

Bay Area Alliance for Sustainable Development

October 28, 1999; 8:30 a.m. - noon

Sierra Club, San Francisco

MINUTES

Michele Perrault, international vice president of the Sierra Club, opened the meeting, **welcomed** everyone and provided introductory remarks. Based on conversations she has had with people throughout the country working on sustainable development, the Bay Area Alliance for Sustainable Development (Bay Area Alliance) is the envy of many communities because of its ability to bring and keep together such a diverse group of leaders. She suggested that as we think about indicators to be considered for the Bay Area Alliance, we think about people and not necessarily limit ourselves by excluding “data poetry,” e.g., someone going into a lake to see if he can see her toes. Michele suggested that among the most important achievements of the Bay Area Alliance to date is that it provides a forum for a wide variety of stakeholders to discuss of issues.

Gary Binger, deputy executive director of the Association of Bay Area Governments, provided an update on the **public outreach efforts** of the Bay Area Alliance. Early next year, a series of meetings/workshops will be initiated around the region for the purpose of further exposing the public to the *Compact for a Sustainable Bay Area (Compact)* and to provide the opportunity for wide public review and improvement suggestions for the *Compact*. A workshop will be held in each of the nine counties comprising the Bay Area and three region-wide workshops for the free-E’s (environment, equity, economy).

The San Francisco Foundation has provided a grant to the Bay Area Alliance for the purpose of securing **professional public relations assistance**. Public Affairs Management, a public relations firm from San Francisco, has been retained to help the Bay Area Alliance tailor its messages for the various audiences in the Bay Area and further refine a media strategy.

The members of a graduate studio class at UC Berkeley have agreed to review the *Compact* to help the Bay Area Alliance, with guidance from the Steering Committee, develop **action strategies** associated with the initiatives. They expect to finalize the report in December.

Binger also reported that the **Tax and Fiscal Policy Working Group** will meet late this year to begin the process of discussing and providing recommendations to the Bay Area Alliance on a variety of fiscal issues including the fiscalization of land use. The Working Group will be co-chaired by members of the Steering Committee. The Working Group will tap into work already underway at the State level. Among other options to be considered to achieve some of the goals to be adopted by the Bay Area Alliance, is the Bay Area-wide pooling of incremental local municipal tax revenue, i.e., tax revenue above that which is already collected, infrastructure pricing, tax credits, etc.

Finally, Binger reported that approximately two dozen of the 46 members of the Bay Area Alliance have already signed and returned their **affirmation forms**. These forms indicate an organization's agreement in principle with the provisions of the *Compact* and that the *Compact* is sufficiently well developed at this point to be released for public review. Feedback from the outreach effort will undoubtedly result in modification of the *Compact*. There has been concern expressed by some members of the Bay Area Alliance with respect to certain provisions of the *Compact*. The Steering Committee will meet and with them as appropriate to help overcome these concerns.

Several people provide an update on the **Partnership for Regional Livability** (PRL) project. Andrew Michael of the Bay Area Council provided background on the PRL. The PRL is affiliated with the President's Council on Sustainable Development and the Metropolitan Initiative and includes several national foundations. The PRL is conducting four regional pilot projects throughout the nation – regional initiatives that would improve the quality of life in the region by forming more efficient and efficacious partnerships between the pilot regions (San Francisco, Denver, Chicago and Atlanta) and between the regions and federal agencies. The regions are to identify the issues on which to engage.

The Bay Area Alliance is the lead convenor for the Bay Area pilot project and the organization through which the Bay Area partners will operate. Two projects in the formative stages are proposed for the Bay Area pilot: the Bay Area Footprint and the Community Capital Investment Initiative.

Andrew Michael summarized the **Bay Area Footprint** project as an application of geographic information systems technology, which will include five overlays on the nine-county Bay Area. The overlays are employment growth patterns, jobs-housing balance patterns, environmental quality patterns, transportation systems, and the patterns of both hard and soft infrastructure. He suggested that examples of hard and soft infrastructure include roads, sewers, power lines, social services, etc.

Ness Sandoval, also of the Bay Area Council, provided additional detail on the Bay Area Footprint project by discussing the methodology and principal results of high study of the infill housing capacity of Alameda County.

