

# Plan BayArea

TO: MTC Planning Committee, ABAG Administrative Committee

DATE: December 7, 2012

FR: Executive Director, MTC  
Executive Director, ABAG

RE: Plan Bay Area Public Engagement

As reported to you last month, the draft Plan Bay Area is scheduled to be released in March 2013. Following that action staff will initiate another round of public meetings, polling and community engagement to gather comments on the draft Plan in preparation for final Plan adoption in June. We propose to seek input through a variety of methods that provides everyone who wishes to comment the opportunity to do so in a civil and respectful environment. To that end, staff recommends the following activities for your consideration and approval.

## **Open House and Formal Public Hearing**

Unlike the public workshops hosted in the earlier stages of the Plan's development, where we sought to present a range of options and gather input on preferences on broadly defined strategies, in this phase of public participation we will be seeking comments on specific elements of the Draft Plan. To accomplish this, staff recommends holding public meetings in each of the nine Bay Area counties following a two-part format that includes both an "Open House" beginning at approximately 4 p.m. and running until 6 p.m., followed by a formal public hearing that would run from approximately 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. We will hold these events at venues that can comfortably accommodate both activities.

**Part 1: Open House** — We propose holding an "open house" to begin each meeting to provide interested residents with a chance to review and ask questions about the key elements of the Draft Plan. Members of the public could arrive at their convenience, partake of light refreshments, and have a chance to learn about the draft plan before submitting their comments. The Open House would include:

- A series of stations would include visuals and information that correspond to the chapters of the draft Plan. Staff from ABAG and MTC would be at each station to answer questions or provide clarification. Staff from other partner public agencies within each county would be invited to participate, as well. Included in these information stations would be a review of the Plan Bay Area process, including key milestones and remaining steps before final Plan adoption. Other topics would cover housing, jobs, the transportation network and investment strategy, performance measures, and policy recommendations.
- A "Comment Station" will allow members of the public to enter their written comments directly into a computer, or offer oral comments that will be recorded, transcribed and included in the formal public comment record. Likewise, comment forms will be available at all displays if people wish to log their comments as they review the information. This provides a convenient option for people who want to attend the open house portion of the meeting but who prefer not to speak before a large group or who are not able to stay for the formal comment portion of the meeting.

- Local land use or transportation planning efforts and their connection to Plan Bay Area will be showcased at additional tables, or integrated into existing displays and tables as appropriate.

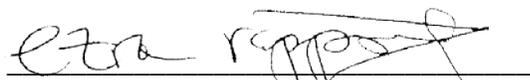
**Part 2: Public Hearing** — Following brief welcoming remarks from a Commissioner, ABAG board member or staff from ABAG or MTC, speakers will have a chance to comment on the Draft Plan. This will be a formal public hearing where those wishing to speak will be asked to fill out a request-to-speak card. A court reporter will be present to transcribe all oral comments. We propose to retain retired judges or professional mediators to preside over the hearing and help ensure that all who wish to speak have the opportunity to do so. There will be a limit on the time allowed for each speaker, based on the number of people wishing to speak within the two-hour time period.

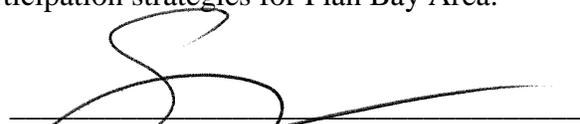
Recognizing that only a small percentage of Bay Area residents are likely to attend the open houses/public hearings, we recommend following additional activities to gather input:

- **Telephone Survey:** We recommend conducting a statistically valid telephone poll that will measure public sentiment on key elements included or outstanding issues identified in the Draft Plan.
- **Community-Based Focus Groups:** We are partnering with community groups in low-income communities and communities of color to conduct a series of focus groups to provide residents in those areas a chance to comment.
- **Local Elected Official Briefings:** SB 375 calls for briefings with elected officials in every county, with official notice to each city and county’s clerk of the board, to discuss the draft plan. We propose to present the Draft Plan for discussion at a regularly scheduled meeting of each of the nine county congestion management agency boards, which include elected officials from cities as well as counties.
- **Updated OneBayArea Web Site:** Our new One Bay Area web site ([www.OneBayArea.org](http://www.OneBayArea.org)) offers users easily accessible and more interactive features. With release of the Draft Plan, we will launch a new online “Bay Area Town Hall” feature that will allow visitors to review and comment on the draft online.
- **Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Public Hearings:** As required by the California Environmental Quality Act, we will hold three additional public hearings to gather comments on the Draft EIR, one each to be conducted in the North Bay, the South Bay, and the East Bay.

Staff will compile and analyze all comments received on the Draft Plan and Draft EIR. Later next spring we will present a summary of comments heard, along with responses, to inform your decisions regarding Plan Bay Area.

Staff recommends your approval of these public participation strategies for Plan Bay Area.

  
Ezra Rapport

  
Steve Heminger