City of Santa Clara

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA

Wednesday, February 29, 2012 – 7:00 P.M.

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
1500 Warburton Avenue
Santa Clara, CA 95050

Please refer to the Planning Commission Procedural Items coversheet for information on all procedural matters.

ITEMS FOR COUNCIL ACTION

The following items from this Planning Commission agenda will be scheduled for Council review following the conclusion of hearings and recommendations by the Planning Commission. Due to timing of notices for Council hearings and the preparation of Council agenda reports, these items will not necessarily be heard on the date the minutes from this meeting are forwarded to the Council. Please contact the Planning Division office for information on the schedule of hearings for these items:

- Planning Commission Budget for FY2012-13

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE and INVOCATION

2. ROLL CALL

3. DISTRIBUTION OF AGENDA AND STAFF REPORTS

Copies of current agendas and staff reports for each of the items on the agenda are available from the Planning Division office on the Friday afternoon preceding the meeting and are available at the Commission meeting at the time of the hearing.

4. DECLARATION OF COMMISSION PROCEDURES

5. REQUESTS FOR EXCEPTIONS, WITHDRAWALS AND CONTINUANCES

A. Withdrawals
B. Continuances without a hearing
C. Exceptions (requests for agenda items to be taken out of order)

6. ORAL PETITIONS/ ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Members of the public may briefly address the Commission on any item not on the agenda.

7. CONSENT CALENDAR

Consent Calendar items may be enacted, approved or adopted, based upon the findings prepared and provided in the written staff report, by one motion unless requested to be removed by anyone for discussion or explanation. If any member of the Planning Commission, staff, the applicant or a member of the public wishes to comment on a Consent Calendar item, or would like the item to be heard on the regular agenda, please notify Planning staff, or request this action at the Planning Commission meeting when the Chair calls for these requests during the Consent Calendar review. Items listed on the Consent Calendar with associated file numbers constitute Public Hearing items.

7.A. Planning Commission Minutes of January 11, 2012
7.B. Planning Commission Minutes of February 8, 2012
7.C. Planning Commission Budget for FY2012-13

**********END OF CONSENT CALENDAR**********

8. PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

None

9. SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS: DISCUSSION ITEMS

9.A. General guidelines for discussion items
9.B. Study Session: Discussion on SB 375 Sustainable Communities Strategy

10. OTHER BUSINESS

10.A. Commission Procedures and Staff Communications

i. Announcements/Other Items

ii. Report of the Director of Planning and Inspection
- City Council Action

iii. Commission/Board Liaison and Committee Reports
- Architectural Committee: Commissioners Stattenfield and Mayer
- Station Area Plan: Commissioner Champeny
- General Plan sub-Committee: Commissioners Champeny and O'Neill

iv. Commission Activities
- Commissioner Travel and Training Reports
- CalAPA Basic Planning 101 Workshop Series
- National APA Conference: Los Angeles, April 14-17, 2012

v. Upcoming agenda items
- Planning Commission Procedures

11. ADJOURNMENT

Adjourn. The next regular Planning Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 21, 2012, at 7:00 p.m.

Prepared by: Gloria Sciara
Gloria Sciara, AICP
Development Review Officer

Approved by Kevin L. Riley
Kevin L. Riley
Director of Planning & Inspection

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City of Santa Clara

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, January 11, 2012 – 7:00 P.M.

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
1500 Warburton Avenue
Santa Clara, CA 95050

Please refer to the Planning Commission Procedural Items coversheet for information on all procedural matters.
An audio recording of this meeting is available in the Planning Office for review or purchase the Friday following the meeting.

ITEMS FOR COUNCIL ACTION

The following items from this Planning Commission agenda will be scheduled for Council review following the conclusion of hearings and recommendations by the Planning Commission. Due to timing of notices for Council hearings and the preparation of Council agenda reports, these items will not necessarily be heard on the date the minutes from this meeting are forwarded to the Council. Please contact the Planning Division office for information on the schedule of hearings for these items:

- None

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE and INVOCATION

Keith Stattenfield initiated the Pledge of Allegiance, and the Invocation was read.

2. ROLL CALL

The following Commissioners responded to roll call: Ian Champeny, Deborah Costa, Todd Fitch, Teresa O'Neill, and Keith Stattenfield. Commissioners Marine and Mayer were excused.

