SUMMARY MINUTES (DRAFT)

ABAG Regional Planning Committee Meeting
Wednesday, August 5, 2015
Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter
101 8th 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
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
Erin Hannigan	Supervisor, County of Solano
John Holtzclaw	Sierra Club
Nancy Ianni	League of Women Voters—Bay Area
Jeremy Madsen	Executive Director, Greenbelt Alliance
Nate Miley	Supervisor, County of Alameda
Karen Mitchoff	Supervisor, County of Contra Costa
Carmen Montano	Vice Mayor, City of Milpitas
Julie Pierce	Councilmember, City of Clayton (ABAG President)
Laurel Prevetti	Assistant Town Manager, Town of Los Gatos (BAPDA)
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
Pixie Hayward Schickele	California Teachers Association
Warren Slocum	Supervisor, County of San Mateo
James P. Spering	Supervisor, County of Solano
Jill Techel	Mayor, City of Napa
Egon Terplan	Planning Director, SPUR
Dyan Whyte	Assist. Exc. Officer, San Francisco Regional Waterboard
Monica E. Wilson	Councilmember, City of Antioch

Members Absent	**Jurisdiction**
Diane Burgis	East Bay Regional Park District
Dave Cortese	Supervisor, County of Santa Clara (RPC Chair)
Russell Hancock	President & CEO, Joint Venture Silicon Valley
Michael Lane	Policy Director, Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California
Mark Luce	Supervisor, County of Napa
Eric Mar	Supervisor, City and County of San Francisco
Anu Natarajan	Director of Policy and Advocacy, MidPen Housing
David Rabbitt	Supervisor, County of Sonoma (ABAG Vice President)

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were public comments by Ken Bukowski, and Heather Hafer from City of Novato.

A quorum was present.

3. APPROVAL OF REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES OF JUNE 3, 2015

Vice Chair Gupta recognized a motion by **Karen Mitchoff**, Supervisor, County of Contra Costa, and seconded by **John Holtzclaw**, Sierra Club, to approve the committee minutes of June 3, 2015.

There was no discussion.

The motion passed unanimously.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Member Whyte mentioned that the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) has had hearings over the last two months pertaining to our regional storm water permit. This permit has 76 permittees, including most local agencies, cities, and counties within Alameda, Contra Costa, Santa Clara, and San Mateo Counties, as well as the Cities of Fairfield, Suisun City, and Vallejo. There are new requirements proposed that will require permitees to develop a comprehensive green infrastructure plan, which must be approved at a high level within each agency. The RWQCB will be having a final hearing on the item on October 14th, with the hope of adopting the permit with these requirements.

Vice Chair Gupta introduced new Committee Member Carmen Montana, Vice Mayor of City of Milpitas.

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. She also gave a briefing of the last Regional Planning Committee meeting with the following updates on the items from the last session:

- ABAG Staff is proceeding with the analysis of Priority Industrial Areas. They have developed a comprehensive land use inventory of industrial lands throughout the region and are developing an inventory of industrial businesses and industrial jobs. They will complete the first study by the end of the year which they will share with the Committee.
- On the East Bay Corridors, in response to a request that they engage more with the City of Fremont, ABAG staff has had conversations with the Fremont staff and they are very eager to join the East Bay Corridor. ABAG staff will be doing a field visit tomorrow to discuss some of the specific components of Fremont's Priority Development Areas.

Vice Chair Gupta said that the way they are proceeding with the Plan Bay Area update, they are looking at many different strands at the same time. While staff is talking about PDAs and PCAs today, they have also looked at economic modeling and forecasting. They are looking at the *People, Places, and Prosperity* report, which is like the glue that puts all of these together in the context of planning. He wanted to make sure that everybody has this road map in their head when they are listening to these individual presentations.

Ms. Chion introduced Item 6.

