

PRIORITY CONSERVATION AREA PROGRAM

**APPROVAL OF 2025 NOMINATIONS
+ AMENDMENTS
&
CALL FOR PROJECTS AUTHORIZATION**



Background



ABAG: PCA Geographies

Approve and designate PCA
Amendments and Nominations



MTC: PCA Grants

Support PCAs through One Bay Area
Grant (OBAG) funding



Dotson Marsh Restoration and Public Access Project

PCA: San Francisco Bay Trail - Bay Area Ridge Trail

PCA Grant Total: \$1,000,000

Background on the PCA Planning Framework



1. Background

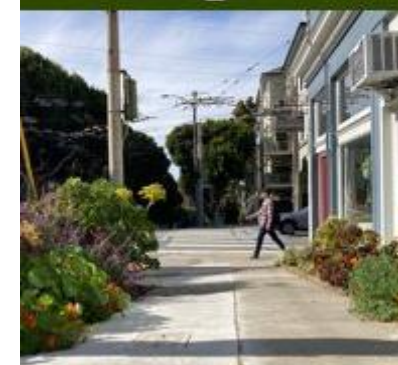
- **Why?** Priority Conservation Areas (PCAs) continue the Bay Area's commitment to resilience, parks, farmland, open space, and ecosystems. They **elevate local conservation priorities** to a regional framework, **address conservation gaps**, and provide eligibility for **PCA Grants**.
- **What?** The PCA Program identifies **locally nominated, regionally significant areas** for protection or improvement. Each PCA includes a mapped geography and one or more of **five PCA types**.
- **When?** Established in **2007** alongside Priority Development Areas (PDAs), PCAs are nominated every few years.
- **How?** Cities, counties, and park or open space districts **voluntarily nominate** PCAs, which are designated by the ABAG Executive Board.



Natural Lands



Working Lands



Urban Greening



Recreation



Climate Adaptation



1. Background

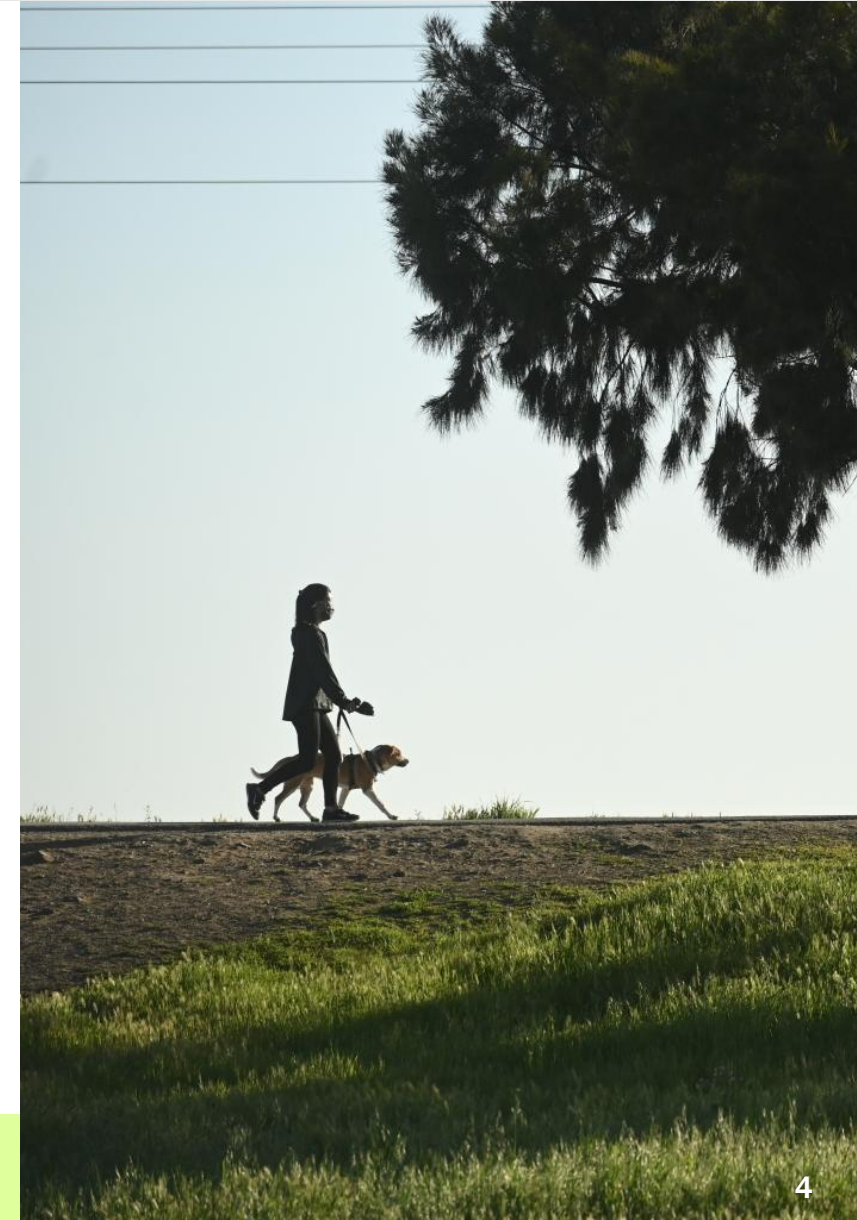
2022 - 2024 PCA Planning Framework Refresh

