**Plan Bay Area 2050+**:

Draft Plan Engagement Findings

MTC Planning Committee and ABAG Administrative Committee

February 13, 2026

# Plan Bay Area 2050+: Engagement Highlights

Draft Plan Bay Area 2050+ was **guided by input from 17,500+ Bay Area residents** from all nine Bay Area counties who shared their priorities for the future.

**41** Pop-Up Workshops

**3** Online Surveys

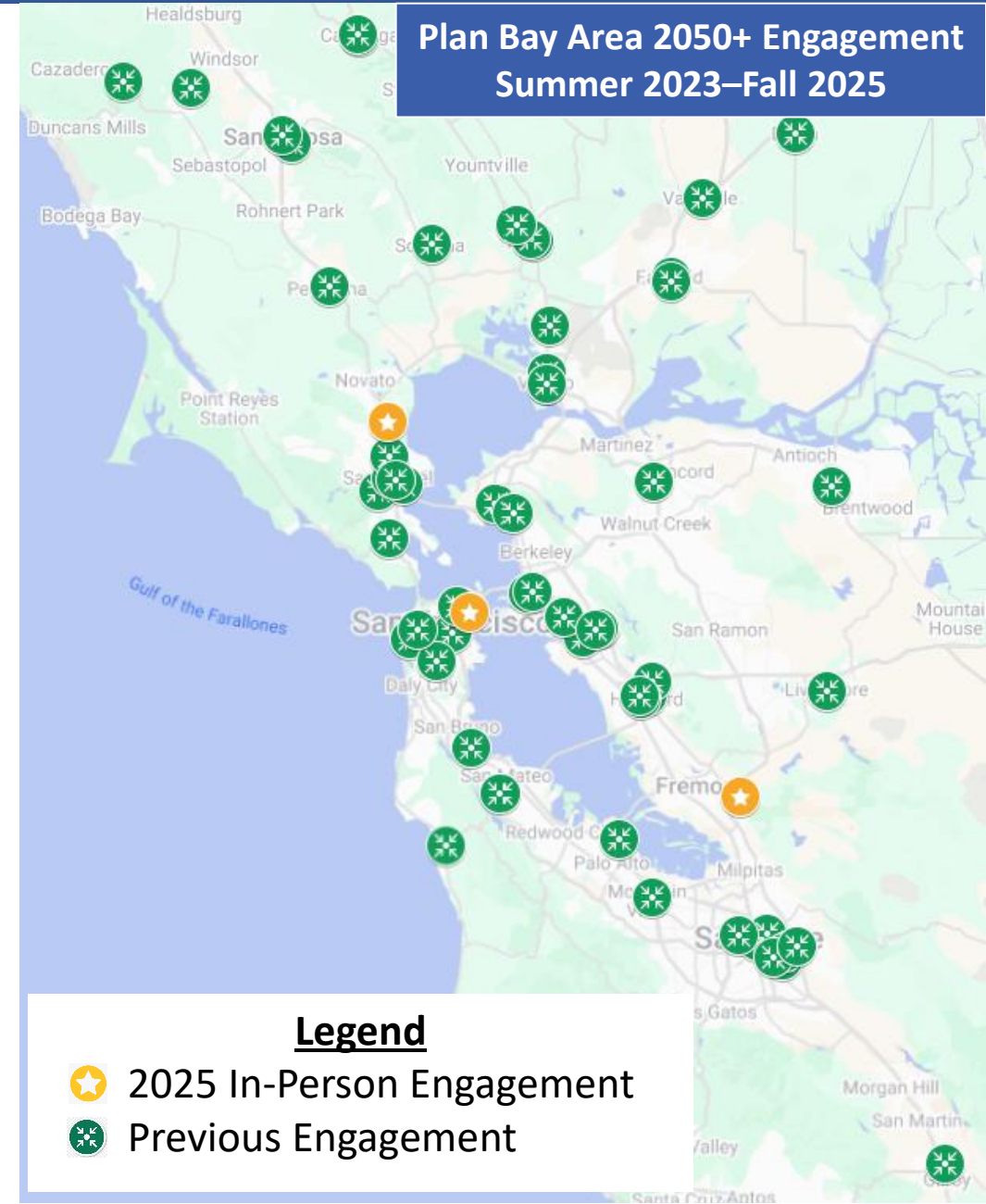**22** Community-Based Organization Partnerships