6. PEOPLE, PLACES, AND PROSPERTY REPORT

Information

Gillian Adams, Senior Regional Planner, presented an overview of the draft *People, Places, and Prosperity* report. To inform discussions about the Plan Bay Area 2040 update, this report highlighted efforts to implement *Plan Bay Area* and provided a comprehensive look at the ways in which economic, housing, and environmental issues relate to one another and how they are currently affecting local communities and the region as a whole.

Member Eklund pointed out it was a great summary of the report. She asked how it is intended to fold into Plan Bay Area. How do they differentiate the regional issues versus the local issues, which may or may not coincide with what has been identified here as regional issues, because there are differences. They need to respect those differences.

Ms. Chion said Member Eklund described the report in the way it was intended, which is to recognize where they need to have regional dialogues and how the regional dialogues can enhance and support the local efforts while recognizing the differences. More than trying to address the uniqueness of each place in this report, the intent is to see where we need to come together to address the specific challenges or where we find some strengths on some of the strategies. Would this be the specific template for Plan Bay Area? No. This is the starting point for the conversation. Is this a framework that can support the dialogue that we need to have? Are there additional questions that need to be placed at the table as we engage in discussions that can be substantial? It is not just about greenhouse gas targets, but it is how greenhouse gas targets relate to the quality of life, and to the efforts that are happening on the ground.

Member Eklund said the answer to her question is yes, the intent is to fold this into Plan Bay Area. But what if some of the regional issues that have been identified in some of the objectives are in conflict with what the local communities' own destiny is? How are they going to reconcile that? Also, she did not see very much on water availability, which is a key issue for any type of growth, whether it is economic or housing.

Ms. Chion said the intent is to respect and to recognize the specificity of the local challenges and the local strengths. Not all those pieces are captured here, and those differences will be recognized as they move into Plan Bay Area. In terms of the water issues, the challenge of this report is that you are not going to find a lot of anything. It is

not a housing report, it is not a water report, it is not an employment report, but the attempt is to see if they can connect those dots to address the comprehensive nature of regional strategies and the connection between the local efforts and the regional efforts. If there are specific areas where she believes they should strengthen the connection between water capacity and water quality to some of the other components, they will be happy to explore that and take her input.

Member Prevetti thanked staff for their hard work on this effort and the way the staff approached them by reaching out to local governments for their inputs. That was really quite helpful. This is a very valid framework for the discussion of Plan Bay Area. It is important that they lay out a vision that identifies the quality of what makes the Bay region special and there are going to be certain strategies and objectives that resonate with some of our communities and others will resonate with different communities. They do need to address local control very directly and this does not undermine or take away that local control. As a starting point, this is great, and really does promote a larger discussion; not just about how much growth, but where and how do they accommodate it and what are the qualities that need to be preserved as we move forward.

Ms. Adams acknowledged that they reached out to the Bay Area Planning Director Association Steering Committee, which is made up of planning directors from throughout the region, who provided some really valuable insight into the report. She acknowledged their contributions to what they created in this report.

Member Campos expressed concern about the policy recommendations which work at cross purposes; maybe increasing the cost of building housing and the ability for our region to really supply a lot more housing. For example, this includes recommendations calling for increasing the stringency of seismic building standards, increasing the energy efficiency of new housing, and increasing the water efficiency of new housing. He suggested taking into consideration what the recommendations might do to the cost of housing, and our ability to provide all types housing in the Bay Area.

Member Combs thanked staff for a clearly written report. She thinks not enough people will read the report. She would like to request a summary in a list format which would work really well in her community.

Member Adams introduced her new status of as Public Health representative for the Regional Planning Committee. She is working as Assistant Professor of Nursing at UC Davis. She would like to request that they look at what happens when they have food deserts, poor air quality, infrastructure that does not work for people, particularly in the low income communities. If they could find some way to capture the importance of how infrastructure and our built environment enhance the quality of health for residents, she would like to see that more fleshed out.

Member Spering asked Ms. Chion to please explain the use of public policy across the board.