- First major update since 2007
- Goal: Address the framework's data and policy deficiencies to improve consistency and usefulness

Key Improvements from the Refresh

- **New data criteria** for regional consistency
- **Updated vision & goals** aligned with Plan Bay Area 2050, stronger focus on equity & climate resilience
- **Refined eligibility maps** for clearer nomination guidance
- **Clearer distinctions between PCA types** inside vs. outside community limits
- **Established Regionally-Identified PCAs**, which apply a regional perspective to fill gaps from the locally-nominated PCAs

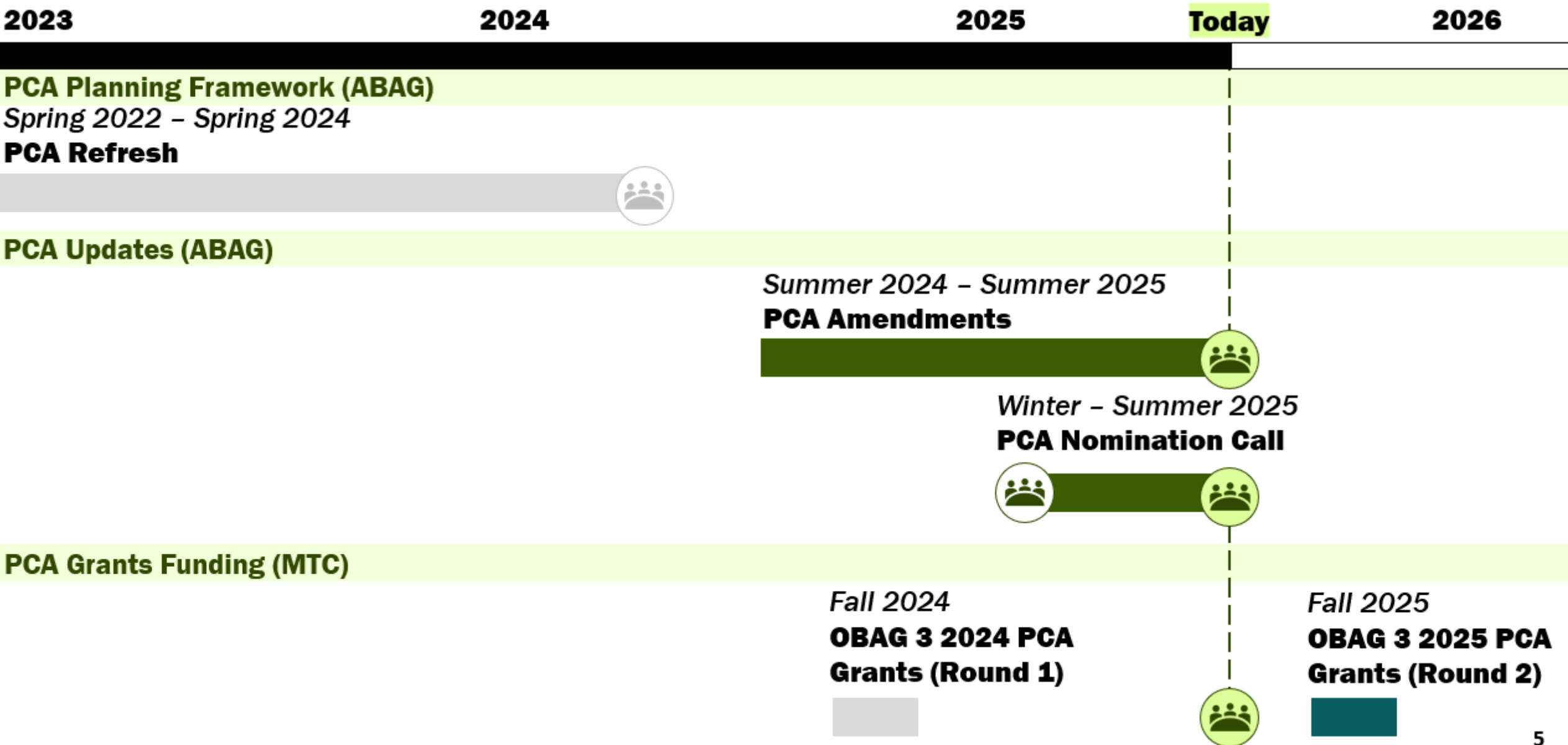
Existing PCAs were then **amended** to match the Refresh framework



PCA Timeline and Process: 2022 - 2025



1. Background



Outreach and Support for Existing PCA Amendments



2. ABAG - Geographies

Outreach

- ABAG/MTC reengaged staff from 37 local governments to process amendments.
- Existing NGO-led PCAs were reassigned to their host jurisdictions.

Tools & Resources

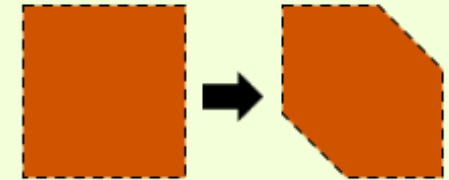
- ABAG/MTC staff evaluated PCAs and developed example amendment options, offered mapping support, and provided 1:1 office hours.
- A briefer outlined key changes needed for compliance.

Impact

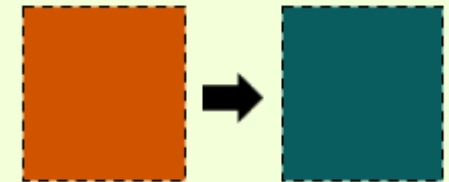
- Improved data consistency, clarity, and funding eligibility.

How were PCAs amended?

