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NOTICE OF PREPARATION (NOP)

To: Interested Agencies, Organizations and Individuals

Project: **Draft Environmental Impact Report for Plan Bay Area 2050+
(Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy for the Nine-County San Francisco Bay Area)**

Lead Agencies: Metropolitan Transportation Commission/Association of Bay Area Governments

Comment Period: January 14, 2025 – February 13, 2025 (30 days)

Interested agencies, organizations and individuals are invited by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) to comment on the scope and content of the environmental impact assessment that will be conducted for the long-range regional plan for transportation, housing, the economy and the environment known as *Plan Bay Area 2050+*. A map of the nine-county area addressed in the plan is included in this notice as Figure 1.

MTC and ABAG are the joint lead agencies undertaking preparation of a program-level Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for Plan Bay Area 2050+. Plan Bay Area 2050+ is designed to serve as the 2025 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) for the San Francisco Bay Area. In addition to the focus on transportation and land use, Plan Bay Area 2050+ incorporates economic and environmental issues into the plan; taken as a package, the plan identifies a suite of integrated strategies that will enable the Bay Area to accommodate future growth and make the region more equitable and resilient in the face of unexpected challenges. The plan also identifies regional transportation planning needs, priorities and funding, and allows project sponsors to qualify for federal funding for public transit, streets and roads, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Although not required by law, the plan further identifies needs and revenues for affordable housing, environmental resilience, and economic development as a best practice.

Plan Bay Area 2050+ seeks to ensure that the Bay Area is more affordable, connected, diverse, healthy, and vibrant for all by the year 2050. It also seeks to meet or exceed state and federal planning requirements, including a state-mandated year 2035 target for greenhouse gas emissions reduction. The plan is required to be updated every four years. Attachment A to this NOP provides more information on MTC, ABAG, SB 375 and Plan Bay Area 2050+.

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (Section 15082), the purpose of this Notice of Preparation is to seek comments about the scope and content of the environmental impact report that will be prepared for Plan Bay Area 2050+. EIRs are prepared to inform decision makers and the public about the potential physical environmental impacts associated with changes to the environment that may result if a project is approved. If you represent an agency that may rely upon the EIR for project approval and/or tiering, MTC and ABAG are particularly interested in what information may be helpful for these purposes. Input is also sought from organizations and individuals as to the issues that should be addressed in the EIR.

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FIGURE 1. NINE-COUNTY SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

Adoption and implementation of Plan Bay Area 2050+ has the potential to result in environmental effects in all the environmental impact areas identified in CEQA. For this reason, the Plan Bay Area 2050+ EIR will be a “full scope” document and will analyze all the required CEQA environmental issue areas. These include: aesthetics; agriculture and forestry resources; air quality; biological resources; cultural resources; energy; geology and soils; greenhouse gas emissions; hazards and hazardous materials; hydrology and water quality; land use and planning; mineral resources; noise; population and housing; public services; recreation; transportation/traffic; tribal cultural resources; utilities and other service systems; and wildfire. The EIR will also address cumulative effects, growth inducing impacts and other issues required by CEQA.

MTC and ABAG would be particularly interested in hearing your views on the following questions:

1. Are there any alternatives you believe MTC/ABAG should evaluate?
2. What types of mitigation measures do you think would help avoid or minimize potential environmental effects?

All interested agencies, organizations and individuals are invited to attend a scoping meeting webinar providing an overview of the EIR scope and/or submit comments on the project. The scoping meeting for Plan Bay Area 2050+ will be held on January 29, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. The meeting will be held virtually at the following Zoom link:

<https://bayareametro.zoom.us/j/84828971011?pwd=HawKgsJQFLsngkUSLGxMvThkEzhfg.FyEx6Dpdgt21yXRV>

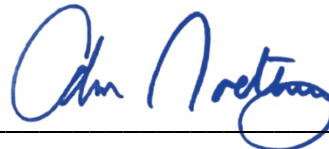
If you choose to phone in for audio only, please dial 1-877-853-5247 and enter Webinar ID: 848 2897 1011 and Passcode: 812438.