Staff present were Director of Planning and Inspection Kevin Riley, Assistant City Attorney Julia Hill, and Office Specialist IV Megan Zimmershead.

3. DISTRIBUTION OF AGENDA AND STAFF REPORTS

Copies of current agendas and staff reports for each of the items on the agenda are available from the Planning Division office on the Friday afternoon preceding the meeting and are available at the Commission meeting at the time of the hearing.

4. DECLARATION OF COMMISSION PROCEDURES

Keith Stattenfield reviewed the Planning Commission procedures for those present.

5. REQUESTS FOR EXCEPTIONS, WITHDRAWALS AND CONTINUANCES

A. Withdrawals – None.
B. Continuances without a hearing – A request was read into record from applicant Sal Caruso to continue Item 8.A. to the February 8, 2012 Planning Commission meeting in light of the absence of two Commissioners. The request was approved unanimously.
C. Exceptions (requests for agenda items to be taken out of order) – None.

6. ORAL PETITIONS/ ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Members of the public may briefly address the Commission on any item not on the agenda.
No comments were received.

7. CONSENT CALENDAR

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7.A. Planning Commission Minutes of December 14, 2011

Motion/Action: The Commission continued Item 7.A. to the meeting of February 8, 2012 unanimously (5-0-2-0, Marine and Mayer absent).

7.B.	**File No.(s):**	**PLN2011-08944**
	Address:	2783 El Camino Real, a 1,340 square foot tenant space within an existing commercial shopping center, on a 2.13 acre site, located at the northeast corner of El Camino Real and Bowers Avenue, APN: 216-01-058, 059. Property is zoned Thoroughfare Commercial (CT)
	Applicant:	Paul Lee
	Owner:	Christopher S. Yi
	Request:	**Conditional Use Permit** to allow on-site beer and wine sales in conjunction with a full service restaurant (Shabuway) in an existing vacant tenant space
	CEQA Determination:	Categorical Exemption per Section 15301, Existing Facilities
	Project Planner:	Yen Chen, Associate Planner
	Staff Recommendation:	Approve, subject to conditions

Motion/Action: The Commission motioned to adopt a resolution to approve the Use Permit for the project located at 2183 El Camino Real unanimously (5-0-2-0, Marine and Mayer absent).

**********END OF CONSENT CALENDAR**********

8. PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

8.A.	**File No.(s):**	**PLN2010-08245**
	Address:	1091 Fremont Street, a 0.36 acre (15,958 sq.ft.) parcel located at the northeast corner of Main Street and Fremont Street APN 269-15-024 *(Continued from the September 28, 2011 Planning Commission Meeting)*
	Applicant:	Sal Caruso
	Owner:	Patricia Machado
	Request:	**Rezone** from R1-6L (Single-Family) to PD (Planned Development) to facilitate the expansion and conversion of an existing detached accessory structure into a second dwelling unit.
	CEQA Determination:	Categorically Exempt per CEQA Section 15303
	Project Planner:	Payal Bhagat, Assistant Planner II
	Staff Recommendation:	**Recommend Denial to the City Council**

Notice: The notice of public hearing for Item 8.A. was posted within 300 feet of the site and mailed to property owners within 300 feet.

Discussion: None

Motion/Action: This item was continued, date certain, to the meeting of February 8, 2012 under Agenda Item 5.B.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

9.A. Commission Procedures and Staff Communications

i. Announcements/Other Items

ii. Report of the Director of Planning and Inspection

- City Council Action

iii. Commission/Board Liaison and Committee Reports

- Architectural Committee: Commissioners Stattenfield and Mayer
- Station Area Plan: Commissioner Champeny
- General Plan sub-Committee: Commissioners Champeny and O'Neill

iv. Commission Activities

- Commissioner Travel and Training Reports

v. Upcoming agenda items

The Commission and staff discussed utilizing PC meetings with little to no agendized items to be used as study sessions for Planning topics and Commission procedures.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:22 p.m. The next regular Planning Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 8, 2012, at 7:00 p.m.

Prepared by: Megan Zimmershead
Office Specialist IV

Approved by: Kevin L. Riley
Director of Planning & Inspection

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City of Santa Clara

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, February 8, 2012 – 7:00 P.M.