James Nixon of Sustainable Systems and Keith Nakatani of Urban Habitat reported on the **Community Capital Investment Initiative** (CCII). The goal of the CCII is to encourage large-scale, market-based investments in Keystone developments in the 46 communities in the Bay Area identified by the Bay Area Partnership as having concentrated and persistent levels poverty. The objectives are multiple. The CCII hopes to mobilize an investment of \$1 billion in these areas. These investments are expected to offer viable rights of return to the investors. They are expected to reduce poverty by producing high-quality jobs in these communities and promote creation of aggregate community wealth while avoiding displacement. Investments these communities will also help mitigate pressure for development at the edges of the Bay Area.

Nixon reported that three councils which will govern this project are in formation -- a Government Council, Community Council, and Business Council. Co-chairs of the Government Council will include representatives of the California Treasurer's office and the federal Housing and Urban Development agency.

Nakatani pointed out the linkage between the two projects. The Footprint project will be able to inform the CCII project. Nakatani reported that the Social Equity Caucus of the Bay Area Alliance is very excited about the potential of the project to both reduce poverty and improve the quality of life in poor neighborhoods. However he suggested that there is also significant potential for this project to exacerbate gentrification impacts and expressed his encouragement that the economic and environmental caucuses agree with the Equity Caucus about the seriousness of the gentrification/displacement issue. The challenge is to improve the quality of line without displacing existing residents, especially low-income renters, and small businesses. He cited examples of neighborhoods in the Bay Area that are already experiencing the negative impacts of gentrification, including the Mission and Bayview/Hunters Point districts in San

Francisco, East Palo Alto and West Oakland. While emphasizing the need for the development of more affordable housing, Nakatani also suggested that the CCII might have broader policy implications, such as strengthening fair share housing laws and facilitating community land trusts.

Peter Melhus of the Bay Area Alliance led the discussion on the proposed **sustainable development indicators** to be used by the Bay Area Alliance. To kick off the discussion, he acknowledged the time and effort of the members and the leaders of the Indicators Working Group. He suggested that the indicators were intended to be descriptive, i.e., describing trends leading to the current situation, rather than prescriptive, i.e. implicitly or explicitly suggesting what should be done. The indicators should be considered in the context of the entire package rather than as individual indicators. He emphasized the equal priority of all the indicators, pointing out that the numbering was purely to facilitate expeditious discussion during the meeting, rather to imply relative importance. Finally, he emphasized that the purpose today was to seek agreement at the broadest level only – was this set of indicators one that the Bay Area Alliance members could “live with” or were there indicators included that were absolutely unacceptable, or left out that would make the package unacceptable.

Following are the comments provided by the meeting participants with attribution (we apologize in advance for any mistaken attribution or misrepresentation of suggestions). Comments received after the meeting via the Response Forms provided at the meeting and include in the briefing package are also included. Suggestions that were repeated are not necessarily repeated below:

- Mathis Wackernagel (Redefining Progress): what is definition of sustainability you are using? Not clear from these indicators what is good or bad – need to have some value judgments about targets for the indicators. Add a measure that addresses scope, i.e., carrying capacity of the Bay Area. Sustainability should be defined as “satisfying lives for all, within the means of nature.”
- Bill Hough (Resource Center for the United Nations): add health and crime rate indicators and include emergency preparedness.
- Sherman Lewis (Sierra Club): 12 of the 28 indicators on the list are wrong or need significant change. He provided a memo to participants outlining his criticisms and suggestions. Job growth is unacceptable as an indicator.
- John Holtzclaw (Sierra Club): in transportation, we should focus on measures of accessibility not congestion, e.g., the ratio of trips by transit to total trips, the ratio of total trips by non-motorized travel to total trips. We should also keep the vehicle miles traveled indicator. The environmental quality section does not measure habitat, Bay, other non-human factors.
- Tom Steinbach (Greenbelt Alliance): add a measure on protected open space; include open space available for public access and total open space.
- Ann Boren (Green Team): add measures on reduction of solid waste and reduction of consumption. Also, the current list does not address cultural/spiritual issues. Will population carrying capacity be addressed?
- Tom Jones (HUD): add densification/intensification measures, by county.
- Heather McCullogh (Policy Link): measure reduction of poverty, particularly in the 46 neighborhoods.
- John Wise (EPA): recognized the hard work and likes the list. Add a transportation measure of total available transportation funds and ratio of funds invested in highways vs. all other modes; Add a education measure of \$s invested per pupil and compare to national norms.
- Austin Hoggatt (Interfaith Coalition): add measures that look at species other than man; land removed from wild lands; water area (square miles) in the Bay, biodiversity, global climate change.