Written comments are also being accepted via email to eircomments@bayareametro.gov; via mail to MTC Public Information, Attn: Veronica Cummings, 375 Beale Street, Suite 800, San Francisco, CA, 94105; or via fax to 415.536.9800. **All written comments must be received no later than February 12, 2025.** For more information, call the MTC Public Information Office at 415.778.6757.

Do you need an interpreter or any other assistance to participate? Please call 415-778-6757. We require at least three working days' notice to provide reasonable accommodation. For TDD or hearing impaired, call 711, California Relay Service, or 1-800-735-2929 (TTY), 1-800-735-2922 (voice) and ask to be relayed to 415-778-6700.

¿Necesita un intérprete u otra asistencia para participar? Por favor llame al 415-778-6757. Solicitamos tres días hábiles para poder coordinar servicios de intérprete. Para servicios de TDD o para sordomudos, favor de llamar al 711 al Servicio de Retransmisión de California o al 1-800-735-2929 (para TTY) o al 1-800-735-2922 (para voz) y pida que lo conecten al 415-778-6700.

您是否需要翻譯員或任何其他幫助才能參加呢？請提前三天致電 415-778-6757。有聽覺或者語言障礙的人士，請打電話到 711，加州傳達服務。電傳打字機的聯繫號碼是 1-800-735-2929，需要語音服務可以打電話到 1-800-735-2922，然後要求傳達到 415-778-6700。



Adam Noelting, Principal Planner
Plan Bay Area 2050+ EIR Project Manager

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

Draft Environmental Impact Report for Plan Bay Area 2050+

Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy for the Nine-County San Francisco Bay Area

Metropolitan Transportation Commission/Association of Bay Area Governments

ATTACHMENT A

Responsibilities and Requirements

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) is the transportation planning, coordinating and financing agency for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area (which includes Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano and Sonoma Counties). Created by the State Legislature in 1970, MTC functions as both the regional transportation planning agency (RTPA), which is a state designation, and as the region's metropolitan planning organization (MPO), which is a federal designation.

ABAG was formed in 1961 by a joint powers agreement among Bay Area local governments and serves as the comprehensive regional planning agency and Council of Governments (COG) for the nine counties and 101 cities and towns of the San Francisco Bay Region. ABAG is a public entity created by local governments to meet their planning and research needs related to land use and is responsible under state law to conduct the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) process. ABAG also hosts several joint powers and administrative entities related to environmental and water resource protection, disaster resilience, energy efficiency and hazardous waste mitigation, financial services and staff training to local counties, cities and towns.

Per federal planning requirements, a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is a long-range plan that identifies the strategies and investments to maintain, manage, and improve the region's transportation network. The RTP must address no less than a 20-year planning horizon and include long-range and short-range strategies and actions that support the development of an integrated multimodal transportation system. The RTP must be updated at least every four years and seek to address projected transportation demand over the RTP planning horizon and pursue operational and management strategies that will improve the performance of the transportation system. The RTP must have a fiscally constrained financial plan that demonstrates how the RTP can be implemented and how the transportation system can be operated and maintained using revenues reasonably expected to be available over the planning horizon. The RTP also has myriad state and federal requirements with respect to public participation, equity and environmental justice, and air quality conformity, among others. As required by state legislation (Government Code Section 65080 et. seq.) and by federal regulation (Title 23 USC Section 134), MTC is responsible for preparing the RTP for the San Francisco Bay Area region.

Regional transportation planning, local land use planning and regional housing allocations are more closely aligned because of the passage of California's Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act (SB 375 (Steinberg)) signed into law in 2008. MTC and ABAG are jointly required by SB 375 to develop the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) that accompanies the RTP. The SCS must identify the general location of land uses, residential densities, and building intensities within the region; identify areas within the region sufficient to house all the

population of the region, including all economic segments of the population; identify areas within the region sufficient to house an 8-year projection of the regional housing need; identify a transportation network to serve regional transportation needs; gather and consider the best practically available scientific information regarding resource areas and farmland in the region; consider the state’s housing goals; set forth a forecasted development pattern for the region; and allow the regional transportation plan to comply with the federal Clean Air Act. (Gov. Code, § 65080, subd. (b)(F)(2)(B)).

