

The Bay Area Plan - Initial Vision Scenario, Crafted by MTC and ABAG, is Severely Flawed 5-13-11

In March 2011, Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) took the first step in crafting the Sustainable Communities Strategy (State Bill 375's centerpiece) when they introduced their Initial Vision Scenario showing where and how the region might grow so as to be able to sustainably accommodate 2 million more residents and 902,000 new housing units in the Bay Area by 2035 (the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) determined by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).)

"The Bay Area Plan - Initial Vision Scenario assumes a **strong economy** (in which the Bay Area region will add some 1.2 million jobs by 2035), and a **substantial public investment** in affordable housing, public infrastructure, and high quality transit. The operating assumption of the Initial Vision Scenario is that all issues that prevent growth from occurring in the urbanized core are substantially resolved, including adequate public infrastructure, appropriate management of hazards and risks, sufficient transit headways, redevelopment and affordable housing funding, quality schools, fiscal solvency, and the removal of market barriers to private development. With these assumptions, the Initial Vision Scenario proposes to meet the housing needs of the Bay Area in locations that are appropriate both for local governments and for sustainable development." (Excerpt from the Bay Area Plan - Initial Plan 2011 by ABAG & MTC: Page 8)

Those rosy assumptions are belied by "real time" data: The state faces a \$15 billion to \$20 billion deficit, a current 12.5% unemployment rate and a statewide loss of 14,197 jobs in March 2011 and a loss of 60,810 jobs over the past twelve months, according to the Census Current Population Survey (CPS). According to the Current Employment Statistics survey (CES), California employment peaked in July 2007 at 15,214,200. Since then, California has lost 1,181,800 jobs according to the employer survey [See <http://www.deptofnumbers.com/employment/california/>].

At the local level in Marin, we experience teacher layoffs and cuts in school programs, reductions in bus service (i.e. elimination of bus service for 110 students in Marin City), repeat sewage treatment plant spills, roads and dikes in disrepair, etc. ... and we are made aware of Marin County's inadequate public infrastructure, services and transportation with little hope for any significant improvements due to limited funds.

The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) have clearly based their methodologies and programs (which promote a surge in population and residential development) on false assumptions and need to go back to the drawing board and start again.