League of Women Voters of the Bay Area Education Fund

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A Bimonthly Review of Regional Issues

A Fair Trade?

By Leslie Stewart

A recent poll by the Public Policy Institute of California revealed that many people are unaware of a key state environmental program, although they support its goals. The 13th annual *Californians and the Environment* survey showed that 65 percent of participants believe it's important to reduce the production of greenhouse gases right away, but more than half of those polled don't recognize the cap-and-trade program, created in 2006 by Assembly Bill 32 (Pavley), the Global Warming Solutions Act. Through the cap-and-trade program and a variety of other measures, the goal of AB 32 is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, and then cut them another 80 percent by 2050.

Joaquin McPeek, the California media director for the Environmental Defense Fund, isn't worried that the public doesn't understand the specifics of the program. "We have a lot of outreach to do on AB 32," he acknowledged, "because there are a lot of issues in it, and there is a major education component to what we need to do. But the main thing really is that people understand that it is about lowering emissions."

However, Tupper Hull, vice president of Strategic Communications for the Western States Petroleum Association, is more concerned. "We recognize that there is strong public support for the concept, but people are not fully aware of the implications of the program for their household budgets," he explained. "We never opposed cap-and-trade in theory, but over time, it has turned into an enormously expensive revenue-generating program that we believe was never intended by AB 32."

The cap-and-trade program, expected to account for nearly a fifth of AB 32's intended emissions reductions, is administered by the California Air Resources Board to regulate

The cap-and-trade program covers refineries like this Chevron facility in Richmond. *photo by Alec MacDonald*

approximately 350 businesses at 600 facilities. These major polluters include refineries, power plants, and cement plants, as well as gasoline, diesel, and natural gas providers.

The "cap" is the annual limit on emissions for the state as a whole, measured in metric tons of carbon dioxide or its equivalent in other greenhouse gases such as methane or nitrous oxide. Determined by the Air Resources Board, the cap will be reduced steadily over the coming years. In 2012, emissions from major polluters were forecast for that year, and then those polluters were given "allowances" equal to the projected emissions. The level was reduced by 2 percent to set the cap for 2013, the first year of mandatory participation for refineries, power plants, and cement plants (inclusion of gasoline, diesel, and natural gas providers will start in 2015). The cap will drop about 2 percent more in 2014, then about 3 percent per year until 2020.

As the cap is reduced, allowances allotted for each covered entity will be reduced as well, benchmarked by industry and updated annually. Initially, allowances were free, but each year an increasing percentage of the total allowances must be purchased through quarterly state auctions. The result is that each covered entity is looking at fewer allowances each

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year, and will be required to pay for more of those allowances each year as well. There will be penalties and fines if a covered entity is found to have generated more emissions than are covered by the allowances.

This is where the "trade" part comes in, offering options other than just purchasing allowances in the quarterly state auctions. For those entities that can't reduce their own emissions enough, another strategy is to purchase credits from utilities or other participants that have reduced their emissions and don't need all of their allowances for that year. Soon businesses will also be able to purchase "offsets," credits created by environmental programs which reduce greenhouse gases. Offsets must be re-acquired each year.

The environmental offset component has been controversial, at least partially because it's projected that many qualifying offset opportunities won't be geographically close to polluting industries. For this reason, many environmental groups opposed cap-and-trade from the outset, such as the West County Toxics Coalition in Richmond, headed by Dr. Henry Clark. Clark is a Richmond native who worked at Chevron before joining the coalition more than 20 years ago. "We felt that cap-and-trade would simply continue to allow hot spots such as Richmond and other similar communities in the state that are already disproportionately impacted. It would not reduce impacts in the immediate community," Clark explained.

Hull observed, "There is a constant tension in the program and among advocates of the program over global emissions reductions versus local reductions." He pointed out that unlike particulate pollution, which is regulated because of its impact on neighboring communities, "CO_2 reduction for global climate change need not be tied closely to a particular location."

After a year of voluntary compliance to transition participants into the program, mandatory participation began in January 2013. The 2013 quarterly auctions have seen a slow but steady rise in the price of the allowances sold for the current year. (Each auction also includes some allowances which are reserved for a future year, and the price for those has remained at the base price set by the state.) McPeek is pleased, because "we've had four successful auctions — prices have been stable and all the credits have been sold."

