

Assembly California Legislature

April 21, 2016

Mr. James Spering, Chair
Planning Committee, Metropolitan Transportation Commission
101 Eighth Street
Oakland, CA 94607

Ms. Julie Pierce, Chair
Administrative Committee, Association of Bay Area Governments
101 Eighth Street
Oakland, CA 94607

Dear Mr. Spering and Ms. Pierce:

We write to address the findings in the Options Analysis and Recommendation Report put together by Management Partners for the ABAG-MTC Merger Study. The ABAG and MTC Joint Committee will meet tomorrow and could select one of these options as the path forward in Regional Governance.

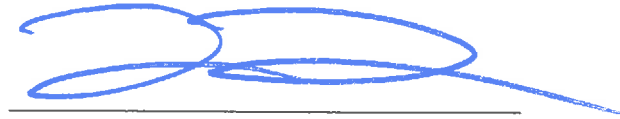
Management Partners recommended Option 6 (Execute a Contract between MTC and ABAG to Consolidate Planning Functions within MTC and Enter into an MOU to Create a New Regional Agency and Governance Model), or Option 7 if 6 is rejected (Enter into a Contract between ABAG and MTC to Consolidate Staff Functions under One Executive Director and Enter into an MOU to Pursue New Governance Options).

The State Legislature has an important role in the issues being considered. At stake is the planning process for the implementation of SB 375 (2008), transportation development, the allocation of housing needs, and much more. Further, because of state-mandated roles and responsibilities any proposal for a change in regional governance or organizational responsibilities will require legislation for implementation.

Based on the Report, we believe that the full consolidation plan outlined in Option 4 is the best choice for both ABAG and MTC. Both of the options Management Partners recommended end in the same result – full consolidation of the two agencies into one body with a new governance model. Our view is that there is no reason for a two-step process that first merges staff, and then consolidates the agencies second. A strong and carefully crafted transition plan will be needed for ABAG and MTC to consolidate into a well-functioning team. By first transitioning only some of the ABAG staff into MTC, the full reorganization process will be more complicated and further delayed. There would also be an additional layer of questions relating to ABAG's continued funding, the relationship between ABAG and MTC staff, and the eventual merger.

We would like to thank Management Partners, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, and the Association of Bay Area Governments for working with each other and coordinating with us in the Legislature so that we may move our Region forward together. We would be more than happy to further discuss this request.

Sincerely,











Tony Thurmond
Assemblymember, 15th District

Philip Y. Ting
Assemblymember, 19th District

Richard S. Gordon
Assemblymember, 24th District

Marc Levine
Assemblymember, 10th District

Susan A. Bonilla
Assemblymember, 14th District