

Association of Bay Area Governments
ABAG Regional Planning Committee

July 16, 2020

Agenda Item 5a

Plan Bay Area 2050 Draft Blueprint: Key Findings

Subject: Presentation on the findings from the Draft Blueprint analysis, highlighting successes and shortcomings in advance of stakeholder workshops later this month.

Background: Approved for further analysis by MTC and ABAG in February 2020, the Draft Blueprint is the “first draft” of Plan Bay Area 2050, integrating 25 resilient and equitable strategies from the predecessor Horizon initiative. Horizon tested strategies against a wide range of external forces, exploring which policies and investments were best prepared for an uncertain future – from rising telecommute levels to economic boom & bust cycles to consumer preference shifts.

The Plan Bay Area 2050 Draft Blueprint weaves together these transportation, housing, economic, and environmental strategies – as highlighted in **Attachment B** – alongside an expanded set of growth geographies to advance critical climate and equity goals. Designed to accommodate the 1.5 million new homes necessary to house future growth and address overcrowding, as well as 1.4 million new jobs, the Draft Blueprint integrates strategies to address our severe and longstanding housing crisis. With infrastructure investments in walking, biking, and public transportation – as well as sea level protections designed to keep most Bay Area communities from flooding through 2050 – the Draft Blueprint makes meaningful steps towards the adopted Plan Bay Area 2050 Vision.

In line with the Plan Vision, this memorandum includes some key highlights as well as key challenges, organized by the five Guiding Principles – to ensure a more **affordable, connected, diverse, healthy, and vibrant Bay Area for all**. For additional detail on the specific metrics – forecasted outcomes for equity & performance – please refer to **Attachment C**.

**Highlights of
Draft Blueprint:**

The Plan Bay Area 2050 Draft Blueprint goes well beyond what was included in the current long-range regional plan, Plan Bay Area 2040. Notable highlights from the analysis conducted over the past four months include:

- **Improving Affordability for All:** For a typical household, the cost burden for housing and transportation as a share of income declines by 9 points between 2015 and 2050. Reductions are even greater for low-income households – a decline of 26 points – with means-based fares and tolls yielding further dividends in advancing equity goals.
- **Expanding Housing Opportunities for Low-Income Residents.** With robust regional measures in play – as well as an expanded inclusionary zoning strategy – the Draft Blueprint includes funding capacity for the construction of over 400,000 permanently-affordable homes through 2050.
- **Focusing Growth in Walkable, Transit-Rich Communities.** The majority of future housing and job growth is located in walkable communities with frequent transit; the Final Blueprint may make further performance gains via additional transit strategies under consideration for the Final Blueprint.

- **Saving Lives and Protecting Communities.** Reduced speed limits and roadway redesigns help play a critical role in saving thousands of lives through 2050, even as more progress is needed to achieve Vision Zero goals. Investments in sea level rise infrastructure saves 98 percent of at-risk homes through 2050, and funding for seismic home retrofits protects 100 percent of homes at high risk of damage.
- **Positioning the Region for Robust Economic Growth.** Despite over \$200 billion in new taxes in the decades ahead to pay for the bold strategies approved in February 2020, Bay Area businesses are forecasted to rebound robustly, with per-capita gross regional product soaring by 65% through 2050.

Challenges for Final Blueprint:

While the Draft Blueprint strategies make meaningful headway on some of the region's most critical policy issues, five key challenges remain in advancing the bold vision of Plan Bay Area 2050. These challenges will be the focus of our outreach and engagement this summer, as we consider how to make the Blueprint even more resilient and equitable in preparation for an uncertain future:

- **Challenge #1: Affordable Guiding Principle.** While the Draft Blueprint funds a considerable amount of deed-restricted affordable housing, hundreds of thousands of existing low-income residents would still lack a permanently affordable place to live. What strategies could we modify or advance to further increase production of homes affordable to lower-income residents, most importantly in High-Resource Areas with well-resourced schools and convenient access to jobs?
- **Challenge #2: Connected Guiding Principle.** While the Draft Blueprint makes significant headway in improving access for drivers and transit riders compared to existing trends, traffic congestion and transit overcrowding remain significant challenges across the region. How can new or expanded strategies better address these key transportation issues?
- **Challenge #3: Diverse Guiding Principle.** While the Draft Blueprint focuses a sizable share of affordable housing in historically-exclusionary places in the Bay Area, displacement risk continues to rise, especially in Communities of Concern. How can new or expanded strategies reduce this risk of displacement so more residents can remain in place?
- **Challenge #4: Healthy Guiding Principle.** While the Draft Blueprint includes robust protections for agricultural lands and communities vulnerable to sea level rise, the biggest challenge remaining relates to mitigating greenhouse gas emissions (GHG). Given the magnitude of the gap between Draft Blueprint performance and the state-mandated target, what strategies could we modify or expand to close this GHG gap in an equitable and sustainable manner?

- **Challenge #5: Vibrant Guiding Principle.** While Bay Area businesses thrive in the Draft Blueprint, job growth remains relatively concentrated in traditional job centers such as Silicon Valley. Potentially impactful strategies such as office development caps were not included in the Draft Blueprint following discussion at the Commission/Board workshop in January, and more modest strategies such as impact fees led to positive yet limited effects in shifting jobs to housing-rich communities, such as parts of Alameda County. What additional strategies could be considered to shift jobs closer to the region's existing workforce?


Next Steps:

Staff will now seek further input from the public, key stakeholders, and local jurisdiction staff as part of summer 2020 engagement activities. Following a combination of virtual public workshops, telephone town halls, office hours, and non-digital engagement approaches, staff will return to this committee in September with a summary of feedback on Draft Blueprint strategies and outcomes. Staff will also develop potential revisions to the strategies for the Final Blueprint, with anticipated action also slated for **September 2020**. Following modeling and analysis of the Final Blueprint strategies this fall, MTC and ABAG will select a Preferred Alternative for the Plan Bay Area 2050 EIR by the **end of 2020**.

Recommendation: Information

Attachments:

Attachment A: Presentation
Attachment B: Draft Blueprint – Summary of Strategies (*February 2020*)
Attachment C: Draft Blueprint – Summary of Equity & Performance Outcomes (*July 2020*)


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