

Fred Castro

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, August 12, 2020 12:47 PM
To: MTC-ABAG Info
Cc: Dave Vautin
Subject: Thursday RHNA Allocation Methodology Committee meeting
Attachments: RHNA Letter August 2020 (2).pdf

External Email

Dear Committee members and staff,

My city council (Palo Alto) has just approved a letter asking ABAG to adopt the methodology (just 2019 HH) that results in the lowest allocation to my city.

As a 50 year resident and regional economist, I support using the equity (high resource/opportunity) area criterion and the existing jobs imbalance and access to transit criterion to achieve equity and GHG reduction goals.

In my letter to my council I wrote:

"I support the ABAG methodology committee direction shown in the staff memo to allocate an above average share of the regional allocation to communities that are considered "high opportunity" areas (their equity criterion) and to communities with large existing excesses of jobs over housing and also good access to public transit (their jobs criterion).

I find the research of Raj Chetty and Sean Reardon at Stanford compelling on the benefits to children in low income families of being in neighborhoods with good schools and social infrastructure like Palo Alto. I also note that council used this evidence as one piece of their Buena Vista decision and funding (the city and county purchased the mobile home park to allow mostly Latino resident to remain with their children in PA schools."

I find this research on the impact of neighborhoods on outcomes and opportunities for low income residents compelling and it points to an above allocation of RHNA totals to communities on the peninsula. I do note that San Jose is in a different position somewhat as it has an excess of workers compared to jobs.

Finally I am attaching the letter Palo Alto Forward submitted to our council (we are currently working on a SVCF grant to broader voices in PA on housing) to show that not all PA residents support minimizing our housing goals.

Stephen Levy

Director Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy

PALO ALTO FORWARD

August 1st, 2020

Re: Item #11, August 3rd - Summary Title: PBA 2050 / RHNA Update

To: Mayor Adrian Fine, and City Council Members

Dear Mayor Fine and Council members,

Palo Alto Forward thanks the staff for the excellent summary of the Bay Area RHNA development process. The material summarized the progress of the ABAG methodology committee discussions regarding allocating the regional total to cities.

As the memo notes, roughly half of the regional allocation is not related to growth but to statutory state requirements, some of which are new to this cycle. I have attached the HCD determination letter so council members can see the contribution of the new factors--reducing the number of overcrowded and cost-burdened households and the contribution of existing factors--moving toward a more "normal" vacancy rate and replacing demolished units as a means to not create a further deficit of housing units.

With regard to the allocation methodology Palo Alto Forward favors the three allocation metrics shown on page 5 of the staff report. These metrics will prioritize communities with access to high opportunity areas and communities with large excesses of jobs versus housing units. Palo Alto Forward supports efforts to increase housing in resource rich cities like ours. The proposal the committee currently favors has a 50% weight for access to high opportunity areas and a 40% weight to job factors including access to transit..

While these allocation factors will result in more units allocated to Palo Alto than the staff proposal, we believe they are the fairest way to allocate new housing. A lower target for Palo Alto will simply shift housing allocations to communities that less meet the equity and job imbalance criteria.

Achieving these goals will be hard for all communities but the Housing Element requirement is to identify sites, zoning and policies to meet the requirements. To that end Palo Alto Forward encourages the council and staff to begin now to think about the Housing Element update, which will require thoughtful and innovative elements no matter what Palo Alto's allocation is.

Gail A. Price

President, Palo Alto Forward Board