Ms. Chion explained on the housing front that there are different partners including local jurisdictions, planning directors, and local elected officials that have been engaged to deal with some of the specific strategies. For example, there is a group that is convened to guide the Regional Housing Need Allocation process. Another example is on economic development strategies. This Committee and their Executive Board raised the issue that Plan Bay Area needed to deal more explicitly with the economic challenges that this region is facing, while they enjoyed strong economic growth. They should not take that for granted. They have an economic strategy working group with various representatives of different economic development organizations and local organizations to figure out what are some of the key priorities and who will be the actors to carry some of those actions. In general, they have a specific partnership depending on the tasks. Resilience is another situation where they have targeted areas where we identify the need, the strategies, and the actors that can carry the implementation.

Member Spering asked how they will identify the receptive parties. How are they going to identify whose willing to participate and help with the housing crisis and the various other jobs issues? How are they going to identify the willing partners?

Ms. Chion said for example, in the case of resilience, they are completing the third workshop to deal with local hazard mitigation plans. Those plans are needed in order for a local jurisdiction to get the federal funding in case of a disaster. They contacted all jurisdictions and identified who is the responsible person within the jurisdiction for completing that plan. In some cases, within the planning department, in other cases, within the emergency services office, in other cases, it is public works. They send the announcements and identify what is the level of interest in getting some support for the development of that local plan. Based on that input, we did some more specific outreach to identify our specific needs, and that helped us design the three workshops. They have had a really substantial attendance and they are getting to a solid completion of these local plans that are more robust than in the last cycle. To your question, they do the outreach based on the task that they are addressing and then identify the specific actors that have some resources to engage. The challenge is that in some cases, there are actors that are interested and cities that might be interested, but they do not have the resources to engage and participate. Those are some of the gaps that get more difficult in figuring out how they still take the input and support those efforts when resources are not available.

Member Spering appreciated the answer, and liked the direction they are going. The communities that want to participate and do not have the resources need to start focusing the resources in those areas that will make a difference.

Member Whyte wanted to recognize and thank staff for specific mention of low impact development and green infrastructure in the report. That is very much consistent with what she foresees to be requirements that will be imposed on a lot of our municipalities. She mentioned water conservation and management, and foresees a much larger expansion of the use of recycled water within our region which could be emphasized more in that section of the report, especially the infrastructure needs that will be needed

to support that expansion. She thinks it is much bigger than what is mentioned in the report.

Member Eklund followed **Member Whyte's** comments about the importance of more emphasis on reuse of storm water by stating ABAG is well situated to try to provide the resources financially and identify how cities can reuse storm water. There is a lot of opportunity. Water that can be captured gets discharged everyday into our streams and rivers and into the Bay. She feels Federal and State regulatory agencies pushing that discussion is a good idea. Her experience is that it is difficult to get local support on this subject.

Member Combs said Santa Rosa has a remarkable water agency, and in the last four years, they had zero discharge, they recycle 100%. Information on what they are doing is available to share.

Member Chang asked if there was any consultation with the congestion management agencies who have implemented most of the 44 community-based transportation plans that were funded out of the 2000 Welfare-to-Work analysis that was focused on Communities of Concern. They had a good experience in San Francisco, they did seven plans and they were spread around the region. The idea was to help identify neighborhood-scale plans and eventually projects that could help close transportation gaps. Now, it could perhaps be expanded to the sort of complete communities context and not just deal with transportation. It might be worth reviewing the 44 community-based transportation plans.

Member Montano talked about the need for a stronger input on traffic congestion. Everyone wants to live in the Bay Area because of jobs, many are forced to move out to the valley like Modesto and travel two hours each way to go to work. This causes so much congestion. The cost of housing is so high due to supply and demand. This needs to be addressed very strongly.

