



PLAN BAY AREA 2050 +



ASSOCIATION OF BAY AREA GOVERNMENTS  
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

# 2024 Equity Priority Communities Update

*Data update using America Community Survey (ACS) 2022 5-  
Year Estimates*

MTC Policy Advisory Council

April 26, 2024



# Today's Agenda



What are Equity Priority Communities (EPCs)?



2024 EPC Update



What is next for MTC Equity Priority Communities?

# What are EPCs?

- EPCs are designated geographies (census tracts) that have high concentrations of underserved populations.
- EPCs are recalculated every four years using the latest American Community Survey Data.
- EPCs were known as Communities of Concern (CoC) until May 2021.
- The methodology that identifies EPCs was revised in 2016 and remains unchanged.



# How are EPCs Defined?

- EPCs are census tracts that have a significant concentration of disadvantage “factors”.
- “Thresholds” are created to determine statistically significant concentrations for each “factor”.
- How does a tract qualify to be an EPC?
  1. Meets thresholds for both people of color and low-income households
  2. Meets thresholds for both low-income households and three of any of the remaining six factors

## MTC Equity Priority Community Disadvantage Factors

Low Income

People Of  
Color

People With  
Disabilities

Limited  
English  
Proficiency

Zero-Vehicle  
Household

Seniors 75  
Years and  
Over

Single-Parent  
Family

Severely Rent-  
Burdened  
Household

# How are EPCs Used?



## Within MTC/ABAG

- Planning (*e.g., Plan Bay Area*)
- Funding decisions
- Public engagement

## Beyond MTC/ABAG

- Equity analyses
- Prioritizing projects
- Grants and funding



# Data Considerations for 2024 EPC Update

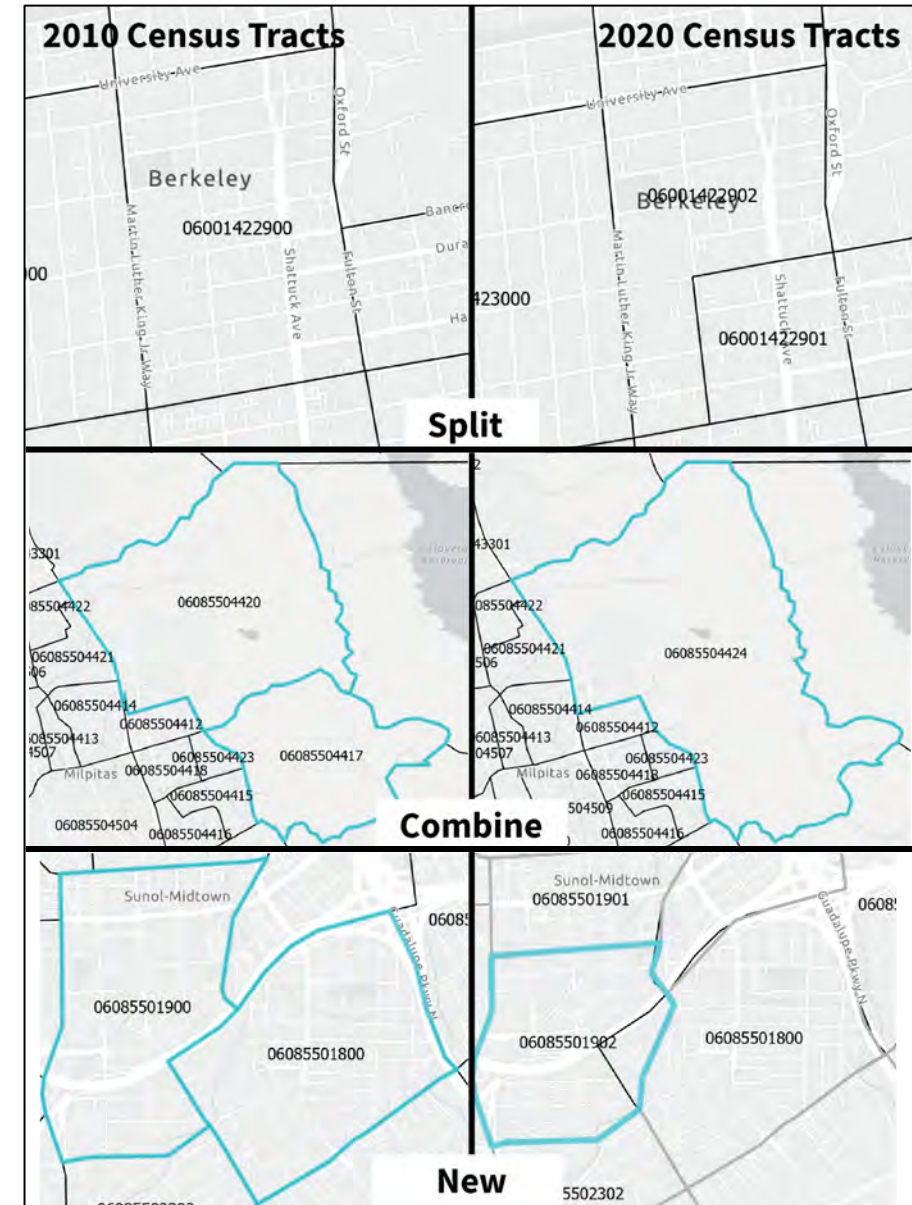
## Limited and Focused Update Using ACS Data from 2018-2022

