



# PLAN BAY AREA 2050 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## What Is Plan Bay Area 2050?

Plan Bay Area 2050 is a 30-year plan that charts a course for a Bay Area that is affordable, connected, diverse, healthy and vibrant for all residents through 2050 and beyond. Thirty-five strategies comprise the heart of the plan to improve housing, the economy, transportation and the environment across the Bay Area's nine counties — Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano and Sonoma. This long-range plan, developed by the Bay Area's two regional planning agencies, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), lays out a \$1.4 trillion vision for a more equitable and resilient future for Bay Area residents.

Photo: MTC Stock Archive

## About the Strategies

In Plan Bay Area 2050, a **strategy** is a public policy or set of investments that can be implemented in the Bay Area at the city, county, regional or state level over the next 30 years. A strategy is not a near-term action, a mandate for a jurisdiction or agency, or a legislative proposal. All levels of government — as well as advocacy groups, the private sector and Bay Area residents — have a role to play in implementing the strategies. Specific actions and roles for MTC and ABAG, as well as partners, have been identified through the collaborative development of the Implementation Plan.



## The New Normal

The COVID-19 pandemic changed overnight how Bay Area residents live, work and travel. As a regional long-range plan developed during an unprecedented global health crisis, Plan Bay Area 2050 was shaped by and responds to COVID-19's new challenges in several ways. In summer 2020, MTC and ABAG staff connected with over 8,200 Bay Area residents online, in writing and over the phone to understand their present-day challenges and most pressing concerns. As a result, strategies in each of the four elements of the plan were added or adjusted to respond to the pandemic's effects. Simultaneously, planning assumptions related to future financial projections and population growth were revised to reflect slower short-term growth. While the long-term impacts of this watershed event may change many aspects of life in the Bay Area, Plan Bay Area 2050 meets the moment and plans for the future by centering equity and resilience to uncertainty in each of its strategies.



<b>PLAN BAY AREA 2050</b> Guiding Principles	 <b>AFFORDABLE</b>	 <b>CONNECTED</b>	 <b>DIVERSE</b>	 <b>HEALTHY</b>	 <b>VIBRANT</b>
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## 5 GUIDING PRINCIPLES, SHAPED BY EXTENSIVE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

### Preparing for an Uncertain Future

Between now and 2050, best estimates suggest the Bay Area’s population will rise from nearly 8 million to over 10 million residents and that the number of jobs within the nine counties will climb from 4 million to more than 5 million. This growth will influence what the Bay Area looks like in 30 years, and many questions remain about where these new residents will live and work. In addition to growth, forces outside of the region’s control such as climate change, economic booms and busts, and changing technologies will contribute to future uncertainty. The COVID-19 pandemic provides an extreme example of how these unprecedented events can reshape everyday life.

In order to craft a long-range plan that is resilient to future unknowns, MTC and ABAG planners developed a multi-year scenario-planning effort called Horizon prior to beginning work on Plan Bay Area 2050. Through Horizon, the agencies analyzed strategies and transportation projects in divergent potential future conditions called **Futures**, evaluating each strategy’s probable success across three sets of future conditions. Each Future varied in terms of economic vibrancy, population growth rates, severity of natural hazards like sea level rise and earthquakes, and adoption rates for telecommuting or autonomous vehicles, among other forces. The 35 strategies included in Plan Bay Area 2050 proved effective across multiple Futures or respond to challenges that remained unaddressed after the conclusion of the Horizon effort.

### Advancing Equity

MTC and ABAG define equity for Plan Bay Area 2050 as “just inclusion in a Bay Area where everyone can participate, prosper and reach their full potential.” The agencies strive to advance equity through careful consideration of investments and policies that affect historically and systemically marginalized, underserved and excluded groups, including people with low incomes, people with disabilities and communities of color. Each strategy in Plan Bay Area 2050 has been crafted to advance equity, with particular attention paid to the needs of people living in Equity Priority Communities, which are geographic areas that have a concentration of both residents of color and residents with low incomes, or that have a concentration of residents with low incomes and other factors such as limited English proficiency, seniors or people with disabilities.

