

The Reporter

Plan B needed for PBA

By: Colleen Britton – June 23, 2013

Gee, am I supposed to think that Tom Barnidge's piece, "Plan Bay Area. It's either the best or worst thing ever" (The Reporter, June 12) was objective? He clearly drank the Plan Bay Area Kool-Aid and, without checking facts beyond a "PBA PowerPoint presentation," places everyone who opposes it in tin foil hats.

I strongly urge Mr. Barnidge and readers to carefully read "Comments on Plan Bay Area, Executive Summary," by Randal O'Toole of the Cato Institute. You can download and read his 16-page report backed up with real facts and figures at: <http://ti.org/pdfs/ROTonPBA2.pdf> .

What is Plan Bay Area? It is a master plan for all nine Bay Area counties that extends until the year 2040. A plan for five to 10 years may make sense, but a plan for 27 years is fanciful. It integrates transportation, land use/ housing and greenhouse gas reduction. The implications are far-reaching and expensive. They affect your pocketbook, property rights, zoning restrictions, local schools, available housing and the affordability of that housing. Also, available transportation choices and costs, jobs and employment opportunities, where those jobs are located, who can work there and how people will get there. If adopted, drastic limitations will be placed on future generations of Bay Area residents for a long time.

How much will all this cost? Who pays for all this utopia? A recent estimate puts the costs of Plan Bay Area at nearly \$277 billion.

Initial federal grants, from your federal tax pocketbook, will get the projects started, but like the bullet train, that is only the beginning. Bay Area planners seem to assume unlimited funds. Keep in mind we have a national debt of \$17 trillion, and our current state surplus does not include \$127 billion in debt and deficit. Bottom line -- you will pay for it. Your taxes, bridge tolls, fees, etc., will continue to go up to pay for this astronomically expensive utopian fantasy.

How else will Plan Bay Area affect you? It will affect how local tax dollars are spent. City services will be reduced because local funds will be diverted to subsidize additional low-cost housing and other mandated provisions of the plan.

Your property rights will become even more restricted through mandated zoning restrictions, conservation easements, etc. Housing costs will go up, and supply of single-family homes will diminish. According to the Plan Bay Area draft environmental impact report, implementation of Plan Bay Area will require the demolition of more than 169,000 single-family detached homes, or one out of every nine in the region.

Do we really need this? No!

It makes no sense, is too expensive and removes local control from cities and counties and gives it to regional bureaucrats. The only ones who benefit from this plan are special interests and those who want to see a bigger, more centralized government.

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