

# Connect Monterey Bay 2050 Frequently Asked Questions

November 2024

## Who is AMBAG?

The Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Monterey Bay region. As the MPO, AMBAG is required to prepare certain documents, such as the Metropolitan Transportation Plan/ Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS), to ensure the region is eligible for transportation funding.

To prepare the MTP/SCS, AMBAG works with the Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (San Benito County Council of Governments, the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission and the Transportation Agency for Monterey County), transit providers (San Benito County Local Transit Authority, Monterey-Salinas Transit, and Santa Cruz METRO), the Monterey Bay Air Resources District (MBARD), local, state and federal governments, and other organizations.

## What is Connect Monterey Bay 2050?

Connect Monterey Bay 2050, the latest MTP/SCS, is the long range transportation plan for the Monterey Bay region. Updated every four years, the MTP/SCS identifies regional transportation needs, investment priorities to meet those needs, and local, regional, state and federal transportation funding the Monterey Bay region expects to receive for these investments.

## When are things happening?

Connect Monterey Bay 2050 is scheduled for AMBAG Board approval in June 2026.

### *Timeline*

Develop Vision and Goals.....	Fall 2023
Select Performance Measures.....	Spring 2024
Update Project List.....	Summer – Fall 2024
Generate Revenue Projections.....	Summer – Fall 2024
Create Scenarios.....	Fall 2024 – Spring 2025
Prepare Draft Plan.....	Spring 2025 – Fall 2025
Board Approve Final Plan.....	Spring 2026

## How can I get involved?

AMBAG encourages public input during the development of the MTP/SCS to better plan for the transportation needs (highways, roads, public transit, bicycle, pedestrian, freight, airport, etc.) of the Monterey Bay region over the next 25 years. The feedback received will be used to prioritize transportation projects in the region, as well as shape the land use and transportation investment scenarios analyzed to meet state required greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions goals over the MTP/SCS' planning horizon.

### *Public Meetings and Survey*

In Spring 2025, AMBAG will be hosting in person and virtual MTP/SCS public meetings in the Monterey Bay region. A survey will also be released for your input on transportation, land use, housing, and GHG reduction strategies to be included in the MTP/SCS.

For the latest information, visit the project webpage at [www.ambag.org/plans/2050-metropolitan-transportation-plan-sustainable-communities-strategy](http://www.ambag.org/plans/2050-metropolitan-transportation-plan-sustainable-communities-strategy) , which can also be reached using the QR code below. You can also sign up to receive updates at [info@ambag.org](mailto:info@ambag.org) .



### *Project Manager*

For questions or comments on the MTP/SCS, contact Heather Adamson, Director of Planning, at (831) 264-5086 or [hadamson@ambag.org](mailto:hadamson@ambag.org) .

### **Why is Connect Monterey Bay 2050 being prepared?**

The federal government requires that MPOs, such as AMBAG, develop long range transportation plans which cover a twenty-year horizon, and are updated every four years to reflect current population, employment, and travel projections as well as changes in local plans and regional transportation priorities. Preparation of the MTP/SCS also ensures eligibility for various transportation funding programs. Under federal law, among other requirements, AMBAG must demonstrate that the MTP/SCS is financially constrained and reflects reasonably anticipated transportation funding over the coming decades.

Additionally, with the passage of Senate Bill 375 by the California Legislature, AMBAG must consider land use patterns to meet GHG reduction targets set by the California Air Resources Board. Transportation planning is to be coordinated with land use planning to ensure that housing, jobs, and services are developed and located in such a way as to help reduce the amount of travel we do day-to-day in our cars and trucks. Finally, this is also an opportunity to think about how we want the Monterey Bay region to grow and evolve over the next several years in a way that meets our needs and matches our values. Planning in advance of growth can result in better neighborhoods, more housing and transportation choices, and a higher quality of life for residents.

Ultimately, the MTP/SCS allocates anticipated federal, state, regional, and local revenue for transportation projects and programs locally. Simply put: no MTP/SCS, no money.

## **Why should I get involved?**

Public participation is essential to the success of Connect Monterey Bay 2050 and we hope you will get involved. We are seeking the input of our residents and stakeholders to create a plan that meets the goals and reflects the values of the Monterey Bay region. AMBAG staff collects, analyzes, and summarizes all comments and responses received throughout the planning process.

## **What if I need information in other languages or formats?**

AMBAG wants all interested community members to be able to participate in the planning process. If requested, this document will be made available in alternate languages per Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as well as, appropriate alternative formats for persons with a disability, as required by Section 202 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 USC Sec. 12132), and the federal rules and regulations adopted in implementation thereof.

For these requests, contact AMBAG at (831) 883-3750 or [info@ambag.org](mailto:info@ambag.org) .

## **How do the counties and the cities participate in this effort?**

The counties and the cities are the land use authorities in their jurisdictions. They develop General Plans that describes how they will allocate land use and what requirements they will set for the development of housing and industry, how farmland and open spaces will be managed, and where the jurisdictional boundaries will be.

The General Plans developed by the local agencies are the foundation for the land use portion of the land use/transportation decision making process. The local agency established land uses have been included in the MTP/SCS as the land use planning assumptions.

The MTP/SCS also includes the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) allocations. RHNA is a program in which Council of Governments and the local agencies establish how the state mandated housing requirements will be shared by the local agencies. The RHNA identifies areas to house the region's population growth for at least the next twenty-five years. This includes households at all income levels.

## **What does it mean to coordinate land use and transportation plans?**

Public agencies regularly create and update land use and transportation plans, but these are not always done together or in coordination. AMBAG's MTP/SCS will consider both land use and transportation together, recognizing that land use affects how and where people live, work and travel. If we know what land use changes are likely to occur, we can better plan our transportation systems to meet those needs. Likewise, land uses may change based on how the transportation system is working.

## **What is the connection between planning and GHGs?**

Transportation is the largest single source of GHGs in California. Changing transportation patterns by reducing how much people need to drive can reduce emissions and improve air quality. Strategies that an MTP/SCS can consider to reduce GHG emissions include, but are not limited to:

- Encouraging land uses (jobs, stores, schools, and homes) to be located closer together in communities so people can drive less to meet their day-to-day needs.
- Increasing/developing/improving public transit to lessen dependence on individual cars and trucks.
- Clustering homes, jobs and other activities near public transit, so people have more transportation choices.
- Planning land uses and transportation in coordination, so we can manage congestion and reduce emissions from inefficiencies.

## **How can a coordinated transportation and land-use plan reduce GHG emissions?**

The MTP/SCS can help meet reduction goals by working with local cities, counties, and public agencies to plan for more people living near their jobs and other services. Also, by creating better access to public transit and making biking and walking easier and safer, residents won't have to drive as much. Greater efficiency in how people travel can mean less driving which translates into fewer GHG emissions and other health based pollutant emissions from tailpipes into the air.

## **Why would local governments want to participate in regional planning?**

Some issues like congestion or air quality often require the cooperation of several communities to address. Regional planning efforts can bring a variety of benefits to our neighborhoods. We can improve the efficiency and quality of life of our communities by working together to provide cleaner air, improved public health, safer streets, and homes closer to transportation, jobs, and services. There are also California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) incentives for development at the local level which conforms to the MTP/SCS.