



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Association of Bay Area Governments

January 16, 2025

Updates

EPA Awards \$5 Million to SFEP's Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program

- The EPA award will support the San Francisco Estuary Partnership's ongoing efforts to implement the Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program (WRMP). The WRMP collects and leverages monitoring data to respond and adapt to drivers of change for wetlands. This novel collaborative monitoring program offers a regionwide, robust, science-driven approach. Some of the key issues being addressed through the WRMP include accelerating the pace, scale and success of tidal wetland restoration; providing information on how people are interacting with and benefitting from wetlands; and advancing equity by engaging with community-based organizations, tribes and youth leaders.

RHTA Program Highlights First Three Years of Technical Assistance

- The first round of grant funding for the Regional Housing Technical Assistance (RHTA) Program ended in 2024. This work will continue until 2026 with Regional Early Action Planning 2.0 funds. Some highlights from the first three years of the RHTA Program include helping 95 jurisdictions bring their Housing Elements into substantial compliance with state law as of Dec. 2024 and granting about \$11 million directly to the region's 109 jurisdictions to support local priorities, including support for seven subregional Planning Collaboratives serving eight counties. Read more about RHTA's accomplishments [in this year-end wrap-up story](https://abag.ca.gov/news/rhta-program-highlights-first-three-years-technical-assistance). (https://abag.ca.gov/news/rhta-program-highlights-first-three-years-technical-assistance)

RHTA Hosts New State Housing Laws Webinar

- On Dec. 11, more than 300 housing staff from jurisdictions around the region attended a RHTA webinar where attorneys from Goldfarb and Lipman LLP presented on new state housing laws that could impact jurisdictions' housing processes, and included action items and summary information to help jurisdictions comply with the new laws. Attendees included ABAG Executive Board member Pat Eklund. The webinar and materials are available on the [ABAG website](https://abag.ca.gov/technical-assistance/2024-new-housing-laws-webinar). (https://abag.ca.gov/technical-assistance/2024-new-housing-laws-webinar)



One Bay Area Grant Recipients Meet Deadline for Housing Element Certification

- MTC required that jurisdiction recipients of various One Bay Area Grant (OBAG 2 and 3) funds receive Housing Element certification from the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) by Dec. 31, 2024. As of the previous update to the Commission in November 2024, four jurisdictions had OBAG grants at risk due to noncompliance with this requirement. In Dec. 2024, the Commission transferred sponsorship of an OBAG 3 project from a noncompliant jurisdiction (San Mateo County) to a compliant jurisdiction (Redwood City). Thanks to the diligent work and exemplary coordination among ABAG-MTC, HCD and jurisdictions staff, all three remaining jurisdictions subject to this requirement met MTC's deadline and no grant awards will be rescinded.

San Francisco Bay Sea Level Rise Study Included in Water Resources Development Act of 2024 (WRDA)

- The Bay Area Regional Collaborative, the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, and other state and regional organizations announced that the WRDA, signed Jan. 4 by President Biden, includes a section instructing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to study the impacts of sea level rise on the entire Bay Area region. Anticipated to begin in 2026, the study will consider the needs of economically disadvantaged communities and the existing vulnerable infrastructure of these areas, and the use of natural features and beneficial use of dredged sediment in the solutions. The study has the potential to bring federal funds to the region for climate adaptation, in alignment with PBA 2050 implementation and the SF Estuary Partnership's Estuary Blueprint.

POWER Program Adds New Members

- The POWER program has experienced significant expansion this fiscal year, with the addition of 16 new members, predominantly from school districts. This growth has brought the total number of participants to 52 members, reflecting strong interest and trust in the program's value and capabilities.

Looking Ahead

Jan. 16 Webinar on HCD's Annual Progress Report

- On Jan. 16, the RHTA program will host staff from the HCD housing policy unit for a webinar on 2025 changes to the Annual Progress Report (APR), the annual report filed by all jurisdictions in the state to chart progress in implementing their Housing



Elements. The HCD team will explain the new requirements for this year and highlight tools to help jurisdiction staff complete the report. This is one of the only forums in the region for jurisdiction staff working on the APR to ask questions of the HCD team. About 200 staff members from around the region are expected to attend. [Register via this link.](https://bayareametro.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_FVU1eXFnRGaNnom55-UYzg#/registration) (https://bayareametro.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_FVU1eXFnRGaNnom55-UYzg#/registration)

Save the Date: ABAG General Assembly on Friday, June 20

- The annual ABAG General Assembly will be held at the Bay Area Metro Center on Friday, June 20. Additional details to come.

for

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Executive Director