PLANNING IN ITS POLITICAL CONTEXT:
Developing Organizational Strategies
for the
Planning Agency
by
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ABSTRACT

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Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning on August 9, 1974, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of City Planning.

Planners are trained to provide rational technical analysis of public policy issues to guide governmental action. However, planners have often been faced with the dilemma of having their technical analyses ignored by political decision-makers. It is proposed here that to resolve this dilemma, planners must seek to identify a new role for themselves which recognizes that (1) despite the seeming irrationality of political decision-making which planners perceive, the processes of public policy development and implementation possess elements of a 'political rationality,' and (2) planners should seek to shape their activities and the roles they play to complement this ongoing political decision-making process, rather than replace it with their 'technically rational' master planning process.

This research attempts to illustrate what type of role planners should seek to play and how that role might be implemented. First, based on a review of the literature on political decision-making and on planning experience, a role concept for the planner is proposed which envisions the planner as a type of overseer of the political decision process. In this role, the planner concentrates (1) on linking his or her technical knowledge to specific public decisions as they emerge and (2) on ensuring that all interest groups which have a stake in a particular decision can have their interests expressed and considered in that decision.

The research then uses this role concept as a theoretical basis for resolving a major question: How can a city or region develop a continuing planning capability to carry out this role? The research focuses on the analysis of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission in the San Francisco Bay Area. The agency's political context is analyzed and its current organizational structure and planning activities are reviewed. Based on this analysis, suggestions are made for changes in the agency's organizational structure and set of planning activities to provide improved technical guidance for the ongoing political decision processes in the region. Finally, the applicability of this approach to developing organizational strategies for planning agencies in other metropolitan areas, other planning disciplines and in local governments is briefly reviewed.

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Debbie Sylvain, Susan Lorch, Pat Otis and Carol Walb sat through the hot summer, typing drafts and this final thesis, correcting 'chairman' to read 'chairperson,' and ensuring that this document came into existence. I hope that my anxiety was not too oppressive for them.

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DISCLAIMER

The opinions and conclusions expressed or implied in this thesis are those of the author. They are not necessarily those of the sponsoring agency nor of any of the reviewers or other contributors.
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Planners are trained to provide rational, technical analysis of public policy issues to guide governmental action. Whether the issue is in land use, health, transportation or any of a number of other fields, the planner attempts to apply a range of analytic tools to help political decision makers consider the full set of implications of their decisions. Often, those decisions involve major change in governmental funding policies, organizational structures or investment priorities. But they also include smaller, more frequent decisions on zoning variances and particular construction projects.

As urban areas have grown, and the problems which those areas face have become more complex, the planner increasingly has been brought into urban and metropolitan institutions. To help solve the problems of these areas, the planner has sought to apply a 'rational' process to understanding the problems and identifying solutions for them. First, attempts were made to identify the goals and objectives of the area in the abstract. Then, alternative master plans for land use, transportation and other components of the area were developed. Finally, these alternatives were evaluated according to a number of technical criteria which sought to measure how well the various plans met goals and objectives. The findings of these studies were then presented to decision-makers as a basis for selecting one of the alternatives as the official master plan for the region.

Planners were soon to find, however, that despite their warm official welcome into the governmental decision process, politics just didn't seem to work in the same technical and rational ways that planners worked. In many cases, the people who engaged in political decisions were different
in attitude, in lifestyle and in education from the planner and decisions often ignored the technical analyses of the planners. Studies were left on the shelf (some planners resorted to larger-than-normal size pages to ensure that reports could not be filed away forever) and, even worse, were sometimes used only as justification for decisions primarily based on less technical rationales.

The planners, who had invested considerable effort and much of their lives in their work, were faced with a serious dilemma. The means which they had developed to analyze public problems were providing information which was not being used to guide decisions. How were the planners to reshape their activities and the roles they played to provide more relevant and timely information to political decision-makers?

Faced with this dilemma, some planners expressed disdain for politicians and their activities. For example, an assistant editor of Planning magazine (an American Society of Planning Officials publication) commented in a review of a recent book by Anthony Downs: "Our political leaders should read it and take up his (Downs's) cause. That his proposal would make sense even to an idiot makes it even more doubtful that Downs's plan will be understood or implemented by our elected officials." Others, taking less extreme positions, argued that planners must seek increased access to decision-makers (i.e., as policy advisors to chief executives and city councils) to ensure that their analyses were heeded. Still another approach to resolving the dilemma suggested that technical changes were necessary: planners would have to develop more sophisticated analysis tools and broaden their concerns to include social and economic as well as physical aspects of the urban environment. Many similar approaches have been proposed.
and, to a certain extent, they all make important contributions to identifying problems with current planning practice.

Planners must recognize, however, that these approaches to resolving the planner's dilemma have serious shortcomings. First, planners' attempts to develop improved technical tools will always be limited by the complexity of the problems with which they are dealing and the limits on human capabilities to comprehend that complexity. While attempts to develop sophisticated, computer-based technical analysis tools may improve the planner's understanding of particular urban or metropolitan problems, this understanding will always be limited by uncertainties about the future and by the need to consider a great number of factors which shape the urban environment. Second, planners are human beings, who have not been trained or specially selected for their special ability to be totally objective in approaching issues, but rather have been socialized and trained to believe in a particular set of values. Often, these values (interest in promoting economic efficiency is probably the prevalent type), are reflected in the particular technical tools and evaluation criteria which planners apply to the analysis of problems. However, these values may not be shared by all those who make decisions. As a result, planners' attempts to definitively analyze and resolve societal problems will not reflect 'objectivity', but rather the personal value biases of the planners themselves.

It is proposed here that planners must seek to identify a new role for themselves which recognizes these limitations. In seeking to develop this role, this research is based on two premises:

(1) That despite the seeming irrationality of political decision-making which planners perceive, the processes of
public policy development and implementation possess elements of a political rationality; through these processes, important conflicts between the diverse values of different groups are resolved, and actions are taken based on that conflict resolution; and

(2) That planners should seek to shape their activities and the roles they play to complement the ongoing political decision-making process, rather than replace it with their technically 'rational' master planning process; thus the planners can primarily play a role in helping the political process consider issues which it otherwise might overlook as it makes decisions which will shape the future of a city or region.

This line of reasoning is not new to analyses of the planner's dilemma. Meyerson and Banfield (1955), Altschuler (1965) and Rabinovitz (1969) have all devoted major treatises to the topic. But this research proposes to take a considerably more pragmatic approach to the issues. While drawing on these existing analyses (which have been primarily based on descriptive political science analysis), the focus here will be on the analysis of a particular planning agency (the Metropolitan Transportation Commission in the San Francisco Bay Area). The research will analyze this agency's political context and its current organizational structure and planning activities. Based on this analysis, suggestions will be made for changes in the agency's organizational structure and set of planning activities to provide improved technical guidance for the ongoing political decision processes in the region.
Approach

In Chapter II, a review of the literature of existing models of political decision-making and of political analysis of the planning process is undertaken. A conceptual framework for the processes of public policy development and implementation is developed, drawing common threads from various portions of the political science literature. Current planning role concepts are then critiqued through review of planning experience. Finally this critique and the conceptual framework for public policy development and implementation are linked in the development of a role concept for the planner which would increase the effectiveness of the planner in providing technical guidance to political decision-making processes. This concept serves as the theoretical basis for the remainder of the analysis.

