

Plan Bay Area 2050: Round 2 Engagement

Background

In July 2019, staff presented the Plan Bay Area 2050 public engagement program to MTC and ABAG committees and working groups, outlining the three phases of engagement over the two-year Plan cycle. In early October 2019, staff kicked off the Plan with the first round of engagement, which consisted of a series of “pop-up” workshops at existing community events and an interactive online tool called Mayor of Bayville. Both efforts provided the public the opportunity to comment on the high-performing strategies from the Plan’s predecessor effort, the Horizon initiative. The input received helped staff prioritize and refine the strategies that were then approved by MTC and ABAG for further study and analysis through the Draft Blueprint phase.

Throughout spring 2020, staff analyzed the 25 integrated strategies to determine how far they might be able to move the region toward a more affordable, connected, diverse, healthy and vibrant Bay Area for all by 2050. The results of this analysis showed that the strategies made meaningful gains on some key regional issue areas, such as regional affordability, transit and roadway safety, and infrastructure protections from sea level rise and earthquakes. However, five main challenges remained as key focus areas for revision this summer. Summer 2020 engagement efforts focused on seeking input from the public on new or enhanced strategies that would best address these remaining challenges.

Round 2 Engagement Activities

The second round of Plan Bay Area 2050 public engagement began as the Bay Area and the rest of the world began contending with the novel coronavirus pandemic, which required all residents to shelter-in-place and maintain physical distancing. This meant staff had to quickly pivot and revise in-person public engagement to be held entirely virtually. Staff leveraged a suite of digital and non-digital approaches—which provided the opportunity to try new technology while also reaching a broader audience—including public, community and tribal workshops and focus groups using Zoom software, telephone town hall meetings using the Broadnet telephone meeting system, an online survey using the Typeform polling platform, stakeholder workshops using Mural collaboration software and a statistically-valid telephone poll to ask Bay Area residents key questions about various elements within the Draft Blueprint. In all, **over 7,000 Bay Area residents** participated via the various engagement platforms.

In total, staff held 25 digital and non-digital events beginning in late spring, with the majority of events happening during the Draft Blueprint’s public comment period from July 10, 2020 to August 10, 2020. Below is a description of both the digital and non-digital engagement, including an overview of the results.

Digital Engagement

1. Digital Workshops (one focused on each Bay Area county):

Staff held nine Zoom public workshops between July 15 and August 5. The two-hour workshops consisted of a detailed presentation on the Draft Blueprint and its outcomes and used the Poll Everywhere polling software to ask participants to select preferred strategies that would best address the five remaining challenges in the Draft Blueprint. To attract a greater number of participants, staff promoted the workshops via a paid digital promotional campaign and by sending emails to MTC's and partner's contacts. In total, **over 270 people** participated in the nine events, yielding **over 350 comments**. In addition, video recordings of the workshops were posted on Facebook and YouTube, which garnered approximately **400 additional views**. Also, the San Francisco Chronicle and other local news outlets prominently featured Plan Bay Area 2050's public engagement in mid- to late-July.

2. Online Survey:

Using the Typeform survey platform, staff released an online survey that mirrored that of the digital workshops. The survey ran from July 10 to August 10 and was promoted digitally to Bay Area residents via a paid campaign on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Snapchat. It was also promoted through our Facebook page and hosted on the Plan Bay Area website. Overall, the survey yielded **over 3,900 survey responses** and **over 1,700 additional comments**.

3. Stakeholder Workshops and Office Hours:

Using the Zoom program, staff hosted three stakeholder workshops, allowing for a deeper dive into specific topics for technical experts. Events on Housing and the Economy (July 29), Equity (July 30), and Transportation and the Environment (August 4) attracted **over 160 partners and stakeholders** to provide detailed input on the remaining challenges in the Draft Blueprint. MTC/ABAG staff led small group collaborative discussions using the Mural online platform, which functions as a digital white board that enables people to collaborate visually and remotely to solve problems like the challenges posed by the Draft Blueprint. The three events yielded **over 950 comments**.