Proceeds from the auctions will be returned to utility ratepayers, or distributed by the state according to law — although some think that collecting funds from industry and spending them to mitigate climate change impacts should be done through the regular tax revenue process. Hull stated, "We don't believe that was the intent of AB 32, to raise billions of dollars for the state, which may not go to related purposes." The spending plan includes funding for sustainable communities located near transit, clean vehicles, energy efficiency, renewable power, resource conservation, and waste diversion. There is also a provision for returning a portion of the funds to disadvantaged communities in the state, especially those neighboring major polluters. Hull said his association supports this provision, but he questioned the seriousness of health impacts from energy facilities that only emit carbon dioxide.

Completion of the spending plan lagged behind the auction process, and proceeds already collected were temporarily loaned to other state programs in the 2013 budget process. Once the funds become available, likely within the next year, many groups are eager to use them. The Environmental Defense Fund has hired a community organizer and is educating communities to become stakeholders. "For example, one of our partners is Moms Clean Air Force, because they are concerned about children's health," McPeek offered, adding, "The great thing about California is that there is a whole host of opportunities for communities. Our concerns are that the money is used effectively, it gets into communities as soon as possible, and it is used in a timely manner."

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Clark said that his group and others will not participate in competing for these funds. "We will continue to resist a wrong policy," he maintained. "We still feel that cap-and-trade is undesirable, and if we get into a position of accepting funds for any reason, it makes it harder to oppose the policy in future."

Hull's association also believes that the program "is seriously off-track" in a number of ways. For example, in implementing AB 32 through cap-and-trade, the Air Resources Board set allowances for certain industries, including refining, at a different rate than others. In Hull's opinion, this is unnecessarily strict. He noted, "We are very close today to meeting AB 32 goals — we are at 80-plus percent of being there, and have a good expectation of getting there by 2020." Because of this, he is hopeful that changes may be on the table for the second compliance period, from 2015 to 2017. However, he also warned that in January 2015 all emissions from transportation-related fuels, including driving, will be covered by the program, and the transportation fuel distributors must pay accordingly. He anticipates that this will have a major impact on prices and the public may not expect or like the results.

Public awareness of a specific program may not be as important as general support for the goals and a sense that the system is running smoothly to reach those goals. Strong majorities of those polled by the Public Policy Institute of California feel that it's very important for the state to pass regulations and spend money now, both on global warming programs and to deal with future effects of climate change. While disappointed in the current program, Hull said it was a step in the right direction. "The notion of creating a genuine market for carbon credits was a good idea in the minds of our members, especially those with European experience," he concluded. "When constructed to be genuinely based on the global market, [cap-and-trade programs] can be the most effective at reducing carbon emissions." ❖

Leslie Stewart is the former editor of the Bay Area Monitor.

CARL MOYER PROGRAM ENTERS FIFTEENTH CYCLE OF FUNDING CLEANER AIR

Most Californians have probably never heard of Carl Moyer, but they can breathe a little easier because of his work. An accomplished engineer who founded an environmental firm in Mountain View, Moyer crafted state air quality policy as a consultant to the California Air Resources Board. Shortly after his sudden death in 1997, the agency paid tribute to his efforts, launching an innovative emissions reduction program that he had masterminded.

The Carl Moyer Program initially offered heavy-duty truck owners financial assistance toward voluntarily upgrading their vehicles' older and dirtier diesel engines, incentivizing the purchase of technology that would perform above and beyond regulatory standards. The program specifically sought to decrease emissions of oxides of nitrogen, but later began targeting reactive organic gases and particulate matter as well. Eligibility also expanded over time, growing to include equipment such as tractors, loaders, forklifts, backhoes, marine vessels, and locomotives. Legislation guided the evolution of the program, bolstering its funding stream with an assortment of fees (related to smog abatement, tire purchases, and automobile registrations) and adding an environmental justice component to specially protect vulnerable communities.

The cumulative effects have been profound, with hundreds of millions of dollars helping retrofit or replace tens of thousands of aging vehicles statewide, slashing massive amounts of air pollution in the process. Last year, the Bay Area alone received close to $5.5 million in Moyer program grants, which should eventually yield an emissions savings of nearly 90 tons of oxides of nitrogen, more than three tons of reactive organic gases, and almost two tons of particulate matter. The Air Resources Board and its partner in this region, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, approved grants to supplement the cost of 55 new trucks, along with a variety of vehicles used on local farms, ranches, and vineyards. The funding will also contribute to the installation of new engines on several boats, as well as a system for delivering electricity to Caltrain locomotives parked at San Jose Diridon Station.

