



DATE: September 20, 2019

TO: BARC Governing Board

FROM: Allison Brooks, BARC Executive Director

RE: *BARC Work Plan 2020-2022: Achieving Key Regional Goals - Overview*

The Draft *BARC 2020-2022 Work Plan: Achieving Key Regional Goals*, attached with this Memo, puts into practice the original intent of the State legislature in establishing the Bay Area Regional Collaborative— a belief that by working together in a highly integrated, collaborative way, the BARC member agencies can more effectively address longstanding challenges impacting our communities like rising greenhouse gas emissions and racial inequities, while also proactively managing new risks like increased flooding, sea level rise and fires due to climate change. Through guidance from agency leadership and the Governing Board, BARC staff was able to pinpoint project areas where programmatic and resource integration across two or more BARC member agencies is essential to meeting goals identified in key regional planning documents. The plans we referenced in this exercise include the Bay Area Air Quality Management District’s (BAAQMD) *Clean Air Plan*, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and Metropolitan Transportation Commission’s (MTC) *Plan Bay Area*, and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission’s (BCDC) *Bay Plan*.

Background

In 2004, the Bay Area Regional Collaborative (BARC), also known as the Joint Policy Committee (JPC), was created through state legislation to “coordinate and improve the quality of land use, transportation, and air quality planning in the Bay Area.” The excerpt of the originating legislation for BARC below calls out a primary function for BARC being the review of major regional planning documents developed by the BARC member agencies.

The Joint Policy Committee shall coordinate the development and drafting of major planning documents prepared by ABAG, MTC, BAAQMD, and the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, including reviewing and commenting on major interim work products and the final draft comments prior to action by ABAG, MTC, BAAQMD, BCDC.¹

Another important role for BARC, mentioned often by the Governing Board and member agency Executive leadership, includes the anticipation and preemption of potential tension points where actions and policies taken by one agency can run into conflict with those of another. For example, such a tension exists between the goal of the Air District to reduce exposure of residents to polluted air, and

¹ Senate Bill No. 849, Chapter 791, Torlakson. Sections 66536, 66536.1 and 66536.2
http://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=200320040SB849

the goal set forth in Plan Bay Area to foster more dense housing development in areas well-served by transit, often in locations challenged by air quality issues. There is an inherent challenge in these seemingly conflicting goals that can best be resolved through regular coordination and collaborative problem solving.

In the development of the new 2-year BARC Work Plan, we have the opportunity to reflect on BARC's purpose as outlined in its originating legislative language in 2004, while recognizing the incredible economic, social and environmental changes – in some cases, upheavals – that have occurred in the Bay Area since BARC's inception 15 years ago. While the legislation provides some language as to the intent of BARC, it provides little guidance as to how greater coordination across agencies could best be operationalized. The BARC Governing Board serves as an important venue where cross-cutting issues involving BARC member agencies can be vetted and discussed. How those ideas are introduced to the individual agencies and commissions represented on the BARC Governing Board is less clear. Additionally, how BARC staff best supports cross-agency coordination that delivers measurable outcomes has varied depending on the projects and the agencies involved and has produced varying degrees of success.

That is all a way of saying that BARC continues to be an evolving experiment at interdisciplinary, collaborative problem-solving that aims for better regional governance. To that point, any discussion regarding regional governance, including the recent commitment by MTC and ABAG in July 2019 to explore new governance arrangements, should also address BARC's role and purpose. An important question to raise in that discussion is whether BARC's current form and function is best suited to meet the need for highly integrated and coordinated regional governance to meet the challenges we face in the Bay Area, particularly while other structural changes are being considered.

Work Plan Overview: Meeting Regional Challenges Through Greater Integration

The new BARC Work Plan, included as Attachment A, pinpoints project areas where programmatic and resource integration across two or more BARC member agencies is essential to addressing the biggest challenges impacting Bay Area communities today, and at the same time meeting the goals identified in key regional plans. The work plan is organized within two broad categories: **Resilient Bay Area**, focused on building resiliency to the impacts of climate change, with a primary focus on sea level rise and flooding, and **Carbon-Free Bay Area**, focused on mitigating climate change through reductions of the emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) and harmful air pollutants. Within both of these categories, BARC chooses and prioritizes its projects based on emerging data while also seeking every opportunity to **Level the Playing Field** for low-income communities and communities of color by addressing systemic racism and unequal access to opportunity in our program work.