## Census Tract Boundary Changes

- Bay Area census tracts (EPC unit of analysis) **increased** from **1,588** tracts to **1,772**, posing challenges for comparisons
- Number of census tracts increased in all counties except Napa

## COVID-19 Impacts

- In 2020 and 2021, only two-thirds of the typical survey responses were gathered
- Margins of error were higher than normal



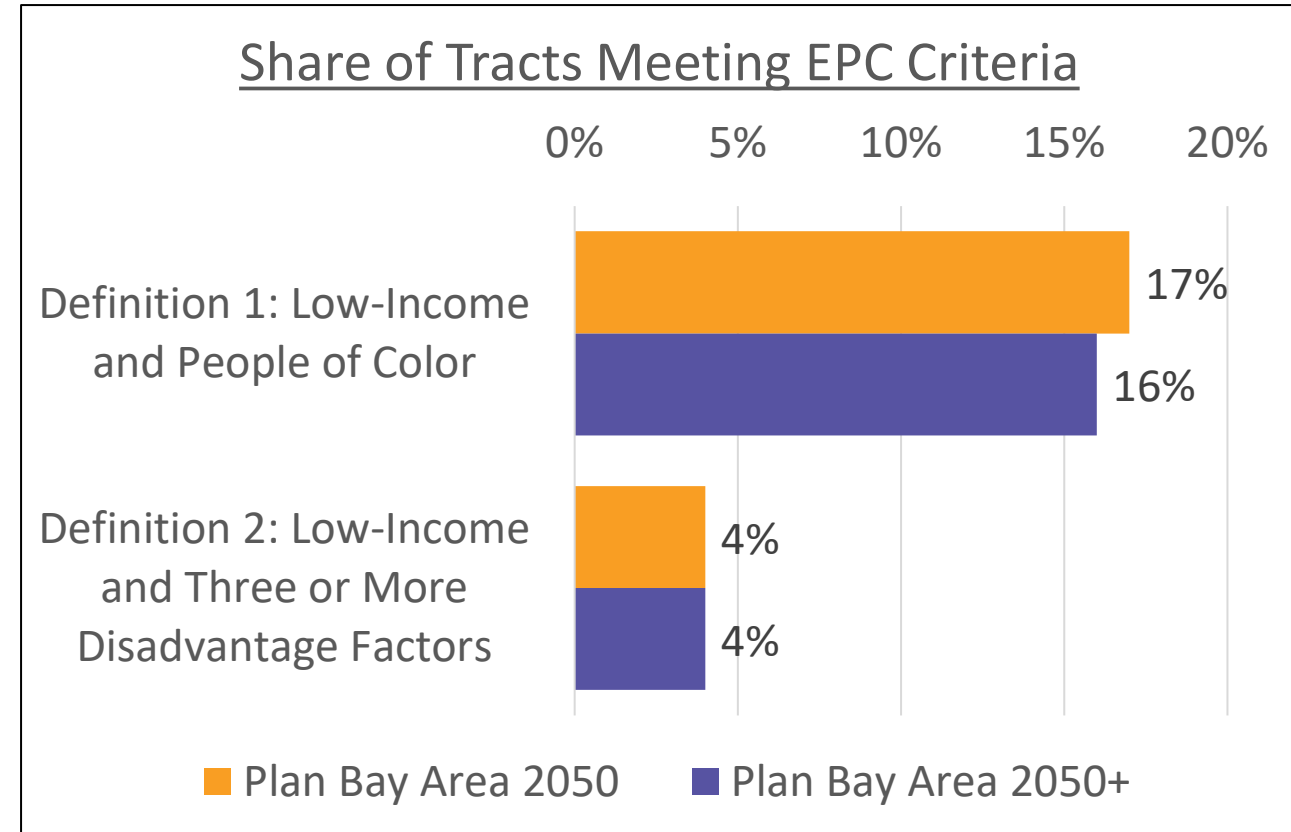
# Updated EPC Concentration Thresholds

<i>Disadvantage Factor</i>	Adopted Thresholds: Plan Bay Area 2050		Proposed Thresholds: Plan Bay Area 2050+		<i>Change</i>
	<i>Mean of Tract-Level Concentration</i>	<i>Concentration Threshold</i>	<i>Mean of Tract-Level Concentration</i>	<i>Concentration Threshold</i>	
People of Color	58%	70%	61%	72%	↑
Low Income (< 200% FPL)	21%	28%	18%	24%	↓
Limited English Proficiency	8%	12%	7%	11%	↓
Zero-Vehicle Household	9%	15%	10%	16%	↑
Seniors 75 Years and Over	6%	8%	7%	10%	↑
People with Disability	10%	12%	10%	12%	—
Single-Parent Family	13%	18%	12%	16%	↓
Rent-Burdened Household	10%	14%	10%	14%	—

For Plan Bay Area 2050 and Plan Bay Area 2050+, thresholds were set at exactly the mean of concentrations at the tract-level plus half a standard deviation. Data sourced from American Community 5-Year Estimates for 2014-2018, 2018-2022.