Chapter III then develops an understanding of the political dynamics of the San Francisco Bay Area. Starting with a brief review of the special nature of metropolitan (as opposed to urban) political processes, this chapter attempts to build sequentially a firm, if limited, understanding of the types of actors, the types of issues and the general political dynamics to be found in the Bay Area. An attempt is made to simulate the limits of information which the director of a metropolitan planning agency (and his or her staff) would face in developing such an understanding. Thus a series of regional and sub-regional policy issues and decisions which have occurred in the region over the past 15 years will be reviewed in the order they occurred. Information will be drawn from meetings with several of the political and technical actors, transcripts of public hearings, recent agency documents (both organizational and technical), newspaper coverage of major issues and a number of other published political analyses of the Bay Area.
Drawing upon the initial theoretical discussion of a role concept for the planner, the analysis of the Bay Area political context and the California legislative mandate for the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), Chapter IV assesses the role which an agency like MTC can play and the planning activities which MTC might carry out to support that role.

Chapter V then attempts to identify criteria by which the effectiveness of MTC's current organizational structure and activities in filling its role can be assessed. The chapter undertakes to analyze MTC's current organizational strategy (i.e., its set of planning activities, the relationship of those activities to political decision-making and its priorities among those activities). Shortcomings in the effectiveness of this strategy for fulfilling the role of the agency of providing technical guidance for governmental action are identified and an alternative formulation is suggested and evaluated.

Finally, Chapter VI draws conclusions from this analysis on (a) the value of political analysis of this sort in assessing organizational strategies for MTC and (b) the potential applicability of this type of analysis to other planning disciplines and in urban as well as metropolitan planning.
CHAPTER I

FOOTNOTES


A. Politics and Policy Development

Norton Long has described the local community as an "ecology of games." He argues that individual actors, seeking to obtain their objectives within their own 'games' (e.g., a house in a good neighborhood, political power, increased profits), interact with other actors whose objectives are in part or fully met by joint action. As a result, decisions are regularly made and coordination regularly takes place in U.S. cities and metropolitan areas; generally controlled by the market mechanisms of the regional economy and the logic of personal and group interactions. Long notes, as an example, that the massive task of feeding the New York Metropolitan Area is accomplished with little, if any, overall planning. Through a series of acts of small scale coordination, ends are achieved which are "collectively functional, if unplanned."¹

Graham Allison has theorized that this structure of games is reflected in the competition within governmental politics. Governmental action results, he argues, as "each player pulls and hauls with the power at his discretion for outcomes that will advance his conception of national, organizational, group, and personal interests."² Through political processes of conflict resolution, actions are chosen which reflect, in some part, these diverse interests.

Each city or metropolitan area has its own "ecology of games." Different actors will take part in the games, and the distribution of power
will vary from place to place. While political and social scientists have expended major efforts trying to identify one paradigm which describes the political decision-making process in all urban and metropolitan areas, the diversity of conclusions drawn from these efforts illustrates that there are no hard and fast rules to be uniformly applied in the analysis of political decision-making.

In place of such rules, this effort will identify a series of common threads of these various political and social science viewpoints. Similarities between different decision-making settings will be developed into a conceptual framework for understanding the process of public policy development and implementation. This framework is developed as a tool for planners to apply in understanding the political context in which they are operating. It is intended to aid the identification of the particular actors and decision dynamics by which issues are resolved in a particular setting. In addition, it will help the planner identify shortcomings in the way issues are resolved, and particular activities which the planner could perform to complement the political decision-making process.

Ultimately, this theoretical framework will be limited in its usefulness. Building an understanding of a particular political context will also require practical experience with decision-making in that context. The framework is developed, therefore, as a starting point from which to build a fuller understanding.

As public policy is developed and implemented, three distinct elements of the policy development process can be identified. During issue emergence, critical problems spur interest groups and actors to seek public action to resolve particular issues (e.g., rapid growth, housing
shortages, traffic congestion). A second element is policy initiation, where the actors interested in a particular issue undertake to develop a governmental response within the rules and structure of the political system in the city or region. Through processes of conflict resolution which Meyerson and Banfield (among others) have identified and categorized (e.g., cooperation, bargaining, accomodation, dictation), a policy action is decided upon and governmental resources are committed to that action (e.g., a zoning plan, housing construction programs, establishment of a transit agency). A third element is implementation, where policies are carried out by designated governmental and private actors. During this process, as Pressman and Wildavsky have suggested, the policy continues to be shaped by the actors who must help implement it (e.g., employers who must hire and train minority employees for government subsidized jobs). Implementation is also shaped by the forces of delay and technical difficulty.

As these three activities occur, policy issues will rarely be fully resolved. Rather, new issues might emerge (e.g., the inadequacy of public relocation compensation policy for urban renewal and highways or the lack of coordination between two transportation agencies which have been established to resolve different, but similar, issues) or the policy, as implemented, might be inadequate to resolve the initial problems, thereby necessitating reconsideration of governmental action.

Policy development, far from being a careful, sequential consideration of issues as they arise, often proceeds simultaneously on many different issues. This necessitates first, that individual actors choose specific issues on which to concentrate their interest, time and resources and second, that these actors, operating together within their particular
political systems, must select among the great number of issues which arise at any one time.

Political and social scientists, in attempting to explain how this process of issue selection and action occurs, have identified two major factors: the systemic influences on the city or region and the distribution of power among actors within that region. Systemic, or environmental, influences, as generally described by Easton\(^5\) and elaborated by Lineberry and Sharkansky,\(^6\) can include macro-economic trends, which give rise to particular housing or land use issues, national and regional demographic trends, which help shape the distribution of power and the nature of the political system and national governmental policies, which affect the resources local governments have to implement actions and may regulate how local governments act. Systemic influences are the givens for local policy makers, as they rarely are controllable at the local level. They may often be the key determinants of the boundaries of public action.

Within the constraints laid down by the broader system, then, the distribution of power (i.e., of resources useful in influencing public action\(^7\)) further shapes which issues are placed on the agenda for public action, what types of dynamics rule the decision process (e.g., cooperation or contention between equals, dictation where one actor holds significantly more resources), which policies are selected and how those policies are implemented (i.e., by whom and with what resources). Elitist\(^8\) and pluralist\(^9\) paradigms have been developed for power distributions and political dynamics in U.S. urban areas. Rabinovitz\(^10\) and Rossil\(^11\) have suggested that no one paradigm holds in all political systems and that rather, cities can be placed along a continuum with different numbers of key actors, different political styles and different
diversities of interests. Given this conception, one can identify a typology of decision-making processes similar to that developed by Rabinovitz, with cities and regions ranging from cohesive political decision-making among a homogeneous population, to competitive political decision-making among equal but different major interest groups and to fragmented political decision-making among numerous smaller interest groups.

While there are clear differences in the political dynamics which occur in each of these systems, one factor would seem to remain constant. In each case, whether there are a large or small number of actors involved in decisions, each actor will have his or her own set of interests and the political decision-making process will be asked to resolve conflicts between these interests and choose public actions. In a cohesive system, these conflicts may be minor so that well-coordinated and consistent actions may be possible. In more fragmented systems, conflicts may erupt into major controversies resulting in actions which may be sporadic and inconsistent. Nonetheless, in each case, actors must assess issues which have emerged, identify their interests in those issues and choose strategies to have those interests considered as public actions are decided upon.