The approved BARC Budget for Fiscal Year 2020 is included as Attachment B. The detailed Work Plan syncs up with the budget in a few ways: 1) by specifying the role BARC staff plays in supporting project work; and 2) identifying projects where BARC funds may be used, or are already being used, to support project deliverables. Certain projects are supported through grants secured by BARC staff, rather than BARC's approved budget, which is noted in the project description.

- **BARC's Level Playing Field Approach**

A recent University of California, Berkeley study found that seven of the Bay Area region's nine counties were more segregated in 2010 than they were in 1970.² According to the study's lead author, "Land use, zoning, and housing policies, in addition to discrimination, have stratified the region by race and class".³ Today, the Bay Area serves as the poster child for the housing affordability crisis; a region where many of our most socio-economically vulnerable communities also sit at the frontlines of risk in terms of exposure to flooding, sea level rise and toxic air. BARC's Level Playing Field approach seeks to unwind the systemic racial inequities that continue to put our most socio-economically vulnerable residents in harm's way, often in communities where access to opportunity is limited. A foundation of this work is supporting the yearlong training in racial equity principles for staff from the BARC member agencies provided by the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE).

- **Resilient Bay Area**

The Resilient Bay Area portfolio of projects is motivated by the data emerging on the future impacts of sea level rise and flooding in the Bay Area, which underscore the need for regional-scale coordination and the rapid mobilization of resources to proactively reduce the impacts we know are coming. Findings from a recent United States Geological Survey report demonstrated the magnitude of impacts when considering all climate-driven flood events, including sea level rise, storms, and coastal erosion:

*The Bay Area accounts for two-thirds of the socioeconomic impacts of coastal flooding caused by sea level rise. According to the study, the region is one of the most vulnerable in the state, even more so than other coastal cities such as Los Angeles/Long Beach and San Diego.*⁴

Furthermore, the socio-economic changes that have occurred in the Bay Area in recent years, including skyrocketing housing prices and displacement of low- and moderate-income people from communities, bring a sense of urgency to reducing the impacts of climate change on the people and places already experiencing displacement pressures and increased risks to other hazards.

To address these impacts, BARC is working closely with staff from MTC/ABAG and BCDC to coordinate and accelerate adaptation projects in areas that are among the most physically and socio-economically vulnerable. This includes advanced adaptation planning work with community partners in East Palo Alto and North Richmond with a focus both on community capacity building and strategy development to address local vulnerabilities to flooding and sea level rise. BARC is taking lessons learned from these individual projects and bringing them to bear on regional-scale planning and governance efforts, including MTC/ABAG's Plan Bay Area and BCDC's ART Bay Area process. We value our continued partnership with the Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative (BARHII) and their support in fostering meaningful relationships with community-based partners that allow for shared learning and local strategy development.

² "The Bay Area of 1970 was less racially segregated than it was in 2010", San Francisco Chronicle, Kimberley Veklerov, May 28, 2019. Retrieved at: <https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/The-Bay-Area-of-1970-was-less-racially-segregated-13902101.php>.

³ Ibid.

⁴ USGS study predicts more disastrous effects from sea level rise in Bay Area, SFGate, Drew Costley, March 17, 2019. Retrieved at: <https://www.sfgate.com/science/article/USGS-disastrous-sea-level-rise-climate-change-13695683.php>.

- **Carbon-Free Bay Area**

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) recently shared the positive news that the State of California is on track to meet its aggressive 2020 climate targets, largely through shifting to renewable sources of energy.⁵ Unfortunately, meeting greenhouse reduction targets through the transportation sector, which at 40% of total emissions is the largest source in the State, continues to be the hardest nut to crack. Pollution from the transportation sector continues to climb upward by 1% annually, although at a slower rate than previous years. As reported recently in the Los Angeles Times:

*One of California's biggest challenges is cutting carbon pollution from cars, trucks and other transportation sources at a time when state officials are battling the Trump administration over its plan to weaken fuel economy standards and revoke California's power to set its own, stricter rules. Those planned rollbacks — combined with increased driving, a consumer trend toward roomier, less-fuel-efficient SUVs and a slower-than-anticipated switch to electric models — will only make it more difficult to reduce those emissions.*⁶

It is clear that business-as-usual strategies around mobility and transportation are not going to help meet the State of California's aggressive climate goals. Both BAAQMD and MTC/ABAG have critical roles to play, best met by working together, to address the Bay Area's most challenging hurdles in reducing transportation induced GHG emissions. Furthermore, pursuing strategies that promote cleaner forms of transportation while improving mobility will simultaneously make progress towards the *Clean Air Plan* and *Plan Bay Area*, with the ultimate goal of making our communities healthier and safer.

