

# Association of Bay Area Governments

## Executive Board

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March 20, 2025

Agenda Item 11.a.

San Francisco Estuary Partnership

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### **Subject:**

Report on ABAG Resilience Technical Assistance

### **Background:**

The San Francisco Bay Area is experiencing an increasing urgency to address impacts related to a range of climate change-related hazards, including vulnerability to rising seas and storm surges along the shoreline. According to the California Action Strategy published by the CA Natural Resources Agency, the San Francisco Bay will face warming temperatures, increased fire risk, changes in precipitation, and increases in sea level rise and extreme storms. Local governments are working to respond to these hazards through community-based planning, project development, and implementation of multi-benefit projects. Direct technical assistance is crucial to responding to these challenges and giving local governments the tools and resources needed.

### **ABAG's Role in Technical Assistance**

ABAG is uniquely positioned to lead the coordination of resilience technical assistance in the region given its role as the Regional Council of Governments and its experience administering large complex technical assistance undertakings including the Regional Housing Technical Assistance (RHTA) Program and other local assistance to support seismic and wildfire retrofits.

Importantly, ABAG serves as the host agency for the San Francisco Estuary Partnership (Estuary Partnership). As a National Estuary Program under the US Environmental Protection Agency, the Estuary Partnership is a collaborative, place-based, non-regulatory program that leverages federal, state, and regional resources to increase the health and resilience of the San Francisco Estuary. The Estuary Partnership focuses on advancing nature-based solutions that support multiple benefits to communities, nature, and the economy. The Estuary Partnership works at the regional scale as well as at the local scale, providing technical assistance to advance on-the-ground projects in partnership with local jurisdictions and communities. The Estuary Partnership is currently engaged in several sea level rise planning and implementation efforts across the region.

While ABAG is well-positioned to administer and lead a regional collaborative technical assistance program to advance climate resilience, scaling up to meet the need of the region for enhanced technical assistance services will require additional resources. As the Estuary Partnership relies solely on grant funding, a significant increase in resources will be needed to support ABAG and SFEP's work to deliver the level of technical assistance needed for the San Francisco Bay Area.

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### Regional Agency Collaboration on SLR Adaptation

Regional agencies are working together to address an increasing urgency for action and improve coordination. One driver for increased action is the passage of SB 272 which requires local jurisdictions to undertake sea level rise vulnerability assessments and develop adaptation plans to be approved by the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) for the San Francisco Bay.

Recognizing the importance of regional coordination on sea level rise, an Interagency Flooding and Sea Level Rise MOU was signed in 2024 by the Bay Area Regional Collaborative and its originating member agencies (the Association of Bay Area Governments, Bay Area Air Quality Management District, Metropolitan Transportation Commission, and San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission) and its participating member agencies (California State Coastal Conservancy, California Department of Transportation District 4, and San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board). The MOU commits each agency to aligning efforts, expertise, and core functions to support the delivery of priority, multi-benefit, flood risk management projects across the Bay Area. The MOU outlines how the agencies are uniquely situated to establish and deliver a collaborative technical assistance program. While many agencies have a role in providing technical assistance, under the MOU, ABAG is identified as the entity responsible for administering and leading a Regional Technical Assistance Program “which provides staffing, services and support to cities, counties, special districts, and other key partners to move from planning to project management and delivery.” The MOU acknowledges that the scale of the program will be dependent on sufficient resources being secured.

#### Issues:

None

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**Recommendations:**

Information

**Attachment:**

A. Presentation

**Reviewed:**



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