

Summary of Public Comments

In accordance with MTC/ABAG’s Public Participation Plan, the Draft Transportation-Air Quality Conformity Analysis for the Amended Plan Bay Area 2050 and the 2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), along with the Draft Amendment to Plan Bay Area 2050, were made available for a 30-day public review and comment period. This period began on August 12, 2024, and concluded on September 11, 2024. Opportunities to provide feedback were promoted through MTC’s website, email notifications, a press release, and display ads in local newspapers. Below is a list of the public comments received during this period:

Table 1. Comments Received through Online Comment Form (www.planbayarea.org/finalplan2050)

#	Commentor	Comment(s)
1	Elliott P	I am in strong support of including the Healdsburg extension in this plan. I would also support inclusion of the Cloverdale extension. SMART needs as much support as it can get.
2	Gavin Waters	<p>Why doesn’t the amendment address the planned SMART extension to Cloverdale?</p> <p>The real thing that should be in the plan is the need for increased frequency of service and the fact that the smart train does not connect directly to other transportation in the area (STS, Larkspur ferry terminal, SFO).</p> <p>Plan 2050 does not have enough detail about specific actions that will be taken to integrate transit schedules and increase frequency to make regional transit realistic.</p> <p>I need to go to Hayward and SFO on transit and there are no realistic options from Sonoma County. These regional transit standards should have been in place since the 1970s, not maybe by 2050!</p>
3	Bill Mayben	<p>To what extent is a sustainable community autonomous? Should it include food production, commerce, energy sufficiency, digital as well as transportation connectivity?</p> <p>Previously I suggested that PBA2050 encompasses only the “toes” of 9 Bay Area counties; yet the Plan avoids the realities of sea level rise by setting in motion extraordinary expenditures on sea walls to safely maintain a centralized commercial and residential footprint; essentially concentrating rather than decentralizing future growth.</p> <p>The costs to maintain a concentrated commercial and residential Bay Area within the available land area going forward in time are incalculable; extending far beyond 2050.</p> <p>The original decision to permanently adhere to existing city, county, and open space boundaries; given the realities of sea level rise, place all infrastructure; civic, commercial, and private and improvements at risk in the future.</p>

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		<p>We are setting the precedent for development options far beyond 2050; meanwhile global warming, sea level rise, and severe climate events will become more costly and time-consuming in a deteriorating environment. Our belief that the features we have planned will endure exponential global warming does not match up with the science.</p> <p>A coastal solution has greater true sustainability only if it does not require constant major public cash infusions and infrastructure disruption to maintain it. The higher the proposed sea walls must be raised over time, the more vulnerable and uninsurable we become.</p> <p>Beyond sea level rise; we are vulnerable to earthquakes. This plan places an unmanageable burden on future generations.</p> <p>Decentralization follows a strategy of spending each public dollar towards the longest possible, safest, most affordable applications. There are areas in the rest the nine counties that can assure the safety and continuity of public investment.</p> <p>The UN has particular concerns regarding the effects of extreme climate events on cities with populations of 10 million or more. There are now 42 of these worldwide. Public safety, at a time when we can choose, requires stable, long-range solutions. 2050 is only 26 years away.</p>
4	Donald Robertson	I fully support adding SMART Train (which I ride regularly) to Healdsburg (and beyond) to the Plan Bay Area 2050.
5	Vincent Hoagland	I believe that in the long run the extension of SMART to Healdsburg will be used frequently by people wanting to go to shops and especially wineries were they will not have to drive perhaps after imbibing in too much wine.
6	Adina Flores	<p>The current plan does not appear to mention that if the SMART Tiny Tax fails renewal over the next 5 years, SMART will cease operations entirely. The measure failed miserably in 2020 and is predicted to fail once more.</p> <p>The transition to EV is utilizing enslaved children in the Congo to mine the precious materials powering these batteries. Black lives don't matter to the colonizers leading these efforts.</p> <p>When referencing 'affordable housing', the market rates have not yet been determined. What is considered affordable to whites from outside of our area (Sonoma County)? They appear to be utilizing CBO's such as Gen H which benefit the developers serving on their board. The average person of color will not be able to afford the rental prices, and our neighborhoods are being gentrified (E.g. Tierra de Rosas, Roseland).</p> <p>The Potter Valley Dam is being removed and will drastically reduce the water supply over multiple counties, therefore negatively impacting agriculture by means of water usage restrictions. If Measure J passes on the November '24 ballot, virtually all large Sonoma County farms will be banned. How can we claim that the housing projects in Roseland and other BIPOC communities are being built for the underserved? If there are no farms, where will the farmworkers be working? They will be forced to relocate outside of the area.</p>

