

Plan
Bay Area
2040

Focus on Solano County

Solano County

Spring 2015 Public Engagement Open House Comments, by County

Open House: Thursday, May 7, 2015
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Hilton Garden Inn, Fairfield

Goals and Targets Station Feedback

At the **Goals and Targets Station**, participants received information about the current goals and targets for Plan Bay Area, as well as the process underway to update them. Participants were asked to select their top three personal priorities from the list of current goals and targets for Plan Bay Area, and to post their other ideas on an adjoining additional board.

Below are the responses when tallied across the nine-county region, and the tally from participants at the Solano County Open House.



Question: Is anything missing from these goals? *Below are responses from the Solano County Open House.*

I believe that transportation system effectiveness underlies climate protection, so even though there are not a bunch of dots on that, know that that is why I put the dot on TSE. Climate is our biggest challenge.

Don't short change OS and ag preservation in Solano County.

Affordable and low-income housing.

Initiative and grants to develop connectivity of bike/ped projects to transportation hubs.

Don't encourage biking and walking

Focus on drought and impact on air quality and health.

Mission statement needs to acknowledge need to stabilize population rather than constantly accommodating population growth.

Question: What are the biggest challenges facing your community? The Bay Area? *Below are responses from the Solano County Open House.*

Affordable housing

Jobs/housing imbalance. We need lots more jobs relative to houses.

Deterring crime by investing in families and youth.

Plan for the spike in senior population numbers. This group will need specific housing and transportation.

Jobs/housing imbalance.

There is too much government. Size needs to be reduced.

Challenges: Population growth. An economy geared to population growth.

Challenges: Urban sprawl.

Challenges: Blighted inner/older neighborhoods.

Challenges: Congestion

Challenges: Lack of quality jobs.

Question: What are your ideas for solving these challenges? *Below are responses from the Solano County Open House.*

Convince CEOs of large corporations that they can attain their company objective/mission without being in San Jose.

Be much more aggressive with VMT goals – like 25% reduction by 2040 (25 in 25).

Integrate a portion of designated affordable housing into every new development.

Dedicate childcare facilities in new housing developments.

Maintain trans system repair. Don't boot trips without a car. Don't reduce miles traveled per capita.

Develop small commercial centers among housing developments – walkable distance to small grocery stores, etc.

Help boost the economic success of farms so they are more inclined to keep their land in farming. There are land use, infrastructure and permitting hurdles that can be addressed to help.

Ideas to solve problems: stabilize population, focus on existing residents

Ideas to solve problems: prohibit urban sprawl, land use policies need to be adopted to discourage housing construction on farmland.

Transportation Station Feedback

How should we support the mobility needs of Bay Area residents now and over the next quarter-century? The Transportation Station included displays about currently planned local and regional transportation projects (highways, public transit, bicycle/pedestrian, local road improvements, etc.). On an accompanying board, participants were asked to post ideas for new projects, then to share their biggest transportation challenges and offer solutions for improving their trips.

Question: What projects are missing? What would make it easier for you to get where you need to go? *Below are responses from the Solano County Open House.*

Stabilize population rather than accommodate it.

More ferries from Vallejo/Solano/other areas in the Bay Area to Marin, Alameda, Sonoma counties (even South Bay).

Longer hours for regional transit.

More buses (and frequency), more trains within Solano and from Solano to other major transit centers.

Rather than building new roads...repairing the ones we have may lessen complaints to build new ones.

#31 Vacaville/Dixon Bike-Ped – \$3 million allocated, but nothing done except for one road sign that says "Share the Road." Where has all the money gone?

Question: What are the biggest transportation challenges in your town? In the Bay Area? What would make it better? *Below are responses from the Solano County Open House.*

Too much congestion on roads. Too much housing planned, but not enough road improvement to handle.

Fairfield: Road care very poor. Lots of plans to build housing off Leisure Town, but no sustainable roads to move traffic.

Need to reprioritize Caltrans to maintenance rather than big projects (i.e., highway beautification instead of big construction projects).

We can't get anywhere easily via public transit: not enough capacity for existing, cost is high, not frequent enough. Also limited reach to areas like Marin and Sacramento and South Bay.

Actually it's housing. More density would make transit more feasible.

Need to stabilize population to truly address transportation/congestion issues. Federal/state grants for transport systems do not seem to work. (Ex.: City of Benicia bus system had better ridership prior to its merger with Vallejo Bus system, i.e., SolTrans. Few riders in buses.)

Old roads need to be fixed before new projects are built.

Fairfield: More opportunity and space for casual carpool (if necessary).

