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Sent: Wednesday, May 24, 2017 2:29 PM

To: Ken Kirkey <KKirkey@mtc.ca.gov>

Cc: jpierce@ci.clayton.ca.us

Subject: PlanBayArea2040: Draft Plan undermined by fundamental problems with job projections

Annemarie Kemeny, Director, FTL HUB

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To

Ken Kirkey, Director of Planning, MTC

Julie Pierce, President, ABAG

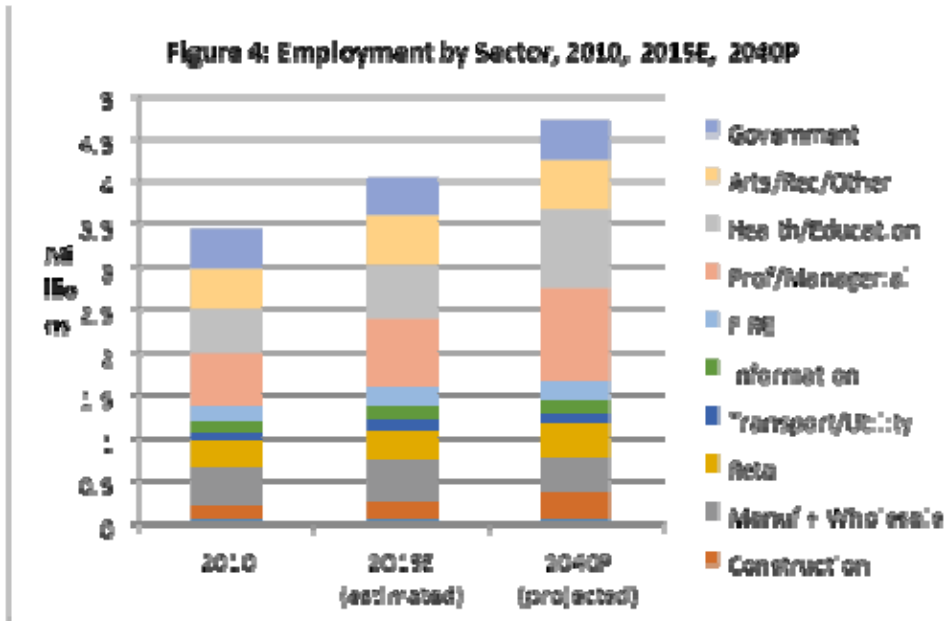
Re: Plan Bay Area 2040

Dear Mr. Kirkey/Ms. Pierce,

After attending two events organized around PlanBayArea2040—the SPUR forum “What Should the Region be Doing about Housing” and the open house at the San José Marriott—as well as reading the Draft Plan, the Regional Forecast of Jobs, Population and Housing, and the Native American Tribal Outreach Report, I would like to share some thoughts regarding your future projections and the strategic action plan based on them.

As you well know, all aspects of regional housing and transportation targets for 2040 are directly dependent on the reliability of current projections about future employment and population trends in the Bay Area. In light of this, it is difficult to understand why the “Regional Forecast” jobs outlook for the 30-year period from 2010 to 2040 takes absolutely no account of the seismic shift expected in employment due to the imminent advent of automation. In fact, your projections foresee a net gain of 16.7% in employment by 2040, and the report’s breakdown of the relative importance

of job sectors remains more or less unchanged over 30 years (the graph below is copied in from page 7 of the “Regional Forecast”).



Source: ABAG from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey, and modeling results from ABAG REMI 1.7.8, NC3RC1

However, studies recently reported in such mainstream media as *Forbes*, *The Guardian*, *The Washington Post* and *Ars Technica* all seem to concur on at least 1/3 of jobs disappearing over the next two decades, with another 1/3 undergoing radical transformation requiring extensive retraining of the work force. Some studies, such as the one by former President Obama’s federal task force, and one by the University of Oxford, estimate the loss at fully ½ of all current U.S. jobs.

Given these projections, the Commission overseeing the Draft Plan probably cannot afford to wait another 4 years to start integrating these factors into their long-term planning, for a number of reasons:

- First, it is expected that by as early as 2021, 6% of jobs will have been made obsolete by AI (*The Guardian*, Jan 11, 2017 “Robots Will Destroy Our Jobs—And We’re Not Ready for It”).
- Second, the lengthy review process involved in the construction of infrastructure and housing means that embarking on the wrong path today could seriously set back or cancel altogether badly needed improvements. Obviously, the requirements for housing and transportation of a largely underemployed population will differ markedly from those of households enjoying full employment.
- Finally, even if projected federal statistics do not yet reflect the global disruption about to take place in the way we work (or don’t), the Bay Area, as the region whose technological development choices are behind the global trends about to disrupt the lives of billions, bears a strong responsibility also to lead in designing the social fabric that will support the consequences of the region’s choices without harming its inhabitants.

Sincerely,

Annemarie Kemeny

Director, FTL HUB