

# OneBayArea

Date: July 5, 2011

To: MTC Planning Committee  
ABAG Administrative Committee

From: Executive Director, ABAG

Re: Response to Equity Groups Regarding Sustainable Communities  
Strategy (SCS) Land Use Scenario Assumptions

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## Overview

Social equity leaders and advocates have worked with regional agencies in the development of the equity analysis to be conducted for the alternative scenarios once they are completed. While some questions remain on the scope and indicators included in this equity analysis, it is our understanding that the main concern is related to the equity inputs in the design of the scenarios. Regional agencies staff have responded to this concern by explaining and adding specific equity components to the Focused Growth, Core Concentration, and Outer Bay Area Growth scenarios.

The Joint Committee also requested that staff develop a sixth alternative that would specifically explore issues related to equity, employment, and the environment. The details of this potential scenario are still under development through consultation with the equity groups, so a description of this option has not been included in this memo.

## Forecasted Constrained Scenarios

The three moderate growth scenarios are *Focused Growth*, *Core Concentration*, and *Outer Bay Area Growth*. These three scenarios take into account reasonable planning assumptions related to funding availability. All three scenarios assume higher rates of employment growth and housing production than the Bay Area has experienced over the previous 20 years. In order to achieve these results, these scenarios assume that over the next 30 years there will be significant reforms in State and regional policies and the availability of new funding sources for affordable housing and infrastructure that replace redevelopment financing.

Land use decisions are governed by local jurisdictions and are a local responsibility. The land use assumptions utilized in the scenarios are based upon local input and strong coordination among local and regional agencies.



## **Land Use Patterns and Strategies**

### Focused Growth Scenario

This scenario maximizes the potential of the Priority Development Areas (PDAs)<sup>1</sup> to accommodate household and job growth across the region with an emphasis on density along several transit corridors in the Inner Bay Area (the map on page three shows how this is defined). This scenario would intensify growth in all PDAs, with an emphasis on growth in the PDAs along the major transit corridors. It is expected that around 70 percent of the housing production and around 55 percent of the employment growth would be accommodated within PDAs. Putting more homes and jobs near transit would provide residents and employees with increased access to jobs and services, while providing the densities needed to support more robust transit service.

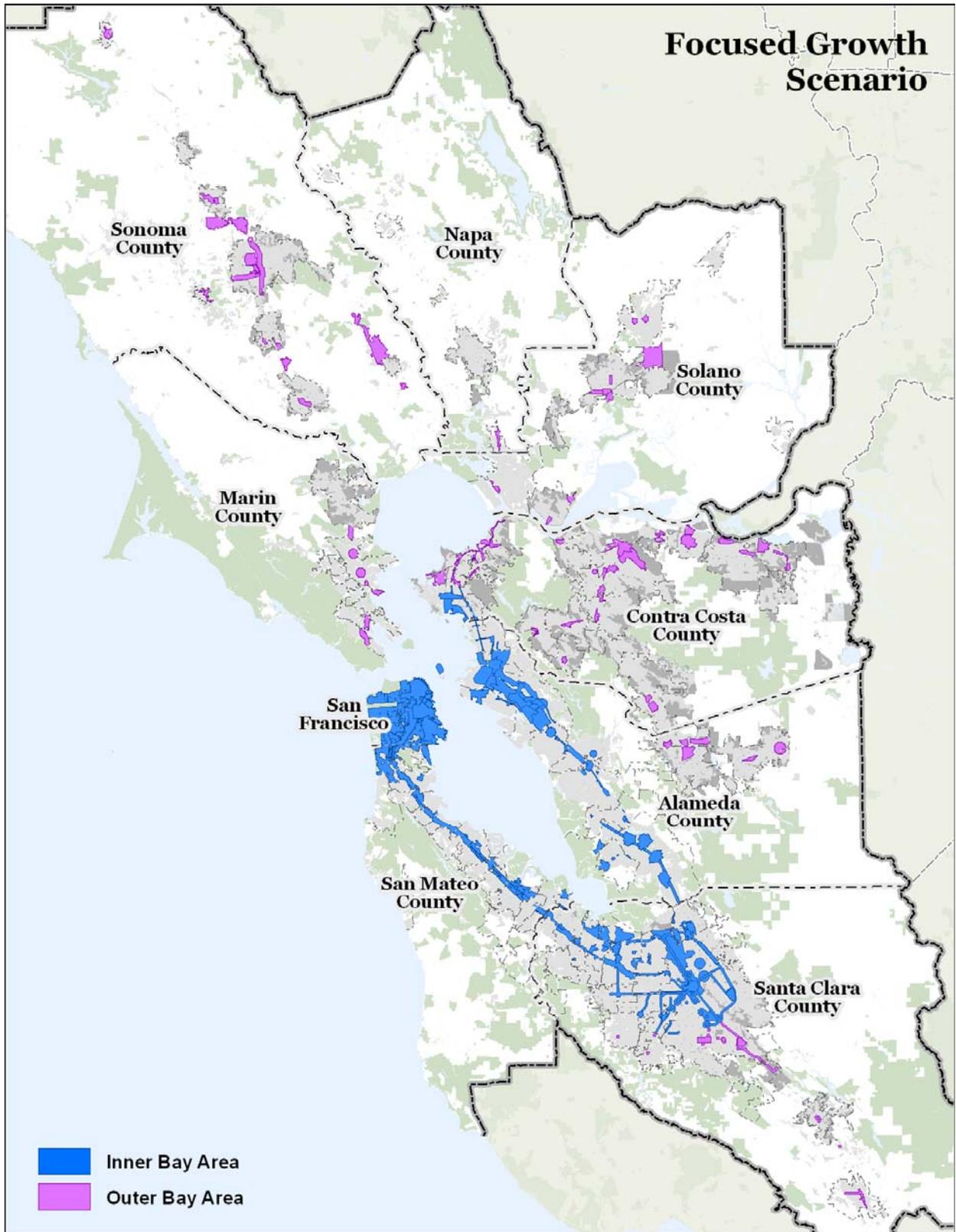
The growth within the PDAs would be based on the place type proposed by the local jurisdiction and would be tied to input provided by local jurisdictions on the level of growth they can reasonably accommodate given their resources, local plans, and community support. Except for the major cities, where high-rise buildings are considered, most other places would be expected to build three- to five-story buildings of wood frame construction.