The Bay Area stands to benefit even more in the coming year, with some $15 million having become newly available in the Moyer program's fifteenth cycle, which began back on July 23. The Air District is facilitating the application process, awarding grants on a first-come, first-served basis to vehicle owners who can best demonstrate the cost-effectiveness of a prospective upgrade. Per the environmental justice component, priority will go to upgrades that improve air quality in six of the region's most "highly impacted" communities: Concord, Richmond/San Pablo, Western Alameda County, San Jose, Redwood City/East Palo Alto, and Eastern San Francisco.

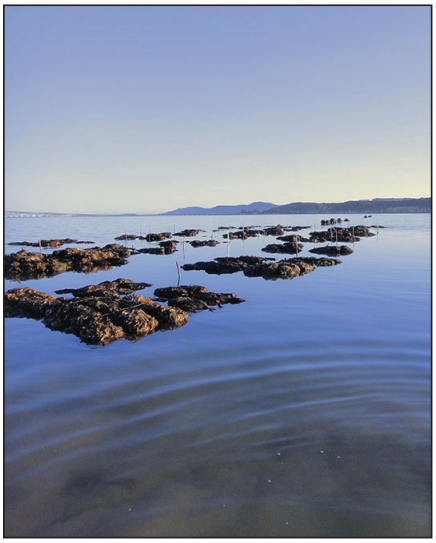
Assuming the Air District allocates all of the given $15 million, the Moyer program will have been responsible since its inception for furnishing the Bay Area with $121 million toward diesel engine upgrades. This represents a huge accomplishment in terms of improving air quality and safeguarding public health in this region. Were he alive today, one former resident would be justifiably proud.

For more information about the Carl Moyer Program, visit www.baaqmd.gov/moyer or call (415) 749-4994.

Scientists Set Seashells by the Seashore

By Aleta George

There's a new reef in the San Francisco Bay. It's not made of coral, but like the tropical variety this biological reef provides a structure where other creatures can hide, hunt, and huddle. A "reef" is what project partners call the native oyster and eelgrass restoration plots that make up the first phase of the San Francisco Bay Living Shorelines: Nearshore Linkages Project, or Living Shorelines for short.



As part of the Living Shorelines project, scientists placed mesh bags full of oyster shells (pictured at distance on the left and in closeup on the right) off of the San Rafael coast.

photos courtesy of State Coastal Conservancy

The State Coastal Conservancy and its partners installed this one-acre pilot restoration project in 2012 in a shallow mudflat at San Rafael Bay between Point San Quentin and Point San Pedro. The long-term goal of the Living Shorelines project is to create biologically rich habitats in the subtidal and intertidal zones to improve the health of the estuary and to help its resiliency during sea level rise.

"With climate change it's even more important to pay attention to that zone," said Marilyn Latta, the project manager with the Coastal Conservancy. "There are many areas of the current urbanized edge that are at risk of being inundated during sea level rise, and that's one reason we are testing these techniques to see if the natural habitats can help protect and buffer the adjacent shoreline edge."

The project at San Rafael has four treatment plots parallel to the shoreline, roughly 200 meters from shore. Each plot is 32 meters long and 10 meters wide. One plot has rows of mesh bags filled with empty Pacific oyster shells. Another plot has rows of eelgrass, a submerged aquatic plant native to the Bay. The third alternates with oyster bags and eelgrass like a checkerboard, and the fourth is a control plot with no treatment. Scientists are analyzing each plot to learn ideal techniques to restore these habitats and learn if biological reefs can protect shorelines. The lead scientist on the project is Katharyn Boyer, a coastal restoration specialist at San Francisco State University. Other partners include the University of California at Davis, USGS Western Ecological Research Center, ESA PWA, ENVIRON, and Isla Arena Consulting.

In addition to the treatment plots at San Rafael, they are analyzing small artificial substrates at both San Rafael and Hayward. The structures — which have entertaining names such as reef castle, reef ball, reef ball stack, and layer cake — are made of "baycrete," a cement-like material made of 20 percent Portland cement and 80 percent native sand or oyster shells. So far, the baby native oysters looking for a place to land seem to prefer the mesh bags filled with oyster shells.

In 2009, the state's Natural Resources Agency released the *California Climate Change Adaptation Strategy*, which projected a possible 12 to 18 inch sea level rise by 2050. The same report recommended natural shoreline enhancements as an alternative to hard shoreline protection as the waters rise. The Coastal Conservancy says that Living Shorelines can reinforce shorelines, minimize erosion, and create biological habitat. A healthy living shoreline around the San Francisco Bay would include sand beaches, rocky intertidal zones, seaweed beds, native oyster beds, and eelgrass meadows, and these habitats would work in concert with tidal wetlands and uplands. With this suite of healthy habitats, the twice-daily tidal exchange would bring life to all parts of the bay and the living creatures that depend on it.

