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May 30, 2017

MTC PUBLIC INFORMATION
375 Beale St., Ste. 800
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: Plan Bay Area II

MTC Board Members:

Please accept this email as formal citizen input and reaction to the draft Plan Bay Area 2040.

First, I do not see why there is so much fuss about your plans to build us out of our freeway and traffic congestion problems. After all, L.A. did it.

Those of you on regional boards were not elected to those positions. Your election to City or County positions was not in the hope that you would serve on regional boards nor was it a mandate with regard to your positions on various regional issues. The draft plan represents a naked power grab by people who are not our elected officials in those positions. The notion that residents should be taxed by organizations with no elected representation runs counter to long-standing basic principles of our democracy.

The regional organizations in the Bay Area consist of appointed Directors and, on paper, those appointed Directors have decision-making power. In reality, the appointed Directors of our regional organizations are part time and these appointed positions account for a very small percentage of the Directors' professional time. As a consequence, the reality is that most of the crucial decision-making is by staff rather than by the Directors.

The most insidious aspect of the draft plan, along with the provision for direct taxation by these regional organizations, is the reliance on RHNA because RHNA is, at its heart, anti-community. Different cities and towns in the Bay Area have very different characteristics and different life styles. Some of that is historical accident but much of it has been intentional choice by those communities over time. In my area, Monte Sereno has chosen to have no commercial areas and is entirely quiet residential. Saratoga has no sidewalks or street lights in many areas, large lot sizes and a semi rural atmosphere. Yet we adjoin Campbell, which has chosen a wonderful redeveloped downtown and many commercial areas, while Cupertino, also adjoining, has huge research and development areas. Even after price is considered, different people chose to live in very different communities. The person or family that wants a quiet, semi rural atmosphere in Saratoga is not trying to move to San Francisco and people who appreciate an urban lifestyle are not trying to move to Saratoga or Monte Sereno. In short, individual communities in the Bay Area have largely had the right since their inception to decide on the nature and future of their community. That has produced the diverse communities that we have. All of that is threatened very directly by RHNA and the mandate to develop high density housing, whether it is compatible with a particular community or not. Initially, there was some hope that the RHNA housing allocations would reflect the need to put new housing close to jobs, to help with traffic and congestion. Even that fig leaf of rational process was

discarded several years ago and now RHNA mandates high-density housing in built-out communities like Saratoga, far from jobs and transportation.

The prior Bay Area Plans would have been farcical if only there had been something funny about them. This draft plan is consistent with that tradition. Please ditch it.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey A. Schwartz