- Irwin Mussen (Urban Habitat): Likes the list and Sherman's as well. Add measures of the gap between the highest and lowest 20% in income and of affordable housing.
- Caryn Hoadley (The Nature Conservancy) add measures of preservation of open space, watersheds, wetlands and farmland; conservation easements on private property; preservation of threatened/ endangered species
- Mary Ortendahl (EDAB): add measures of waste reduction, of affordable housing, of number of jobs by economic cluster.
- Jean Matsuura (League of Women Voters): Employment needs to reflect how well the diversity in our communities is reflected in the labor force; add a measure of racial diversification of the labor force. Need more measures of ecosystem integrity.
- Ken Norwood: Does not support as written. Do these indicators lead to compact, livable urban development? Consider measures of the number of persons per unit, alternative types of housing; transit ridership vs. total travel.
- Mike Atkins (Sustainable Communities Forum): Commended Bay Area Alliance for leading the public dialogue. Add measure on income distribution; expand the energy measure to look at all resource use, both renewable and nonrenewable resource (total and per capita); measure imports to the region; measure educational performance by income group and racial diversity; for civic engagement consider potential voters as a measure.
- Bob Harris (PG&E) document O.K.; add number of jobs that require at least a 2-year college education;
- Ellen Johnck (Bay Planning Coalition): add a measure that looks at transportation infrastructure, e.g., efficient movement of water borne cargo, maintaining shipping channels; throughput capacity of ports – combination of shipping, rail, and air;
- Allan Nichol (Napa Valley EDC) –fossil fuels is not good; add measure of region's contribution to degradation of the atmosphere
- Jake MacKenzie (Rohnert Park City Council): We're missing critical measures:
 1. Indicator that looks at whether people are working where they live.
 2. Population and carrying capacity
 3. Measure of design – change from current patterns to improve connectivity of neighborhoods;
 4. Measure of open space preserved;
 5. Measure water – use of recycle water; ground water levels/quality;
- Jean Roggenkamp (Bay Area Air Quality Management District): Pleased with the work and would recommend her Board sign off on the indicators. Rather than measuring energy use per capita, measure it per \$GRP.
- Cynthia Murray (Marin County Supervisor) would recommend that her Board of Supervisors sign off on these indicators. However, there are some missing indicators:
 1. children, i.e., child care availability by income level;
 2. housing, i.e., differentiate between rental and for sale housing, also look at senior housing;
 3. education should be 4th E – improving urban schools is critical;
 4. developed land look at open space, land recycling and infill;
 5. digital divide - # of people w/access to computers/Internet for education, job retraining, etc., particularly in the 46 neighborhoods.;
 6. health – uninsured medical rate;
 7. crime – murder vs. suicide rate;
 8. Single head of household, senior households, watersheds.
- Nancy Conover (Social Equity Caucus): need to begin to reduce number of indicators to 8-10; combine intersecting issues. Important crosscutting issues to measure include difference in income/assets between richest and poorest in the region; comparison of density of development and preservation of open space.