**10** Webinars and Technical Workshops

**3** Hybrid Public Hearings + **9** CTA Board Presentations *(Fall 2025)*

**Widespread** Digital Promotion



Plan Bay Area 2050+ Engagement
Summer 2023–Fall 2025

**Legend**
⭐ 2025 In-Person Engagement
✳️ Previous Engagement

# Plan Bay Area 2050+: Final Round of Public Engagement



## Subregional Webinars

- **4 subregional webinars**
- One each focused on the North Bay, East Bay, South Bay and West Bay
- Content tailored to each sub-region, highlighting how Plan Bay Area 2050+ strategies apply at the local level



## Hybrid Public Hearings + CTA Board Presentations

- **3 hybrid public hearings**
- Geographically distributed across the region; structured to allow for in-person and virtual participation, with oral testimony
- **9 presentations to county transportation agency boards**, exceeding SB 375 elected official briefings requirement
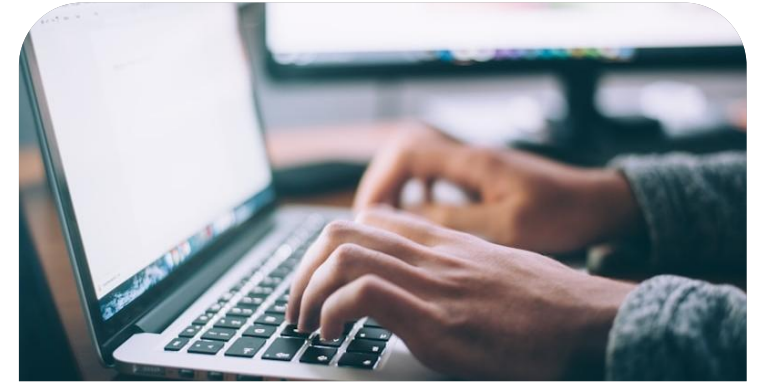


## Public Comment Submissions

- Public comment period that **exceeded the required 55 days**
- Comments were accepted through multiple formats:
  - Email
  - Online web form
  - Telephone messages
  - U.S. mail

# What We Heard: Key Themes

### REGIONAL GROWTH

"I'm curious how the Plan Bay Area population growth forecast aligns with what the Department of Finance shows."

### AFFORDABILITY

"I'm glad to see affordable housing in this vision. The question for many of us is how housing and transportation together will actually become more affordable for working families and seniors."

### LOCAL CAPACITY

"Many cities support the goals of the Plan but will need clearer alignment between regional expectations and local fiscal capacity to implement infrastructure, services and housing without placing disproportionate strain on local governments."

### IMPLEMENTATION

"The Plan lays out an ambitious and comprehensive vision. What will build public confidence is clarity around how strategies will be phased, funded, and tracked over time."

### TRANSIT SERVICE

"If you want us to use public transportation, it has to run when people actually need it — late at night, early in the morning, and for people who can't drive."

### EQUITY

"Equity is clearly a priority in the Plan. I encourage MTC and ABAG to continue refining how equity is measured so that communities with fewer fiscal resources can realistically implement the strategies being proposed."

# Public Comments: Regional Growth Forecast Inquiries

- **While we received comments on a wide range of topics — and will be appropriately responding either via the Final EIR or via a comment response letter in the weeks ahead —** we want to specifically address one of the most frequent topics today: the Final Regional Growth Forecast included in the January 2025 Final Blueprint action item.

- **Commenters questioned the Regional Growth Forecast methodology, its policy assumptions, and its implications for housing and regional planning.**



Photo: City of Vacaville

- **The Plan Bay Area 2050+ Regional Growth Forecast has no influence on the Regional Housing Need Determination (RHND) for past or future RHNA cycles.**

- The Regional Housing Needs Determination (RHND) is set by the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) through a statewide process, using the Department of Finance (DOF) population projections and other statutory factors.

- RHNA (Regional Housing Needs Allocation) is the regional allocation of the RHND to cities/counties based on an adopted methodology; the distribution of the RHND must be informed by Plan Bay Area 2060's growth pattern, but the exact extent will be determined by the ABAG Board in 2028 and 2029.



Photo: Karl Nielsen

# Regional Growth Forecast: Key Requirements



**What is the Plan Bay Area Regional Growth Forecast?**

Identifies **nine-county regional growth assumptions** (population, households, jobs) needed to model future land use patterns, travel activity, and emissions; necessary to evaluate performance metrics and communicate trends.



**Federal Requirements**

Federal regulations require that Plan Bay Area must forecast for **at least a 20-year planning horizon** and promote consistency between transportation improvements and growth patterns.