It is proposed here that the decisions made and the strategies followed by particular actors are based on a form of 'political rationality'. 'Rationality', in this context, is the careful consideration of one's interests and of alternative means of serving those interests through public action. The 'rational actor' has diverse goals and objectives (interests), identifies alternative means of meeting those goals and objectives, evaluates the ability of each alternative to meet each of these goals and objectives and chooses one alternative according to how important each of these goals and
objectives is to the actor. This, in essence, is a process very similar to that which planners have attempted to apply to the technical analysis of alternative master plans. 'Political rationality', however, will often reflect personal considerations of increased power and status as well as technical considerations of the broader social, environmental and economic effects of different actions.

In actual decisions, an actor's behavior may not appear to be as explicitly rational as this paradigm would suggest. As a result, actors, in entering the political process and pursuing the satisfaction of their interests, may often follow patterns of behavior which from a planner's perspective seem irrational (e.g., support of a less stringent zoning plan than they originally supported). However, they actually may be seeking, in their own rational way, to achieve certain interests tied to other particular courses of action (e.g., future support on a transportation policy of greater interest to an actor) or tied to personal goals of an actor (e.g., hopes of achieving reelection endorsement from the chief opponent of the zoning plan).

This process of 'political rationality' will clearly be subject to many of the same human limitations and biases which planners face in attempting to rationally consider an issue. Nonetheless, insofar as such behavior can be explicitly analyzed, a conceptual paradigm of this limited form of 'political rationality' is described below:

(1) **Goals and Objectives (interests)** - Each actor is assumed to have a set of implicit and/or explicit interests. Implicit interests are those which are rarely publicly stated, but which often guide an actor's decisions. These may include interests in increasing one's personal prestige (i.e., through achieving election to a higher office or by gaining
increased personal power) or one's personal wealth (by accepting bribes or by supporting an interest of another actor in return for a later reward of appointment to a high paying job). Intimately tied to an actor's implicit interests are his or her explicit interests. These are normally declared in public statements and include support of programs to aid the poor, to provide adequate health care or to preserve a neighborhood threatened by a highway.

In cases such as that of the official political actor, interests of the actor in reelection may at first be implicit but may become more explicit as elections come near. In addition, implicit interests such as increasing one's own power and efficacy, may be critical to satisfying the explicit interest of increasing the overall power and efficacy of one's constituency.

To begin to understand the key decision criteria by which actors choose to support an action, one must discern both the implicit and explicit interests of that actor. In practice, this may only be possible (a) after an actor has had a period of time in which to match his or her interests to particular actions and thereby identify key interests and (b) after many years of observation of that actor's interests and behavior.

(2) A Range of Alternatives - Ideally, the individual actor moves from his or her goals to the consideration of a full range of alternatives which seek to attain those goals. As Lindblom has carefully argued, there are often constraints on the number and range of alternatives to be considered at any one point, in part due to an actor's inability to treat any decision point as an entirely new situation and in part due to human constraints on time and knowledge.

Further, one might argue that the number of alternatives initially considered is constrained by one or two of the actor's important goals at that
time. For example, groups interested in improving the mental health of the poor and applying psychiatric care to the treatment of many different groups may only consider means of providing psychiatric services to the poor. The mental health of the poor, however, may depend much more heavily on improvement of their economic and social living conditions than on individual psychiatric care, thereby suggesting a much broader range of alternatives.

One last constraint on the range of alternatives considered is "non-decision" (i.e., explicit 'decisions' by actors to not consider certain alternatives in deference to the power of others who oppose those alternatives as suggested by Bachrach and Baratz16). However, as Wolfinger17 points out it may often be difficult to distinguish conscious non-decisions from the other limitations on alternatives described above.

(3) Evaluation of Alternatives - Each actor, under this model, is assumed to evaluate the alternatives under consideration based on three basic types of criteria: the general viability of the proposal, its desirability from the perspective of the actor's implicit goals and its desirability from the point of view of explicit goals. Viability is a measure of the chances of an alternatives' implementation. Criteria range from the technical feasibility and resources available to the personal power resources available and necessary for implementation. Implicit desirability builds on these criteria to assess how following a particular alternative will affect the balance of power and, in particular, the implicit personal interests of the actor. Explicit desirability is concerned primarily with the substantive changes achieved (e.g., implementation of a health insurance program) and their positive and negative impacts. The degree to which any of these is traded off against the others can only be assessed in the context of parti-
cular actors and decisions (and may be impossible even then).

(4) Choice - The actor's choice of which alternatives to pursue and finally agree upon can only be viewed in the context of the broader decision arena. A particular actor's decision (to vote in a particular way, to lobby for an action, to make a particular proposal) will to some extent be based on the importance of his or her goals and the degree to which they are achieved by the various alternatives. But the choice of an alternative which does not achieve some of the actor's implicit or explicit ends as effectively as other possibilities may result from either deference to elite power which opposes the more effective action (as Bachrach and Baratz suggest) or deference to the interests of the broader electorate (as Dahl suggests).

The choice of an actor's behavior may be based as much on the relative gains and losses of power for the various actors (i.e., implicit goals) as on the substantive policy changes to be enacted. In one respect, this process may be an effective means of reaching consensus on explicit goals as well. Only when political actors are forced to decide between actual proposals with different potential for achieving both implicit and explicit goals can the real importance of either type of goal to the actor be tested. Ultimately, the public action chosen will represent, to some extent, consensus on the set of goals met by the action.

This framework for individual action within the governmental decision process suggests several key aspects of the resolution of conflicts between diverse interests and how this conflict resolution might shape public policy actions. First, goal formulation and policy development take place in many different areas (e.g., health, transportation, etc.) at the same time, with different actors participating and differing sets of goals guiding public policy.
actions. For example, Levin and Abend point out the considerable conflicts between federal urban development goals suggested by urban renewal programs to revitalize the central city and highway-oriented transportation programs or federally insured home-ownership programs which encouraged suburbanization.\textsuperscript{21}

A second observation would suggest that the goals which emerge in any one substantive area are likely to vary over time as a result of variations in the number of other issues drawing the attention of political decision-makers and temporal shifts in distributions of power. Thus groups interested in transit service improvement rather than highway construction, when augmented by environmentalists and the energy crisis, can gain at least temporary advantage in developing public policy.

Third, the model would suggest that development of goals is most effectively accomplished when ends are tied to particular means. Thus the individual actor is likely to adhere to many general goals until such time that actual choices between satisfying explicit and/or implicit goals need to be made. Only at that time is the actor asked to commit limited resources of power and influence to achieve particular goals.

Fourth, actions resulting from this policy development process may be considered in a less than comprehensive manner. One cannot deny that self-serving (or implicit) goals may dominate the decision process and exclude other factors. Where this takes the form of homeowners who do not want to be relocated for a highway or immigrant groups seeking increased political power, one can argue that a self-serving perspective should be considered in a decision process. Where, however, this involves potential bribery of actors to influence their decisions, actions may benefit only a few people at great cost to other groups. A second limitation on the
comprehensiveness of public decisions may result from non-consideration of particular aspects of an issue. This may occur when actors have limited time or knowledge with which to consider decisions or when more powerful actors choose to ignore the interests of less powerful groups. A final limitation on comprehensiveness suggested by this model is that some actors would have very short term interests (e.g., in reelection) which might result in long term impacts of public actions going unnoticed in decisions. For example, decisions in urban areas based on stabilizing the property tax rate in the short run may not seriously consider the long run consequences of constrained financing on the deterioration of public services.

One final observation on the goal formulation and policy development process is that it might lead to relatively few major actions. At times, actors will avoid making decisions where the feelings of their constituents or the broader electorate about an issue are not well known. More often, major actions may be hindered by powerful actors who consciously (or passively22) keep certain issues from being fully discussed and acted upon.