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
1500 Warburton Avenue
Santa Clara, CA 95050

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ITEMS FOR COUNCIL ACTION

The following items from this Planning Commission agenda will be scheduled for Council review following the conclusion of hearings and recommendations by the Planning Commission. Due to timing of notices for Council hearings and the preparation of Council agenda reports, these items will not necessarily be heard on the date the minutes from this meeting are forwarded to the Council. Please contact the Planning Division office for information on the schedule of hearings for these items:

- **Item 8.A. – Rezoning request for 1091 Fremont**

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE and INVOCATION

Chair Marine initiated the Pledge of Allegiance, and the Invocation was read.

2. ROLL CALL

The following Commissioners responded to roll call: Chair Tony Marine, Commissioners Ian Champeny, Robert Mayer, Teresa O'Neill, and Keith Stattenfield. Commissioner Costa was absent and Commissioner Fitch was excused.

Staff present were Director of Planning and Inspection Kevin Riley, Assistant Planner II Payal Bhagat, Assistant City Attorney Julia Hill, and Office Specialist IV Megan Zimmershead.

3. DISTRIBUTION OF AGENDA AND STAFF REPORTS

Copies of current agendas and staff reports for each of the items on the agenda are available from the Planning Division office on the Friday afternoon preceding the meeting and are available at the Commission meeting at the time of the hearing.

4. DECLARATION OF COMMISSION PROCEDURES

Chair Marine reviewed the Planning Commission procedures for those present.

5. REQUESTS FOR EXCEPTIONS, WITHDRAWALS AND CONTINUANCES

A. Withdrawals – None.
B. Continuances without a hearing – None.
C. Exceptions (requests for agenda items to be taken out of order) – None.

6. ORAL PETITIONS/ ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Members of the public may briefly address the Commission on any item not on the agenda. No comments were received.

7. CONSENT CALENDAR

Consent Calendar items may be enacted, approved or adopted, based upon the findings prepared and provided in the written staff report, by one motion unless requested to be removed by anyone for discussion or explanation. If any member of the Planning Commission, staff, the applicant or a member of the public wishes to comment on a Consent Calendar item, or would like the item to be heard on the regular agenda, please notify Planning staff, or request this action at the Planning Commission meeting when the Chair calls for these requests during the Consent Calendar review. Items listed on the Consent Calendar with associated file numbers constitute Public Hearing items.

7.A. Planning Commission Minutes of December 14, 2011

7.B. Planning Commission Minutes of January 11, 2012

7.C.	**File No.(s):**	**PLN2008-06947/CEQ2008-01060**
	Address:	Proximate to 4900 Centennial Boulevard
	Applicant/Owner:	49ers Stadium, LLC/City of Santa Clara
	Request:	General Plan conformity findings for vacation of a portion of Centennial Boulevard
	CEQA Determination:	Environmental Impact Report (Previously certified on December 8, 2009)
	Project Planner:	Kevin Riley, Director of Planning and Inspection
	Staff Recommendation:	**Adopt Resolution** for findings of conformity with the General Plan

Motion/Action: The Commission pulled Item 7.B. to be continued to the meeting of February 29, 2012 and approved the remainder of the consent calendar with the following vote:
Item 7.A.: 4-0-2-1, Fitch and Costa absent, Champeny abstained;
Item 7.C.: 5-0-2-0, Fitch and Costa absent

**********END OF CONSENT CALENDAR**********

8. PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

8.A.	**File No.(s):**	**PLN2010-08245**
	Address:	1091 Fremont Street, a 0.36 acre (15,958 sq.ft.) parcel located at the northeast corner of Main Street and Fremont Street APN 269-15-024 *(Continued from the January 11, 2012 Planning Commission Meeting at the request of the applicant)*
	Applicant:	Sal Caruso
	Owner:	Patricia Machado
	Request:	**Rezone** from R1-6L (Single-Family) to PD (Planned Development) to facilitate the expansion and conversion of an existing detached accessory structure into a second dwelling unit.
	CEQA Determination:	Categorically Exempt per CEQA Section 15303
	Project Planner:	Payal Bhagat, Assistant Planner II
		Staff Recommendation: Recommend Denial to the City Council

Notice: The notice of public hearing for Item 8.A. was posted within 300 feet of the site and mailed to property owners within 300 feet for the meeting of January 11, 2012. Because this item was continued date certain to the meeting of February 8, 2012, the item did not require

additional noticing.

Discussion: Payal Bhagat, project planner, gave a brief presentation on the project.

