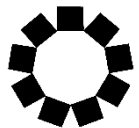


PRIORITY CONSERVATION AREA **REFRESH**

PRESENTATION ORGANIZATION

- 1. Introduction and background**
- 2. Overview of PCA challenges and proposed reforms**
- 3. Proposed changes to how PCAs are defined**
- 4. Using data to inform PCAs**
- 5. Next steps**



Association of
Bay Area
Governments



Metropolitan
Transportation
Commission

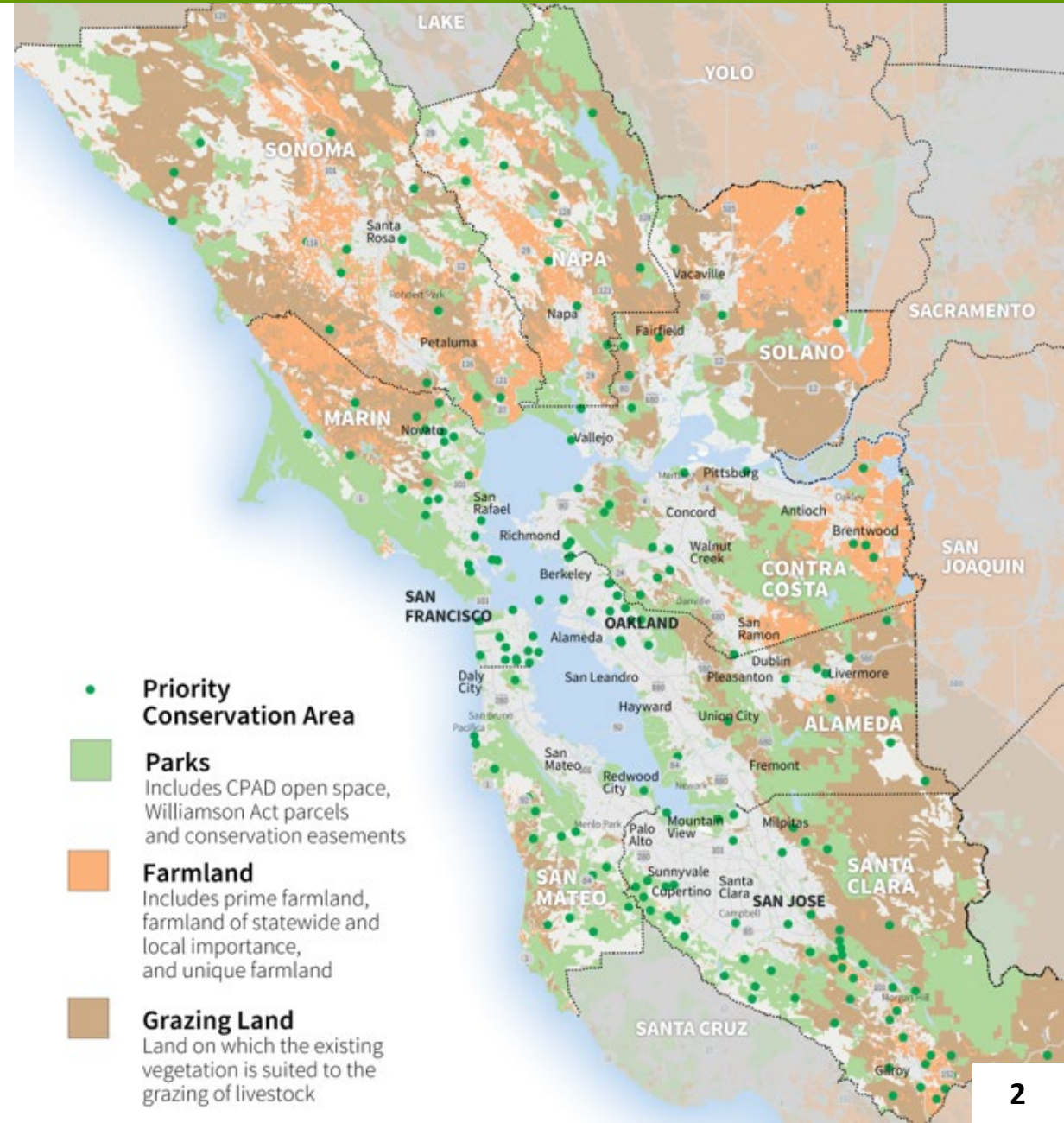


ABAG Executive Board
May 16, 2024

Background on the PCA Planning Framework



- Priority Conservation Areas (PCAs) were conceived at the same time as Priority Development Areas (PDAs) as part of a **planning framework established in 2007**.
- PCAs were identified and nominated through a **voluntary, locally-driven** process by cities, counties, and park/open space districts and designated by the ABAG Executive Board.
- Today, the region's **185 PCAs** encompass four primary designations: natural landscapes, agricultural lands, urban greening, and regional recreation.