Right now we can't boast of healthy living shorelines. Since the Gold Rush we have lost 90 percent of the bay's wetlands, and due to fill and development of its edges, the bay itself is one-third smaller. Eelgrass meadows and oyster beds once covered large portions of the subtidal zone. These habitats provide a physical structure for other species to use. "When we restore or conserve native oyster and eelgrass habitats, we also conserve and attract other species that use the habitats as a place to hide from predators, get food, and find a surface to attach to," said Boyer.

So far, scientists have collected one year's worth of data. During the summer, the lowest tides were at dawn. With

headlamps switched on, the scientists scrambled over slippery riprap covered with oysters and mussels, and slogged across 600 feet of mud while pushing boogie boards full of gear. "It's a visceral experience to start in the dark when you can't see anything in the bay, and then arrive as the sun rises to see organisms crawling or swimming all over the structures," said Boyer. The scientists saw crabs, amphipods, bay shrimp, isopods, tunicates, serf perch, sea slugs, and bay pipefish. "It's just alive, stunning really to see all the activity that's present that wouldn't have been there otherwise," said Boyer.

Every Pacific oyster shell in the mesh bags has attracted about 20 native oysters, now of different ages, according to Boyer. Scientists will continue to monitor the site for another five years.

To test whether or not the reefs might slow the impact of waves, scientists from ESA PWA installed an acoustic Doppler current profiler to gather data of wave and current action. They have extended the reef data with computer modeling back in the office. Early results show that reefs do alter wave height by filtering out some of the wave directions. The next step is to model the ideal height and aspect of reefs. "The point is to find the sweet spot," said oceanographer Doug George. "If the Coastal Conservancy wants to build more of these, they will have a better idea of how high to build them and where to put them."

"It's really exciting to be able to document some of these ecosystem services," said Latta, who was also the project manager for the 2010 *San Francisco Bay Subtidal Habitat Goals Report*, an effort in which 75 agencies and scientists developed a 50-year conservation plan for the bay. The Living Shorelines project was developed with those goals in mind. "Our hope is that these techniques will be successful and result in healthy habitat that will improve conditions for fish, birds, and invertebrates in the bay, and help slow down wave action and prevent some erosion on the shoreline in the face of sea level rise," said Latta.

Looking forward, the Coastal Conservancy hopes to use this data to scale up and build more reefs, while also connecting habitats and restoration projects from the bay to the land. "We'd love to be able to integrate habitat types for multiple benefits, from the shallow subtidal and deep intertidal zone where we're now working, all the way up to tidal marsh and even the upland," said Boyer.

Their goal is to make the structures self-sustaining, and their wish is that after the species recruit and find other homes, they will continue to persist and result in further generations. ❖

Aleta George writes about nature and culture in California.

Burrowing in the Bay Area: The Scoop on Transportation Tunnels

By Beth Hillman

What's the most direct route from Point A to Point B? The proverbial crow has one answer, but when flying that straight line isn't an option, the lowly earthworm can suggest an alternative.

Of course, underground travel doesn't come without complications. In the Bay Area, ongoing and recently completed tunneling projects offer the promise of convenience, but their development is the result of years of specialized planning and often difficult excavations.

Tunneling presents challenges that are literally unseen. Youssef Hashash, a professor of civil and environmental engineering at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, said that engineers understand the geology they are working with by boring into the ground to take samples and collaborating with geologists to establish the connectivity between points.

"That's actually a very challenging task. In some cases, the changes in geology can be quite abrupt," Hashash said. "When you are dealing with tunnels for transportation, we are dealing with very longitudinal structures. There's a limited amount of holes we can put in the ground. Therefore, we have to make certain assumptions."

Making assumptions can result in surprises. "We're dealing with geology, which was given to us by Mother Nature," Hashash said. When she surprises construction crews with a change in rock texture, then they need to alter their tunneling techniques. Softer ground requires more support to prevent cave-ins during construction; rock is harder to excavate but requires less support.

The Devil's Slide Tunnels Project, which enables drivers to bypass an unstable area of Highway 1 in San Mateo County, faced such issues when the rock face was found to be too soft to bore into without risk of collapsing the tunnel. Such unexpected geological situations contributed to the project's delayed completion, a year and a half later than anticipated

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and millions of dollars over budget.