The applicant, Sal Caruso, stated that the DPR form provided by the consultant indicates that the structure with the proposed addition does meet the Secretary of Interior Standards, and also that the barn siding is original and historic in nature. Mr. Caruso further stated that the proposed project maximizes the historic potential for the site while retaining it's current use.

The Commission discussed with the applicant the letter from Honorary City Historian Lori Garcia, along with the statements made by the HLC and its Architectural Advisor Craig Mineweaser, regarding the findings presented in the DPR form.

The Commission discussed the low level of parking provided in the proposal and noted that through the PD rezoning reduced parking may be considered. It was also noted that the PD rezoning is necessary for the project as proposed to relieve the setback requirements for the accessory unit.

The Public Hearing was opened.

John Figueroa, neighboring resident, asked what considerations are being made for the neighbors of the project site. He also stated that the accessory unit should not be a habitable structure as it was never a legal use and that he opposes the approval of the use.

A neighboring resident expressed concern about the project and the excessive fence height. He also noted that the greenhouse was approved, but illegally converted, and that the exhaust problem described at the previous public hearing was fixed but left damage to the fence.

James Rowen gave a brief explanation of the hearing process to the students in the audience.

Kevin Park stated that his concern is not about historical aspect of house, but rather the use, as it does not conserve the purpose of building and lacks proper setbacks which disturbs neighbors. He further noted that the proposal will effect more than the property owner, but also neighbors and future property owners.

In a rebuttal statement, the applicant stated that the damage to the fence will be addressed. Mr. Caruso also noted that the barn has been used historically as a residence, but not with permits, and this proposal legalizes the use that has been present for quite some time. Mr. Caruso further stated that the greenhouse will have a five foot setback, which is compliant with current zoning law, but due to the historic nature of the barn and it's placement, setback requirements do not apply, and that the owners cannot afford to replace the unit elsewhere on the property.

The Commission confirmed that the safety concerns raised at the public hearing in September have been addressed and that the structure is not occupied and will not be unless and until it meets all life safety requirements.

Public hearing was closed.

The Commission deliberated the difficulty in making the findings required to approve the PD rezoning and the intensification of a use on a zero-setback structure when there appears to be other options. The Commission also expressed concern with regard to supporting the project as a significant historic structure when there were such significant differences among the experts.

Motion/Action: The Commission unanimously recommended that the request to rezone the

property located at 1091 Fremont from R1-6L (Single-Family) to PD (Planned Development) be denied (5-0-2-0, Costa and Fitch absent)

9. OTHER BUSINESS

9.A. Commission Procedures and Staff Communications

i. Announcements/Other Items

ii. Report of the Director of Planning and Inspection

- City Council Action

iii. Commission/Board Liaison and Committee Reports

- Architectural Committee: Commissioners Stattenfield and Mayer
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- General Plan sub-Committee: Commissioners Champeny and O'Neill

iv. Commission Activities

- Commissioner Travel and Training Reports
- CalAPA Basic Planning 101 Workshop Series
- National APA Conference: Los Angeles, April 14-17, 2012

v. Upcoming agenda items

a. Planning Commission Procedures

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m. The next regular Planning Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 29, 2012, at 7:00 p.m.

Prepared by: Megan Zimmershead
Office Specialist IV

Approved by: Kevin L. Riley
Director of Planning & Inspection

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PLANNING COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 23, 2012

TO: Planning Commissioners

FROM: Director of Planning and Inspection

SUBJECT: FY2012-13 Planning Commission Budget

The City Manager's Office is requesting the submittal of the Planning Commission's Budget for FY2012-13. This budget funds mainly conference, travel and training for the Commission. The budget amount submitted by the Commission last year was $9,621, which retained the 10% reduction from the prior year's budget.

In the current fiscal year, $4,347.96 has been spent on Commission expenditures to date. The remaining balance in the Commission's budget is approximately $5,273 with little to no foreseeable expenditures through the end of June. This years budget has an above average overage due to not attending this year's National APA Conference.

Staff Recommendation

Due to the City's ongoing budget reductions, staff is recommending that the Commission keep the 10% reduction in place and approve no change to the budget for FY2012-13 resulting in a total allocation of $9,621.