- MTC and the State Coastal Conservancy administer the parallel PCA Grant Program, which has programmed over **\$30 million** in grants to support PCA projects since 2013.



How PCAs Function Today + Goals for the Future



PCAs 1.0

How substantially have PCAs been used in the past?

LIMITED

Primarily due to data limitations and inconsistency.

PCAs 2.0

How substantially can PCAs be used in the future?

SIGNIFICANTLY

Consistent PCAs enable incorporation into core work like Plan Bay Area.

A reformed PCA planning framework will provide a geographic element to some Plan Bay Area environment strategies.

REGIONAL PLANNING & POLICY

ADVOCACY & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

PROGRAM FUNDING

LIMITED

Primarily due to limited use in regional plans and policy.

MORE THAN PREVIOUSLY

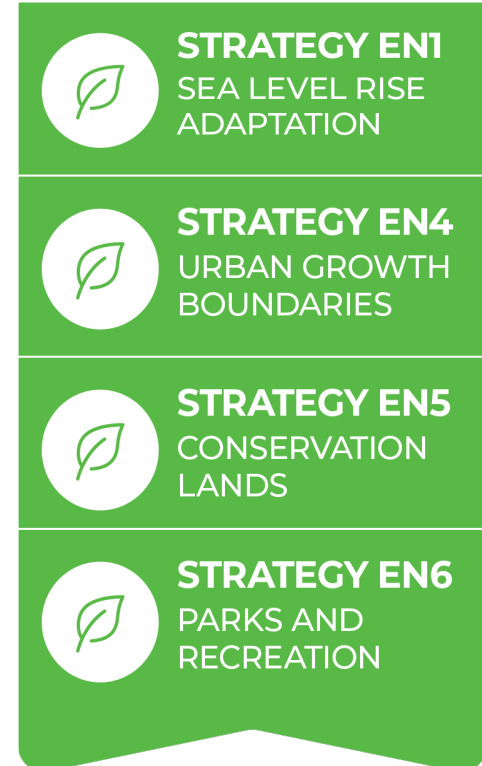
Increased use in regional plans should result in more advocacy.

MODERATELY

Through OBAG grants program, \$30M has been awarded to PCAs.

