



THE CITY OF
NOVATO
CALIFORNIA

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March 14, 2012

Mr. Mark Luce, President
Association of Bay Area Governments
P.O. Box 2050
Oakland, CA 94607-4756

RE: Support for Peer Review of Bay Area Growth Forecasts for the Sustainable Communities Strategy

Dear Mr. Luce:

At its March 13, 2012 meeting, the Novato City Council supported the request of the City of Palo Alto that ABAG commission an independent peer review of the economic forecasts for job and housing growth in the Bay Area over the thirty-year planning horizon for the Sustainable Communities Strategy.

The Novato City Council shares the concerns expressed by the Palo Alto City Council that forecasted job growth for the period from 2010 to 2040 exceeds that experienced during the period of rapid economic growth between 1990 and 2007 by 32 percent. This forecasted job growth translates into elevated assumptions of housing needs.

Like Palo Alto, Novato has virtually exhausted its supply of vacant land for new development and future growth will be dependent upon redevelopment of sites which are currently developed. Redevelopment will be more expensive and much slower to occur than that which occurred between 1990 and 2007 on vacant parcels.

Questions concerning the economic forecasts behind the Sustainable Community Strategy were raised at each of the public workshops conducted by ABAG and MTC, and staff members did not attempt to provide responses. For the benefit of a transparent public process, Council believes a published independent peer review of these forecasts is necessary before consideration of a preferred alternative.

Sincerely,

Denise Athas
Mayor

cc: City Council
City Manager
City Attorney
Planning Commission
Metropolitan Transportation Commission, Attn: Steve Heminger
League of California Cities, Attn: Dan Carrig
Transportation Authority of Marin, Attn: Dianne Steinhauser