



Association of Bay Area Governments

About ABAG

The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) is the regional planning agency for the nine counties and 101 cities and towns of the San Francisco Bay region. ABAG is committed to lead the region through advocacy, collaboration, and excellence in planning, research, housing, and member services to advance the quality of life in the San Francisco Bay Area. ABAG's planning and service programs work to address regional economic, social, and environmental challenges.

The Bay Area is comprised of nine counties: Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma. All nine counties and all 101 cities and towns within the Bay Area are voluntary members of ABAG, representing all of the region's population – more than 7,000,000 people. ABAG offers its members research and analysis, planning and outreach, as well as cost-effective member service programs.

Building coalitions and partnerships within the Bay region and beyond have typified ABAG's problem-solving approach to issues affecting the Bay Area. The Joint Policy Committee (JPC) is a key partnership and exemplifies ABAG's approach to working on regional planning issues. JPC member agencies include ABAG, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC).



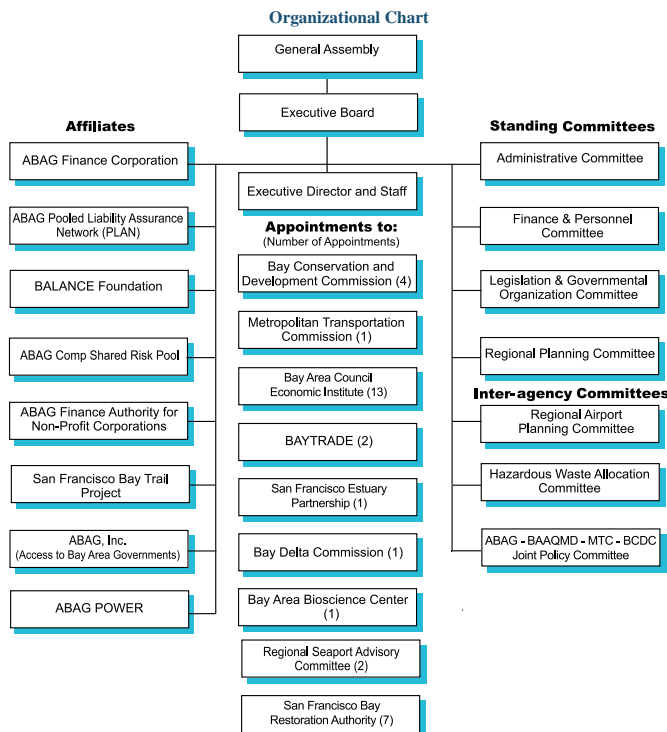
Governance

As an advisory organization, ABAG has limited statutory authority and is governed by the Executive Board. An elected official from each member city, town, and county serves as a delegate to ABAG's General Assembly. The General Assembly determines policy, adopts the annual budget and work program, and reviews policy actions of ABAG's Executive Board. Each delegate has one vote, and a majority of city and county votes are required for action.

The General Assembly also recognizes regional achievements with the *Growing Smarter Together* awards ceremony. The awards recognize innovative approaches and significant achievements of local governments, regional agencies, and residents collaborating to build complete communities to improve the quality of life in the Bay Area.

Awards categories include:

- *Distinguished Leadership – Elected Official*
- *Start It Up*
- *On the Ground – Getting It Done: FOCUSed Growth*
- *Preserving and Protecting the Environment*
- *Public-Private Partnership*
- *Sharing the Benefits*
- *Building a Better Bay Area – Urban Design Award.*



Executive Board

The 38-member Executive Board assembles locally elected officials based on regional population to make operating decisions, appoint committee members, authorize expenditures, and recommend policy. Executive Board meetings are bi-monthly (January, March, May, July, September, and November) on the third Thursday of the month.

ABAG also appoints elected officials to standing committees and external organizations, who are approved by the Executive Board. Members interested in appointments should contact the ABAG President or Communications staff at 510-464-7900.

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Programs, Products, and Services

Offering cost-effective services focused on regional planning and associated local services, ABAG works to meet member needs.

Programs

Regional programs include conducting research and analysis and providing planning and outreach. ABAG also serves as the state-designated clearinghouse for federal grant applications. Other valuable ABAG projects range from job and population research, data analysis, earthquake preparedness research, green business strategies to on-line training classes.

A key ABAG Planning Initiative — which is administered by ABAG in cooperation with MTC, BAAQMD, and BCDC — encourages focused growth through a voluntary, incentive-based development and conservation strategy. **FOCUS** provides an opportunity for local governments and the regional agencies to work together to create complete, livable communities. These communities will, in turn, help achieve a more efficient, equitable, and environmentally sustainable region.