Together, the plan (RTP/SCS) should support the reduction of per-capita passenger vehicle-generated greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by identifying policies and strategies that integrate land use and transportation planning. Plan Bay Area 2050+ will meet the requirements of SB 375 by attaining or exceeding a per-capita GHG emission target of 19 percent reduction by year 2035 from 2005 levels, as established for the San Francisco Bay Area by the California Air Resources Board (CARB). If the plan does not achieve the GHG emission target set by CARB, an Alternative Planning Strategy (APS) must be developed to demonstrate how the target could be achieved.

VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Plan Bay Area 2050+ is designed to meet or exceed federal and state planning requirements while offering a more aspirational vision for the San Francisco Bay Area's future. MTC and ABAG jointly adopted the Vision for the region’s current RTP/SCS, Plan Bay Area 2050, in September 2019, following an outreach and engagement effort to identify the most pressing planning issues to address by the year 2050. This vision, emphasizing resilient and equitable strategies, has been carried forward into Plan Bay Area 2050+. The guiding principles of this vision are defined as follows:

- **Affordable:** All Bay Area residents and workers have sufficient housing options they can afford—households are economically secure.
- **Connected:** An expanded, well-functioning, safe and multimodal transportation system connects the Bay Area – fast, frequent and efficient intercity trips are complemented by a suite of local transportation options, connecting communities and creating a cohesive region.
- **Diverse:** The Bay Area is an inclusive region where people from all backgrounds, abilities and ages can remain in place – with full access to the region’s assets and resources.
- **Healthy:** The region’s natural resources, open space, clean water and clean air are conserved – the region actively reduces its environmental footprint and protects residents from environmental impacts.
- **Vibrant:** The Bay Area is an innovation leader, creating quality job opportunities for all and ample fiscal resources for communities.

CEQA STREAMLINING

SB 375 contains CEQA incentives, or streamlining provisions, to encourage coordinated land use and transportation planning. Certain types of development projects (i.e., transit priority projects or residential/mixed use residential projects, as defined by statute) may qualify for CEQA streamlining as long as the requisite criteria are met. Consistency with the SCS will be determined by the local jurisdiction that is the lead agency for each project to be streamlined. MTC and ABAG will include appropriate information in the SCS, such as land use information as required by SB 375 and/or guidance to aid in interpreting land use information, that will allow a jurisdiction to make a consistency determination with respect to appropriate streamlining options on a project-by-project

basis. Additionally, the EIR will support other CEQA streamlining options that do not fall into the categories under SB 375, such as SB 743, SB 226 and other provisions of the State CEQA guidelines.

Plan Bay Area 2050+ Project Description

Plan Bay Area 2050+ is a limited and focused update to the region’s long-range plan to guide the growth of the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. Plan Bay Area 2050+ will focus on four key elements—transportation, housing, the economy, and the environment—and will identify a path to make the Bay Area more equitable for all residents and more resilient in the face of unexpected challenges. Plan Bay Area 2050+ refines select plan strategies to integrate the lessons of the last three years and will enable continued progress implementing the strategies of Plan Bay Area 2050.

REGIONAL GROWTH FORECAST

The Plan Bay Area 2050+ Regional Growth Forecast identifies how much the Bay Area might grow between the plan baseline year (2023) and the plan horizon year (2050), including population, jobs, households, and associated housing units. The forecast also includes important components of that growth, including employment by sector, population by age and race/ethnic characteristics, and households by income level.