Member Regan stated that the purpose of the Sustainable Communities Strategy or the "North Star" for the SCS is reducing vehicle miles traveled with the end objective of reducing our carbon production. It is a very metric-driven process. They have targets and numbers that they are supposed to meet for both housing and transportation, and within PDAs. This is a visionary document, but it does not seem to really focus on that North Star. It talks about a lot of secondary and tertiary issues. He does not think it really focuses enough attention on that objective. Then he mentioned Member Spering's comment earlier about how they apportion the funds available to them to encourage the right types of growth. Member Regan refuted the idea that the One Bay Area Grant funds to encourage the right type of growth and activity are funneled towards PDAs by stating that fifty percent of OBAG funding goes on a straight population block grant basis. They are rewarding bad behavior, as Supervisor Spering commented. He thinks moving forward, if they could look at some of the ways that they incentivize behavior through some of these grant funds, it would certainly get them to a much better place with the second Plan Bay Area.

Ms. Chion addressed some of the general comments. On specific water issues, ABAG staff will follow up and get some of the specific points. The point on the cost implications of addressing resilience or energy efficiency, that is a very good point and they will make sure that they flag that. It can increase housing cost and it is a difficult challenge. About congestion, they have a wealth of reports that are developed by their partners, the congestion management agencies, as well as some specific reports under MTC and they will link these references; there is a lot of discussion on the subject of congestion or accessibility in general, whether it is to jobs or in a broader sense. About the One Bay Area Grant, it is correct that it is not exclusive to Priority Development Areas. The driving force of the One Bay Area Grant was to see if they can support some of those jurisdictions that are making an effort to address some of the challenges. They understand that changes are happening in a broader spectrum of neighborhoods throughout the region, but the intent of the regional agencies was to identify some level of support to address that difficult challenge of bringing more housing and more services in areas close to transit. They will be taking all those comments and a report will be brought to the ABAG Executive Board. They will be contacting those additional partners or agencies that members have identified. They also will be putting together a website and they took note of the comment about having simple, short text or lists that can be included in the website, and members can just use it as a link for folks that could be involved.

Vice Chair Gupta thanked everyone for all the discussion. He addressed what Member Regan pointed out earlier, namely the metrics in terms of success of a program. What is the goal, what is success? On the local jurisdictional level, there are issues which go beyond the number, there are people involved, their lives are involved, and the city council has many meetings to solve these issues on the local jurisdictional level. He really encourages thinking about those issues before they put out concrete numbers and targets. He encourages this direction of ABAG to look at those problems which are real life problems. Who will be the people who will be interested in following up in terms of water, namely how we can reuse water to resolve our issues going from year to year? Regarding cost of housing the question is whether they are going to be discouraging new housing because of the additional attention paid to the environment, those are all very good questions and he is sure that the people who raised these issues will contribute as best as they can. He thanked staff for this good report.

Ms. Chion introduced Item 7.

7. PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT AREAS

Action

Christy Leffall, Regional Planner, provided an overview of the updated Priority Development Area (PDA) program and will introduce the 2015 PDA nominations recommended for Committee approval.

Member Haggerty asked who designates the place type for PDAs?

Ms. Chion said the city nominating the PDA.

Ms. Leffall, Member Eklund, Ms. Chion, Member Rice and Mr. Wong had a clarifying discussion about PDAs in Marin and their location on the maps in the agenda packet.

Member Montana asked how do they prioritize development areas? Do they have a formula? Is it just whoever gets their request in first? Can they expand on that?

Ms. Chion explained that it is an invitation to all cities and counties to identify what are the areas where they would like to accommodate housing growth close to transit. All cities, all counties, are able to propose any Priority Development Areas. In this last round, based on their contact with all the cities and all the counties, the only proposals that they received were those three proposals. At this point they have a really extensive network of Priority Development Areas. Most cities feel very comfortable with the areas that they have designated as locations that can accommodated the most change within that jurisdiction. That is the reason why you do not see many new applications. They have received some requests for adjustments in boundaries, so the boundaries better match the local plans. Overall, the set of 189 provide quite a comprehensive set of places.

Member Montana thanked Ms. Chion for the explanation.

