



TOWN OF FAIRFAX

STAFF REPORT

October 7, 2015

TO: Mayor and Town Council

FROM: Garrett Toy, Town Manager *GT*

SUBJECT: Authorize the Vice Mayor to send a letter to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) requesting them to fully fund the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) for FY 15-16 and to expand their evaluation of the potential consolidation of MTC and ABAG planning departments.

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize the Vice Mayor to send a letter to MTC requesting them to fully fund ABAG for FY 15-16 and to expand their evaluation of the potential consolidation of MTC and ABAG planning departments.

DISCUSSION

In June 24, 2015, MTC voted to only fund ABAG's planning and research activities through December 2015. MTC's rationale was that they wanted to explore moving the land use planning functions from ABAG to MTC and look for other efficiencies to reduce costs. The SF Bay Area is unique from the rest of California where regional land use planning resides at ABAG and regional transportation planning resides with MTC.

Our initial impression is that this is a "rushed process" with limited analysis by MTC staff, especially with regard to input from local municipalities regarding MTC's proposal. ABAG staff has prepared a white paper which analyzes MTC's proposal to transfer regional land use planning and research staff from ABAG to MTC. The MTC proposal represents a major shift in regional land use planning and could result in ABAG's insolvency with significant consequences to cities and counties and ABAG's employees.

Below is the link to the white paper:

<http://abag.ca.gov/abag/events/agendas/e091715a-Item%2010,%20Response%20to%20MTC%20Proposal.pdf>

Attached is draft letter modeled after the letter Mill Valley sent to MTC.

FISCAL IMPACT

None

ATTACHMENT

Draft letter

DRAFT

October 7, 2015

Steve Heminger, Executive Director
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
101 Eighth Street
Oakland, CA 94607-4700

RE: Potential Consolidation of MTC and ABAG Planning Departments

Dear Mr. Heminger:

This letter is in regard to your recent white paper analyzing the potential consolidation of the ABAG and MTC Planning Departments within the MTC organization. We understand you have discussed this with the MTC Commission.

The Town of Fairfax strongly urges MTC to reconsider swift actions regarding consolidating the MTC and ABAG Planning Departments. The process for consideration of the proposal has been flawed in several ways. First, the process has not been a collaborative effort between the agencies. Second, critical stakeholders have not been afforded the opportunity to fully evaluate the proposal or provide reflective communication regarding its merits or alternatives. Finally, the timeline for the decision to consolidate has been incredibly rushed and very little information about this potential consolidation has been distributed to the cities and key stakeholders.

Instead of the current proposal the MTC is considering, the Town of Fairfax strongly requests the MTC take the following actions:

1. Extend ABAG planning services funding for the final 6 months of FY2015/2016 to secure stability to proceed with Plan Bay Area 2040.
2. Establish an ABAG/MTC subcommittee to produce an action plan which would evaluate options to ensure the appropriate and efficient collaboration between MTC and ABAG planning departments.
3. Retain an independent third party consultant to evaluate the two planning organizations and the options provided by both the September 10th ABAG and September 18th MTC Executive Director "White Papers".
4. Schedule regular progress reports by the Executive Directors to the joint MTC Planning Committee/ABAG Administrative Committee on an action plan, joint working plan and coordination with local jurisdictions.
5. Receive and consider input from cities and key stakeholders before making this crucial decision.

The Town of Fairfax plans to continue to pursue other avenues for small cities to further discuss and provide input.

Sincerely,

Renee Goddard
Vice Mayor

cc: Ezra Rapport, Executive Director, ABAG