This model of individual and group actors seeking to satisfy interests within their own 'games' through participation in a broader public policy development and implementation game has been briefly and generally described. As such, it is difficult to subject the conceptual framework to a rigorous empirical test. In place of such testing, several observations on the nature of public goal development and the resultant public actions have been drawn from the model. In the following section, planner's experience with attempting to explicitly structure these goal selection and action processes will be reviewed as a means of identifying (a) if in fact these
general observations on the political process appear to be valid and (b) the extent to which planner's activities are well suited to public policy development and implementation processes.
B. Planning in its Political Context

Alan Altschuler has typified the comprehensive planner as having three functions: "(1) to create a master plan to guide the deliberations of specialist planners, (2) to evaluate the proposals of specialist planners in the light of the master plan, and (3) to coordinate the planning of specialist agencies so as to ensure that their proposals reinforce each other to further the public interest." He further suggests that each of these functions requires that the planners "(a) understand the overall public interest, at least in connection with the subject matter of their plans, and (b) that they possess causal knowledge which enables them to gauge the approximate net effect of proposed actions on the public interest." Altschuler might also have added, as Francine Rabinovitz has done, that "the planner is traditionally envisioned as an expert capable of discovering the answers to factual questions by detailed analysis in a comprehensive framework. He is also expected to outline a policy that has been rationally selected on the basis of his analysis . . . The planner wishes his programs to be implemented, but he does not regard himself as the promoter of selected paths of development." The planner, in this light, is a technician, carrying out explicitly rational evaluations of alternatives and presenting these alternatives to the decision-maker. Most importantly, the planner's technical analysis is to be objective, thereby raising it above everyday political considerations and providing an unbiased basis for choosing governmental actions.

Although this traditional approach to planning has probably never been fully implemented and alternatives to it have been proposed and tried in recent years, much planning practice, education and research is still based
on its inherent basic assumptions. Training for planners has sought to teach planners to approach problems in a comprehensive manner. Planning education includes smatterings of sociology, economics, architecture, engineering, political science and many other disciplines. Research in the field has sought to identify the causal links between public actions and the many interrelated effects of these actions on ecological resources, the economy and the social environment. Particular emphasis has been given to understanding the long term as well as the short term impacts of these actions. Above all, this comprehensive approach has been technical in nature. Attempts to develop mathematical models and quantifiable criteria for master planning have been extensive. Most recently, computer technology has been applied in an effort to expand the number and complexity of the issues with which planners could deal.

However, as the introductory chapter suggested, planners, in attempting to apply this knowledge, were faced with a dilemma. Political decisions on public actions tended to neglect the analyses performed by planners. As this dilemma has become all the more apparent, several major studies of planning and the political decision process have been undertaken. From these analyses, several key problems with the traditional planning approach to providing technical information to guide the political process have emerged.

First, it has become apparent that the planner is not always best qualified to judge the public's interests and goals. The planner is trained to view the 'public interest' as one set of unified goals which could be grasped and applied to master planning. Altschuler points out, however, that community consensus can often not be reached on abstract goals, hindering
efforts to develop overall master plans which could effectively be implemented. As particular portions of a plan are tested (e.g., when a particular development proposal is made) diverse community goals surface for the first time and conflicts are resolved at that point by the political decision-making process. As issues shift and community interests vary, different decisions reflect different goal consensus, thereby rendering overall views of community goals (i.e., the public interest) ineffectual in guiding community development.\(^{26}\) Often decisions seem to be based on implicit rather than explicit goals (e.g., the maintenance of the political machine). Such decisions, it appears to planners, both hinder efforts to guide overall development of a city and, from a reformist's perspective, benefit only a selected few at the sacrifice of the great majority of citizens. Nonetheless, as Meyerson and Banfield point out,\(^{27}\) the political machinations often reflect the statement of a broader public interest (e.g., through providing jobs for many people) but in a far less poetic and overall fashion than planners might adopt. Thus planners, whose rational analysis depended in large part upon their ability to understand a unified, well stated public interest, find actual expressions of the public's interests to be numerous, inconsistent and often determined by a political process which from their technical perspective is neither rational nor objective.

A second problem emerges with numerous problems with the planner's claim to bring technical expertise to the decision-making process. In most cases, the planner's 'expertise' at considering the interrelationship of urban development components is just not complete. Meyerson and Banfield suggest that adequate planning information is both difficult and costly to develop.\(^{28}\) Altschuler adds that in many cases the causal knowledge necessary
to develop the information does not exist.\textsuperscript{29} Planning information is of necessity based on very uncertain future conditions, often making the value of the information questionable. Further, Meyerson and Banfield suggest that the information which is most needed to guide decision-making, the knowledge of the different political actors and their interests, is something that planners hesitate to seek out and are often not privy to at all.\textsuperscript{30}

A third problem is that planners' objectivity and expertise often either are used or challenged by the political process. Both Rabinovitz and Altschuler cite the use of technical rationales to cover unpopular political decisions (rather than technical influence upon the political decision).\textsuperscript{31} Further, as planners link themselves to particular actors (e.g., the Housing Authority in Meyerson and Banfield, the business interests in Rabinovitz\textsuperscript{32}) in order to have their analyses considered, their analysis is challenged as biased by other actors. In addition, the planners themselves often hold certain biases which are not shared by the political decision-makers. Lastly, planners are challenged by other technocrats (e.g., highway engineers) who use simplified goals and planning techniques and thereby present an impression of certainty to political actors which increases political confidence in the proposals these technocrats present. Planners, by their nature, are interested in comprehensive analysis, are often uncertain in conviction and therefore, hesitate to make recommendations to the political actor.

These difficulties with traditional planning practice lead to the 'planner's dilemma': decisions being made with little or no reference to planning information. Levin and Abend cite the number of key regional transportation decisions which were made during the course of major regional transportation planning studies but with little reference to those studies.\textsuperscript{33}
Studies of this type (i.e., to develop master plans) often take long periods of time and the desire for 'rational objectivity' often leads them to be separated from the day-to-day issues facing a region. As the previous discussion of politics and policy development suggests, however, issues and the need for decisions emerge continuously as a result of systemic influences and the distribution of power. Also, decisions have at times been made during planning to avoid the need to have them considered as part of a master plan. Thus in large-scale comprehensive planning one finds a perplexing paradox: attempts to seek greater technical rationality and objectivity draw planning activities further away from the continuing actions of government which shape public policy and which the planner most directly seeks to influence.

As the particular capabilities which are claimed by the planner are challenged, the planner's role in developing comprehensive master plans to guide governmental action is muted. Nonetheless, it is apparent that the political decision-making process can be limited in its comprehensiveness and its ability to resolve complex issues which have technical aspects (e.g., developing a rail transit system or a housing construction program).

The planner, despite limitations on his or her capabilities, can complement this limited political decision process in two ways. First, the planner can provide some knowledge of the long term and comprehensive effects of a proposed public action. Second, the planner can provide a 'way of thinking' about public issues which recognizes the interrelationships between different public actions and makes those relationships clear to those making decisions. The question which remains is: how must the planner restructure his or her role to provide this knowledge and way of thinking to political decision makers in a form which will be used to guide public actions?
C. Seeking a Role for the Planner

A political decision-making process has been described in which governmental actions emanate from the interactions of various groups and individuals, each seeking to satisfy their own set of interests. The process is based on a form of 'political rationality', but that rationality is limited. The planner, in seeking to guide this process, has attempted to develop an alternative decision-making process, where goals are explicitly structured and master plans are developed and technically evaluated to guide the selection of the 'desired' future of a city or region. However, it has become apparent that first the planner faces severe limitations in seeking to guide this political process and that second, the political process actually performs many of the functions which the planner sought to replicate in a master planning process (e.g., goal selection, consideration of alternatives).