1. Change PCA Boundary



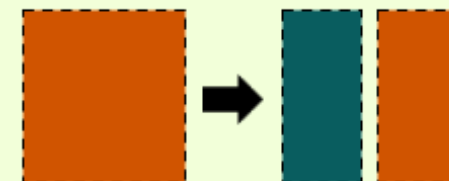
2. Change PCA Type



3. Combination of Above



4. Split PCA



Amendments to Existing PCAs



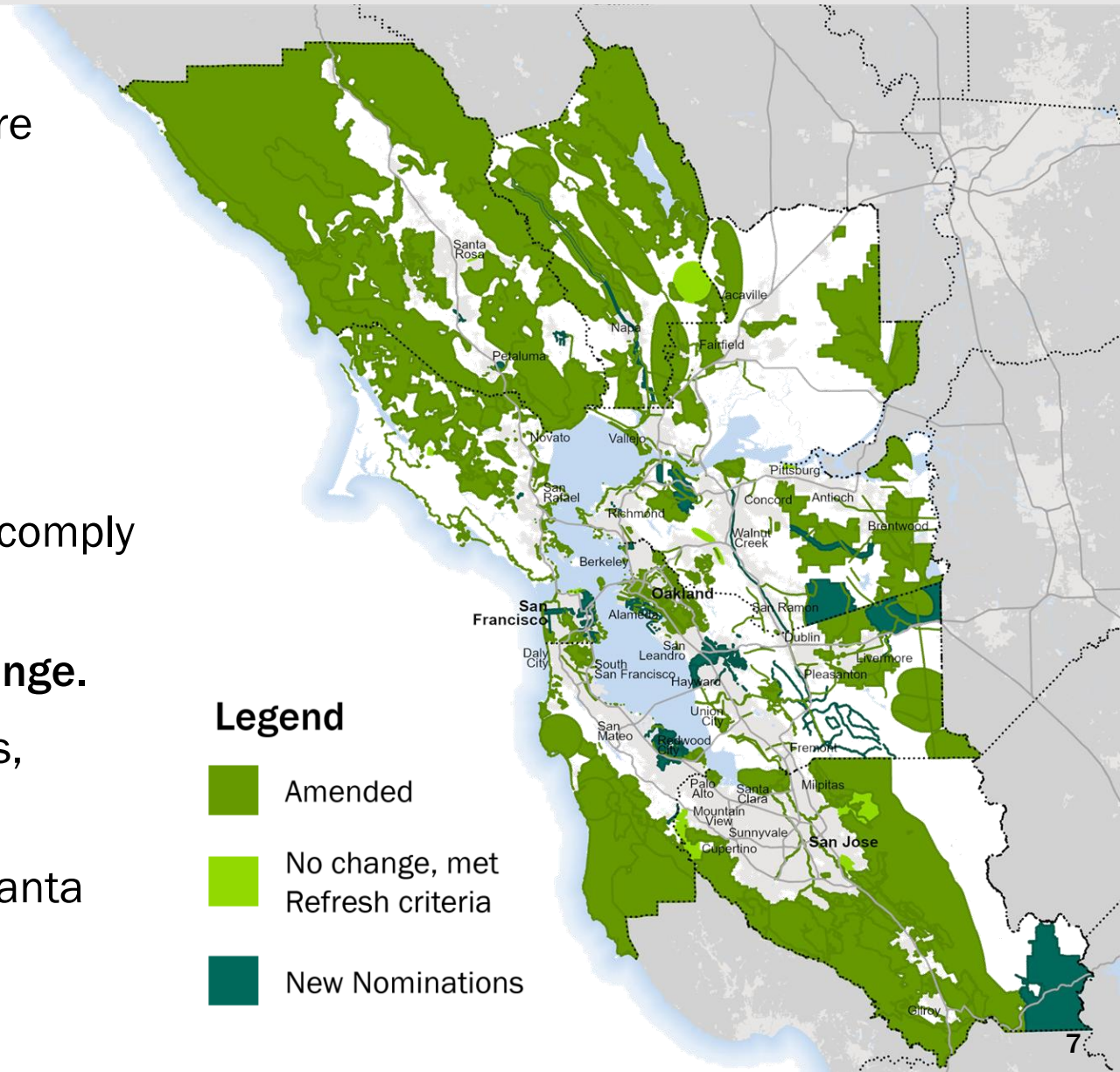
2. ABAG - Geographies

Data

- **100% of 173 PCAs** that needed amendments were amended.
- **12 PCAs** did not require amendments.
- **26%** of existing PCAs intersect with Equity Priority Communities.