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		These initiatives fall in alignment with the U.N.'s 17 Goals for Sustainable Development. My grandmother is an immigrant from Rangoon, Burma, and the byproduct of a communist takeover. These plans mirror communism witnessed within Asian countries, and I will make sure that all people of color are well aware of your intentions.
7	Bill Mayben	<p>In contemplating the proposed TIP improvements, I have previously written about the extent to which these improvements depend on the proposed sea walls in many locations for their endurance.</p> <p>It also occurred that in building sea walls, PBA 2050 may assume flood liability for private property in the event of a sea wall system breach or failure; liability presently resting solely on individuals, families or commercial owners of real property.</p> <p>If civic structures such as the proposed sea walls were to fail; overwhelmed or undermined by Bay water; it is assured that those affected, and their insurance companies would turn to the municipal entities for restitution. If so; this liability then becomes a public cost; representing a new, enduring liability associated with the costs of the sea walls. Actually beyond 2050.</p> <p>While it is budgeted that the sea walls are currently captured to 2050 as a cost; subsequent development over the next 25 years will rely on the sea wall strategy as a permanent solution, encouraging any privately financed development to rely on them for the projected life of their approved construction.</p> <p>The likely public liability associated with sea wall failure or inadequacy resulting in private or corporate property losses, should be treated as a valid, related public liability, associated with all elements of the sea wall engineering and construction; for the duration of improvements built to depend on them. This represents a set of additional specific, long-range budgetary line items.</p>
8	Dani Sheehan-Meyer	As a community advocate for the Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit I urge the MTC to adapt the amendment to: Plan Bay Area 2050 to include Healdsburg Station. With SMART's growing ridership, surpassing all other transit post-covid, in the Bay Area, they are poised to increase ridership even more with the opening of North Petaluma Station and Windsor. Thank you, Dani Sheehan-Meyer Sebastopol, CA 95472
9	Mary Alice Fisher	Will the SMART train go to Cloverdale? We are paying taxes to support SMART here. We have a depot. Please include the northernmost Sonoma County city on the 101 corridor in the 2050 planning.
10	Victor Aiuto	I am a resident of Cloverdale, California, located in Northern Sonoma County. We have been paying a SMART train tax for nearly two decades, and our city has already completed its train depot. We have been long awaiting the train's arrival in Cloverdale, yet your 2050 plan, does NOT include the final SMART train leg - from Healdsburg to Cloverdale...why not? My expectation is that the "2050 plan" includes the extension to Cloverdale. We may be a small community, but we will mobilize to ensure that our community is not ignored.