In this light, one can envision the role of the planner being to complement the political decision process by performing the broad task which John Friedman has posited of creating "the linkage between knowledge and organized action." Under this conception of the planner's role, the planner would not seek to create one master plan to guide all action. Rather, the planner attempts to link his or her knowledge to actions as they emerge from the political processes of policy development and implementation. The planner seeks to have each public decision made with an understanding of the full range of effects of the decision and of the long term as well as the short term implications of the decision.

Consideration of this type of role raises three major issues which must be resolved before successful use of the role can be expected. First, does this role make the planner into a political actor, thereby keeping the
planner from holding any vestige of objectivity? Second, can this role, which sacrifices efforts on long range, comprehensive plans to incremental decision guidance, provide a long term framework for making decisions? Third, what types and formats of information can the planner use to provide incremental decision guidance effectively?

(1) The Planner as Political Actor - In the traditional planning process, the planner is supposed to be objective and 'above' the quarrels and in-fighting of politics. While clearly the planners have never been entirely objective, one advantage they may have had in not taking sides on public issues is that in some cases, they could play a 'neutral' role of bringing together various actors to resolve important issues. The role for the planner described briefly above raises two questions: (a) Do planners, by tying their work more directly to the political decision process, lose any chance for neutrality?, and (b) Perhaps even worse, are opportunities opened up by this role for strongly biased planners to dominate the political decision process? Answers to these questions require a more detailed description of the proposed role of the planner.

Under this role concept, the planner would become a type of overseer of the political decision process. As decision issues emerge, the planner's efforts are directed at ensuring that a range of potential effects and side effects of governmental action are considered in deliberations, that long term consequences of actions are considered and that interest groups which may have a stake in a particular decision but no organized voice to express their interests would be mobilized or would have their interests considered. The planner is interested in overcoming the tendencies of the political process to limit the number of effects and interest groups it
considers. This is accomplished by providing equitable access to that process for all groups so that their interests may be considered. The planner does not always speak for these groups, but rather helps them to speak for themselves.

This type of concept would actually involve different roles in different political systems. Within cohesive political systems where goals are well-defined and homogeneous, the planner may best serve in the role of technician, providing the expertise necessary to choose and implement actions. Where cohesive systems have minority interest groups who are not represented among the ruling elite, the planner may be required to play the role of advocate. In less cohesive systems, the planner might play the role of broker, by encouraging the coordination of diverse interests to achieve particular courses of action (i.e., a 'neutral' role) or mobilizer, to make certain groups aware of their interests in a particular action and then to encourage their coordination with other groups who share their interests.

This type of varying role may be difficult to implement under current institutional arrangements for planning (e.g., the city planner for the cohesive city would have difficulty becoming an advocate for one group). There are, however, possibilities for the planner to play this role even within existing institutional constraints. First, the planner can develop information which makes decision makers (even in cohesive systems) aware of all of the effects of their actions (including effects on unrepresented minority interest groups). Second, the planner can seek, through required citizen participation and public hearing activities, to present this information to the public, as well as decision makers.

In that planners would, under this role concept, be seeking to
ensure consideration of all interest groups and would only in extreme cases become advocates for particular interests (even then, planners would seek to advocate for all unrepresented interests), the role concept does not necessarily imply that it would be impossible for the planner to remain neutral. There remains, however, the danger that as planners begin to fill this role, strongly biased persons would use this cover of being 'an overseer for the political process' to develop information which unduly influences the planning process. For example, while a planner who has negative feelings toward blacks may be a reasonable overseer on most issues, when a proposal is raised to develop integrated housing, the planner might attempt to bias analysis of this issue, to work only with a white group to help them express their interests or to work with black and white groups but deliberately mislead the black groups. One would hope that such blatant bias, and even subtler versions of it, would not be tolerated by other actors in the political process (much as Altschuler and Rabinovitz suggest). Nonetheless, the subtle biases held by planners and the influence those biases have on what types of effects and interest groups are considered will continue to limit the role which planners can and should play.

(2) Planners and the Future - Many planners have argued that only by stepping back from the day-to-day issues requiring governmental action is it possible to assess the probable future trends, identify desirable changes in those trends and suggest the actions necessary to achieve those changes. They also argue that one cannot analyze day-to-day issues without basing that analysis on an officially adopted master plan which illustrates the desired patterns toward which the community is striving. Given these arguments, the question is raised: how effective can the more incremental planning process
suggested by the proposed role concept be without these long range master planning activities to back it up?

In answering this question, it must first be remembered that while planners have been taking this detached, long range view, major governmental actions have often been chosen, in essence deciding what changes in the future are desirable without benefit of the planner's expertise. For example, in health planning, new regional agencies have been struggling to develop long range planning efforts while hospitals expand facilities with little attention to areawide planning efforts. Clearly, decisions will continue to be made by the political process. One route for the planner, it would seem, would be to attempt explicitly to provide direct technical guidance for ongoing decisions which would include long range considerations, rather than be poorly prepared when the decisions inevitably arise during large scale planning efforts.

Nonetheless, without a framework for the future within which to suggest alternatives and assess impacts, how well can the planner actually provide guidance for these ongoing decisions? One simple and not wholly satisfying response suggests that prediction of the future is so uncertain, that the key factors are so difficult to identify, that any attempt (whether large scale or incremental) at looking at future consequences is limited at the start. A second response is to develop a methodology, within the limitations on a planner's expertise, which can trace out the long term implications of each decision by evaluating alternative streams of public actions, rather than one fixed master plan. This methodology, which has begun to be developed in transportation planning, would help political decision makers recognize what future options for public action they are leaving open or foreclosing by committing resources to specific public
actions today.

A third response, and one perhaps, which should be the basis for all planning, is that the continuing analysis of particular issues over time (with conscious concern for the future) can build for the planner (and potentially the political decision-maker) a better understanding of the total set of issues, perhaps even a long range framework from which to view each successive issue. One observer has described such an approach:

"Through the actions flowing from it, every choice results in consequences only some of which can be foreseen. Because of this we do not choose the future once and forever, but many times over, as information about consequences becomes available, as we adjust to other changes within the system, and as our attitudes and values change. This choice of the future is, in reality, a kind of exploration, or, better yet, an experiment that involves a series of sequential steps and is corrected by a continuous stream of information flowing back to us. Essentially it involves a process of learning." 40

(3) Planning Information and Political Decision-Making - Even when planners have developed information concerning the effects of public actions in the long and short run, there is the continuing possibility that the information will not be absorbed or will be ignored by political actors. The conceptual paradigm for 'political rationality' described previously suggests that political actors consider both implicit and explicit criteria in making decisions. Each actor's decision process of balancing implicit and explicit interests is that process into which the planner must basically seek to inject technical guidance. The planner, however, normally can provide only information on the explicit aspects of public actions (e.g., environmental impacts or the costs of developing an urban renewal project). As a result, the planner's information may in some cases always be ignored, regardless of what efforts the planner undertakes to improve his or her information. Nonetheless, the proposed role concept for the planner offers several ideas
for improving "the linkage" between planner's knowledge and public actions.

