportation and policy inputs has resulted in a longer schedule, the more robust modeling work will be a significant improvement over prior analyses.

Revised Schedule

Staff anticipates a concurrent release of the Draft EIR and Draft Plan Bay Area document for 45-day and 55-day public comment periods, respectively, in March 2013, followed by public hearings and workshops to be held throughout the region. The Draft EIR analysis, together with input from the public workshops and public hearings on the Draft Plan, will inform the policy discussions and public dialogue leading to the Final Plan Bay Area adoption by both boards in June 2013.


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