



Association  
of Bay Area  
Governments

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***The Footprint of Smart Growth***  
**Report Links Bay Area Growth Patterns and Livability**



*OAKLAND, CA* – Rather than letting congestion, overpriced housing and rundown neighborhoods continue to frustrate them, Bay Area residents are taking action to shape the future of their Bay Area. As part of the Bay Area **Smart Growth Strategy/Regional Livability Footprint Project** (Smart Growth/ Footprint Project), Bay Area community and business leaders unveiled today the three alternative Bay Area regional growth strategies that are composites of the visions developed by community members at a groundbreaking round of public workshops. They include:

- Locating most new growth in each county’s largest cities
- Creating pedestrian and transit oriented communities along an expanded transit network
- Bringing housing to existing employment areas and jobs to areas that are mostly residential.



The elected officials and community and business leaders who represent the Smart Growth/Footprint Project’s broad coalition of government, business, environmental and social equity organizations, are releasing the critical findings of the project and the region-wide meetings. The three alternatives being revealed reflect that building more housing, compactly and near downtown areas and transit stations, would have significant effects on the Bay Area’s open space, commuting patterns, and housing affordability. These alternatives are important to consider because they map out potential planning paths that could help direct local and regional efforts to increase housing supply, reduce traffic congestion, and improve neighborhoods.



The Bay Area Smart Growth/Footprint Project reflects a strategic vision that incorporates a prosperous **economy**, a quality **environment**, and social **equity** – **the three “Es.”** The smart growth focus concerns investing in the community to revitalize central cities and older suburbs. It is about housing that is adequate and affordable

with access to all transportation alternatives; it is about creating vibrant neighborhoods and protecting open space. Growing smart is about building neighborhoods that allow Bay Area residents to spend less time in their cars and more time enjoying their communities.

As part of the Bay Area **Smart Growth Strategy/Regional Livability Footprint** over 1000 community members came together at a series of workshops held throughout the Bay Area in Fall 2001 to craft a new footprint for the Bay Area to follow. The results of this first round of workshops and study are being unveiled today. The next step will be a second and final round of planning workshops, one in each county on Saturdays between April 13 and May 18, where participants will review the analysis of the three alternatives and vote on their preferred alternative or choose a blend. Efforts are underway to involve even more community residents and businesses than in round one to ensure the most representative vision possible.

The regional leaders at today's announcement include Senator **Tom Torlakson**, Chair of the Senate Local Government Committee; Bay Area Council President **Sunne Wright McPeak**; Association of Bay Area Governments' President Gwen Regalia and Walnut Creek Mayor Pro Tem; Metropolitan Transportation Commission Vice Chair Steve Kinsey and Marin County Supervisor; Sunnyvale Councilmember Manuel Valerio and Valley Transportation Authority Immediate Past Chair; Bay Area Air Quality Management District Board Member Mark DeSaulnier and Contra Costa County Supervisor; Bay Area Transportation and Land Use Coalition Chair Stuart Cohen; Executive Director Juliet Ellis of Urban Habitat Program; Executive Director Bruce Kern of Economic Development Alliance for Business; and ABAG Principal Planner Victoria Eisen, Manager of the Regional Agencies Smart Growth Strategy.

*(See attached for selected press conference speaker comments and workshop dates)*

### **How Were the Alternatives Formulated**

In Fall 2001, over 1,000 people participated in daylong urban planning workshops throughout the Bay Area sponsored by the Smart Growth/Footprint Project to consider the best plans for future growth and to identify needed incentives and regulatory changes for Smart Growth. In each county overflow crowds of elected officials, representatives of neighborhood groups, developers, environmentalists, and social equity advocates used an innovative computer modeling program as a springboard for intense discussions and negotiations about the pace, character, and shape of development in their communities. From these first round workshops held in each of the nine Bay Area counties, three alternative visions of the region's future were distilled.

### **The Bay Area Smart Growth Strategy/Regional Livability Project**

The Smart Growth Strategy/Regional Livability Footprint Project is a region-wide effort initiated by the Bay Area's five regional public agencies (Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), and Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and the Bay Area Alliance for Sustainable Development. (The Steering Committee comprises ABAG, Bay Area Council, Sierra Club, and Urban Habitat Program). For more information about the process, background, press conference materials, information on the workshops, and a list of regional sponsors visit the project web site at: **[www.abag.ca.gov/planning/smartgrowth](http://www.abag.ca.gov/planning/smartgrowth)**. Note that those wishing to attend the second round of workshops can register on line at [www.abag.ca.gov/2ndRoundworkshop.home](http://www.abag.ca.gov/2ndRoundworkshop.home).

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