- Luis Arteaga (Latino Issues Forum): add measures of new development on greenfield vs. brownfield, parks/space available to urban youth, consumption and waste, households or children living in poverty (with Bay Area specific definition of “poverty”), crime, housing density. All by county.
- Susan Tejon: add measure of the use of renewal energy
- L. Best (representing David Militzer, Bay Area Partnership): indicators should provide subregional level information.
- Kelly Costa: Energy indicator should distinguish between renewable and non-renewable; add an education measure of the number of students exposed to, or schools offering, sustainability education.
- Paul Page (FTA) insufficient focus on the elderly, children, youth, disabled – refocus to ensure needs of the weakest among us are covered. Measure transportation affordability, e.g., highway vs. transit, car vs. bus,
- Allison Quaid (International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives): to address environmental justice, add a measure of the number of hazardous waste transfer stations in various neighborhoods.
- Candy Skarlatos (BofA): (to the people recommending changes) If you are recommending an indicator, tell us where we can get the info so we can get the process moving. Also include basic measures, e.g., population, diversity, age, endangered species, watershed maps.
- Andrew Michael (Bay Area Council): In terms of economic development, we need to measure job growth. If we go with the Genuine Progress Indicator, it needs to be clear in definition. Housing is the linchpin to a sustainable Bay Area.
- Eric Fonstein: add a measure of the percent of children in poverty
- Tim Frank: instead of measuring the ratio of compensation of new jobs to average livable wage in the Bay Area (which is unclear), measure the percent of new jobs above the minimum wage

Michele Perrault led discussion on **next steps**. She indicated that the Steering Committee and its staff would take the information received today and make the recommended indicators a better proposal. Clearly, there is strong need to reduce the number of indicators substantially. Our intent with indicators is to help us understand if we are winning or losing ground on sustainability and where to focus. The Bay Area Alliance cannot and will not be able “to do it all.”

She also suggested that any Bay Area Alliance members who had not yet indicated their agreement in principle with the *Compact* contact members of the Steering Committee if there is anything that those individuals can do to facilitate securing the agreement in principle.

John Wise suggested that we begin to plan ahead for a permanent function/group/institution to compile the statistics for these indicators on an annual basis. He noted that gathering this type and quantity of information is not free, and volunteers can’t do it. It is time to begin considering developing a funding proposal; for indicators.

Austin Hoggatt reminded everyone that there was some support at last meeting for studying sea level rise and climate change. The Union of Concerned Scientists is publishing a report on the subject. UCS would make a presentation to the Bay Area Alliance if we asked. The Steering Committee agreed to consider this for future meetings. Hoggatt also suggested that the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives could present on what cities can do.

Luis Arteaga reminded everyone that early on in the process of the Bay Area Alliance we had educational meetings. He encouraged the Bay Area Alliance to keep inter-sectoral education of the membership on the agenda as well as working towards consensus on indicators, issues, etc.

Public comments:

Barry Boulton of the Sustainable Communities Forum addressed the group and suggested that a consensus process such as that embraced by the Bay Area Alliance leads to constraints that may limit the potential of the group. He also suggested that if sustainability means anything, it means time -- a focus on the longer-term. He suggested that global warming has almost destroyed the evolutionary process. Sustainability is in issue of scale. The Bay Area Alliance has been overly anthropocentric in its efforts to date. It needs to recognize that natural communities must be sustained for their own sense. The Bay Area Alliance needs to acknowledge the interdependence of the human species with the others that inhabit the planet.

Linda Brown of the California Alliance for Jobs emphasized her organization's interest in jobs and referred to a letter delivered to the Bay Area Alliance. She is looking for a stable source of financing of transit improvements. She suggests further study, including cost benefit analyses, of congestion pricing and the use of the revenues generated for transit systems.

In commenting on Barry Boulton's remarks, Austin Hoggatt also emphasized the importance of the environment. In response to John Wise's comments on the costs of gathering information for the indicators, Hoggatt suggested that we make ample use of sampling techniques. Hoggatt also suggested that a group with such inherently diverse opinions as the Bay Area Alliance must have a means of constructively dealing with dissenting opinions while keeping people at the table for discussion.

Jane Rogers of the San Francisco Foundation commented on several items. With respect to dealing with dissenting opinions, she suggested that the Bay Area Alliance provide some sort of "escape valve mechanism." She suggested the process used by of the Committee on Water Policy be considered, i.e., develop a consensus document and then let signatories append comments on points they disagree with. It provides an escape valve for those who have a few points of disagreement. This adds to the richness of total group thinking by getting these points on the record as well. She also suggested that the Bay Area Alliance refer to President's Council on Sustainable Development definition of the three E's of sustainability – economic prosperity (not growth) with ecological integrity and social equity. We need to be fundamentally concerned about the environment, but at this time, in this region, we need to be equally concerned about all three or the coalition will fall apart.

Next Meeting of the Bay Area Alliance is February 3, 2000 at ABAG in Oakland.