Plan Bay Area 2050+ forecasts that by 2050, the Bay Area will have over 9.5 million residents, 5.4 million jobs, 3.7 million households, and 3.9 million housing units, as shown in the table below. The updated forecasts indicate lower population and household numbers compared to those forecasted in Plan Bay Area 2050, while employment levels remain similar. These adjustments reflect a declining national population outlook alongside a strong regional job projection.

Plan Bay Area 2050+ Regional Growth Forecast			
	2020	2035	2050
Total Population	7,749,000	8,476,000	9,586,000
Total Employment	4,025,000	4,855,000	5,436,000
Total Households	2,798,000	3,312,000	3,796,000
Total Housing Units	2,875,000	3,486,000	3,996,000

GROWTH GEOGRAPHIES

To plan for this future growth and meet the greenhouse gas emissions reduction target established pursuant to SB 375, Plan Bay Area 2050+ identifies specific areas prioritized for new housing and jobs, known as Growth Geographies. For housing, Growth Geographies include Priority Development Areas (PDAs), Transit-Rich Areas (TRAs), and High-Resource Areas (HRAs). For jobs, Growth Geographies include Priority Production Areas (PPAs), PDAs, and TRAs. A map of the plan’s Growth Geographies is included as Attachment B.

PLAN REVENUES AND STRATEGIES

Plan Bay Area 2050+ includes a financially constrained investment plan for the Transportation Element, as required by state and federal planning regulations. It includes transportation projects and programs that can be funded through existing and new revenues projected to be reasonably available to the region over the plan’s horizon. The plan also estimates needs for the Housing,

Economy, and Environment elements, which are not subject to fiscal constrain requirements but illustrate what is needed to meet key regional goals.

Across all elements—transportation, housing, economy, and environment—the plan forecasts a total of \$615 billion in existing revenues and at least \$862 billion in new revenues, as shown in the table below.

Plan Bay Area 2050+ Regional Revenues and Investments			
	Existing Revenues¹	New Revenues²	Strategy Investment
Transportation Strategies	\$423 billion	\$89 billion	\$500 billion
Housing Strategies	\$161 billion	\$339 billion	\$500 billion
Economy Strategies	N/A	\$246 billion	\$246 billion
Environment Strategies	\$31 billion	\$188 billion	\$229 billion

Note: Revenues may not sum to strategy investments due to rounding.

To advance the Plan Bay Area 2050+ Vision and meet or exceed state and federal planning requirements, including state-mandated GHG emissions reduction targets, select strategies across all four elements have been refined to incorporate progress and insights from the past three years. Refinements to the transportation strategies incorporate recommendations from the parallel Transit 2050+ planning process, conducted in partnership with Bay Area transit operators to develop a comprehensive transit network and revamp the region’s transit-related strategies.

The Plan Bay Area 2050+ strategies are organized into eleven key themes:

¹ Existing economic development revenues were not inventoried. \$11 billion in existing transportation revenues are used to support Environment strategies.

² New revenues are estimates based upon Final Blueprint strategies; estimates subject to change.