One idea has been suggested by John Friedmann. He argues that various actors, with their day-to-day (personal) knowledge of a situation, have important contributions to make to any planning process as do planners, with their broader conceptual and factual (processed) knowledge of causal relationships in the urban environment. He therefore sees planning going beyond the preparation of graphic and written information to a transactive style of planning where planners and the various interest groups mesh their two special types of knowledge to guide decisions on courses of action.\(^41\) This perspective would argue that perceptions of and relationships with the planner for different actors will shape the effectiveness of the planner in linking knowledge to action. In Francine Rabinovitz's less-than-cohesive systems, the personal trust and prestige of the planner in the eyes of political decision-makers clearly contributed to the planner's 'effectiveness' in those situations.\(^42\) Both Altschuler\(^43\) and Levin and Abend\(^44\) also point out that personal confidence in highway engineers rather than planners, in part attributable to better knowledge of the people, resulted in relatively greater adherence to the engineers' findings. If one envisions the political process as a series of interactions between people, the planner's ability to interact with people must be a key element of any attempt to provide better technical guidance to the process.

A second idea suggests that by attempting to provide direct guidance for ongoing political decisions, the subject matter of planners' analyses should address more directly issues of immediate concern to the political actors, increasing their interest in the results of planners' analyses. Tied to this concept is a necessary emphasis on developing reports
and presentations which are concise and clearly understandable to the various political actors, rather than complex, overly long documents which hinder attempts by these actors to assess the planners' analyses.

A third idea for improving "the linkage" between a planner's knowledge and public action involves providing information in a manner which helps the political process overcome its tendency to be less than comprehensive in reaching decisions. In a more pluralistic political system, comprehensive decisions may not be so difficult to achieve. While the existence of numerous interest groups with equal power may increase the controversy and inconsistency surrounding issue resolution in these systems, the existence of a number of groups may also facilitate the planner's role of overseer to the political process. The planner could develop information about the effects of a proposed public action which illustrates how that action would affect the interests of each interest group (e.g., the effects of a highway on an urban neighborhood, some nearby marshland and the regional economy). With this information, each interest group can press for its interests to be considered and the resultant public action is likely to reflect these various interests as well as the information which the planner originally developed.

Where more cohesive political decision-making occurs in elite groups, this means of incorporating information may not be very effective. While cohesive political systems may be capable of more consistent and less controversial actions than pluralistic systems, the actions taken may often ignore the interests of minority groups which are not part of the elite. In these cases, the alternative roles for the planner (i.e., mobilizer or advocate) may provide a better opportunity to press for consideration of information on the effects of public actions and how those effects relate to
interests of unrepresented interest groups.

The ideas proposed here are not new to planners. Robert Walker (1950) and T.J. Kent (1964) both developed the planner's role as policy advisor to major political actors (the chief executive and city council, respectively).45 In recent years, trends toward increasing citizen participation in all phases of planning and towards focusing planning effects not on long range goal formulation but on near term actions which shape the future have moved planning in this direction. The Boston Transportation Planning Review, in encouraging extensive citizen participation, in providing technical assistance to community groups not capable of providing their own and in focusing on particular facility development proposals with an aim to guide particular governmental decisions, actively attempted to apply this broader yet simpler role concept for planners of creating "the linkage between knowledge and action."46 In another set of recent trends, efforts at developing improved program evaluation techniques to learn from the series of 1960's 'social experiments' and 'demonstration projects' have been accelerated.47

One major topic to be addressed, it would seem, is how a city, or a region, can go about creating a continuing planning capability of this type. What sort of planning activities should be carried out? What types of institutional and personal relationships should planners maintain with political decision makers? These questions are those which must be faced by the directors of planning agencies as they decide upon the tasks which their agency will perform and on the role that agency will play. The directors must assess the particular political context in which they operate and devise organizational strategies to provide decision oriented information to
the policy development and implementation process while helping that process build on understanding of the future implications of their actions. The case study which follows of transportation politics and planning in the San Francisco Bay Area addresses these questions.
CHAPTER II

FOOTNOTES


7. Power has been defined in many forms and by many different people. The intention here is to use only a very broad definition. For finer definitions, see: Bachrach, Peter and Morton S. Baratz, "Decisions and Non-Decisions: An Analytic Framework, The American Political Science Review, 57 (September 1963), pp. 632-642.


12. Rabinovitz, op. cit.

14. This distinction is similar, but not identical, to the public regarding/private regarding interest difference posited by Banfield (Political Influence, New York: Free Press, 1961). However, explicit interests may be both private and public regarding, as may implicit ones; the distinction is based on stated vs unstated interests rather than private vs public.


22. Bachrach and Baratz, op. cit., argue that "non-decisions" may be made in anticipation of elite opinions, rather than as a result of their direct expression.


24. Rabinovitz, op. cit. p. 35.


27. Meyerson and Banfield, op. cit.

28. ibid.


30. Meyerson and Banfield, op. cit.

31. Rabinovitz, op. cit.; Altschuler, op. cit.

32. Meyerson and Banfield, op. cit.; Rabinovitz, op. cit.
33. Levin and Abend, op. cit.


35. Rabinovitz, op. cit.

36. Altschuler, op. cit.

37. Rabinovitz, op. cit.


41. Rabinovitz, op. cit.


43. Altschuler, op. cit.

44. Levin and Abend, op. cit.


CHAPTER III
UNDERSTANDING METROPOLITAN POLITICS:
THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

A. Introduction: The Metropolitan Political Culture

Metropolitan areas in the United States have experienced rapid growth throughout much of the twentieth century. As a result of foreign and rural migration into urban areas and the spreading of urbanized areas commonly characterized as 'suburban sprawl', the great majority of United States residents now live in metropolitan areas. As suburbanization proceeded, spurred by population growth, improving economic conditions and increased mobility offered by the train and then the car, the governmental structure of urban areas could not keep pace with the new sets of problems which were arising. Many central cities attempted to annex suburban areas as they grew, but these attempts were foreshortened by inflexibility in the process of changing governmental structures and defensiveness on the part of newly forming suburban areas which did not wish to have their political futures tied to those of the much larger central city. As a result, metropolitan areas were left with fragmented governmental structures but with common economic and social interests (i.e., the central city as the center of employment, retail business and entertainment in the metropolitan area).

As the dependence on the central city has been reduced over the years, this fragmentation of institutions has helped to create several major problems in the ongoing maintenance of the metropolitan areas. One group of observers has pointed to two major issues which have arisen: (1) maintenance
of key elements of the areas' economic and social systems and (2) unequal
distribution of resources and services in the metropolitan areas.

(1) Maintenance of the system: A number of key elements serve as
"the lifeblood" of metropolitan areas. Some, such as communications,
are largely in the private sector. But many, most notably, transporta-
tion, sewer, and water and power facilities, are critical to the
continuing economic and social well being of the regions but cannot
be fully developed by the private sector. Continuing trends of
population growth and spread create demands for increased levels of
service from each of these elements. But the facilities necessary
to provide these services must cross boundaries of the many
political jurisdictions and must, as a result, be dealt with from
the perspective of all of the jurisdictions rather than the
individual perspective of each government.