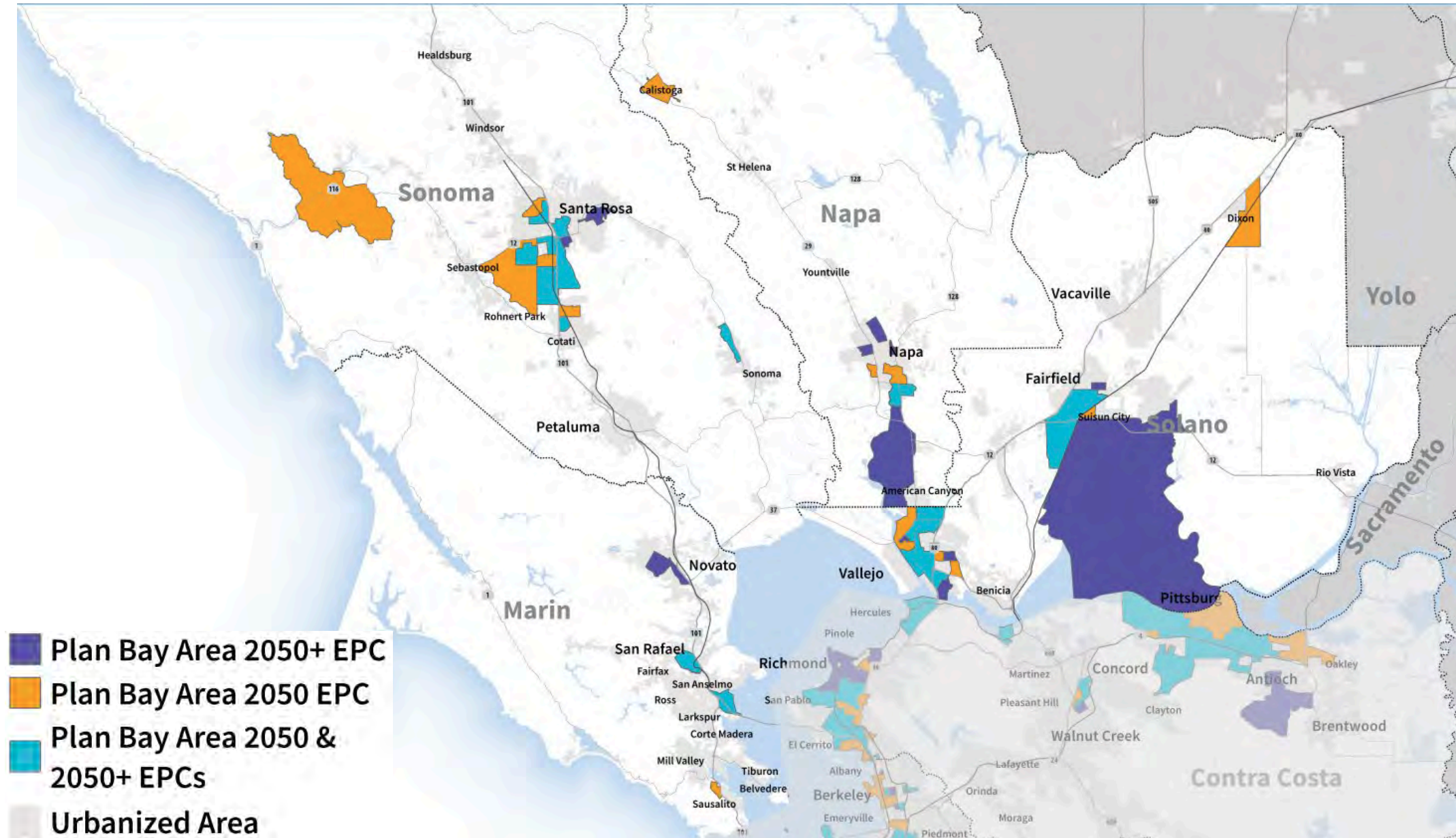
# Plan Bay Area 2050+ vs. Plan Bay Area 2050 EPCs

- Most counties saw a decline in the share of EPCs, except for Marin County which saw a moderate increase.
- Equity Priority Community tracts meeting the low-income and people of color criteria declined slightly.
  - Staff analysis indicates that this can be attributed to a decline in low-income households.
  - Tracts meeting the low-income and three-plus disadvantage factor criteria stayed the same.