**State Requirements**

State regulations (*Senate Bill 375*) require that ABAG must identify areas within the region sufficient to **house all the region's population, including all economic segments of the population**, over the course of the planning period.

# Plan Bay Area (2013): Lessons from the First Plan



### Initial Approach

Plan Bay Area, the first regional plan developed under SB 375 requirements, relied largely on status-quo population growth forecasts and did not fully address the region's housing needs.



### Legal Challenges

The Building Industry Association (BIA) challenged Plan Bay Area for not planning for housing across all economic segments of the population as required by SB 375, resulting in increases in in-commuting from the megaregion.

### Ongoing Requirements

The BIA Settlement Agreement created ongoing requirements for transparency and documentation:

- Forecast cannot be based on historical production (must meet demand at all income levels)
- No increase in in-commuters over base year (no spillover to megaregion)
- Greater disclosure of growth assumptions, supported by fully documented methodology, publicly adopted, and disclosed before EIR Notice of Preparation

# Plan Bay Area 2040: New Approach and New Challenge
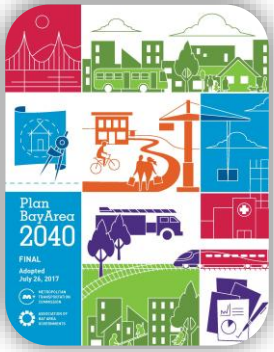
### Integrated New Requirements

Plan Bay Area 2040 refreshed the methodology to meet the BIA Settlement Agreement requirements, as well as the more complex, integrated planning requirements of SB 375.

### New Challenges

Despite this, Plan Bay Area 2040 was ultimately unable to advance affordability goals, with worse outcomes at all income levels. Performance findings indicated that the region needs new funding to deliver affordable housing at scale to meet regional goals.

### Policy Response

In response, the Commission and ABAG Executive Board directed a shift in long-range planning toward a more ambitious "what would it take" approach, which shaped the policy-led context for the subsequent regional plan and the Regional Growth Forecast.

The Committee to House the Bay Area (CASA) effort led to the **3 P's Framework** as Solutions to the Housing Crisis: Protection, Preservation, Production.

# Plan Bay Area 2050 and 2050+: Latest Iterations



## A Vision for the Region

**Plan Bay Area 2050** contains 35 comprehensive strategies to address the region's interconnected housing, transportation, and environmental challenges.



## Forecast Methodology

The Regional Growth Forecast methodology was developed through extensive **stakeholder engagement** and a **technical advisory committee** that comprised of economists and experts from the state, megaregion, and Bay Area. **The methodology was adopted by ABAG Executive Board in September 2019.**



## Plan Bay Area 2050+ Data Update

**Plan Bay Area 2050+, as a minor update, maintained the forecast methodology,** while incorporating more recent data to reflect post-COVID conditions - reducing the 2050 growth forecast by 740,000 people.

The Draft Regional Growth Forecast was first presented to committees in fall 2023 and ultimately **integrated into the Final Blueprint as approved in January 2025.**

# Why Does the Plan Bay Area 2050+ Forecast Differ from DOF?

**The California Department of Finance (DOF) forecast is a status-quo demographic projection, while Plan Bay Area relies on a regional forecast shaped by federal, state and legal requirements, and Commission and ABAG policy direction.** Because of these differing requirements, differences should be expected.

## Integrated Demography and Economy Forecast

- **Plan Bay Area:** Integrated forecast linking jobs, population, and industry to economic performance and labor force.
- **DOF:** Demographic trend forecast without explicit linkage to regional economic competitiveness or labor market.

## Reflecting Policy Changes and Impacts

- **Plan Bay Area:** Reflects policy impacts (e.g., state housing laws and plan strategies) that shape affordability, migration, and the labor force.
- **DOF:** Does not account for changes in migration, education, housing, or transportation policy; discloses that such changes could significantly affect its projections.

# Next Steps

**February 2026**

- Review comments and prepare revisions to Draft Plan and associated reports, as needed.
- Respond to Draft EIR comments as part of Final EIR process.

**March 2026**

- Present Final Plan Bay Area 2050+ and the Final Implementation Plan for consideration for adoption and the Final EIR for certification by the Commission and ABAG Executive Board.

**Late 2026** *(as part of Plan Bay Area 2060)*

- Staff will begin updating the Regional Growth Forecast Methodology and explore emerging trends, such as AI, remote work, and immigration policies.