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11	Neena Hanchett	Extending & expanding the existing SMART system to Healdsburg and then to Cloverdale would give our residents, businesses, and visitors access to viable thru-county transportation options, thereby expanding their access to educational and medical facilities, as well as access to jobs and hiring employers throughout Sonoma County. The current situation is untenable with very few practical options existing to move people from Cloverdale to other areas of the county without the use of cars streaming up and down Hwy. 101.
12	Duane Bellinger	<p>As a resident of Petaluma, I enjoy the opportunities the SMART train provides for alternative transportation. My destinations have included ball games in San Francisco (by ferry connection), shopping and dinner in San Rafael, visits to a Kaiser medical facility on Third Street, north to Santa Rosa and also to the Sonoma County airport (via last-mile SMART shuttle). The proximity of the Petaluma North Station to Lagunitas Brewery will no doubt be enjoyed by many.</p> <p>I hope to enjoy trips on SMART to Healdsburg soon, if for no other reason than to enjoy music on the plaza, visits to wineries and a ball game with the Prune Packers. Thank you for inviting comments.</p>
13	Cloverdale Indivisible Steering Committee Pam Browning, Brooke Green, Virginia Greenwald, and Vicky Groom	<p>Cloverdale Indivisible represents 180 Cloverdale residents who are concerned with significant social, economic, and environmental justice issues that impact us at the local level, as well as at the state and national levels. With these concerns in mind, we have been reviewing the Metropolitan Transportation Commission/Association of Bay Area Governments (MTC/ABAG) Draft Amended Transportation Plan for the Bay Area 2050.</p> <p>We were shocked and dismayed to see that the 2024 draft omits Cloverdale from the 2050 plans. As early as 1997, Cloverdale built a train station in preparation for transit coming to our community. This reflects how important SMART is to our residents. Moreover, this year we broke ground on building 75 affordable housing units — all within short walking distance from this station — in anticipation of this promised transit.</p> <p>Cloverdale has been Federally designated as a historically disadvantaged community for low income and low educational attainment. For us, SMART will be a Social and Economic Justice elevator. SMART will help level the playing field for disadvantaged students in Cloverdale by increasing access for our students to Jr. College, colleges and universities.</p> <p>Smart will open up many more job opportunities for our workforce, and it is essential for maximizing job opportunities and taking Cloverdale workers to jobs throughout the Bay Area. Buses from Cloverdale to Santa Rosa currently take 1.5 hours — too long for a reasonable commute for workers or students.</p> <p>Cloverdale’s economic growth has suffered greatly as a result of the Covid Pandemic. The anticipation of the SMART extension to Cloverdale will stimulate much needed development for our community.</p> <p>Dropping Cloverdale from the 2050 SMART Plans is not acceptable and is a betrayal of trust. Residents of Cloverdale and the surrounding areas have been</p>

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		<p>paying the same sales taxes which support this project as the residents to our south who are already benefitting from SMART.</p> <p>Residents of our community have been big supporters of SMART. The only folks who have disapproved are residents who are anti-tax, anti-transit, and who have predicted that — while they would be taxed — SMART would never be built to Cloverdale in their lifetimes. Wow! Please don't make them right and the rest of us stupid. What a horrible lesson that would be.</p>
14	Lorrie Harnach	Cloverdale must be included in the 2050 SMART Plans! We are a part of Sonoma County so include us with the rest of the county!
15	Sheila Leighton	<p>I was surprised and disappointed that extension of SMART rail service to Cloverdale was omitted from Plan Bay Area 2050. As I resident of Anderson Valley for 33 years, I saw how much enthusiasm the new rail service inspired when Sonoma County voted overwhelmingly to fund it through sales tax in 2008, with the goal of providing rail service to Cloverdale by 2014. It's now 2024, and all this time, Cloverdale citizens have been paying sales tax to support a transit system that doesn't serve us, and we are arguably the community that can least afford it. Please change the North Bay Near Term Project item that reads "SMART Rail Extension from Windsor to Healdsburg" to "SMART Rail Extension from Windsor to Cloverdale."</p>
16	Ann S. Medlin	Cloverdale must be included in the 2050 SMART Plans!
17	Linda Liebl	<p>I am a citizen living in Cloverdale since 2010 and I've been excited about the SMART TRAIN line coming to Cloverdale as promised in 2014. I am also a member of Cloverdale Indivisible. I agree with the comments submitted by Brooke Green as written below.</p> <p>"I was surprised and disappointed that extension of SMART rail service to Cloverdale was omitted from Plan Bay Area 2050. As I resident of 40 years, I saw how much enthusiasm the new rail service inspired when Sonoma County voted overwhelmingly to fund it through sales tax in 2008, with the goal of providing rail service to Cloverdale by 2014. It's now 2024, and all this time, Cloverdale citizens have been paying sales tax to support a transit system that doesn't serve us, and we are arguably the community that can least afford it. Please change the North Bay Near Term Project item that reads "SMART Rail Extension from Windsor to Healdsburg" to "SMART Rail Extension from Windsor to Cloverdale."</p>
18	Dennis Liebl	<p>Cloverdale MUST be included in the Plan Bay Area 2050!</p> <p>I was surprised and disappointed that extension of SMART rail service to Cloverdale was omitted from Plan Bay Area 2050. As I resident of 40 years, I saw how much enthusiasm the new rail service inspired when Sonoma County voted overwhelmingly to fund it through sales tax in 2008, with the goal of providing rail service to Cloverdale by 2014. It's now 2024, and all this time, Cloverdale citizens have been paying sales tax to support a transit system that doesn't serve us, and we are arguably the community that can least afford it. Please change the North Bay</p>