The team planning the Caldecott Fourth Bore Project, which adds a tunnel to the Caldecott Tunnel on Route 24 between Oakland and Orinda, has thus far been able to navigate their excavation's changing geology. Slated for completion in late 2013, the four-year, $405 million project is aimed to reduce congestion at off-peak hours and eliminate the need to reverse the direction of the traffic in the middle bore, which is required up to several times a day. For this project, engineers are using a sequential excavation process by which the length of each excavated section is based on the surrounding geology, tunneling simultaneously from both sides. The nature of the sedimentary rock, which has shifted over millions of years, has resulted in the need to tailor the process to suit the various categories of rock within, said Ivy Morrison, a public information officer with the project.

Construction has been nearing completion on the Caldecott Fourth Bore Project. *photo by Karl Nielsen*

"There were abruptly shifting conditions in the ground," Morrison said. "We knew that, and we did extensive core samples. Even with that information, you never know how the tunnel will behave until you are excavating."

In addition to dealing with changing types of rock, the Caldecott team has also had to navigate another geological challenge: excavating fossils. Fossils found in the bore have included a three-toed horse, a camel, and microscopic crustaceans, which indicate that the area was once a deep marine environment. As the site's potential for such discoveries was known, an on-site paleontologist has been part of the excavation, Morrison said. The fossils will be studied and stored at UC Berkeley and then displayed to the public.

Given the nature of excavation projects, tunnel infrastructure is designed with a long view into the future. When planning a major tunneling project, Hashash said, a major consideration is how it can be sustained and rehabilitated in the long term.

"I can't just simply say that my transportation tunnel in the heart of a major city is for 50 years and then when 50 years are up, shut it down," Hashash said. "If I have a building that becomes really old, I demolish it and build a new one. But if I have a tunnel, how can I demolish that? I can't just fill the ground and say I'm going to dig a new tunnel. We have to work with what we have."

In addition to geologic and structural considerations, tunnel projects must take into account broader effects on urban development. As such, they need to have a "long-term urban planning vision, which incorporates sustainability, resiliency, population growth, economic policy, and social policy," Hashash said.

The Central Subway Project in San Francisco, for example, is designed to accommodate ridership projections for the year 2030, said project manager John Funghi. However, the project is being undertaken with the possibility to extend and enhance the system based on later need.

"We design to a certain capacity level, and if we are to reach that estimated capacity level, there are measures we can put in place to enhance the system," Funghi said. "For example, the line is currently going to Chinatown, and we could extend the line to North Beach or Fisherman's Wharf and there would be a dramatic increase in use."

The Central Subway Project is aimed to address current transportation problems, while also looking ahead to anticipate future needs, Funghi said.

"There is an existing issue that we have a very congested corridor that is without the benefit of a modern system, and it carries a huge volume of people very inefficiently," Funghi said. "We're building a duplicate system underground without reducing the capacity on the street, so we are basically speeding up the system while adding additional capacity to the line."

The subway will mitigate the frequent overcrowding on the bus system, with the idea that people will take the subway for longer trips and the bus for shorter ones.

In the case of the Devil's Slide project, the planning challenges were even more immediate. The Devil's Slide section of Highway 1, carved out of steep cliff, has been notoriously dangerous for drivers. It has been closed

numerous times since 1937; one shutdown in 1995 lasted 158 days and cost nearly $3 million in repairs. Closures greatly extended the commutes of affected residents and also hurt the local economies, restricting tourism through the area.

Another reason to look far into the future when planning a tunnel is the lengthy time projects can take from conception to completion. Solving the issue of the unreliable Devil's Slide section became a subject of debate starting in the 1960s, with a highway bypass first considered as the best option; the tunnel project wasn't approved until 1996, with the passage of a county ballot initiative. Construction eventually began in 2005 and lasted until March of 2013, when the project opened as the state's first highway tunnel in almost 50 years.

Nonetheless, the technology of tunnel-boring machines has advanced dramatically in recent decades, making the excavation process both more efficient and far safer for workers.

"The technology is phenomenal," Hashash said about the machines. "As they move they build behind them; they are excavating and supporting the ground behind them. They are almost like a mobile factory."

Morrison was enthusiastic about the "sophisticated, high tech" machines being used at the Caldecott Fourth Bore. They can be remotely operated, which alleviates safety concerns, and the excavating tactics can be tailored to the category of rock that is encountered.

