

Via email: [info@abag.ca.gov](mailto:info@abag.ca.gov)

January 16, 2019

David Rabbitt, President  
Members of the Executive Board  
Association of Bay Area Governments  
375 Beale St. Ste. 700  
San Francisco, CA 94105

*Re: The Metropolitan Transportation Commission's CASA Compact*

Dear Mr. Rabbitt and Members:

On behalf of the City of Palo Alto, I write to respectfully ask that you not vote to authorize the President to sign the CASA Compact at your Executive Board meeting on January 17. Palo Alto agrees that preserving existing affordable housing and increasing housing production in the Bay Area are vital regional goals. In fact, our City recently revised our zoning code to allow for new minimum density standards for multi-family housing, among several other recent housing-supportive policy changes. This change to our local ordinance occurred after a deliberate public process and is an example of one City acting in a manner that best meets the needs of its residents. It is also the type of local decision-making we believe is lacking in the CASA Compact.

Local land use ordinances and citywide housing planning are subject to a transparent, public process. It would be problematic for ABAG, as an organization representing local governments, to advocate the sweeping legislative proposals embodied in the CASA Compact without clear and robust engagement opportunities for Bay Area communities. Members of our community can attend public meetings and submit written thoughts on how they would like to see the City proceed. Unfortunately, adhering to a CASA Compact, created without our City's involvement, would circumvent this public, community process. Additionally, the Compact does not appear to take into consideration the local land use laws of each Bay Area City, the plans each City has in place to meet its housing needs in the near future, or the housing needs of the residents in each city.

We are also concerned with the funding mechanism of diverting property tax growth. The City of Palo Alto uses this funding in part for our core services; there is no mention in the Compact about the financial consequences for cities. Indeed, there is little mention of any of the funding specifics.

P.O. Box 10250  
Palo Alto, CA 94303  
650.329.2477  
650.328.3631 fax

As such, we ask that you postpone approval of the CASA Compact pending more inclusive engagement with the very cities the Compact will affect.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Eric Filseth".

Eric Filseth  
Mayor, Palo Alto

Cc: Palo Alto City Council  
Scott Haggerty, Chair, ABAG Legislative Committee  
Andi Jordan, Santa Clara Cities Association Executive Director