Trends

- Many PCAs required a **narrowing of PCA types** to comply with new eligibility standards.
- About **60% of PCAs** also required a **boundary change**.
- **The most common PCA types** were Natural Lands, Recreation, and Climate Adaptation.
- **At least 8 PCAs were amended in each county.** Santa Clara County jurisdictions processed the most amendments at 46 PCA amendments.



Legend

- Amended
- No change, met Refresh criteria
- New Nominations

Outreach and Support for New PCA Nominations



2. ABAG - Geographies

Outreach

- Email blasts, targeted outreach, and updates at County Planning Director meetings to advertise the opportunity

Tools & Resources

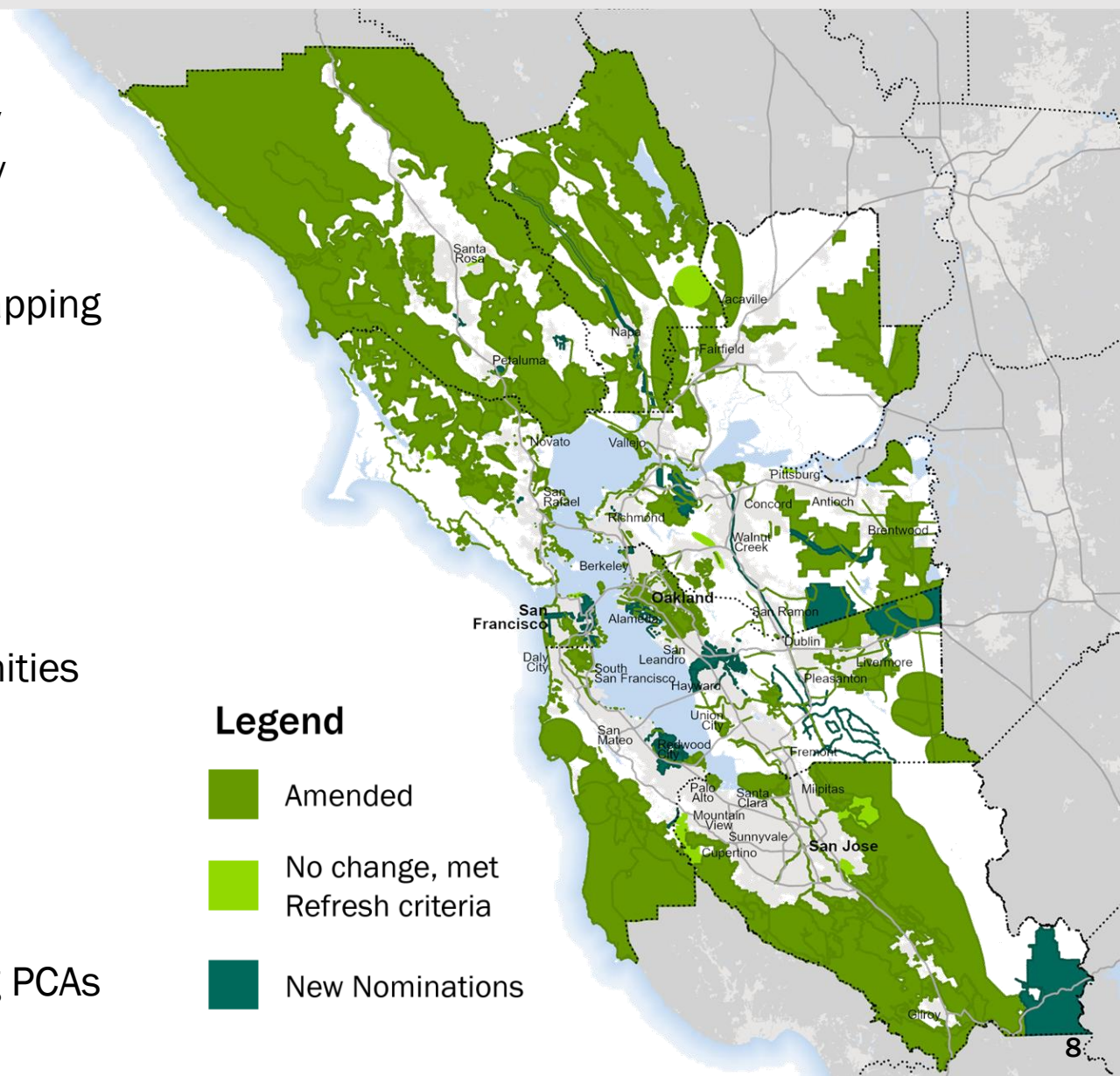
- Webinar to share opportunity & demonstrate online mapping tool
- 1:1 office hours and template materials provided