MORE SIGNIFICANTLY

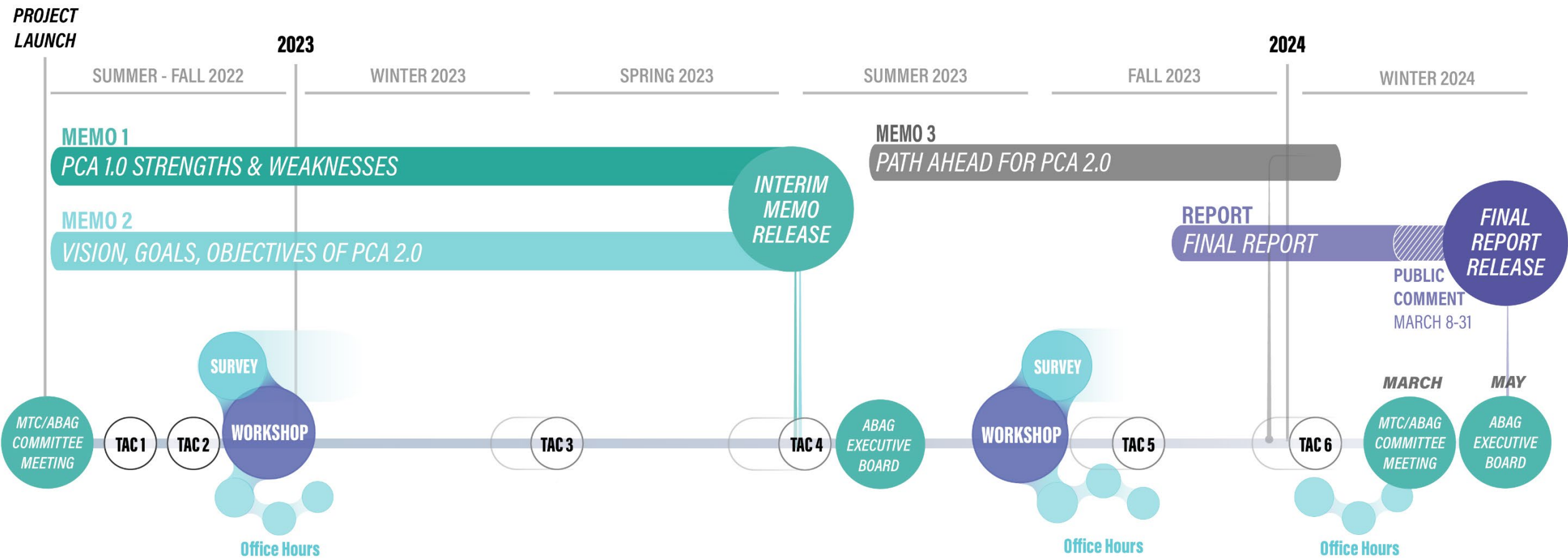
With a goal to advocate for more funding that is better-aligned.



PCA Refresh Timeline and Milestones



The PCA Refresh began in fall 2022. The May 2024 ABAG Executive Board action is the final milestone for the Refresh, allowing implementation to proceed over the months ahead.



Proposed PCA Planning Framework Reforms



PCAs 1.0

Too little structure

1



The existing PCA definition is inconsistent with how PCAs are used and funded.

2



Climate adaptation and equity are not directly incorporated into PCAs.

3



Some PCAs have poorly defined geographic boundaries.

4



PCA types are inconsistently applied in the region.

5



Existing PCAs have incomplete coverage across the region.

6



Existing PCA funding is too restricted and insufficient to meet the needs.

PCAs 2.0

Data-supported and structured



Refine the PCA definition to be clearer and reflect how they are used in practice.



Add climate adaptation as a new PCA type and incorporate equity into each PCA type.



Ensure PCAs have accurate and verified geographic boundaries.



Ensure PCA type consistency with eligibility maps.



Incorporate regionally-identified PCAs to complement local nominations.



Elevate PCAs for new funding with the refreshed Framework.

Updating the Vision and Definition for PCAs



VISION

By the year 2050, the Priority Conservation Area Program will ensure the region's biodiversity, natural resources, open spaces, agricultural lands, clean water and clean air are resilient to a changing climate and enjoyed by all.

DEFINITION

Priority Conservation Areas are locations nominated by cities, counties, and park/open space districts and designated by ABAG for protection and enhancement of natural lands, working lands, areas of regional recreation, urban greening, and climate adaptation needs.

INTENT BEHIND KEY CHANGES

Biodiversity, *resilience*, and *equity* are key topics that the Refresh seeks to elevate. The vision acknowledges each with language like: “biodiversity,” “resilient to a changing climate,” “enjoyed by all”.

The prior definition focused PCAs as areas for *protection* only. The updated definition expands to include *enhancement* to match both how PCAs had already been used, as well as how stakeholders would like to see them used.

Climate adaptation has been added to the Framework as a fifth PCA type.

Identifying Multiple Values and Opportunities of PCAs



The PCA 2.0 Framework achieves greater cohesion by adding structure to the five PCA Types.