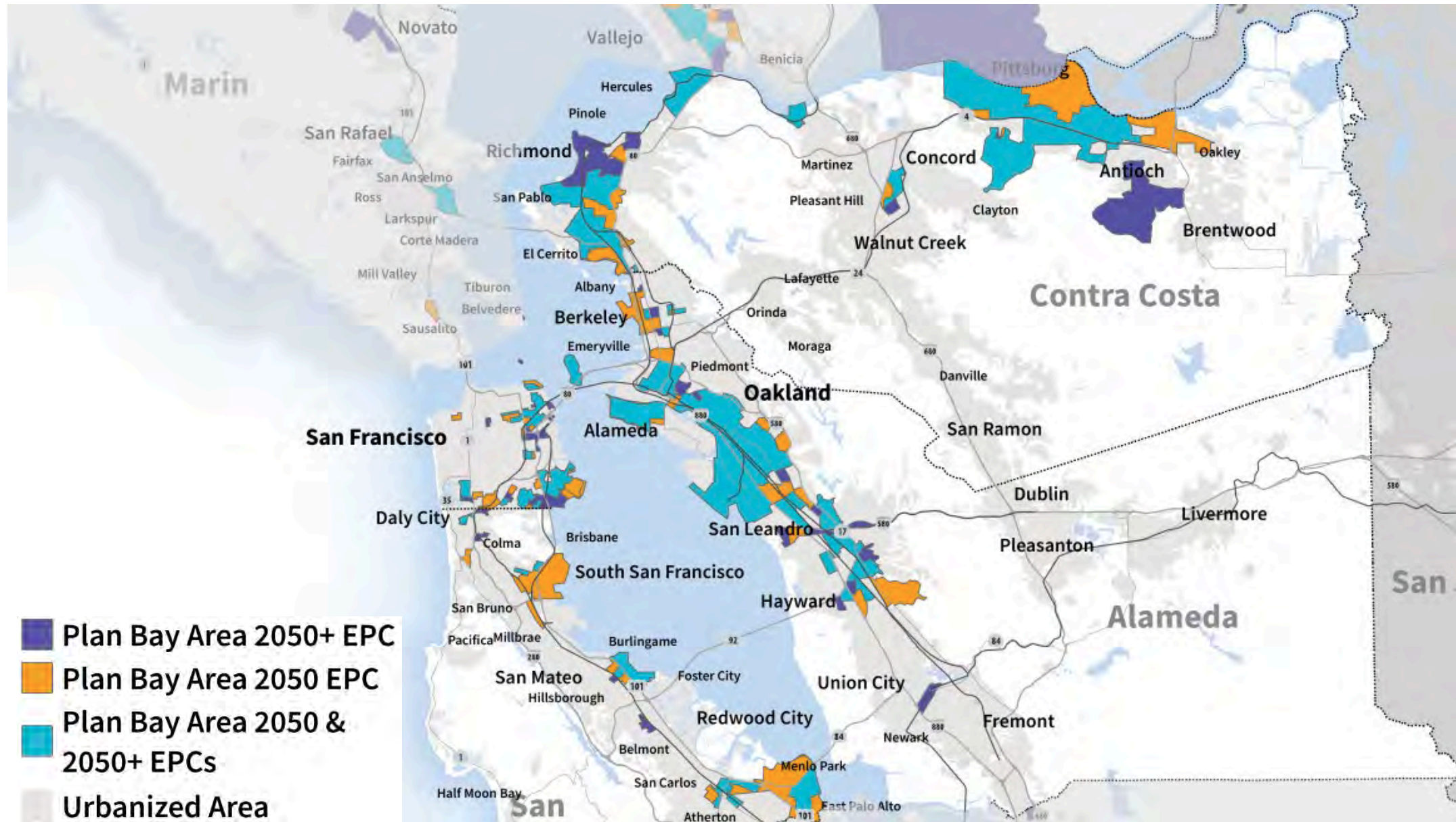


# Notable EPC Changes – North Bay



*See Attachment D for more detailed views of Plan Bay Area 2050+ Draft EPCs*

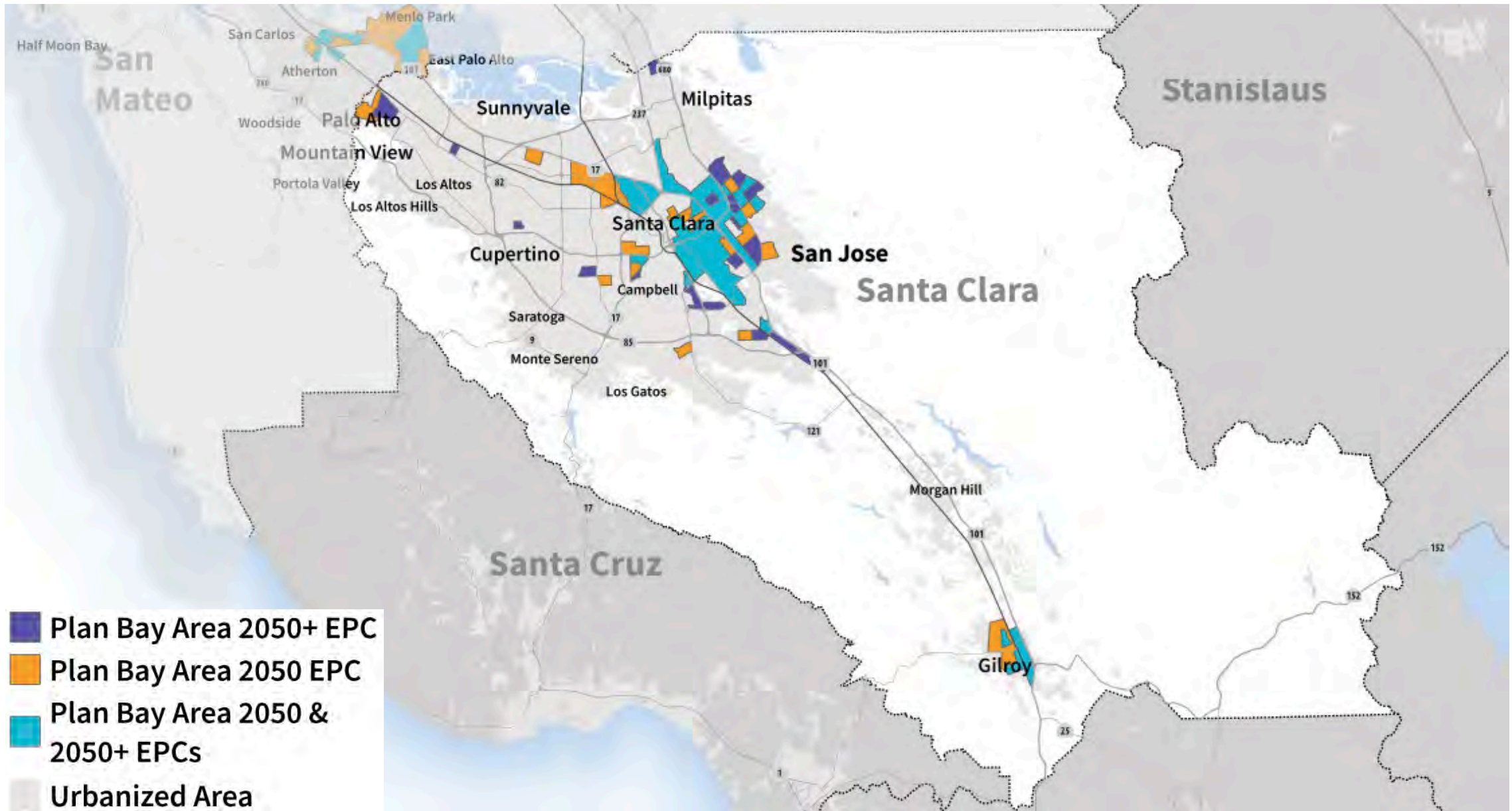
# Notable EPC Changes – Central Bay



See Attachment D for more detailed views of Plan Bay Area 2050+ Draft EPCs



# Notable EPC Changes – South Bay



See Attachment D for more detailed views of Plan Bay Area 2050+ Draft EPCs



# Factors Driving Changes in EPC Status

- In the 2024 update, the primary factor affecting EPC status was changes to the low-income population, although not the only one.
- There are many different dynamics that influence population demographics and therefore drive changes in EPC designations.
- American Community Survey data can tell us “what” changed but not “why”.
