



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



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Executive Director

ADRIENNE WEIL

Secretary / Legal Counsel

Dear ABAG Delegates,

The weeks spent sheltering in place during this public health emergency underscore the importance of resilience as a key to our work. As the executive director for ABAG, as well as for the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), I have been working with all of you for the last fiscal year. Our work together includes the long-range joint ABAG-MTC Horizon/Plan Bay Area 2050 planning initiative as well as ABAG's work in housing planning and its efforts on the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). All this work is to make the Bay Area more resilient — to a wide range of current and future challenges.

While the coronavirus emergency eventually will pass, ABAG's Resilience Program supports members' preparedness for earthquakes and other natural disasters that are sure to come; and supports planning and investment to meet our region's enduring housing challenges and to adapt to sea level rise and other long-range environmental factors. Sea level rise also impacts the San Francisco Bay Trail Program's work to close gaps in the Trail. The Estuary Partnership is addressing the challenge with its work to improve estuary health.

Resilience is a word that applies to the ABAG-MTC staff as well. We are a consolidated staff, serving two independent organizations with unique statutory responsibilities. Three years into consolidation, we are still learning.

Governance has been and will continue to be a topic of discussion. In July 2019 we began a conversation to look at how and if we should consolidate or otherwise better coordinate governance. Over the past fiscal year a core set of MTC and ABAG committees have met jointly, providing opportunities for both the Executive Board and the MTC Commission to work together. These partnerships will continue to be central to how we work both internally and externally.

Housing the Bay Area also can be defined as resilience-related work, with extensive challenges to meeting the region's housing needs. The ABAG and MTC Housing Legislative working group developed amendments to numerous housing bills, including AB 1487 (Chiu), which authorizes ABAG and MTC to place a regional housing funding measure on the ballot.

Thanks to the Housing Methodology Committee, the sixth cycle of the RHNA process is off to a great start and ABAG will distribute the numbers by the end of FY 2021. President Arreguin's letter has more detail about this collaborative effort. The expanded work done by the Planning Group's Housing unit will help cities and counties implement RHNA via the local housing element and the Governor's Budget Act provided assistance with a one-time allocation of \$250 million to regions, counties and local jurisdictions.

As mentioned above, the development of Plan Bay Area 2050 is now well underway, building on the joint Horizon planning initiative with MTC that considered various policy and investment solutions designed to ensure the Bay Area can continue to thrive across a range of future scenarios. Plan Bay Area 2050 work will continue through the next fiscal year, with a task list that includes not just the final Plan document but an associated Environmental Impact Report and an Implementation Plan.

Clearly, there is much to do over the next fiscal year. And in a region with skyrocketing living costs, the most burdened households tend to be households of color. So we are committed to making equity a top priority. To this end, ABAG and MTC launched an Equity Platform. Bringing an equity lens to our work and related issues is critical if we are to learn from the past and bring about a just, inclusive and dynamic Bay Area where expanding access to opportunity brings greater dividends to our whole region.

More information on ABAG's programs and activities is included in this document and more on abag.ca.gov. I look forward to discussing these and other items at our June 11th General Assembly.

Sincerely,

Therese W. McMillan
Executive Director