Data

- **69 new PCAs** nominated by **15 jurisdictions**, covering **~130,000 acres**
- **50%** of new PCAs intersect with Equity Priority Communities

Trends

- **Climate adaptation** was the most common PCA type, reflecting broad eligibility and support.
- New nominations included more **urban greening** and **recreation** types than amended PCAs, whereas existing PCAs included more **natural and working lands**.





3. MTC – Grant Program

Grant Program

- MTC and the Coastal Conservancy have awarded over **\$38 million** in support of **71 projects** (2014, 2019, 2024).
- This popular program advances **Plan Bay Area strategies** by promoting balanced land use, climate resilience, and equitable access to nature.
 - **Enhance Natural & Agricultural Lands:** Funding helps protect and restore landscapes critical to ecological health and food systems.
 - **Improve Park and Trail Access:** Funding expands recreational opportunities and urban greening, supporting livability and public health.
 - **Build Climate Resilience:** Funding supports nature-based solutions that mitigate climate impacts like flooding and extreme heat.
- **OBAG 3 PCA Grant Program** split into 2 phases:
 - Phase 1 (2024) awarded **\$8.5M** to **13 projects**
 - Phase 2 to incorporate **new PCA designations**



Evolving Shorelines at Bothin Marsh Project

PCA: San Francisco Bay Trail
PCA Grant Total: \$670,000



3. MTC – Grant Program

\$8 million Call for Proposals

- Maintain applicant and project-type eligibility from prior rounds
 - Locally-nominated PCAs eligible
 - Target 50+% of funding in North Bay counties
- Evaluate how projects advance PCA Refresh objectives
 - Support PCA-aligned planning efforts
 - *PCA designation type does not affect eligible project type*

Implementation

- **September 2025:** Finalize Grant Guidelines
- **October 2025:** Release Round 2 Call for Proposals
- **Summer 2026:** Recommend Round 2 grant awards



Rangeland Enhancement through Livestock Pond Restoration Project

PCA: East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP

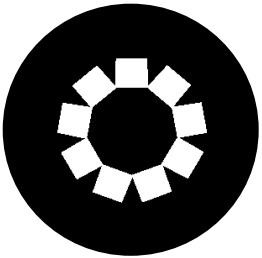
PCA Grant Total: \$280,000

Thank You & Next Steps



ABAG – Geographies | MTC – Grant Program

Item 10b.



*Resolution No. 11-2025:
Approve
173 PCA amendments and
69 PCA nominations
for formal adoption*

Item 10c.



*Authorize release of
\$8 Million Call for Proposals
(OBAG 3 – Phase 2)*

Thank you to local jurisdiction staff for their partnership!

Next Steps:

- Ongoing: Maintain PCA Mapping Viewer and data resources.
- Plan Bay Area 2050+: Feature PCA maps in the Final Plan Document and explore how PCAs can support urban greening and conservation implementation actions.
- Plan Bay Area 2060: Consider how PCAs can be further leveraged for the next long-range plan.

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