NATURAL LANDS



Photo credit: Ben Botkin
Marin County, Open Space

AGRICULTURAL & WORKING LANDS



Photo credit: Karl Nielsen
San Mateo County, Agriculture

URBAN GREENING



Photo credit: Karl Nielsen
Santa Clara County, Milpitas Street Trees

RECREATION

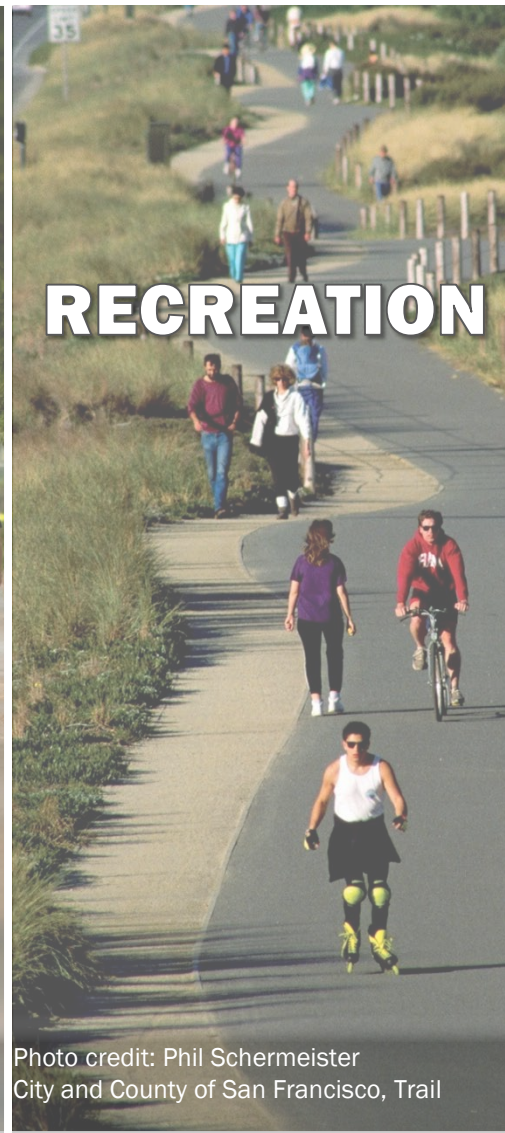


Photo credit: Phil Schermeister
City and County of San Francisco, Trail

NEW! CLIMATE ADAPTATION



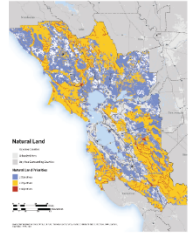
Photo credit: Karl Nielsen
Solano, Napa, Sonoma Counties,
Skaggs Island

Proposed Method to Add Structure to PCA Types

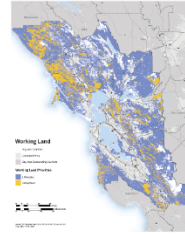


WHERE DOES THIS PCA TYPE EXIST?

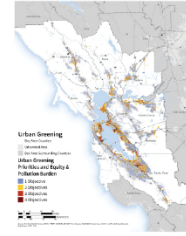
NATURAL LANDS



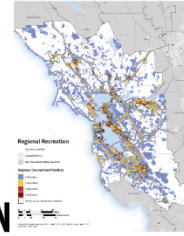
WORKING LANDS



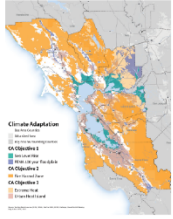
URBAN GREENING



RECREATION



CLIMATE ADAPTATION



IN LOCATIONS SUPPORTED BY DATA



INSIDE CITY LIMITS OR UGB



OUTSIDE CITY LIMITS OR UGB



WHAT ACTIVITY IS SUPPORTED BY THIS PCA TYPE?

PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION



ENHANCEMENT



WHAT APPROACH IS USED TO INTEGRATE EQUITY INTO PCAS?

PLACE-BASED APPROACHES



PROGRAMMATIC APPROACHES



*Eligible Natural Lands are inclusive of tidal areas (e.g. tidal wetlands, polder management, and non-urbanized upland migration areas.)