- Community engagement and supplemental data sources are key to understanding the complete story; MTC staff will center this type of engagement and analysis in an upcoming, broader effort to re-envision the EPC methodology.



# EPC Re-Envisioning

- In late 2024, MTC will kick off a multi-year effort to re-envision the EPC framework.
- This effort will:
  - Build on the collaboration from past planning efforts
  - Engage with advocates and partner agencies
  - Work with historically underserved communities to better identify needs and values
  - Address known gaps in the existing EPC methodology (i.e., displacement of low-income populations); better identify the needs of people with disabilities; move beyond a solely place-based framework



Photo: Zander Design

# Next Steps

## Spring 2024

- Public Release of Draft EPC Map with Comment Period (April 15 through May 15, 2024)
- Finalize 2024 Equity Priority Communities for use in Plan Bay Area 2050+ and other deliverables

## Fall 2024 and Beyond

- Kick off multi-year Equity Priority Communities Re-Envisioning in late 2024
- Release of Plan Bay Area 2050+ Draft Equity Analysis in spring 2025
- Adoption of Plan Bay Area 2050+ in fall 2025; kick off Plan Bay Area 2060 in 2026





PLAN BAY AREA 2050+



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# Questions?

## Discussion Questions:

- 1) What questions do you have about the draft 2024 Equity Priority Communities maps and their integration of new ACS data?
- 2) What local insights do you have about census tracts that were previously EPCs or census tracts that are newly-identified EPCs?

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