### Core Concentration Scenario

This scenario builds upon the pattern of growth outlined in the Focused Growth scenario, but shifts additional growth toward the regional and city centers in the Inner Bay Area, to take advantage of the core transit network. This would result in a more compact development pattern, but within reasonable financial constraints. By concentrating more growth in the city centers and regional centers, it goes even further than the Focused Growth scenario in trying to maximize the use of the existing transit network and provide access to jobs and services to most of the population. It would include a higher number of steel frame buildings and higher densities in regional and city centers than in the Focused Growth or Outer Bay Area Growth scenarios.

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<sup>1</sup> ABAG/MTC staff expect to expand the PDA framework to incorporate the Growth Opportunity Areas that were identified during development of the Initial Vision Scenario. As a result, the term PDAs in this context refers to both PDAs and Growth Opportunity Areas.



### Outer Bay Area Growth Scenario

This scenario also builds upon the Focused Growth scenario, but incorporates a regional employment analysis to address higher levels of growth in PDAs in the Outer Bay Area than those considered in Focused Growth and Core Concentration. Most of the housing production and employment growth would still be accommodated in the Inner Bay Area. However, this scenario would cluster jobs and housing in key transit-served locations as a way to promote economic development and greater access to services and amenities in the Outer Bay Area. Office parks in the Outer Bay Area would be assumed to grow faster in this scenario than the others and would be supported by increased density of PDAs and cities in the Outer Bay Area. While increased use of public transit would be very limited in the Outer Bay Area, some shorter commutes could be expected as jobs are created closer to some primarily residential communities. This scenario would consider intensifying existing office parks, downtown centers, and PDAs in the Outer Bay Area through construction of three- to five-story buildings and town houses.

### **Equity in the Constrained Alternative Scenarios**

The Focused Growth, Core Concentration, and Outer Bay Area Growth scenarios address the land use components requested by the equity leaders and advocates as follows:

1. *Allocation of a substantial proportion of housing growth based on jobs, high-performing schools, transit service levels, and other indicators of opportunity:*

The SCS will pursue the development and strengthening of complete communities to enhance the quality of life in all neighborhoods and centers throughout the region. The PDA framework, in particular, emphasizes residents' access to transit, jobs, stores, quality schools, health services, and entertainment. While many PDAs might not currently have high-performing schools or strong employment growth, the purpose of the SCS is to provide additional support to those communities to address needed improvements. The alternative scenarios will identify some of the policies and investments required to achieve strong complete communities in PDAs.

In addition, some growth in each of the constrained alternative scenarios will be directed to areas outside of the PDAs that have the characteristics of a complete community. Growth outside of the PDAs will be distributed based, in part, on factors that contribute to neighborhood quality of life, such as access to jobs, transit, services, and quality schools. Each jurisdiction will be expected to accommodate a minimum percent of the housing need it is expected to generate based on factors related to demographic change and household formation.

The approach used would be consistent with what is adopted as part of the Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA) methodology for the 2015-2022 period. As currently proposed, the RHNA methodology includes the following components: housing and job growth in PDAs from SCS Preferred Scenario, an upper housing threshold (110 percent of household formation), a minimum housing floor (40 percent of household formation),

quality of life factors for growth outside of PDAs, and the income allocation (175 percent shift towards regional average)<sup>2</sup>

*2. Allocate extremely low, very-low, and low income housing units to cities with low numbers of low-income residents:*

All three constrained alternative scenarios will address this equity objective by projecting a greater diversity of housing choices across jurisdictions, which is also part of the proposed RHNA methodology described above. As proposed, the income allocation method gives jurisdictions that have a relatively higher proportion of households in a certain income category a smaller allocation of housing units in that same category. Conversely, jurisdictions that have a lower proportion of households in an income category would receive a larger allocation of housing units in that same category.

The Focused Growth, Core Concentration, and Outer Bay Area Growth scenarios emphasize different equity approaches based on the underlying land use pattern. The Core Concentration scenario will provide greater access to jobs and services to a higher share of the low-income population than the other scenarios given the concentration of growth in the Inner Bay Area. The Outer Bay Area Growth scenario would increase employment opportunities and access to services and amenities for the predominantly residential neighborhoods in the Outer Bay Area. By accommodating more moderate levels of growth in PDAs throughout the region, the Focused Growth scenario provides a balance between these approaches.

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<sup>2</sup> More details about the RHNA methodology are available on the One Bay Area website at: [http://www.onebayarea.org/plan\\_bay\\_area/housing.htm](http://www.onebayarea.org/plan_bay_area/housing.htm).