Chair Gupta recognized a motion by **Pat Eklund**, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Novato, and seconded by **Jim Spering**, Supervisor, County of Solano, to recommend the following to the Executive Board: Adopt the final inventory of Priority Development Areas (Attachment 1), including the Golden Gate/North Oakland, Rumrill Boulevard and Sonoma Boulevard Priority Development Areas.

The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Chion introduced Item 8 and explained updates that the Committee requested a year ago.

8. PRIORITY CONSERVATION AREAS

Action

Laura Thompson, Bay Trail Project Manager, provided an overview of the updated Priority Conservation Area (PCA) program and introduced the 2015 PCA nominations recommended for Committee approval. Staff requests that the Regional Planning Committee recommend the following to the Executive Board: Adopt the 68 Priority Conservation Areas recommended in the staff report and listed in Attachment Three.

Vice Chair Gupta called for public comments.

There were public comments by Jane Mark, Planning Manager at MidPeninsula Regional Open Space District, and Heather Hafer, City of Novato.

Member Haggerty asked staff to explain why protected open space in Alameda County is not showing on the map.

Ms. Chion said they can have a map of the protected open space which would be different from the Priority Conservation Areas. What they are showing with the Priority Conservation Areas are only the areas that were proposed by our local jurisdictions, so if they were not proposed as a Priority Conservation Area, it will not show on the map. However, it is easy for staff to provide a map with all the protected areas.

Member Haggerty replied that would be very helpful. He asked how many applications were there from Alameda and were any of the Oakland applications chosen?

Ms. Thompson answered there were seven applications from Alameda County, 6 from Oakland and 1 from Livermore, and all the Oakland application were chosen.

Member Haggerty asked for some clarification about Oakland's PCA applications and he asked what was the previous funding and what the funding will be now that 68 new PCAs will be added.

Ms. Thompson said last OBAG PCA program was $10 million, $5 million in the North Bay and then $5 million for the other counties. She explained that it is now a separate process. Those conversations are happening right now. Right now, the latest proposal is $16 million.

Member Haggerty said that if the committee votes on accepting the 68 new PCAs, the committee also needs to have a discussion on the funding.

Ms. Chion replied that they will take note, but wait for the committee to make a proposal to see how they can coordinate with MTC.

Member Pierce asked staff to clarify the number of PCAs.

Ms. Thompson said in 2008, 101 PCAs were adopted. In 2013, three more PCAs were adopted for a total of 104. San Francisco has nullified four so that brings us down to 100 and we have 68 additional to add. If you take action today, there will be a total of 168 PCAs.

Member Pierce said the reason for the PCAs was to designate areas that were endangered or to protect areas from potential development. It was not necessarily to fund them although that may become necessary in order to protect them. PCA designation indicates that it is a priority for conservation, but it is not an official planning designation. We really do not have any effective method of protecting them unless we buy them, correct?

Ms. Thompson replied that is correct. PCAs are essentially a list of areas that are important to the region. Each area has potentially different measures that need to happen to implement the goals of that local jurisdiction or the region. They may not be able to fund everything but what it does is it helps funding agencies understand the priorities in the region.

Member Pierce recommended a map with all PCAs as well as all other protected open space areas to be graphically informed of all protected areas.

Member Eklund said PCAs are not only to protect from development, but to help promote the relationship between people and the environment. She asked have the applicants been notified of all the other funding sources and has ABAG helped those

applicants to apply for money for those PCAs? Were any applications denied by ABAG staff?

Ms. Thompson replied that was a very good summary of the primary purposes of the PCAs, to provide connection between people and nature, as our region grows and becomes denser in urbanized areas. About the applicants being notified of funding sources, that is a fantastic idea. We have in mind an updated website which will provide information on what the PCAs are and also the lands that we have already protected in the area, as well as the funding sources that are available. All applications were accepted.

