



October 2021

To the residents of the Bay Area:

As we mark more than a year and a half since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, we continue to mourn the lives lost and extend immense gratitude to our frontline workers. Reflecting on the events of 2020 and 2021, we at MTC and ABAG stand in solidarity with the worldwide coalition of voices demanding action to confront racially discriminatory policies across public and private sectors – including our own field of regional planning. Together, these events underscore just how essential it is to plan for uncertainty and address systemic discrimination. Starting with the Horizon initiative in 2018, MTC and ABAG were already seeking to identify resilient and equitable solutions for an uncertain future. This work now feeds into the recommendations of Plan Bay Area 2050, the long-range plan for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area, and provides greater degrees of confidence that the plan's strategies will advance equity regardless of uncertainties in the years to come.

Plan Bay Area 2050 is comprised of 35 strategies across the elements of housing, the economy, transportation and the environment, founded on multiple cycles of meticulous analysis and rigorous public engagement. Alongside the thoughtful, coordinated land use and transportation planning developed in prior iterations of Plan Bay Area, this plan expands its scope to introduce strategies for long-term economic development and environmental resilience. Importantly, equity is interwoven into every strategy, from housing strategies to produce one million new permanently affordable homes by 2050 to transit fare reforms that would reduce cost burdens for riders with low incomes.

We want to thank the many voices that contributed to Plan Bay Area 2050, including members of the public; peers at city, county, regional, state and federal agencies; and partners in the private, non-profit and advocacy spheres. Engagement was fundamental to shaping the plan, and the pandemic allowed innovation and flexibility through new online methods, enabling more diverse voices to weigh in at multiple decision points. In support of the plan's bold equity goals, we sought to hear from the broadest spectrum of the public possible by offering engagement opportunities in multiple languages, connecting with young people who will inherit the Bay Area of 2050, and prioritizing the voices of historically underserved communities.

The release of this plan coincides with what appears to be a new era in policymaking at the state and federal levels. Bold new policy approaches that could lift people out of poverty, counter the effects of climate change and address centuries of racial inequity are cropping up each day at all levels of government. In Sacramento and Washington, D.C., leaders are discussing large-scale investments that would open new revenues for transit operators, cities, counties and regional agencies to carry out their own visionary plans. Plan Bay Area 2050 provides a regional blueprint for how to use these potential new resources to best support a more resilient and equitable Bay Area.

As we wrap up work on Plan Bay Area 2050, it is now time to transition from long-range planning to near-term action. The Plan Bay Area 2050 Implementation Plan details over 80 concrete actions that MTC, ABAG and our partners can take to advance strategies in the next five years. Turning the plan's vision into reality will require advocacy, legislation, research and, above all, partnership, because no strategy in the plan can be implemented by MTC and ABAG alone. The Bay Area will need to think beyond our neighborhoods and act collaboratively as a region if we are going to address the challenges at hand. Every Bay Area resident can contribute to a more equitable and resilient region. As residents of one of the most beautiful and diverse regions in the world, we must listen more intently, make stronger commitments, and respect one another.

Now, we look forward to getting down to the hard work of implementing the plan and realizing its vision. We hope that you will join us as we work toward a Bay Area that is more affordable, connected, diverse, healthy and vibrant for all, together.

Sincerely,

Therese W. McMillan

Executive Director