To facilitate the implementation of cross-cutting projects that accomplish the twin goals of reducing emissions and improving mobility, BARC proposes working with agency staff to identify 3-5 key strategies from the Air District's West Oakland Community Action Plan for cross-agency implementation. The Draft Plan identifies over 80 strategies – developed by the West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project and a diverse local stakeholder group – that the Air District and its partners, including MTC/ABAG, can pursue to reduce emissions and pollution exposure in West Oakland pursuant to Assembly Bill 617. After identifying key projects for cross-agency collaboration, BARC will work to assist agency staff in project implementation, while creating a model for collaboration to achieve results in future AB 617 communities.

Another key opportunity to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that BARC has identified is the electrification of buildings. Momentum for electrification has grown among Bay Area jurisdictions in recent months in the wake of Berkeley's first-of-its-kind moratorium on natural gas connections in new buildings, as well as recent statewide regulatory developments that will allow more ratepayer funds to be used for building electrification programs.

⁵ "Governor Newsom announces climate pollution continues to drop below 2020 target while state's economy grows", California Air Resources Board, August 12, 2019. Retrieved at:

<https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/news/governor-newsom-announces-climate-pollution-continues-drop-below-2020-target-while-states>

⁶ *California's planet-warming emissions declined in 2017, even as its biggest pollution source keeps rising*, Los Angeles Times, Tony Barboza, staff writer, August 12, 2019. Retrieved at: <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2019-08-12/california-greenhouse-gas-emissions-fell>.




To build on this momentum, BARC is working with its member agencies to lower market and policy barriers to building electrification among Bay Area governments. Through a contract with a building decarbonization expert, BARC is collaborating with the Air District to assess building electrification and natural gas phaseout policy opportunities in the Bay Area and developing resources for local governments to use in transitioning toward electrification, including model ordinances and technical guidance documents.

Included with this Memo are illustrations and details about the projects that fall under the different program areas just outlined. Table 1 on the following page is a snapshot of BARC's 2020-2022 Work Plan, organized by program category with the full list of projects. BARC's Detailed 2020-2022 Work Plan is included as Attachment A, which provides greater specificity on the partners involved, project goals, resource expenditures and timeline. Additionally, a matrix that shows the specific provisions of each Member Agency's regional plan that BARC's projects will help to meet is included in the Work Plan as Appendix A. BARC's approved FY20 budget is included as Attachment B.

Conclusion

BARC staff are excited to work with our Governing Board and member agencies in achieving impact through our shared work plan over the next two years. The Work Plan outlines a level of coordination and shared accountability that is a necessary and important step among the regional agencies in meeting critical Bay Area challenges. By integrating our programs and resources to the best of our abilities we can work together to address racial inequities and the unequal access to opportunity many Bay Area residents face, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and proactively manage flooding and sea level rise.

Table 1: BARC Work Plan 2020-2022, Matrix of Activities

  BARC Work Area	 Plan Bay Area 2040	 2017 Clean Air Plan	 Bay Plan
BARC Work Area: Resilient Bay Area			
1. Advanced Adaptation Planning	✓		✓
2. Adapting to Rising Tides (ART) Bay Area	✓		✓
3. Horizon/Plan Bay Area: Integrating Sea Level Rise	✓	✓	✓
4. Regional Adaptation Framework	✓		✓
5. Advocacy at State Level: Resilient Bay Area	✓	✓	✓
BARC Work Area: Carbon-Free Bay Area			
6. AB617 Implementation: Focus on Mobile Sources	✓	✓	
7. Building Electrification	✓	✓	
BARC Work Area: Achieving Racial Equity			
8. Level Playing Field approach to Inter-Agency Projects	✓	✓	✓
9. BARC and the Government Alliance on Race and Equity	✓	✓	✓