(2) Unequal distributions of resources and services: As metropolitan
areas grew and suburban areas established political autonomy, distinct
socioeconomic patterns emerged. Central cities most often held the
majority of the region's businesses and a fairly healthy tax base
but their resident population consisted largely of the poor.
Suburban areas, on the other hand, became the residential domain of
the middle and upper middle classes. However, as trends in the
suburbanization of industry and commerce have continued, central
cities and nearby working class suburbs have had to provide
extensive services for their large poor populations (e.g., health,
education) with resources drawn from an ever-decreasing tax base.
The suburbs, on the other hand, with rising property values and
industrial investments, could provide services to their generally wealthier population by levying relatively low levels of taxes. Emerging from this unbalance were three clear interest groups in the metropolitan area: the downtown businessmen, interested in reviving central city commerce in which they had substantial investments, the poor and working class, suffering from very high tax rates and an inadequate delivery of services and the suburban interests interested in improving access to the central city but also in maintaining autonomy from the fiscal burdens of the central city. ²

As these two issues emerged, it became apparent that no institutional mechanism existed at the regional level to resolve them. Attempts to fill this void in the metropolitan governmental structure have taken several forms. Where particular issues have become large enough to merit attention, state governments have often stepped in (most notably in the case of highways) or local governments have joined together (with state approval) to form special regional and subregional authorities (e.g., transit and port authorities, sewer and water districts, etc.). In almost all cases, special authorities and state agencies have had responsibility for one or two facets of the metropolitan problems described above and often, only incomplete authority in those areas (e.g., only transit or only one portion of the sewer system). As political scientists have noted³, these responses to metropolitan problems have actually amplified some of the problems. While some regional purposes have been accomplished (e.g., development of a basic regional water system) these new agencies have in many cases only increased the existing governmental fragmentation in urban areas, further complicating attempts to coordinate the
different key elements of regional development and resolve conflicts between different interest groups.

To remedy this problem, political and social scientists have often suggested that metropolitan governments be created to either take over the key responsibilities from the various existing institutions or in some cases to take over all the functions of the local government. However, attempts to implement such governments in U.S. metropolitan areas have generally not succeeded. As Scott Greer has pointed out, while a diversity of interest groups have supported such a scheme (e.g., business, good government groups, civic elites), the most notable opposition has come from local governments. These governments, and those who head them, are in a difficult position. They oppose increasing state control over decisions which affect their communities (e.g., state highway programs) and therefore support some form of regional decision-making forum. However, at the same time, they fear the loss of all of their local decision and implementation prerogatives to a formal metropolitan government.

Most often, the reluctance of local governments to support formal metropolitan government has resulted in the development of voluntary associations or councils of governments (COG's). With encouragement from the federal government, these agencies have flourished in metropolitan areas. These agencies have sought to coordinate activities of the various institutions and to develop comprehensive capabilities to help guide the development of the region. However, the structure of the agencies, the limitations on their resources and the diversity of the metropolitan areas they seek to coordinate and plan have hindered their effectiveness in dealing with major regional issues. Several key weaknesses of the agencies can be cited:
(1) **Limited Powers** - Not surprisingly, the preferences of COG members for local autonomy has in most cases left the COG's with few real powers. Generally, their only "powers" are extended by higher levels of government (federal and state). The federal government's A-95 review process, setting up the COG as the regional clearinghouse for all federally funded proposals in a region, provides the COG's with "powers" of review and comment on most major public development proposals. Such comments, however, are only advisory and rarely carry much weight. Further, the review normally comes at the end of the proposal development process, making the proposing agency unwilling to make major changes at a COG's request. As a result, A-95 review can take up a significant portion of the COG staff's time and resources with few major tangible results. More recently, in part due to the ineffectiveness of the A-95 type process, some COG's have been given increased powers. For example, the Federal Urban Mass Transportation Administration has stated that it will not allow the Los Angeles transit agency to begin preliminary engineering on its proposed transit system until the Southern California Association of Governments has approved that system as a portion of its regional transportation plan. However, even where greater powers have been authorized, one finds a reluctance to use them. Most often, this reluctance can be directly tied to a second problem, the political instability of the COG's.

(2) **Political Instability** - The vast majority of COG's are voluntary agencies, i.e., any or all of the members can withdraw at their own pleasure, effectively damaging the legitimacy of the COG. As a device to ensure equitable treatment of all regional constituents, this element of member freedom can be valuable. At the same time, unless almost all of the members of a COG have unified criticisms of a proposal, it is unlikely that
even the most cogent technical analysis will bring a COG to strongly criticize or reject a proposal. Further, the annual round of city council and board of supervisors' meetings at which COG membership is decided upon takes up enormous quantities of staff time and resources and creates annual cycles of uncertainty in the development of planning efforts. Although pressures for planning which is sensitive to the political process may be a desirable outcome of such instability, the need for near unanimity on an issue before a COG will act (rather than the majority necessary in most democratic actions) hinders any strong action to coordinate or shape regional development.

(3) Issues of Political Responsiveness - Voting membership in COG's is almost always held by officials of local government or their appointees. Major local controversies over highway development and zoning have often indicated that local elected officials (particularly those from areas with city or county wide elections) respond, in their actions, to the interests of some groups (e.g., businessmen as campaign contributors and the backbone of the local tax base) but not to the interests of others (e.g., residents of poor neighborhoods). Only if the decision structure of a COG is capable of responding to all common interests across political jurisdictions (i.e., the poor as well as businessmen) can development decisions of a COG be considered comprehensive and reflective of the full set of regional interests. The preponderence of local government officials on COG policy boards, therefore, raises major issues about the effectiveness of the COG's in being responsive to all regional interest groups.

(4) Limited planning capabilities - In addition to the lack of powers which COG's face and their difficulty in using what power they have, COG's also face limitations on the planning capabilities which they can bring
to the analysis of regional issues. First, COG's have generally been funded by apportioned contributions from the constituent governments and limited federal funds. As a result, they rarely have large staffs and comprehensive planning expertise. One result of this shortage is that staff, particularly in large metropolitan areas, spend so much time on going to meetings with other agencies, precessing the numerous A-95 reviews and "fighting fires" that they don't have time to do planning. Second, as Levin and Abend and others strongly point out, comprehensive planners lack any very well defined methodology for analyzing regional issues. Attempts at complicated land use and transportation models met with considerable theoretical and operational difficulty in the 50's and 60's and often were too cumbersome and expensive to provide timely information for political decision-making. Finally, and perhaps most important, these limitations forced COG's to rely on the technical expertise of other regional agencies. Special regional agencies (e.g., transit, ports, sewers) often had relatively sophisticated staffs and well developed plans for implementation. In most cases, these were the only source of information sought out and presented to COG decision-makers. Clearly this information reflects the objectives and assumptions of the agency preparing it (e.g., build the transit system, expand the airport) and this can effectively undermine attempts by COG's and their staffs to establish balanced perspectives on major issues.

This review of COG problems presents, in brief, 4 key elements in the general ineffectiveness of COG's as regional policy development bodies. The San Francisco Bay Area, in its efforts to develop a regional policy body, has almost been a textbook case of the difficulties of dealing with regional issues. The Association of Bay Area Governments was one of the first of its
kind in the country. Throughout its history, it has been hindered by most of the problems cited above which plague COG's in general.

In recent years, however, the Bay Area, with help from the California State legislature, has taken two major steps toward a more formal regional government. First, in 1965, the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) was established to plan for and regulate development around the Bay. Then, in 1970, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) was established to plan for and decide on future highway priorities and future transit development in the region. In both of these cases, local membership was mandatory and increased funds were made available for staffing the agencies. The policy boards of these agencies continued as official representatives from local governments (although this wasn't totally the case for the BCDC).