The technological advances mean that the construction of the San Francisco Central Subway is less disruptive than when the Bay Area Rapid Transit system was being built.

"If we're comparing the construction of BART to the Central Subway, it's like night and day," Funghi said. Those who built BART used a more traditional open excavation method known as open-cut. "If you fast forward to today, it's very mechanized… And it's significantly less destructive on the surface," Funghi said.

While work goes on underground in San Francisco, Funghi said, "life will move on as normal up on the street level." ❖

Beth Hillman is an editor and freelance journalist living in San Francisco.

There Goes the Neighborhood: Will Regional Plan Push People Out?

By Alec MacDonald

We tend to take comfort in the notion that neighborhoods are stable places, steadfastly retaining their distinctive character throughout the years. Yet in reality, they constantly undergo subtle fluctuations, and can eventually start to feel unfamiliar to us. Sometimes, the transformation involves a wave of housing renovations, streetscape improvements, and commercial enterprises — in a word, revitalization. When revitalization leads to the displacement of residents by an influx of wealthier newcomers, another word applies: gentrification.

An intensely loaded term, its mere mention can provoke impassioned reactions and spark heated arguments. Such discussions often fail to reach any productive resolution, in part because participants may have different interpretations of how exactly gentrification works. Analyzing this complex phenomenon hasn't become any easier, either, with the introduction of anti-sprawl planning strategies that can exert powerful influence on neighborhood dynamics.

Planners have increasingly sought to concentrate development within the urban core, aiming to encourage walking and transit use, reduce air pollution from cars, bolster public health, and enhance overall quality of life. However, some advocates contend this approach exacerbates gentrification displacement of lower income residents.

"You're immediately creating this kind of economic and social tension by trying to push more people into a smaller space," said Peter Cohen, co-director of the San Francisco Council of Community Housing Organizations. As a result, "we get almost a Darwinian sorting out of the haves and have-nots based upon who's able to afford rising rents, who's able to afford the latest cost of a condo, who's able to set up a new business."

Having observed this effect in the neighborhoods he serves, he predicts it "is going to be happening in the near- and mid-term future in many other places in the Bay Area as they experience pressure of growth," with San Francisco representing "the canary in the coal mine." With the region's population expected to jump from 7.2 million today to 9.3 million by 2040, that pressure looms large.

Expressing frustration about how officials have been preparing for this prospect, Cohen criticized the recently adopted Plan Bay Area for failing to protect groups at risk from gentrification displacement. Put together by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the Association

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There Goes the Neighborhood (*from page 7*)

of Bay Area Governments, the plan's vision for 2040 focuses 78 percent of new housing units and 62 percent of new jobs into a relatively small proportion of land, roughly 170 pockets around the region dubbed Priority Development Areas. These sites will receive sizeable transportation investments to help them achieve the housing and jobs projections; Cohen thinks the regional agencies should more strictly control this funding by telling local jurisdictions that "you can't just take all this transportation money and do investments that are going to encourage infill development if you don't simultaneously have an effective set of stabilization policies in place so that you do no harm."

"Unfortunately that's the kind of muscle that the regional agencies were not willing at the time to use," he lamented. "So the Plan Bay Area essentially, for the most part, continues the status quo."

As in any examination of gentrification issues, evaluations naturally differ. Dan Chatman, an assistant professor of city and regional planning at UC Berkeley, asserted, "There are ways in which Plan Bay Area could be implemented that would increase the amount of housing that would otherwise have been created in the Bay Area, and that can be nothing but good for affordability of housing and thus for possible displacement pressures."

Emphasizing the concept of supply and demand, Chatman reasoned that the plan's relaxation on development constraints should result in builders producing a surplus of residential units, prompting prices to drop. In his estimation, residents are getting priced out of Bay Area real estate markets because local jurisdictions have refused to offer more options. "It's not about developers not caring about poor people," he said, "it's just about municipalities and neighbors not wanting density."

These same parties will control much of how the plan translates into action at the local level, Chatman noted, and so all the attendant questions about neighborhood transformation rest mainly in their hands. In terms of safeguarding the interests of low income populations, he pointed out that the Bay Area has a staunch network of affordable housing activists whose "voices will be heard" during the process.

Cohen confirmed that he and others like him intend to speak up as Plan Bay Area becomes real "on the ground… jurisdiction by jurisdiction by jurisdiction." Then he added, "Basically we just battle gentrification in the neighborhoods — that's kind of the way it's always been." ❖

Alec MacDonald is the editor of the Bay Area Monitor.