Map of PCA Eligible Locations

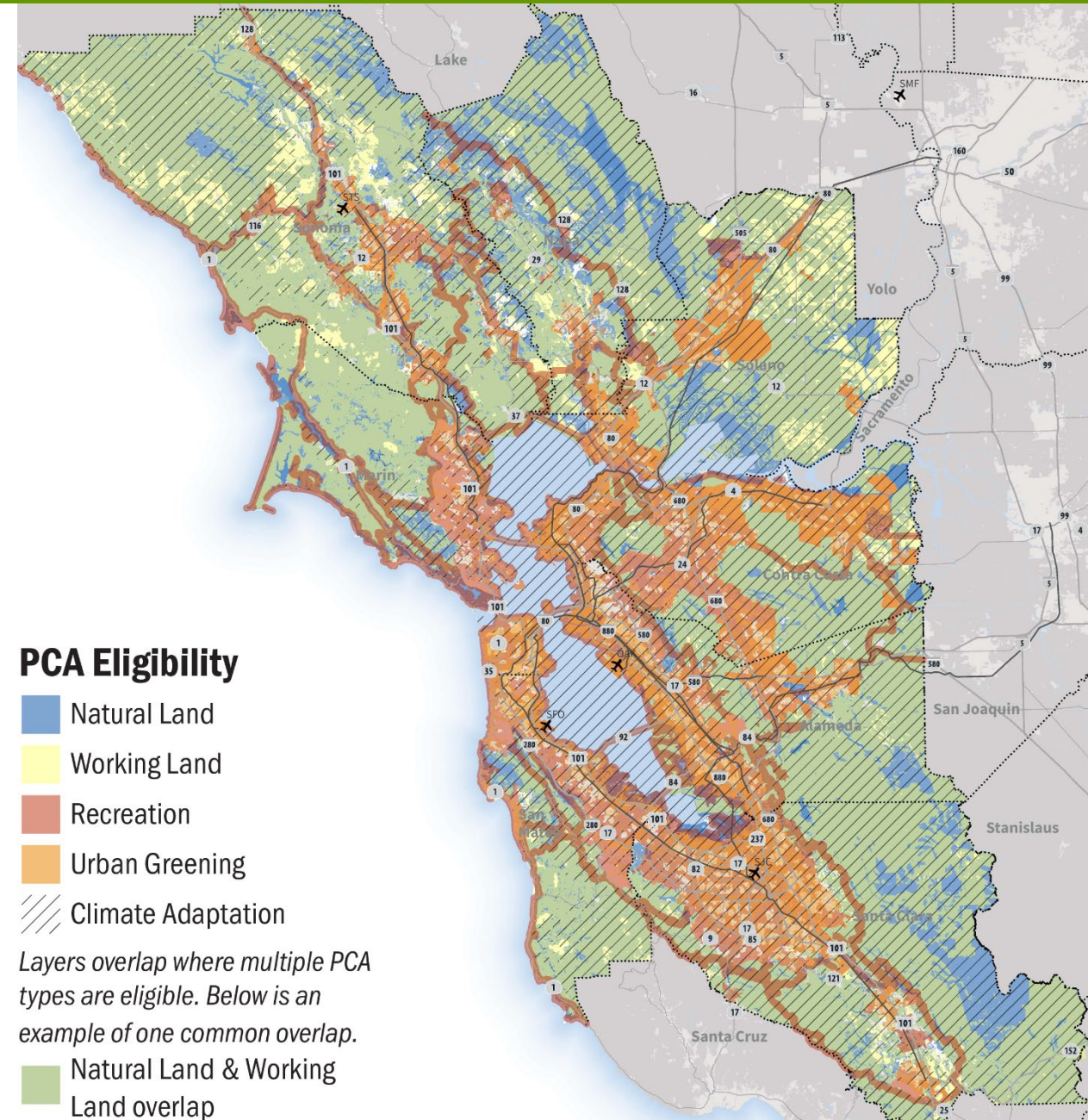


KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE PCA ELIGIBLE MAP

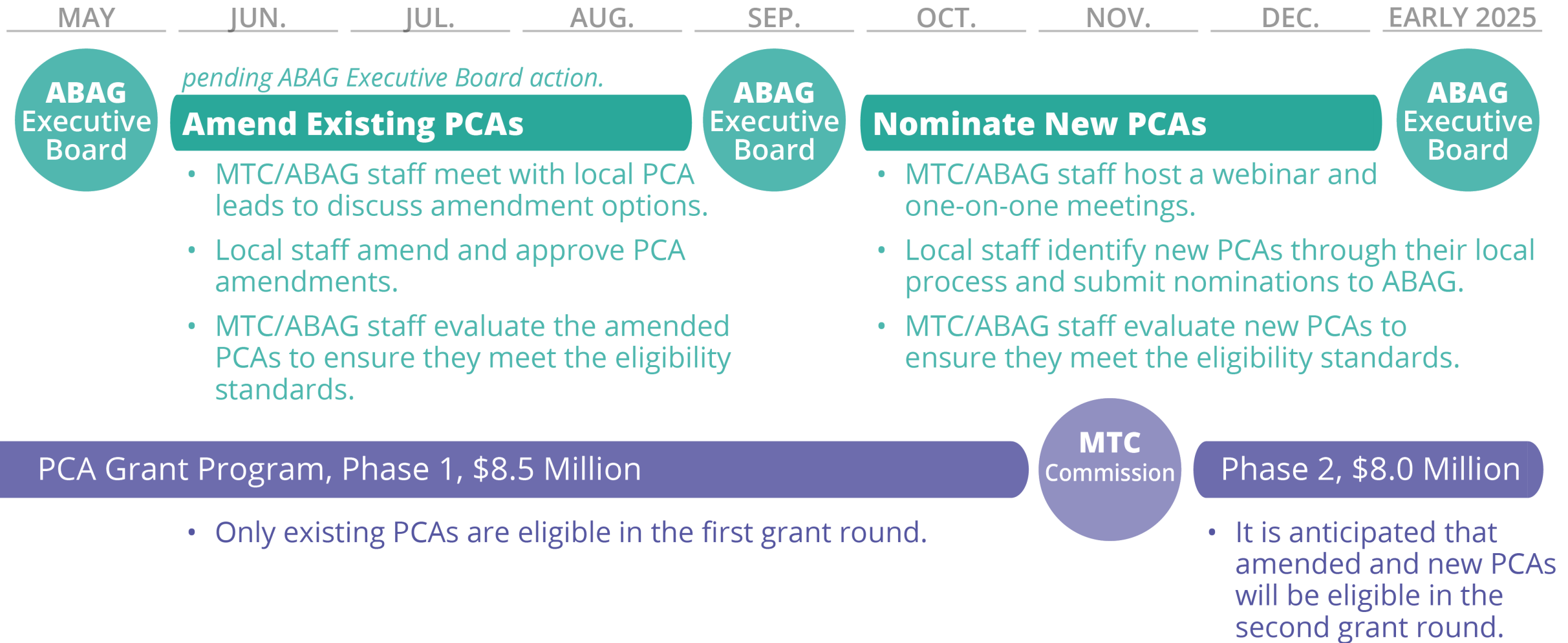
- There is high PCA eligibility coverage. Over 30 datasets were combined to create the eligibility map.
- Future local nominations should continue to prioritize conservation needs. It is not the desire for all eligible locations to be nominated.
- Areas can be identified as multiple PCA types if they meet the eligibility standards for each type.

DRAFT REGIONALLY-IDENTIFIED PCAs

- Added to the planning framework to complement local nominations. Ensures regional connectivity where important (e.g. trails, wildlife corridors).
- Will propose adoption of the regionally-identified PCAs later this year. Anticipate an action to adopt the regionally-identified PCAs when a new call for local PCA nominations begins.



Pathway Toward PCA Refresh Implementation



PCA Planning Framework Contact:

Michael Germeraad, mgermeraad@bayareametro.gov

PCA Grant Program Contact:

Ben Botkin, bbotkin@bayareametro.gov