CITY OF SANTA CLARA
PLANNING COMMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Agenda Item No. 9.B.
Date: February 29, 2012

PROJECT NAME:
Planning Commission Study Session: SB375 Sustainable Communities Strategy

OVERVIEW:
Following the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) reduction legislation in AB32 in 2006, the State passed SB375 in 2008, calling upon regional planning agencies to set targets to address the reduction in GHG by appropriate land use and transportation planning. In the Bay Area, this responsibility lies with the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), who also partner with other regional agencies. While the legislation does not place the responsibility on local governments to produce the plan that is defined as a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) and identified in our region as *Plan Bay Area*, it is in every community's best interest to be engaged in the planning effort, or be planned upon. The introduction on the OneBayArea website states:

> *This law calls upon our region and other areas throughout California to reduce transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions. The Bay Area's regional agencies, together with their local government partners, nonprofit organizations, business and community groups, and interested Bay Area residents, are working together through this effort to tackle pressing issues such as accommodating population growth while keeping the region affordable for all our residents, preserving open spaces, protecting our environment, and getting residents where they need to go, when they need to get there.*

Staff will present the timelines and key issues involved in the planning effort and a perspective on the implications for the City and the region. No action is necessary on this item, but a discussion of the SCS and work being done will be helpful to the Commission in evaluating land use proposals that come before the Commission and in considering the long range planning effort in the next General Plan update (Phase II is 2015).

Attached is the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page on the OneBayArea website that presents a quick overview. Additional background information, including an introductory video, is available at: http://www.onebayarea.org/

ATTACHMENTS RELATED TO THIS REPORT
OneBayArea FAQ page

OneBayArea

Home
About
SPOTLIGHT: Virtual Workshop
Plan Bay Area
- About
- Planning Scenarios
- Transportation
- Housing Needs
- Equity
- Performance Targets
- Public Process
- In Your County
- Get Involved / Comment
- Meetings
- Frequently Asked Questions

FOCUS
Clean Air Plan
SF Bay Plan
Grant Proposal
News
Maps
Video
Glossary
Contact Us
Links

Frequently Asked Questions

Search

Jump to:

- What is Plan Bay Area?
- What will Plan Bay Area do?
- What size of population will Plan Bay Area need to accommodate?
- What are the greenhouse-gas reduction targets?
- Who will prepare Plan Bay Area?
- How will Plan Bay Area affect local land-use control?
- Is there any relationship between Plan Bay Area and U.N. Agenda 21?
- How does Plan Bay Area relate to the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA)?
- Aside from the RHNA requirement, why would local governments want to conform to Plan Bay Area?
- Why the emphasis on automobiles and light trucks?
- Land use development changes very slowly and many places will not change much. How much difference can Plan Bay Area really make?
- While we implement the long-term land-use changes, is there anything we can do that will have more immediate impact?
- What are some of the other regional efforts related to Plan Bay Area?
- What if Plan Bay Area is not able to meet its targets?
- What type of CEQA assistance might be provided through Plan Bay Area?
- Plan Bay Area sounds like a big project. Are we starting from scratch?
- How much time do we have to complete Plan Bay Area?
- How can I get involved?
- Who should we contact with questions?

What is Plan Bay Area?
Plan Bay Area is an integrated land use and transportation plan that all metropolitan regions in California must complete under Senate Bill 375. In the San Francisco Bay Area this integration includes ABAG's Projections and Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) and MTC's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

What will Plan Bay Area do?
State law requires that Plan Bay Area develop a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) that accomplishes three principal objectives:

1. Identify areas to accommodate all the region's population associated with Bay Area economic growth, including all income groups, for at least the next twenty-five years;
2. Develop a Regional Transportation Plan that meets the needs of the region; and
3. Reduce greenhouse-gas emissions from automobiles and light trucks.

In responding to these three state mandates, Plan Bay Area will also need to be responsive to a host of other regional and local quality-of-life concerns.

What size of population will Plan Bay Area need to accommodate?
The Bay Area currently has about 7 million people. ABAG projects that over the next twenty-five years the region will grow by about another two million people; this additional growth is equivalent to approximately five times the current population of the City of Oakland. ABAG uses federal, state and in-house data sources to develop regional population forecasts. The rate of growth depends on several variables, including age distribution, predicted birth and death rates, and estimated migration into the Bay Area.

What are the greenhouse-gas reduction targets?
On September 23, 2010, the California Air Resources Board (ARB) adopted greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets for regions across California, as mandated by SB 375. For the San Francisco Bay Area, the board followed the recommendation adopted by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission on July 28 — a 7 percent per capita reduction target for 2020 and 15 percent per capita reduction target for 2035, relative to 2005 levels.