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		Near Term Project item that reads "SMART Rail Extension from Windsor to Healdsburg" to "SMART Rail Extension from Windsor to Cloverdale."
19	Melinda Shaw	Please reinstate the town of Cloverdale in the 2050 Plan. We're a community that's trying to grow, increase our tax base and feel supported by our state. Smaller North Bay towns like ours need to thrive and participate and share in the economic powerhouse that is California.
20	Jeanne Miernyk	Cloverdale must be included in the 2050 SMART Plans!
21	Dobie Edmunds	Please don't forget your promise to the people of Cloverdale. We must be included in the plans for SMART. All of us are counting on you to live up to the promises made. Our future depends on it. Thank you. Dobie Edmunds, Cloverdale resident.
22	Ron and Malinda Thal	Cloverdale NEEDS to be included in the 2050 SMART Plan.
23	Jody Williams	Please, please include Cloverdale in the 2050 Plan! I have lived in Mendocino County for over 40 years and when I saw the construction begin (and be completed) of the RR stations on the edge of Cloverdale, I was so excited! At last an alternative to the long drive to SF! I grew old waiting for the train...and now I learn the darling stations are not included in your plan. Please include Cloverdale in your plan.
24	L. Diane Bartleson	I urge you to rectify your mistake of turning your back on the residents of Cloverdale who NEED the Smart Train to ensure our economic future. The good tax paying citizens here respectfully request an explanation of exactly why we have been paying taxes toward this promised benefit. If you renege on your promise, we will insist on remuneration for taxes paid and compensation for future lost benefit. We already have a train depot and exiting rail track. Thank you for your immediate action to rectify your committee's lack of commitment to promises already made to the 8500 citizens of the community of Cloverdale.
25	Marlene crane	I cannot believe you've left Cloverdale out of the updated SMART plan. We are always left out, yet we have to pay taxes for whatever comes down the pike. Shame on you! I'm voting no on every tax whatever it's for.
26	Candace Delgado	Cloverdale must be included in the SMART train extension. It's good for Sonoma County as well as the commuters and families who reside in Cloverdale. Please don't ignore Cloverdale just because we are at the very north end of Sonoma County and a small but growing community.

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27	Sally C. Evans	Please reconsider and include the town of Cloverdale in the Smart train plan. We have been ready for the train here for years! Our stately terminal sits and waits for the expansion to our charming town.
28	Glenda Morgan	I was dismayed to hear that Cloverdale was not included in the SMART plans. This is a rather remote area of Sonoma in regard to medical and grocery stores. We have many seniors, some who cannot drive. Please reconsider adding Cloverdale to the plan as was in the original promise.
29	Tom Conlon	<p>Mindful of our critical statewide and regional equity and climate action goals, any MTC/ABAG updates to Plan Bay Area 2050 (PBA 2050) must be securely anchored on clear objectives, factual data, and unambiguous findings linking the two. This is necessary so as to prevent local politicians (some simply under-informed, others perhaps with conflicting more parochial objectives) from undermining the ambitious regionwide goals currently agreed upon and established in Plan Bay Area 2050.</p> <p>Because the transportation strategies are so fiscally constrained, MTC & ABAG must take special care to ensure that any regionally significant capacity-increasing projects are targeted first to addressing the needs of historically disadvantaged equity priority communities. This is particularly important to avoid replicating old patterns of ex-urban sprawl known to enable and facilitate white-flight, rural land conversion, and other harmful social and environmental consequences of poor planning.</p> <p>As noted in Alix Bockelman’s memo (July 12, 2024, Agenda Item 7b) on the proposed PBA Amendment: SMART to Healdsburg: “the analysis found that many of the region’s commuter rail projects, like the proposed northern extension of SMART, had low cost- effectiveness with limited ridership gains relative to their project costs. Furthermore, these projects often had equity concerns, given ridership forecasts skewed toward higher-income demographics.” These are facts that cannot be simply wished away because “it is clear there is strong local support for... the Healdsburg extension project.”</p> <p>To the Statutory Requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RE Fiscal Constraint: The two projects Sonoma County offers to trade off in exchange for the Healdsburg extension are actually “ghost” projects (Table 1, DRAFT Amendment, Aug. 2024). Although these projects (Farmers Lane, Railroad Ave.) have long been identified in County transportation plans and the old Measure M sales tax project list, for several years it has been widely acknowledged by Sonoma County planning staff that these projects cannot secure the necessary state and/or federal funding needed to ever be built. As such, they fail to meet the requirement of fiscal constraint. - RE GHG Target: Because the SMART train already induces more tourism-related trips than probably any other Bay Area rail system, the “small magnitude” claim should not be accepted without more evidence and findings. This region is highly tourism dependent, and air travel by visitors to destinations in Sonoma County are likely to be significant (as was successfully litigated in 2016 when Sonoma County’s Climate Action Plan was found to be inadequate under CEQA).