Member Madsen thanked staff for all the work which went into this program. He agreed with Member Eklund's point about how people, nature, agricultural lands, and recreational lands all work together. They are fulfilling one of the promises of not just the PCA planning process, but the overall concept of regional planning through this program. How do PCAs benefit people who are in low-income housing, people with disabilities or urban greening with our cities and towns? As to Member Haggerty's point, funding is important and necessary. How do they take that $16 million and leverage it many times over?

Member Regan said they all agree that providing the appropriate balance between open space and developed land for housing is what makes a region an attractive place to live. He asked staff, whether there has been any kind of unwanted development in the 104 existing PCAs in the last four years that conflicts with their conservation status.

Ms. Thompson answered not to her knowledge, but they have not tracked it in detail.

Member Regan asked can they assume that the PCA program is 100% successful, so far?

Ms. Thompson agreed

Member Regan said that OBAG funds are not supporting the PDA program to be a 100% successful.

Member Campos said PDAs are priority areas which cities, local governments have chosen as a priority. Support for PCAs can be confusing because their consensus is more from the community. Funding comes mostly from transportation money and should be carefully considered.

Member Haggerty explained that Alameda County just passed a full cent sales tax and will generate 150,000 jobs and $8 billion over the next 20 years. He appreciated the discussion about where money comes from, but that is if you only look at one source. If they want to increase funding, they can go look for other sources. They can secure grants and they can find federal money that works with PCAs and open space.

Member Eklund made a motion to support staff's recommendation to accept the PCA applications. She also expressed the importance of the funding discussion for the PCAs.

Vice Chair Gupta suggested that the vote on the PCA applications by Eklund's motion be held until after the first round of committee members' comments.

Member Ross asked if it is one community applying for a PCA, does that mean that it is all entirely in that community's sphere of influence. Does it spill over the sphere of influence?

Ms. Chion answered that they can always add more layers of assessment, but when they discussed this last year, there were very specific requirements about public notification and resolutions that they did not have before. What they are getting is a lot of work from their local staff presenting input about why this is important. Ms. Thompson indicated that they did not reject any Priority Conservation Area and they should acknowledge that what they are getting now is the result of work by their local staff providing data, going through maps, and a providing specific input about why this is important. They did a lot of analysis to justify the PCAs. Ms. Thompson discussed some of those issues in collaboration with two of the partner agencies in a lot of detail. They were concerned about some PCAs. That leads to a lot of discussion to get to a resolution.

Member Ross said that PCAs should be vetted in a way that funders can choose from projects that have regional significance. He suggested that the process be modeled after the Surface Transportation Program (STP) process so it has credibility.

Vice Chair Gupta also said that the PCA designation should carry a certain qualification that will give some positive impression to someone who is looking at it.

Member Miley asked about property owner notification. The public does not understand that PCAs are not land use designations. They should better explain what PCAs mean and what they do not mean.

Ms. Thompson: We left it up to the local jurisdictions to notify property owners. What we required of them was a resolution, which was adopted in a public meeting. The PCA program itself did not require explicitly notification of property owners. We left that to the locals.

Member Rice expressed that she is comfortable with the fact that PCAs are part of a local designation process. They need more money to protect and maintain parks/open space. They need to clarify PCA designations. The list in the packet includes broad descriptions and should be narrowed down.

Vice Chair Gupta said ABAG should provide guidance for how local jurisdictions could use PCA designations for grant applications

Pat Eklund said she would like to move staff's recommendation to adopt the 68 new Priority Conservation Areas.

Member Spering asked to amend the motion to state that they approve staff's recommendation to adopt the 68 new Priority Conservation Areas and to look for additional funding for PCAs.

Member Regan: I think Supervisor Spering’s amendment was to look for funding sources from non-OBAG funding sources.

Vice Chair Gupta recognized a motion by Pat Eklund, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Novato, and seconded by Susan Adams, Assistant Clinical Professor at UC Davis, to recommend the following to the Executive Board: Adopt the 68 Priority Conservation

Areas recommended in this staff report and listed in Attachment three, after exploring additional sources of funding.

The motion passed unanimously.