Who will prepare Plan Bay Area?
Within the Bay Area, the law gives joint responsibility for Plan Bay Area to the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). The two agencies will work with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC). They will also partner with local governments, county congestion management agencies and a wide range of stakeholders to ensure broad public input into Plan Bay Area's preparation.

How will Plan Bay Area affect local land-use control?
SB 375 is explicit that neither ABAG nor MTC has the legal authority to supersede "the land use authority of cities and counties in the region." However, the law does require that Plan Bay Area be consistent with the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) and therefore affects the next iteration of housing elements in local general plans.

Is there any relationship between Plan Bay Area and U.N. Agenda 21?
No. Plan Bay Area is mandated by California Senate Bill 375. For more information, read the American Planning Association fact sheet "Agenda 21: Myths and Facts" (PDF).

How does Plan Bay Area relate to the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA)?
Plan Bay Area combines these three elements into a single, integrated regional plan. For example, Regional Transportation Plans traditionally include land use projections. For Plan Bay Area the SCS will be the land use allocation in the next RTP, slated for adoption in March 2013. SB 375 also stipulates that the SCS will incorporate an 8-year housing projection and allocation pursuant to RHNA.

Aside from the RHNA requirement, why would local governments want to conform to Plan Bay Area?

1. To improve the quality of life of our neighborhoods by providing cleaner air, improved public health, better mobility, more walkable streets, and homes closer to transit, jobs, and services.
2. To benefit from incentives that will be available to conforming localities — for example, Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC) funding, Station Area Planning Grants, investments from the Regional Transportation Plan, and assistance in meeting the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA);

Why the emphasis on automobiles and light trucks?
Transportation is the largest single source of greenhouse gases in California. In the Bay Area, it accounts for 41 percent of our emissions, and over three quarters of these come from personal travel in on-road vehicles. If we are to significantly reduce our contribution to global warming, then we need to reduce the impact of our travel within the region. Plan Bay Area aims to reduce emissions by:

- Reducing the separation of land uses (jobs, stores, schools, and homes) and encouraging more complete, mixed-use communities, so people can drive less and increase their walking, biking, and use of transit;
- Clustering more homes, jobs and other activities around transit, so people will be encouraged to take transit rather than drive; and
- Planning land uses and transportation together, so we can manage traffic congestion and vehicle speeds, reducing emissions from excessive idling and other inefficiencies.

Land use development changes very slowly and many places will not change much. How much difference can Plan Bay Area really make?
We acknowledge that it will likely be decades before changes in the land use pattern make an appreciable difference to the total emissions from personal vehicles. Improvements in vehicle technology and transportation pricing mechanisms (e.g., parking) are likely to have a greater impact, both in the short and longer term. However, the impact of more efficient vehicles could be significantly reduced if the amount we drive and congestion continue to increase because of inefficient land uses. There is a broad consensus that there isn't just one thing that we should do; we will need to move on all fronts. Changes in technology will have to be accompanied by changes in travel behavior if we are have any hope of reducing emissions to the levels required by the middle of this century. If we are to be successful in reconfiguring the region by 2050 or so, we need to start now.

While we implement the long-term land-use changes, is there anything we can do that will have more immediate impact?
Yes. SB 375, the state law that requires a Sustainable Communities Strategy allows us to use transportation measures and policies. These might include road pricing (new and increased tolls), parking regulations, and incentives to accelerate the adoption of alternative vehicles like electric cars, among others.

The extraordinarily high gas prices in 2008 demonstrated that an increase in the cost of driving had an immediate effect on travel patterns: fewer people drove, while more took transit. However, while transportation pricing policies could be powerful and fast-acting measures, the impact on people's pocketbooks will be politically contentious and difficult to implement. In addition, the equity consequences could be particularly challenging: we do not want to make life more unaffordable for those who are already struggling. If we increase the costs of driving, we need to supply land use and transportation choices so people have a genuine ability to avoid or mitigate those costs.

What are some of the other regional efforts related to Plan Bay Area?
The Air District and BCDC are developing policies and regulations that will affect the region's land use pattern and placement of public infrastructure, including transportation.