Staff also held office hours that aimed to assist local jurisdiction and partner agency staff with questions about Plan Bay Area 2050 and its Draft Blueprint. In total, **10 jurisdictions or partner agencies** requested assistance to understand the data inputs and models used to estimate housing and employment growth. In most cases, maps and explanatory memos were sent after office hours, and input provided will be integrated into baseline data for the Final Blueprint when appropriate. Refer to **Attachment E** for more information on office hour feedback.

4. Community-Based Organization Focus Groups:

Like the public and stakeholder workshops, staff held seven focus groups in partnership with community-based organizations via the Zoom platform. Held prior to the release of the Draft Blueprint, the focus groups were conducted in late spring and served as listening sessions for the participants, who provided input on ways to improve or alter the Draft Blueprint's strategies. In total, the focus groups hosted **over 60 participants** and yielded **more than 260 comments** on the Draft Blueprint challenges.

5. Digital Tribal Summit:

On August 3, staff held the traditionally in-person tribal summit digitally via Zoom, presenting information on Plan Bay Area 2050 and the Draft Blueprint to tribal participants. Staff also outlined the upcoming Notice of Preparation process for the Plan's Environmental Impact Report, which includes a formal consultation with the tribal governments per California state law. Finally, Caltrans District 4 staff provided an update on applicable projects.

While staff invited all federally recognized tribal governments in the nine county Bay Area to join the summit, only a small group of two participated in the event. The workshop was conducted in a conversational style, as the size of the group lent itself to facilitated verbal comments/questions. The summit did yield several comments, which were included in the official record.

Non-Digital Engagement

1. Telephone Town Halls:

To reach those with limited internet access and/or limited English proficiency, staff held five telephone town hall sessions: two in English, one in Spanish, one in Mandarin and one in Cantonese¹. Staff promoted the events via a printed flyer directly mailed to 20,000 Bay Area households located in Communities of Concern in all nine Bay Area counties and via the Nextdoor social media platform. As well, a member of the Policy Advisory Council promoted the telephone town halls to members of the unhoused community.

The telephone town hall meetings yielded few participants and **approximately 25 comments**. To attract greater participation, staff will work to increase promotion of future telephone town hall meetings and will fully integrate our promotion efforts into our overall promotion strategy.

2. Statistically Valid Telephone Poll:

The poll has been a key public engagement component for the past several Plans, providing useful data to the Commission and ABAG Board about various Plan elements. This Plan's poll focused on asking Bay Area residents about the 25 Blueprint strategies, asking poll participants to provide their level of support for strategies related to each Blueprint element: transportation, housing, environment and

¹ This is the first time that MTC/ABAG has held telephone town hall events in-language.

economy. Polling took place from July 22 to August 7 and yielded **(just shy of) 3k responses**. Results of the poll are included in agenda item 5b.

Results

Staff integrated the results from the digital workshops, the online survey, and the telephone town halls, which focused on requesting input on which strategies best met the challenges remaining in the Draft Blueprint. A summary of the results is listed in Figure 1 below and Table 1 on the following page. Additionally, results from the statistically valid telephone poll are included as part of agenda item 5b. Finally, all detailed results, including county-specific results from the digital workshops and all correspondence are available on the Plan Bay Area website at planbayarea.org/your-comments/plan-bay-area-2050/draft-blueprint-comments-summer-2020.

Figure 1. Priority Ranking: Which Two of the Five Draft Blueprint Challenges Should Be the Top Priorities for the Final Blueprint?