Most of Plan Bay Area 2050’s investments are directed toward residents of Equity Priority Communities or other systemically underserved communities. Among its many equity-advancing components, the plan envisions billions of dollars for affordable housing production and preservation, a universal basic income to support residents’ essential needs, investments in means-based transit fare discounts, and subsidies to protect homes and businesses from natural hazards.



## Housing Strategies — Cost: \$468 Billion

Protect and Preserve Affordable Housing	H1. <b>Further strengthen renter protections beyond state law.</b> Building upon recent tenant protection laws, limit annual rent increases to the rate of inflation, while exempting units less than 10 years old.	\$2 BILLION
	H2. <b>Preserve existing affordable housing.</b> Acquire homes currently affordable to low- and middle-income residents for preservation as permanently deed-restricted affordable housing.	\$237 BILLION
Spur Housing Production for Residents of All Income Levels	H3. <b>Allow a greater mix of housing densities and types in Growth Geographies.</b> Allow a variety of housing types at a range of densities to be built in Priority Development Areas, select Transit-Rich Areas and select High-Resource Areas.	N/A
	H4. <b>Build adequate affordable housing to ensure homes for all.</b> Construct enough deed-restricted affordable homes to fill the existing gap in housing for the unhoused community and to meet the needs of low-income households.	\$219 BILLION
	H5. <b>Integrate affordable housing into all major housing projects.</b> Require a baseline of 10-20% of new market-rate housing developments of five units or more to be affordable to low-income households.	N/A
	H6. <b>Transform aging malls and office parks into neighborhoods.</b> Permit and promote the reuse of shopping malls and office parks with limited commercial viability as neighborhoods with housing for residents at all income levels.	N/A
Create Inclusive Communities	H7. <b>Provide targeted mortgage, rental and small business assistance to Equity Priority Communities.</b> Provide assistance to low-income communities and communities of color to address the legacy of exclusion and predatory lending, while helping to grow locally owned businesses.	\$10 BILLION
	H8. <b>Accelerate reuse of public and community-owned land for mixed-income housing and essential services.</b> Help public agencies, community land trusts and other non-profit landowners accelerate the development of mixed-income affordable housing.	N/A

NOTE: Numbers may not sum due to rounding.



## Economic Strategies — Cost: \$234 Billion

Improve Economic Mobility	<b>EC1. Implement a statewide universal basic income.</b> Provide an average \$500 per month payment to all Bay Area households to improve family stability, promote economic mobility and increase consumer spending.	<b>\$205 BILLION</b>
	<b>EC2. Expand job training and incubator programs.</b> Fund assistance programs for establishing new businesses, as well as job training programs, primarily in historically disinvested communities.	<b>\$5 BILLION</b>
	<b>EC3. Invest in high-speed internet in underserved low-income communities.</b> Provide direct subsidies and construct public infrastructure to ensure all communities have affordable access to high-speed internet.	<b>\$10 BILLION</b>
Shift the Location of Jobs	<b>EC4. Allow greater commercial densities in Growth Geographies.</b> Allow greater densities for new commercial development in select Priority Development Areas and Transit-Rich Areas to encourage more jobs to locate near public transit.	<b>N/A</b>
	<b>EC5. Provide incentives to employers to shift jobs to housing-rich areas well served by transit.</b> Provide subsidies to encourage employers to relocate offices to housing-rich areas near regional rail stations.	<b>\$10 BILLION</b>
	<b>EC6. Retain and invest in key industrial lands.</b> Implement local land use policies to protect key industrial lands, identified as Priority Production Areas, while funding key infrastructure improvements in these areas.	<b>\$4 BILLION</b>