In its effort to control local and regional air pollution (smog, particulate matter, and airborne toxins), the Air District is considering an indirect source review rule (ISR) that would regulate the air quality impacts of transportation and other sources associated with land development. The ISR will likely include incentives to encourage development that minimizes automobile use and emissions and may require mitigation or payments for development that increases automobile travel and vehicle emissions. The Air District also recently adopted new thresholds for the evaluation of development projects under CEQA.

BCDC will be releasing a revised recommendation on amendments to the Bay Plan to prepare for inevitable sea-level rise and storm surges affecting areas on and near the Bay shoreline. Sea level rise will have implications for the location of future development and perhaps for the relocation of existing development and infrastructure. Plan Bay Area needs to consider this adaptation work.

What if Plan Bay Area is not able to meet its targets?
If we cannot meet the greenhouse-gas reduction targets in Plan Bay Area, then we must prepare an Alternative Planning Strategy (APS) to accompany the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS). The APS will be structured like the SCS, but it is an unconstrained plan that does not have to be as feasible or achievable as the SCS, since it would not be adopted as part of Plan Bay Area. The APS would identify the physical, economic, or political conditions required to meet the regional greenhouse gas targets. The APS may provide some CEQA streamlining to housing or mixed-use development projects which are consistent with certain aspects of its land use pattern.

What type of CEQA assistance might be provided through Plan Bay Area?
The CEQA relief to be provided through Plan Bay Area could include the following:

1. Residential or mixed use projects that comply with the general use designation, density, building intensity and other policies specified for the project area will not be required to deal with growth-inducing impacts or transportation-related project-specific or cumulative impacts on global warming or on the regional transportation network required by CEQA.
2. Transit priority projects, which meet a number of land use, density and location criteria as well as including high-quality transit might be totally exempt from CEQA or might qualify for a streamlined review called a sustainable communities environmental assessment.

Plan Bay Area sounds like a big project. Are we starting from scratch?
Thankfully, we are not. For decades, the Bay Area has been encouraging more focused and compact growth to help revitalize older communities, develop complete communities, reduce travel time and expense, make better use of the existing transportation system, control the costs of providing new infrastructure, protect resource land and environmental assets, promote affordability, and generally improve the quality of life for all Bay Area residents. Reducing greenhouse-gas emissions just provides another reason to continue and accelerate these ongoing efforts.

Responding to the regional agencies' FOCUS program, over sixty local governments have voluntarily designated over 120 Priority Development Areas (PDAs). Located within existing urbanized areas and served by high-quality public transit, PDAs consume only about three percent of the region's land area but are being planned by their local jurisdictions to house nearly one-half of the region's projected population growth to the year 2035. FOCUS PDAs and associated incentive programs like Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC) – which reached its 10-year anniversary in 2008 – provide a solid foundation upon which to build Plan Bay Area.

How much time do we have to complete Plan Bay Area?
According to the State, the Bay Area's final plan is due in March 2013. However, a draft plan needs to be completed by the beginning of 2012 so it can guide the investments in the transportation plan, to ensure consistency with the eight-year housing allocation, and make sure that environmental impact documents are completed in time to allow sufficient public review. We received our final greenhouse-gas targets from the California Air Resources Board in September 2010. That leaves a relatively short time to work with all our partners to actually produce the plan.

In coming months, we will build the necessary analytic tools, strengthen partnerships with local governments and other stakeholders, and work out the information and engagement mechanisms to make the process transparent and worthy of public support.

How can I get involved?
Public engagement is essential to the success of all the regional efforts that are part of the One Bay Area initiative, as well as to the multi-year development of one of our most comprehensive regional planning efforts to date, Plan Bay Area. Simply put, we need the input of all stakeholders — most especially the people who live and work in Bay Area communities — if we're going to build a plan that meets their vision, goals and aspirations for a prosperous future.

There are many ways to get involved. A great way to start is by getting engaged in the development of Plan Bay Area. You can go to our Get Involved page to sign up for alerts about meetings and other opportunities to have your voice heard. We also encourage you to visit our Public Process page, which explains the nuts and bolts of what can be an admittedly complicated multi-year planning process.

Finally, if you're on Facebook or Twitter, please visit our One Bay Area social media pages for more updates and conversation. Over time, we hope these sites will become an online hub of activity for a whole community of engaged Bay Area citizens. We need you to be our partners!

Who should we contact with questions?

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SHARE

Association of Bay Area Governments

Bay Area Air Quality Management District

bcdc Bay Conservation and Development Commission

Metropolitan Transportation Commission

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