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		Adding additional transportation capacity to Healdsburg is likely to induce greater air travel, which has not previously been calculated in PBA 2050 GHG estimates. I strongly recommend rejecting the Amendment unless these requirements have been fully vetted and fixed.
30	Sandy Erickson	Please include Cloverdale in your Smart plans. We have been anxiously waiting and supportive of the smart train for many years. Do not forget us! You must include us in your plans. It's imperative for our community. Thank you.
31	Tom Conlon	Addendum to my previously submitted comment: SB 904 (Dodd), recently passed by the CA legislature, removed vital anti-sprawl protections originally contained in CA law. The following sentence was deleted from Section 105096 of the Public Utilities Code: "(c) In Sonoma County, north of Healdsburg, the district shall locate commuter stations only within incorporated areas." This suggests that if this Amendment to PBA 2050 is approved without additional conditions or fiscal constraints, SMART does not intend to simply stop in Healdsburg. Instead, SMART will likely seek to add additional new stations in Geyserville and elsewhere along the existing right-of-way all the way to Cloverdale and beyond. These as yet unanalyzed remote growth-inducing impacts of the Amendment must be fully assessed, and recirculated for public comment, before it is adopted by MTC/ABAG.
32	Karen Davis	The Plan Bay Area 2050 must include Cloverdale in the plan for Smart Train Service. This is what we voted on originally in order to tax ourselves in Sonoma County to improve transportation to the northern edge of Sonoma County.
33	Jo Ann Mandinach	Stop the insanity of replacing parking on BOTH sides of El Camino Real with bike lanes for its entire length. How many TENS of thousands of businesses will this destroy
34	Bill Hough	I'll believe global warming is a problem when the rich people telling me it is as a problem start ACTING like it is a problem. They can start by selling their private jets.
35	Victor	PLEASE DO NOT ADD MORE TAXES. More jobs and population will go to other states. Please propose plans to use the already VERY HIGH taxes being paid by the people of California. Parcel tax, Sales Tax, State Tax, County tax.... are all by definition taxes! Do NOT drive businesses and people away from this State.

Table 2. Comments Received via Email (Plan Bay Area Info or MTC Email Inboxes)

#	Agency/Organization	Signatory	Comment(s)
1	Public	No signoff	See attached
2	Public	Adina Flores	See attached
3	Sonoma County Board of Supervisors	Supervisor David Rabbitt	See attached
4	Cloverdale Indivisible Steering Committee	Pam Browning, Brooke Greene, Virginia Greenwald, and Vicky Groom	See attached
5	Public	Roz Katz	See attached
6	Public	Rob Davis	See attached
7	Public	Joaquin & Audrey Espinosa	See attached
8	Public	Carol Russell	See attached
9	City of Cloverdale	Mayor Todd Land	See attached
10	Public	Carol Russell	See attached
11	City of Healdsburg	Jeff Kay	See attached
12	Friends of SMART	Jack Swearingen, PhD	See attached
13	Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit District (SMART)	Eddy Cumins	See attached
14	Town of Windsor	Mayor Rosa Reynoza	See attached
15	Cloverdale Indivisible Steering Committee	Pam Browning, Brooke Green, Virginia Greenwald, and Vicky Groom	See attached
16	Sonoma County Transportation & Land-Use Coalition	Stephen Birdlebough	See attached
17	The Honorable Jared Huffman	Congressman Jared Huffman	See attached