**NOTE:** Numbers may not sum due to rounding.



## Transportation Strategies — Cost: \$578 Billion

Maintain and Optimize the Existing System	<b>T1. Restore, operate and maintain the existing system.</b> Commit to operate and maintain the Bay Area’s roads and transit infrastructure while reversing pandemic-related cuts to total transit service hours.	<b>\$389 BILLION</b>
	<b>T2. Support community-led transportation enhancements in Equity Priority Communities.</b> Provide direct funding to historically marginalized communities for locally identified transportation needs.	<b>\$8 BILLION</b>
	<b>T3. Enable a seamless mobility experience.</b> Eliminate barriers to multi-operator transit trips by streamlining fare payment and trip planning while requiring schedule coordination at timed transfer hubs.	<b>\$3 BILLION</b>
	<b>T4. Reform regional transit fare policy.</b> Streamline fare payment and replace existing operator-specific discounted fare programs with an integrated fare structure across all transit operators.	<b>\$10 BILLION</b>
	<b>T5. Implement per-mile tolling on congested freeways with transit alternatives.</b> Apply a per-mile charge on auto travel on select congested freeway corridors where transit alternatives exist, with discounts for carpoolers, low-income residents, and off-peak travel; and reinvest excess revenues into transit alternatives in the corridor.	<b>\$1 BILLION</b>
	<b>T6. Improve interchanges and address highway bottlenecks.</b> Rebuild interchanges and widen key highway bottlenecks to achieve short- to medium-term congestion relief.	<b>\$12 BILLION</b>
	<b>T7. Advance other regional programs and local priorities.</b> Fund regional programs like motorist aid and 511 while supporting local transportation investments on arterials and local streets.	<b>\$17 BILLION</b>
Create Healthy and Safe Streets	<b>T8. Build a Complete Streets network.</b> Enhance streets to promote walking, biking and other micro-mobility through sidewalk improvements, car-free slow streets, and 10,000 miles of bike lanes or multi-use paths.	<b>\$13 BILLION</b>
	<b>T9. Advance regional Vision Zero policy through street design and reduced speeds.</b> Reduce speed limits to between 20 and 35 miles per hour on local streets and 55 miles per hour on freeways, relying on design elements on local streets and automated speed enforcement on freeways.	<b>\$4 BILLION</b>
Build a Next-Generation Transit Network	<b>T10. Enhance local transit frequency, capacity and reliability.</b> Improve the quality and availability of local bus and light rail service, with new bus rapid transit lines, South Bay light rail extensions, and frequency increases focused in lower-income communities.	<b>\$32 BILLION</b>
	<b>T11. Expand and modernize the regional rail network.</b> Better connect communities while increasing frequencies by advancing the Link21 new transbay rail crossing, BART to Silicon Valley Phase 2, Valley Link, Caltrain Downtown Rail Extension and Caltrain/High-Speed Rail grade separations, among other projects.	<b>\$81 BILLION</b>
	<b>T12. Build an integrated regional express lanes and express bus network.</b> Complete the buildout of the regional express lanes network to provide uncongested freeway lanes for new and improved express bus services, carpools and toll-paying solo drivers.	<b>\$9 BILLION</b>

NOTE: Numbers may not sum due to rounding.



## Environmental Strategies — Cost: \$103 Billion

Reduce Risks From Hazards	EN1. <b>Adapt to sea level rise.</b> Protect shoreline communities affected by sea level rise, prioritizing low-cost, high-benefit solutions and providing additional support to vulnerable populations.	<b>\$19 BILLION</b>
	EN2. <b>Provide means-based financial support to retrofit existing residential buildings.</b> Adopt building ordinances and incentivize retrofits to existing buildings to meet higher seismic, wildfire, water and energy standards, providing means-based subsidies to offset associated costs.	<b>\$15 BILLION</b>
	EN3. <b>Fund energy upgrades to enable carbon neutrality in all existing commercial and public buildings.</b> Support electrification and resilient power system upgrades in all public and commercial buildings.	<b>\$18 BILLION</b>
Expand Access to Parks and Open Space	EN4. <b>Maintain urban growth boundaries.</b> Using urban growth boundaries and other existing environmental protections, focus new development within the existing urban footprint or areas otherwise suitable for growth, as established by local jurisdictions.	<b>N/A</b>
	EN5. <b>Protect and manage high-value conservation lands.</b> Provide strategic matching funds to help conserve and maintain high-priority natural and agricultural lands, including but not limited to, Priority Conservation Areas and wildland-urban interface areas.	<b>\$15 BILLION</b>
	EN6. <b>Modernize and expand parks, trails and recreation facilities.</b> Invest in quality parks, trails and open spaces that provide inclusive recreation opportunities for people of all backgrounds, abilities and ages to enjoy.	<b>\$30 BILLION</b>
Reduce Climate Emissions	EN7. <b>Expand commute trip reduction programs at major employers.</b> Set a sustainable commute target for major employers as part of an expanded Bay Area Commuter Benefits Program, with employers responsible for funding incentives and disincentives to shift auto commuters to any combination of telecommuting, transit, walking and/or bicycling.	<b>N/A</b>
	EN8. <b>Expand clean vehicle initiatives.</b> Expand investments in clean vehicles, including more fuel-efficient vehicles and electric vehicle subsidies and chargers.	<b>\$5 BILLION</b>
	EN9. <b>Expand transportation demand management initiatives.</b> Expand investments in programs like vanpools, bikeshare, carshare and parking fees to discourage solo driving.	<b>\$1 BILLION</b>

