

**Metropolitan Transportation Commission and Association of Bay Area Governments
Community Advisory Council**

May 1, 2026

Agenda Item 4.a.

Looking Ahead to Plan Bay Area 2060

Subject:

Introduction to Plan Bay Area, reflecting on past plans and looking ahead to the next major update, Plan Bay Area 2060, which will kick off this year as a significant MTC-ABAG planning effort for the next four years.

Background:

Plan Bay Area is the long-range regional plan for the San Francisco Bay Area. It integrates transportation, land use, housing, environmental, and economic considerations into a single planning framework that focuses growth near transit to support complete, connected, and affordable communities. The plan establishes regional priorities rather than mandates, offering a shared vision and strategic framework while respecting local land use authority. It also evolves with emerging needs, delivering results through strong partnership and local leadership.

Plan Bay Area is updated every four years, alternating between minor and major updates. It fulfills multiple regulatory requirements, serving as the federal Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the state Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) as required under Senate Bill (SB) 375 (Steinberg, 2008); planning requirements are further described in Attachment A.

The Evolution of Plan Bay Area:

Across its iterations, Plan Bay Area has expanded in scope and ambition. The first plan, adopted in 2013, pioneered the integration of transportation, land use, and climate policy, with an emphasis on sustainability and focused growth. Plan Bay Area 2040 (2017) was the first minor update and remained largely oriented toward fulfilling regulatory requirements in its policies and investments. Developed amid growing housing and transportation challenges, Plan Bay Area 2040 led to the convening of the Committee to House the Bay Area, or CASA, which resulted in subsequent efforts and actions responsive to the housing crisis and charted the course for future plan updates. Plan Bay Area 2050 (2021) marked a major shift, developed during a period of unprecedented uncertainty, and featured a significantly broader planning framework, including

additional elements, strategies, and more detailed cost analysis. Notably, Plan Bay Area 2050 centered equity and resilience to uncertainty as core cross-cutting themes informing the development of plan strategies and placed a strong focus on demonstrating equitable outcomes for all. The subsequent Plan Bay Area 2050+ update, adopted in 2026, built on this foundation while responding to post pandemic conditions, fiscal constraints, and the need to further elevate climate and resilience considerations. Together, the two most recent iterations reflect a more expansive and aspirational approach to addressing regional challenges.

Plan Bay Area 2050+ lays out how the region can accommodate over 900,000 new households and more than 1.3 million new jobs by 2050, while fostering a more affordable, connected, diverse, healthy, and vibrant Bay Area. Structured around four elements, 11 themes, and 35 strategies, the plan directs over \$1.4 trillion in investments toward Bay Area transportation, housing, economic development, and environmental resilience. Subject to review and approval by the California Air Resources Board (CARB), the plan is expected to meet its statutory 2035 target of a 19% per capita reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from light-duty vehicles compared to 2005 levels. In developing the 2050+ update, regionwide outreach solicited input from 17,500+ residents through various forms of engagement, including 41 pop-up workshops, 3 online surveys, and sustained partnerships with 22 community-based organizations.

The predecessor MTC Policy Advisory Council had a significant impact on the development and revision of past plans, especially the evolving breadth and focus of community engagement. Plan Bay Area 2050+ incorporated many substantive modifications resulting from the Policy Advisory Council's feedback, particularly changes to better meet the needs of people with disabilities. Staff anticipates that the new MTC-ABAG Community Advisory Council will similarly play an essential role in helping to shape Plan Bay Area 2060.

Plan Bay Area 2060:

Kicking off this year and continuing as a significant MTC-ABAG planning effort for the next four years, Plan Bay Area 2060 will be a major update, broadly reevaluating core components of the plan and updating planning assumptions. Potential shifts in state planning requirements may emerge mid-process, including changes to the original state law (SB 375) that sets key

requirements applicable to the plan, as well as a new GHG target and revised guidelines from CARB.

This fifth iteration of the plan will be aligned with the seventh cycle of the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) process. Every eight years, the State Department of Housing and Community Development provides a Regional Housing Needs Determination (RHND), which is next expected in early 2028. ABAG then develops a methodology to turn the assigned RHND into RHNA allocations to individual jurisdictions, which are required to be “informed by” the long-range regional plan.

Challenges and Opportunities:

Past iterations of the plan highlight key lessons for Plan Bay Area 2060. Earlier iterations lacked the comprehensive strategies and analysis needed to address regional priorities, while more recent updates have struggled to connect aspirational visions to the concrete realities of today. There have been gaps between the plan’s ambitious vision and the available resources and authority necessary for implementation. Fluctuating political and funding constraints have further complicated project prioritization and the plan’s long-term durability. The plan has also been challenged by the inherent complexity of its long-range, region-wide scope, which can make it harder to understand and translate into near-term, local-level decision-making.

Plan Bay Area 2060 presents an opportunity to elevate emerging priorities by planning for uncertainty driven by demographic, economic, technological, and climate forces. Analysis of existing conditions and trends will ground the plan in the lived realities of Bay Area residents and set the stage for exploring multiple growth and funding trajectories, assessing tradeoffs, and clearly prioritizing strategies. The current land use framework and strategies will be evaluated and updated to strengthen efforts like improving affordability, reducing homelessness, and bolstering resilience to hazards and climate risks. With a goal of aligning the plan’s vision with its implementation, staff aim to make complex content more intuitive and readily applicable, simplifying the narrative by connecting long-range planning to a diversity of everyday issues.

Challenges and opportunities for Plan Bay Area 2060 are further summarized in Attachment A.

Finalizing a Scope of Work for Plan Bay Area 2060:

Over the coming months, staff will undertake early outreach to refine the scope of Plan Bay Area 2060. A key focus at this stage will be designing a planning process that is both disciplined and realistic, while still allowing room for long-range, regional thinking. Scoping will seek to find a balance between emerging trends and best practices in the field of regional planning, the Bay Area's most consequential near- and long-term concerns, statutory requirements, and progress toward a shared vision.

Staff propose to organize plan development around four primary areas of work over the next four years: *Foundations*, *Outlook*, *Blueprint*, and *Final Plan*. *Foundations* will establish a shared understanding of current conditions, reaffirm the plan's vision, and assess the strengths and limitations of the plan's existing land use framework and strategies. *Outlook* will examine external forces and uncertainty, using scenarios to test assumptions around growth, funding, and tradeoffs. The *Blueprint* phase will integrate updated strategies, land use frameworks, and projects into a cohesive approach and evaluate performance and outcomes. The *Final Plan* phase will synthesize this work into a draft and final plan, supported by environmental review, supplemental analyses, and an implementation plan.

Next Steps:

Staff will return to the Council in June to share the proposed Public Participation Plan (PPP) and again in the fall to formally kick off Plan Bay Area 2060, at which time we will begin outreach and engagement on existing conditions and revisit the plan's Vision and Guiding Principles. In the meantime, staff will continue gathering input and feedback from key partners and finalize the proposed scope for Plan Bay Area 2060.

Questions for the Council:

During this time while staff continues to develop a final scope for Plan Bay Area 2060, we ask that the Council reflect on the following discussion questions:

- What potential challenges or opportunities do you foresee in the development of Plan Bay Area 2060?
- Which aspects of developing Plan Bay Area 2060 do you believe will benefit most from the input of the Council?

- Where do you see the ideal role for sustained engagement with specific community representatives, and for broad, maximum-reach public outreach?

Attachments:

- Attachment A: Presentation

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew B. Fremier". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Andrew B. Fremier