

Draft PBA 2050 Comment Form submission

Plan Bay Area <info@planbayarea.org>

Mon 7/19/2021 8:49 PM

To: info@planbayarea.org <info@planbayarea.org>

External Email

Submitted on July 19, 2021 Submitted values are: *Name* Frank Welte *Email* fwelte@lighthouse-sf.org [1] *Zip Code* 94103 *Affiliation* LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired *Topic* Other *Comment* The executive summary says almost nothing about people with disabilities. People with disabilities are over-represented in the ranks of the economically disadvantaged and unemployed. This disparity will not be resolved without explicit, deliberate, targeted actions to redress the systemic barriers faced by people with disabilities. Other than including a vague reference to people with disabilities and the [1] <mailto:fwelte@lighthouse-sf.org>

Draft PBA 2050 Comment Form submission

Plan Bay Area <info@planbayarea.org>

Mon 7/19/2021 11:37 PM

To: info@planbayarea.org <info@planbayarea.org>

External Email

Submitted on July 19, 2021 Submitted values are: *Name* Frank Welte *Email* fwelte@lighthouse-sf.org [1] *Zip Code* 94103 *Affiliation* LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired *Comment* This chapter lays out an ambitious plan for strengthening the Bay Area economy by confronting long-standing structural defects, particularly in terms of land use. The plan calls for a universal base income for all California residents. It calls for changing land use policies to better align housing and employment, and more. However, this chapter is also silent on the role of people with disabilities in our economy. The Americans with Disabilities Act was enacted in 1990. ADA included requirements aimed at minimizing employment discrimination against people with disabilities, primarily by mandating reasonable accommodation for workers with disabilities and also in the employment process. A generation later, we find that the astronomical unemployment rate for people with disabilities is mostly unchanged, in spite of the ADA's anti-discrimination provisions and major advances in access technologies that have greatly increased the range of jobs that can be competitively performed by people with disabilities. Clearly, the status quo isn't good enough. While several of the trends that the plan is intended to promote; more telework, moving housing and jobs closer together and transit-oriented development will probably improve the employment outcomes for a portion of the disabled population, these non-disability specific remedies will likely not be sufficient to bring about the structural changes that would result in economic parity for people with disabilities. The plan needs to include specific strategies to improve the employment rate of people with disabilities. Such strategies might include; adding a supplement to the universal base income for people with disabilities to offset the additional costs of living with a disability, heavy investments in rehabilitation engineering to promote the development of more forms of access technology that could open up a greater range of jobs to people with a greater variety of disabilities, investments in sophisticated public education campaigns to debunk disability myths and stereotypes and to disseminate accurate information about people with disabilities, and strengthening and vigorously enforcing laws and regulations to combat employment discrimination against people with disabilities. [1] <mailto:fwelte@lighthouse-sf.org>

Draft PBA 2050 Comment Form submission

Plan Bay Area <info@planbayarea.org>

Tue 7/20/2021 7:08 AM

To: info@planbayarea.org <info@planbayarea.org>

External Email

Submitted on July 20, 2021 Submitted values are: *Name* Frank Welte *Email* fwelte@lighthouse-sf.org [1] *Zip Code* 94103 *Affiliation* LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired *Comment* This chapter provides a plan for a more integrated and seamless Bay Area transportation system. However, it falls short in several areas. 1. The plan needs to treat pedestrian movement as an integral part of the transit system. In order to access trains and busses, people have to walk, whether on their legs or on mobility devices, such as wheelchairs or scooters. Pedestrians need safe, accessible paths of travel. A large percentage of the Bay Area's network of sidewalks and walking paths is in disrepair, too narrow and/or cluttered with street furniture, illegally parked vehicles and poorly trimmed bushes and trees. Local ordinances against blocking sidewalks go almost entirely unenforced. In many neighborhoods pedestrian paths are intermittent or nonexistent. Also, due to insufficient availability of bike paths, cyclists are forced to ride on sidewalks, constituting a safety hazard for pedestrians. I understand that, in many communities, the responsibility for maintaining sidewalks falls on property owners. This is absurd! Like streets, sidewalks are public rights of way. We don't expect individual property owners to maintain the patches of roadways in front of their yards, so why do we expect them to maintain the adjacent sidewalks? Furthermore, because pedestrian access is inseparable from public transportation, the construction, maintenance and funding of the pedestrian infrastructure should be integrated into the region's transit system. This includes maintaining close cooperation between transit providers and local public works departments. All communities should increase funding for sidewalk and walking path maintenance and for the enforcement of ordinances against sidewalk obstructions. The installation of sidewalks along both sides of all newly constructed roads (with the exception of freeways) should be mandatory, and the installation and repair of sidewalks should be a mandatory component of all road repair projects. All intersections and mid-block street crossings need to be made fully accessible to people with mobility, sensory and cognitive disabilities through the installation of well-designed curb cuts, tactile detectable warnings and accessible pedestrian signals, and the elimination of obstructions that prevent drivers from seeing pedestrians at street crossings. Transit stops need to be made accessible to people with disabilities by removing obstructions and other barriers to wheelchair access, installing and maintaining benches and shelters and providing stop identification and transit route and vehicle arrival information in multiple languages and in large print, braille/tactile signage and audio formats. While active transit and micro-mobility planning can reduce car traffic, it can increase hazards for pedestrians if bikes, E-scooters, etc. are permitted on sidewalks. All vehicular traffic, whether motorized or manually propelled, excluding wheelchairs and other mobility devices for people with disabilities, should be physically separated from pedestrian traffic as much as possible. 2. There should be a single point of contact for consumers who wish to report problems with sidewalks, pedestrian signals, bus stops, transit vehicles, etc., so people don't get passed around to different agencies, none of which want to take responsibility for fixing a particular problem. San Francisco's 311 system is a model that should be replicated throughout the Bay Area. 3. Public transit needs to be funded from a more stable source than is currently the case. Just as it would be unacceptable to close streets during years when there are shortfalls in road maintenance funds, it is also unacceptable to cut transit service levels every time there is a budget deficit. People make critical housing and employment choices based on their access