Central to FOCUS are **Priority Development Areas** (PDAs) that are locally identified, infill development areas near transit; and Priority Conservation Areas (PCAs), which are regionally significant open spaces for which there exists a broad consensus for long-term protection.



Downtown Berkeley PDA
Photo: Brad Perks

ABAG's Website was named "Best of the Web" by the San Francisco Chronicle for city and government sites, citing its role as a gateway to information on planning, economy, transit, earthquakes, environment, and more. Visit ABAG's Website (www.abag.ca.gov) for a review of ABAG's programs, government services, and the latest regional research.

In response to critical environmental and sustainability challenges, ABAG provides a pooled natural gas purchasing program, the Hazardous Waste/[Green Business Program](#), and an earthquake preparedness and hazard mitigation program with extensive planning research and supporting hazard maps.

ABAG also administers the [San Francisco Estuary Partnership](#) and the [Bay Trail Project](#), both designed to preserve and protect the region's natural resources. The Estuary Partnership's mandate is to protect, enhance, and restore the San Francisco Bay-Delta Estuary through implementing actions identified in the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP). The Bay Trail is a planned 500-mile "link around the Bay" of recreational and alternative commute trails. To date, more than 300 miles have been completed.

Products

Major products of the [Research Department](#) include an annual housing report and the biennial demographic and economic forecast for the Bay Area, *Projections*. The *Projections* series documents population, jobs, housing, and income changes for the Bay Area over a twenty-five year period. Starting in 2009, the forecast now includes regional performance targets, including carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions.

For more information see, *Projections and Priorities 2009, Building Momentum*. *Projections* is pivotal to planning and development decision-making by local government policy makers and administrators, as well as private sector business and the general public.

Bay Area Projections

	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035
Population	6,783,762	7,096,500	7,341,700	7,677,500	8,018,000	8,364,900	8,719,300	9,073,700
Households	2,466,020	2,583,080	2,667,340	2,784,690	2,911,000	3,039,910	3,171,940	3,302,780
Employed Residents	3,452,117	3,225,100	3,410,300	3,633,700	3,962,800	4,264,600	4,547,100	4,835,300
Household Income	\$104,000	\$97,300	\$102,000	\$107,600	\$113,600	\$119,800	\$126,400	\$133,400
Total Jobs	3,753,460	3,449,740	3,475,840	3,734,590	4,040,690	4,379,900	4,738,730	5,107,390

Services

Local service programs provide quality cost-effective member services to local governments struggling with rising costs and diminishing income. A variety of service programs address the comprehensive needs of local governments from [ABAG Financial Services](#) capital financing to [ABAG POWER](#) energy efficiency and pooled purchasing of natural gas, and [ABAG PLAN](#) risk management including liability and property insurance. These services represent another dimension to the variety of planning resources and publications available to member jurisdictions.

ABAG continues to provide technical assistance and training not only for members but also for other national stakeholders. The Association also sponsors workshops and conferences where local officials, business and industry leaders, special interest groups, and private citizens can discuss programs and issues of regional significance.

ABAG's innovative programs, projects, and partnerships have led to state, national, and international recognition.

History

Almost fifty years ago, Bay Area leaders recognized the need to address common issues from a regional perspective. As a result, in 1961, elected officials from the region's cities, towns, and counties formed a council of governments, named the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG).

Since inception, ABAG has examined regional issues such as housing, transportation, economic development, education, and environment. In 1970, ABAG broke ground developing the **Regional Plan, 1970-1990**, the Bay Area's first comprehensive regional plan. The Plan incorporated the first regional open space plan, regional information systems and technology support, criminal justice and training, water policy and waste collection, and earthquake hazards and planning.

Since then, ABAG became the first Council of Governments in the state to develop a regional vision, an outgrowth of the Smart Growth Livability Footprint planning process, which was completed in 2000. This was a precursor to the FOCUS Regional Blueprint Planning Initiative being advanced today.

Starting in the 1980s to support local governments, ABAG added financial services and the insurance and risk management programs in 1983 and 1986, respectively. Since 1994, with [abagOnline](#), ABAG has provided public agencies with Web hosting, access to and assistance with the Internet and training. In 1995, the foundation for ABAG POWER was laid, leading to a natural gas purchasing pool the following year and an electricity purchasing pool in 1997.