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## OUTCOMES

Plan Bay Area 2050 is forecasted to make significant progress in tackling the greatest challenges facing the region, from housing affordability to the intensifying impacts of global climate change, based on the extensive analysis and modeling conducted over nearly four years of planning work by MTC and ABAG. Using simulation models to forecast future economic, land use and travel patterns over the next three decades, Plan Bay Area 2050 explores how the plan's strategies advance the region toward the adopted vision of a Bay Area that is affordable, connected, diverse, healthy and vibrant for all residents, with a strong focus on measuring equity outcomes.

If Plan Bay Area 2050's strategies were implemented, housing and transportation costs, the two largest expenditures for most Bay Area families today, would decrease as a share of household income by 2050, and families with low incomes would see larger reductions in these costs than the region at large. This is the first regional plan for the Bay Area that makes meaningful progress on this critical metric of affordability. Plan Bay Area 2050 would also prepare the region's workforce for future jobs while simultaneously planning for enough new housing to ensure that strong job growth is not met with an increase in the number of long-distance commuters traveling to the Bay Area from outside of the region.

Under Plan Bay Area 2050's strategies, just under half of all Bay Area households would live within one half-mile of frequent transit by 2050, with this share increasing to over 70% for households with low incomes. Transportation and environmental strategies that support active and shared modes, combined with a transit-supportive land use pattern, are forecasted to lower the share of Bay Area residents that drive to work alone from 50% in 2015 to 33% in 2050. Greenhouse gas emissions from transportation would decrease significantly as a result of these transportation and land use changes, and the Bay Area would meet the state mandate of a 19% reduction in per capita emissions by 2035 — but only if all strategies are implemented.

## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

How do the Plan Bay Area 2050 strategies get implemented? No strategy can be carried out by MTC and ABAG alone, so partners, policymakers and the public will be essential to realizing the plan's vision. Developed through months of in-depth engagement with staff from city, county, regional, state and federal agencies; equity and environmental groups; labor organizations; businesses; and members of the public, the Plan Bay Area 2050 Implementation Plan identifies concrete actions that can be implemented within the next five years to advance each of the 35 strategies. Over 80 individual implementation actions have been identified, covering a wide array of activities ranging from new programs to areas of further study (see Chapter 7).

Implementation actions can be broadly classified into three types of activities, also known as implementation vehicles: advocacy and legislation; new, existing or restructured initiatives; and planning or research. The Implementation Plan identifies several near-term legislative priorities, including working to secure new revenues to fund strategies across the four elements. Additionally, the Implementation Plan outlines near-term steps for new, existing or restructured programs housed within MTC and ABAG that have a nexus with the plan's strategies. Finally, additional planning or research work needed to inform future action is also included in the Implementation Plan, with future studies examining the future implications of road pricing and Priority Conservation Areas planned for the next few years.

## LOOKING AHEAD

As the Bay Area continues to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic, there are many opportunities to enact new policies and practices to better reflect the needs and desires of all who live in the region. Together, Bay Area residents and leaders can work toward equity and prosperity by taking bold actions in the face of a rapidly changing world. The 35 strategies described in Plan Bay Area 2050 outline a vision for confronting unpredictable societal forces in a way that is inclusive and pragmatic — a plan for a Bay Area that is more affordable, connected, diverse, healthy and vibrant for all residents.

For more information, read the full plan and supplemental reports. To request translation of any part of the plan, or request other assistance, call (415) 778-6757 or email [info@bayareametro.gov](mailto:info@bayareametro.gov).