Member Eklund pointed out Supervisor Haggerty raised a good question that this committee needs to have a discussion about what is the appropriate funding level for Priority Conservation Areas.

Vice Chair Gupta said Miriam has taken your comment. They will be looking at that.

9. ABAG BUDGET DISCUSSION

Information
Julie Pierce, president of ABAG and Councilmember of City of Clayton gave an overview of current discussions on the proposed transfer of the ABAG planning department to MTC and the ABAG budget status.

Member Pierce: The agenda item in your packet was very lengthy. I will give you an update of where we are today. Subsequent to the ABAG Executive Board meeting last month, MTC Chair Cortese and I agreed that I would add a few more items to the list of things that he requested in his July 16 memo, which is attached at the very end of your packet. To summarize the issue quickly, a proposal was made prior to the adoption of the MTC budget for this current year, which also included funding for ABAG, to look at the potential consolidation of the planning and research staffs from the two agencies into MTC. Over the past few months, Chair Cortese and I have drawn together a small Ad Hoc Subcommittee of board members who serve on both MTC and ABAG or have served in leadership positions. They are fully aware of the breadth and the depth of the operations of both agencies. The subcommittee has discussed a potential reorganization and a process that might improve the integration of the work of the two departments. As many of you know, we were highly criticized in round one of the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) for being a little clumsy sometimes when we handle things. We got off on a bad foot on our first round, but it was the first. We were inventing a process and we have learned from that and we think we have done a lot of clarifying of roles and responsibilities. But in anticipation of those discussions going forward, the MTC staff asked the MTC Commission in June to only allocate six months of funding to ABAG rather than the traditional full year as called for in our interagency agreement. The Commission did approve that recommendation. Commissioner Haggerty and I voted to oppose the six-month budget for ABAG, feeling like the discussions would need a little more time to reach fruition. As stated by Chair Cortese in his June 16th memo that you have in your packet, the Ad Hoc Subcommittee decided to ask the respective executive directors to provide the subcommittee with a joint analysis of how we can improve the planning integration without any structural consolidation of functions because we are two structurally separate agencies and how the consolidation of the planning functions under a single director or entity might be organized and how reporting to MTC and ABAG would work under some kind of systemic change. We also realize that this might not lead to 100 percent agreement. We are going to engage in this process to see what we can develop and at least analyze all of the impacts that this kind of a structural change might have. ABAG staff and I and our subcommittee remain committed to working

collaboratively with MTC on this matter. We are looking at a thorough analysis of both of the options suggested by Chair Cortese in his memo, including how consolidating functions under a single director might work from the ABAG point of view and understanding that the consolidation would have not only financial, but programmatic and governance repercussions for ABAG and that the local jurisdictions with whom we work are going to be very concerned about our ability to continue to function as a Council of Governments. We have asked the executive directors to document these issues in writing and give us a more thorough analysis of what that would mean. Many of you serve on either ABAG or MTC but many of you do not serve on either one so you may not be fully aware of all of the different things that ABAG is involved in. ABAG gets tens of millions of dollars of grants every year to do work on the ABAG PLAN and the POWER groups, the BayREN, and the San Francisco Estuary Partnership. We work on resilience planning. We are working in many, many areas that are funded almost completely by grants but those depend on the overall structure of ABAG as an administrative agency to be able to provide the oversight for those grants. We are concerned with six months of funding that this may impact our ability to get grants for the next year. We are hoping to resolve through this process relatively quickly some way of looking at how that will impact those activities. We are looking at how we would continue to maintain our local contact. As many of you know, we work very closely with all the local agencies on a great deal of different projects and particularly our smaller agencies who do not have staff rely on ABAG for levels of expertise that they do not have in house. We have the financial impacts, we have the programmatic impacts, and we have the structural impacts to the governance. How would this actually work? What is an organizational chart going to look like if we were to go forward with something like this? How would we continue to do our grant-funded work if we were to consolidate these two departments? What are the agency-wide financial implications to the elimination of any planning department funding or would it be partial, would it be complete? Those are the questions we are going to be asked, not to mention the fact that ABAG employees are union and MTC employees are not. That creates a wrinkle all its own that those of you involved in retirement issues understand very well. We are bringing together the Ad Hoc Subcommittee. We asked the executive directors to outline all of these items in detail. What I would like to ask is that we all remain calm and hang in there while we do this analysis. If you have specific questions, please address them to Chair Cortese and myself. The ad hoc committee is Chair Cortese and I, Jim Spering who has been on MTC for a long time, immediate Past President of ABAG Mark Luce and Scott Haggerty. These are folks who have had leadership in both agencies and know how the agencies work. If there are any questions, I would be happy to answer them.