Looking Ahead Station Feedback

To plan for how best to invest in transportation and housing in the future, local agencies, regional agencies, private businesses and community organizations need information on what to expect: Who will live in the Bay area and where? Where will they work? What kinds of jobs and incomes will be available?

At the Looking Ahead Station, participants received information on how ABAG develops population and economy forecasts, as well as how past projections compared to actual numbers. Participants were asked to share their feedback on two key questions:

Question: **What possibilities most excite you (about the future of your community)?**

Below are responses from the Solano County Open House.

Bay Area universities taking a lead on training environmental leaders and stewards.

More emphasis on bike transport infrastructure.

Bike lanes on county roads need to be looked at.

Funding PCAs not just PDAs to create quality living environments.

Make the Bay Area the site for a green economy boom.

Question: **What concerns you about the future of your community?** *Below are responses from the Solano County Open House.*

Leadership. Educated citizens. Potholes.

Lack of affordable housing

Cities and people dumping waste in or near watershed areas (near the water table) without planning for sea level rises. There is a gross underestimate of potential damage. We need to plan for much farther out.

Economic growth is going up, but wages are going down. Big companies work together with NAFTA and other cartel deals. Workers need to do the same to get wages up.

Surge of senior population, specific needs for housing, and public transportation.

Economy is geared to encourage population growth.

Too much population growth. Need to stabilize population. Not enough jobs for current residents. Not enough quality jobs.

I have a concern of water availability and how it will affect migration.

Population growth needs to be controlled so stack & pack housing not needed in Solano County

Water resources.

Lack of community pride as reflected in how neighbors neglect physical property.

Homelessness.

Lack of jobs. Lack of quality jobs.

Too much weight put on statistics and projections.

Power of quasi government agencies.

Feedback Via Written Comment Forms

Some participants submitted additional comments via a comment form available at the open houses. *Below are comments received at the Solano County Open House.*

Plan Bay Area needs to acknowledge need to stabilize population, rather than constantly accommodating growth. This should be identified in its mission statement.

I would ask ABAG to initiate a study/plan to deal with homelessness using the "housing first" model. House, then deal with their issues. See recent article in Washington Post at <http://wapo.st/1lgDpgT> or Google Sam Tsemberis, CEO, Pathways to Housing. He has some study results.

There needs to be grant \$\$ focused to connectivity between city-city, county-county, city-county projects. City comprehensive bike plans have built to their line but connectivity would happen quicker if the \$\$ focused to joining the projects...

Need to be arbitrator in minor transportation issues to bring closure to these projects; i.e., Cordelia Road and Hale Ranch Road, Fairfield. Stop arguing and get it finished. Already on list.

Development in downtown Vallejo is improving; however, we do need stable businesses such as Peet's Coffee or more well known, so that it can increase foot traffic.

Musical interactions between downtown areas to promote more downtown vitality.

The Fairfield-Vacaville train station project is blatant urban sprawl. It merges Fairfield and Vacaville into one big blob. Where are the jobs for the residents of this development project? Where are the quality long-term jobs for the residents of this development? This project will just add more people which equals more competition in the work force. Not good for current residents.

I, of course, don't know what the full 2-year PBA outreach strategy is, but I hope the formats are mixed up. This was an excellent format for the 1st public workshop. The boards that were customized to each county are great. The interactive exercises (post dots, post-it comments, etc.) were great. One thing that could be improved is really encouraging people at the stations to fill out comment cards – explaining to them that this is one of the most effective ways to get their voice heard. A lot of people don't stand up from the group to do the post-it note, exercise or whatever. And I think a lot of people also may perceive these cards as for giving process feedback, not content feedback, or they simply need an extra push. MTC should give that push! Also, how nuts is it that the PBA website doesn't have a submit your comments/tell us what you want your community and our region to look like in 2040 form? Fix this, please!

That said, I hope you mix up the format and scale of future outreach events. For instance, take some of the boards with your questions to Farmers' Markets, the YMCA or rec centers, a plaza in downtown, etc. Or organize a few issue-based focus groups appropriate to each county, perhaps focused on the PCA program and how it can help farmers, etc. Or do something like a very coarse charrette to capture visual themes about people's visions. I know there is concern about public forms that can get dominated by one vocal group. I think it's great to not only do that format, but perhaps there is a role for that, too – with very highly trained facilitators who get to design the agenda. My background is in community organizing, facilitation, and planning. If there is a way I could help in the design of future PBA outreach, let me know. It would be fun to volunteer. (Please do not put me on the PBA email list - I follow this on my own.)