to transit. This is particularly true for people with disabilities and for low income families. 4. The provision of service to transit-dependent populations, particularly people with disabilities, children, low income families and older adults should be a higher priority than providing transit services to wealthy commuters. To that end, transit planning should favor accessibility, affordability and ease of use over high-speed travel. This priority fits well with the Plan's stated "fix it first" priority for transit funding. [1] <mailto:fwelte@lighthouse-sf.org>

Draft PBA 2050 Comment Form submission

Plan Bay Area <info@planbayarea.org>

Mon 7/19/2021 9:46 PM

To: info@planbayarea.org <info@planbayarea.org>

External Email

Submitted on July 19, 2021 Submitted values are: *Name* Frank Welte *Email* fwelte@lighthouse-sf.org [1] *Zip Code* 94103 *Affiliation* LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired *Topic* Other *Comment* The introduction says almost nothing about people with disabilities. People with disabilities are over-represented in the ranks of the economically disadvantaged and unemployed. This disparity will not be resolved without explicit, deliberate, targeted actions to redress the systemic barriers faced by people with disabilities. Other than including a vague reference to people with disabilities and the elderly in a couple of sentences, the introduction is silent on this important subject. This almost dismissive treatment of people with disabilities by the authors of Plan Bay Area 2050 stands in sharp contrast with the refreshingly specific and thoughtful consideration of the needs and disparities faced both historically and presently by people of color. The introduction quite properly points to specific examples of inequities; redlining, disruption of vibrant minority neighborhoods by highway construction, discriminatory home valuation in minority neighborhoods and inequitable distribution of relief funding and reinvestment after disasters. The summary is silent on specific examples of disparities for people with disabilities; extremely high unemployment rates, higher rates of poverty, a shortage of wheelchair accessible housing and more than a century of construction that is saturated with accessibility barriers for people with disabilities, most of which have not been mitigated, even a generation after the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act. We won't do right by people with disabilities if we don't clearly document the specific barriers they face. The introduction is equally silent on providing recommendations for addressing inequities faced by people with disabilities as compared with the treatment given to specific recommendations regarding inequities faced by racial minorities. The access barriers and discrimination faced by people with disabilities won't be overcome if we don't make specific plans to remove those access barriers and to resist the discrimination. If these plans aren't spelled out in Plan Bay Area, they won't happen. [1] <mailto:fwelte@lighthouse-sf.org>

Draft PBA 2050 Comment Form submission

Plan Bay Area <info@planbayarea.org>

Mon 7/19/2021 10:32 PM

To: info@planbayarea.org <info@planbayarea.org>

External Email

Submitted on July 19, 2021 Submitted values are: *Name* Frank Welte *Email* fwelte@lighthouse-sf.org [1] *Zip Code* 94103 *Affiliation* LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired *Topic* Other *Comment* This chapter begins with the following statement, "In Plan Bay Area 2050, an equitable future in housing is a future where every resident enjoys the bedrock of a strong, vibrant community: a safe, stable, affordable, high-quality home" For people with disabilities, if a home isn't also accessible, it is no home at all. This chapter lays out a wide-ranging, robust plan for tackling the Bay Area's severe housing shortage with particular emphasis on addressing the lack of sufficient affordable housing. Unfortunately, the chapter is utterly silent regarding the housing needs of people with disabilities. Not only does the chapter lack any recommendations for eliminating the shortage of housing that is accessible for people with disabilities; it doesn't even use words like "wheelchair", "accessible" or "disability". People with disabilities simply do not factor into the housing segment of Plan Bay Area 2050. When you fail to plan, you plan to fail. The authors of Plan Bay Area 2050 are planning a future where people with disabilities are denied accessible housing. [1] <mailto:fwelte@lighthouse-sf.org>