Member Adams said she fully supports looking at where they can have efficiencies and then improving collaborative efforts. What she does not understand is why MTC is going to give ABAG only six months of their funding. The funding could have been for the full year and then set timelines for the discussion and proposal.

Member Pierce answered she can only speculate that it was in conjunction with the move to the new building and that the integration of the two agencies was part of it and that six months was plenty of time to get this accomplished. Some of us do not agree with that. That was the reason we voted against it but there is an opportunity to bring this back in September, if we can determine that it needs sufficiently more time to bring that up for reconsideration at the MTC Commission. The money is in the budget for the full

year. We will ask that that be added in the September meeting to help us with obtaining other grants that are dependent on that.

Member Prevetti thanked Member Pierce for adding this to the agenda. It is very important that we all have an understanding of the discussions to date. She especially appreciates Member Pierce's work with the supervisor and the ad hoc committee to fully identify the questions that need to be answered and then to answer them as objectively as possible from the perspective of both agencies. It is important that the full breadth of what the planning and research entity does be on the table to be considered. It goes far beyond the SCS which has been the focus of some of the memoranda, not just PDA implementation but so many other programs. Many are anxiously waiting for our next Regional Housing Need Allocation process. She is trying to imagine that from a transportation perspective. For smaller agencies, particularly there are going to be a lot of questions about how that would actually work. She also appreciates not just the technical services but the acknowledgment of the governance and the role of the general assembly representing all of our communities here in the region. Should those functions migrate to another agency, what would the accountability be to all of the communities, because as you so correctly say, a lot of us smaller agencies just do not have the resources to do the forecasting and other work that the planning and research group does here at ABAG. Member Prevetti is looking forward to the analysis and the continued outreach.

Member Eklund said her concerns have been shared by previous speakers. The governance is really a very important issue because the MTC Commission does not have the appropriate city representation. In the San Francisco Bay Area, we have 101 cites, nine counties. If you look at the MTC Commission, the balance of cities is not there. ABAG, it is a Council of Governments, and has members from the cities and the counties throughout the San Francisco Bay Area. She suggested that part of the memo that is being developed by both MTC and ABAG should include an option of transportation planning being put into ABAG as you see in other Councils of Governments throughout California.

Member Pierce said they are trying to keep this an intelligent discussion, keep it calm, keep it rational, and keep it professional because they really do have to examine all of the implications.

Member Romero agreed to stay calm and look at those various options, either through a restructure or potentially through reasserting and understanding the relations between the two organizations, so they can come up with a more effective way of pursuing those regional goals that all of us are embracing, whether in the private sector or public sector. ABAG is a more democratic structure, let us make that very clear. He thanked Member Haggerty and Member Pierce for their work and leadership.

Member Terplan said this is really about what is best for the region, what is the best way to plan, what is the best way we think forward for decades. He asked whether MTC is looking at a range of scenarios, including some that feature reforms or modifications to MTC, or just moving ABAG planning functions to MTC. Is this conversation on the table?

Member Julie Pierce answered everything is on the table.

10. ADJOURNMENT

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

The next meeting of the Regional Planning Committee will be on October 7, 2015.

Submitted:

Wally Charles

Date: September 25, 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.