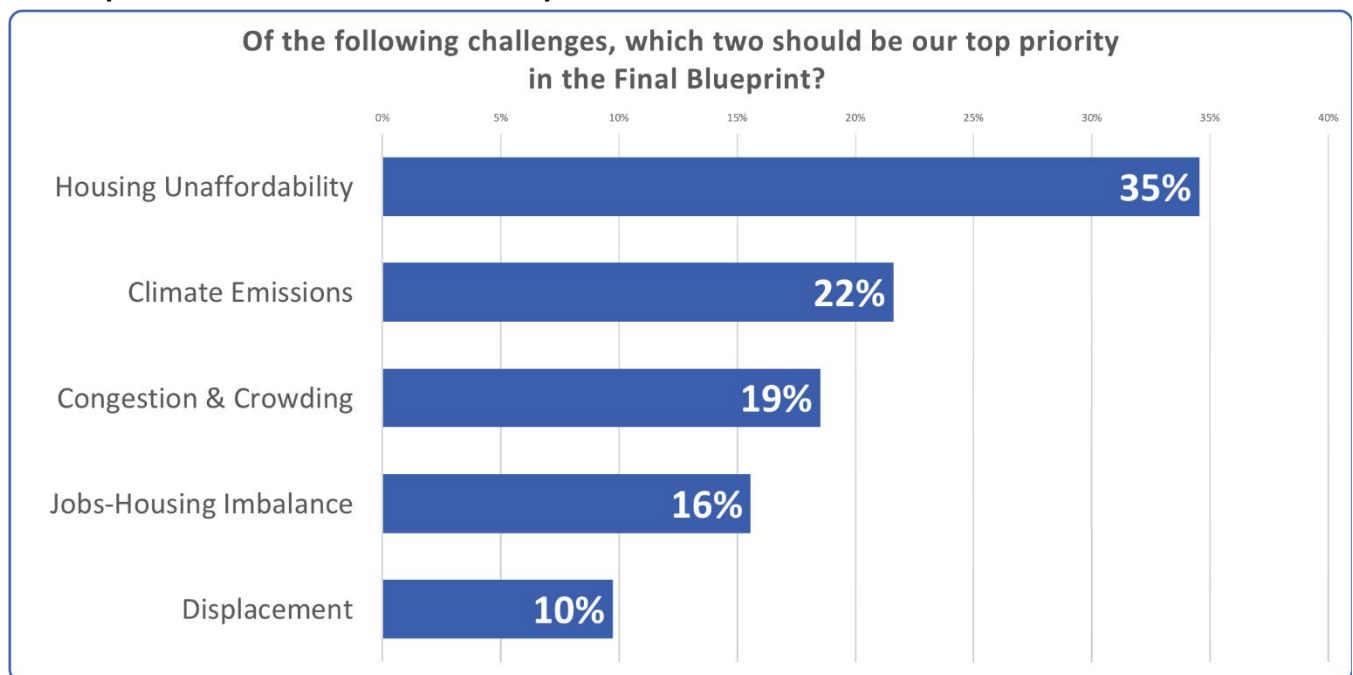


Table 1. Summary of Public Engagement Feedback

Challenge	Highlights of Public Engagement Feedback	Top 2 Strategy Ideas to Address Challenge
Affordable Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build more housing (affordable, middle-income, near transit, near jobs, mixed-use, accessible, eco-friendly) • Provide homeownership assistance • Hold jurisdictions accountable to RHNA • Increase density, build up, address zoning restrictions • Support expansion of community land trusts • Pass the regional housing bond 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Invest in constructing more affordable housing. 2. Expand capacity for new housing in communities with well-resourced schools and good access to jobs.
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern the region will not meet its greenhouse gas emissions target • Support for the Climate Initiatives Program • Implement a carbon tax/offsets • Expand and improve transit so people do not have to drive 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Require employers to implement mandatory work from home policies 2 or 3 days per week. 2. Expand electric vehicle and charging infrastructure subsidies, especially for lower-income households.
Congestion and Crowding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate, improve and expand transit service • Prioritize implementation of Complete Streets • Address first-mile access to regional transit systems • Little support for widening freeways and for all-lane tolling 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Redesign public transit systems to provide more seamless transfers and focus service on high frequency routes. 2. Extend regional rail services to new communities and increase the frequency of service.
Jobs-Housing Imbalance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address wealth disparities: implement a universal basic income, livable wages, debt forgiveness, tax the rich • Bring jobs near housing; provide incentives for East Bay job growth • Strong support for incubator programs 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide tax subsidies for employers to relocate middle-wage jobs closer to affordable housing. 2. Expand business incubator programs to create new small businesses in housing-rich communities.
Displacement Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen household and commercial renter protections • Strong support for job training programs • Address wealth disparities: implement a universal basic income, livable wages, debt forgiveness, tax the rich 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expand investment in the preservation of permanently affordable housing in communities facing displacement. 2. Ensure ample affordable housing is built in communities most at risk of displacement.