Element	Theme	Strategy
Transportation		
	Maintain and Optimize the Existing System	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Operate and Maintain the Existing System 2. Improve the Rider Experience through Transit Network Integration 3. Improve the Rider Experience through Refined Transfer Timing at Key Regional Hubs 4. Enhance Security Measures and Improve Safety and Cleanliness on Transit 5. Implement Pricing Strategies to Manage Demand 6. Modernize Freeways and Interchanges 7. Expand Freeways and Mitigate Impacts 8. Advance Other Regional Programs and Local Priorities
	Create Healthy and Safe Streets	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Build a Complete Streets Network 10. Advance Regional Vision Zero Policy through Street Design and Reduced Speeds
	Build a Next-Generation Transit Network	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Enhance Transit Frequency, Capacity and Reliability 12. Expand Transit Services throughout the Region
Housing		
	Protect and Preserve Affordable Housing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthen Renter Protections 2. Preserve Existing Affordable Housing
	Spur Housing Production at All Income Levels	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Allow a Greater Mix of Housing Densities and Types in Growth Geographies 4. Build Adequate Affordable Housing to Ensure Homes for All 5. Integrate Affordable Housing into All Major Housing Projects 6. Transform Aging Malls and Office Parks into Neighborhoods
	Create Inclusive Communities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Provide Targeted Mortgage, Rental, and Small Business Assistance to Equity Priority Communities 8. Accelerate Reuse of Public and Community-Owned Land for Mixed Income Housing and Essential Services
Economy		
	Improve Economic Mobility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement a Statewide Guaranteed Income 2. Expand Job Training and Incubator Programs 3. Invest in High-Speed Internet in Underserved Low-Income Communities
	Shift the Location of Jobs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Allow a Greater Mix of Land Uses and Densities in Growth Geographies 5. Provide Incentives to Employers to Locate in Low-VMT Areas 6. Retain and Invest in Key Industrial Lands
Environment		
	Reduce Risks from Hazards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adapt to Sea Level Rise 2. Provide Means-Based Financial Support for Seismic, Wildfire, and Accessibility Home Retrofits 3. Provide Means-Based Financial Support for Energy Decarbonization and Water Efficiency Upgrades in All Buildings
	Expand Access to Parks and Open Space	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Maintain Urban Growth Boundaries 5. Protect and Manage High-Value Conservation Lands 6. Expand Urban Greening in Communities
	Reduce Climate Emissions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Expand Commute Trip Reduction Programs at Major Employers 8. Expand Clean Vehicle Initiatives 9. Expand Transportation Demand Management Initiatives

EQUITY AND PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

Plan Bay Area 2050+ is required by state mandates to accommodate future growth in a more sustainable manner by reducing per capita GHG emissions and providing adequate housing for the region’s projected population growth at all income levels. To determine whether the plan is on track to achieve its Vision, the plan includes the same questions for each Guiding Principle from Plan Bay Area 2050. These questions, shown below, are accompanied by draft metrics that are intended to aid in the analysis of the plan’s performance.

Guiding Principle	Question	Metric
Affordable		
	Will Bay Area residents spend less on housing and transportation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing and Transportation Costs as Share of Income • Transport Expenses per Trip
	Will the Bay Area produce and preserve more affordable housing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share of Housing that is Deed-Restricted Affordable • Share of New Housing Production that is Deed-Restricted Affordable • Share of At-Risk Affordable Housing Preserved as Permanently Affordable
Connected		
	Will Bay Area residents be able to access their destinations more easily?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and Share of all Bay Area Jobs that are Accessible by Frequent Transit • Share of Households and Jobs Within 1/2 Mile of Frequent Transit
	Will Bay Area residents have a transportation system they can rely on?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freeway corridor morning peak-hour travel time (minutes) • Share of Transit Assets Past Their Useful Life Benchmark
Diverse		
	Will Bay Area communities be more inclusive?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share of households with low incomes • Home Ownership Rate for Households with Low Incomes
	Will Bay Area residents be able to stay in place?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share of Neighborhoods (Tracts) that Experience Displacement and Gentrification between 2023 and 2050
Healthy		
	Will Bay Area residents be healthier and safer?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent of households in risk-prone areas/buildings that are protected/retrofit • Reduction in building risk exposure to damage from earthquake or wildfire • Annual incidents per one hundred thousand residents • Daily PM2.5 Emissions (TONs) • Parks and trails per thousand residents
	Will the environment of the Bay Area be healthier and safer?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily CO2 Emissions Per Capita, Relative to 2005 • Commute Mode Share • Efficiency of building stock, relative to 2023
Vibrant		
	Will the Bay Area economy thrive?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Per Capita Gross Regional Product • Growth in number of jobs
	Will the region’s downtowns recover from the pandemic?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in In-Person Workers, Visitors, and Residents by Downtown Area • Does the location of job growth shift toward Growth Geographies? • Jobs to Housing Ratio

ATTACHMENT B