Thus, in conservation and transportation, the Bay Area has sought to solve the problems of the COG and establish real regional planning and decision-making authority. In the remainder of this chapter, an attempt will be made to understand the particular metropolitan political context of the Bay Area which developed these agencies with particular emphasis on transportation issues.
B. The Approach

Understanding the entire political system of a metropolitan area is a very difficult task. Nonetheless, it is crucial that the director of a metropolitan planning agency understand at least the basic political context in which decisions are made in the metropolitan area. Otherwise, his or her efforts to direct a planning staff and to guide the development of technical information to serve as a basis for political decisions will very likely not provide information which is suitable to the decision process. The director must be able to identify what types of issues are likely to emerge and what interest groups will have a stake in decisions on those issues. Only with this type of information can the director decide what types of analysis should be done and when they should be done to provide timely information to guide decisions.

In attempting to develop this understanding, the director is faced with several opportunities but must overcome several disadvantages. The director is likely to be intimately involved in the analysis and resolution of many regional issues, providing opportunities to observe the types of issues being discussed and the interests and personalities of key political actors in the region. At the same time, however, the pull of day-to-day responsibilities for running an agency and for "fighting fires" which arise from those responsibilities can hinder the director's ability to take advantage of these opportunities. The director may be left with little free time to reflect on the decisions being made, making it difficult to draw in-depth inferences from his or her rich experiences to guide the ongoing planning activities of the agency.

In place of a time consuming, in-depth analysis of the political
context in which he or she is working, the most viable means for the planning director to develop an understanding of that context may be by building that understanding over time, through observation of and participation in the resolution of various regional and sub-regional issues. If the director steps back briefly from each decision and takes stock of the political implications of the particular events, he or she can piece together the basic issues, actors and political dynamics which shape regional and sub-regional decisions on development and the future of the region. From that base, the director can then begin to structure the planning activities of the agency to provide information which can most usefully guide future regional decisions.

In the following section, an analysis of the political context of transportation decision-making in the San Francisco Bay Area, using this approach, is performed. First, a broad overview of the Bay Area and its governmental structure is given. Then a series of nine issues, starting with the development of the Bay Area Rapid Transit system and ending with recent issues in highway and transit development, is reviewed. Wherever possible, primary source material (i.e., documents, hearing transcripts, interviews and newspaper coverage) have been used to piece together how the issues were resolved. In certain instances, existing analyses of the issues by other authors have also been used. The review of each issue will not be done in depth, but rather will seek to identify key actors, key issues and the nature of the decision process in each case. At each step, an attempt will be made to identify common threads among issues and begin to structure an understanding of the overall political context. In the concluding section of this chapter, generalizations about the Bay Area's political context will be drawn from this learning process. These are
intended as a basis for the later discussions of the role of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the kind of planning activities it can best carry out to fill that role.
C. Transportation Politics in the San Francisco Bay Area

The San Francisco Bay Area, consisting of the nine counties touching the Bay, has experienced rapid growth since the end of World War II. Spurred by wartime production activities, an excellent natural harbor and the moderate climate, the population, by 1970, had climbed to 4.6 million people. Despite its large size (its area is 7,000 square miles, nearly that of Massachusetts and New Jersey combined), over 70 percent of the region's population and 80 percent of its economic activity is concentrated in 10% of the region's land area, on the land adjacent to the Bay. This pattern owes much to the presence of the Bay and the mountains surrounding it which constrain a narrow Bay Plain. For approximately one hundred miles from San Francisco south to San Jose and then north to Richmond, this Bay Plain contains virtually uninterrupted urban development.

Although San Francisco is the region's largest city (with roughly 700,000 population) the area has three urban centers; San Francisco, Oakland and rapidly growing San Jose. The existence of three centers and economic ties built from the region's earliest days by boat commerce between these centers, have resulted in a balance of social and economic interests throughout the region which is generally not found in traditional metropolitan areas with one major center. The region's fast growth and its physical constraints on that growth have spurred the development of a regional highway (and now rail transit) system in the densely developed urbanized corridors near the Bay. In recent years the existence of the Bay as a natural as well as commercial resource and efforts to expand the region's limited land area by filling that Bay have spurred considerable concern for the environment. At the same time, the large black and Mexican populations in San Francisco,
FIGURE III.1

SAN FRANCISCO AND VICINITY
Oakland, and San Jose have, as in the rest of the country, sought more opportunities to better their social and economic life. As we shall see, the development of transportation facilities and programs has become intimately intertwined in these issues.

Institutionally, the local governments of the San Francisco Bay Area are predominantly of the council-manager or council-administrator form. In county governments, which serve as overseers for city governments and the only government for non-incorporated areas, a similar arrangement exists with boards of county supervisors and a professional county administrator appointed by the supervisors. All local officials in California are elected under a non-partisan system. With a few exceptions, they are elected at large and against the entire field of candidates. Bay Area governments strongly reflect the outward trappings of reformist government structure, spurred by the good government movement in the country as a whole and in part due to the early, corrupt control of California politics by the wealthy owners of the railroads.

As in many other metropolitan areas, actors in the Bay Area have identified over the years a number of major issues concerning parks, sewers, water, air quality and transportation which could not be resolved by local governments acting alone. To resolve these issues, the Bay Area, taking advantage of state laws which encourage the development of special districts, set about developing a series of special districts to deal with each particular problem. Each district is made up of various cities and counties, is governed by an elected or appointed board of directors and can levy property taxes to fulfill its particular function. Stanley Scott and John Corzine have noted that "there are nearly five hundred special districts in the nine-county Bay
Area, excluding school districts, multi-county districts, irrigation districts and a number of others whose functions are not urban in character. (emphasis added)." When one adds to this number the major multi-county districts such as the Bay Area Rapid Transit District and the Bay Area Air Quality Control District, as well as the state agencies such as the local district of the State Department of Transportation and the Toll Bridge Administration (for bridges across the bay), a brief picture of the labyrinthine governmental structure in the Bay Area emerges. The series of issues reviewed in the following brief sections will further illustrate how this cumbersome structure, and particularly the major transportation actors in this structure, interact to resolve regional issues.

* * * * *

Regional Rapid Transit for the Bay Area

Rapid population growth in the Bay Area after World War II and highway travel corridors constrained by the area's geography brought traffic congestion to crisis proportions during the 1950's (from 1954 to 1959, vehicles travelling across the two major Bay bridges rose by 44%). In recognition of the increasing problems that this congestion was causing and the importance of the San Francisco and Oakland central business districts as employment centers for the region, a nine county Bay Area Rapid Transit Commission was formed by the State Legislature in 1954 to study the feasibility of implementing transit. As a result of the Commission's work, five counties (San Francisco, Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin and San Mateo) joined together in 1957 to form the Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART). This agency, funded through property taxes levied in each county, was charged with developing a five county rail rapid transit system for the Bay Area. Thus, as
had been done many times in the past for parks, water and sewer problems, an issue emerged in the Bay Area (traffic congestion) and an attempt was made to resolve the issue by establishing a special district to implement solutions.

With the mandate to develop plans for a rapid transit system, BART proceeded to hire consultants and prepare a master plan for the system. In June 1961, final plans were submitted for a 120 mile system with 52 stations through the five counties. From its inception, the plan clearly represented the development of a commuter rail system in the Bay Area (rather than a local transit service system) to speed workers and shoppers to the central cities. As BART proceeded to seek regional approval of the system and funding for it, this characteristic played a major part.

Final approval to implement the system ultimately rested with the voters, as they had to approve the $792 million bond issue necessary for implementation. From its start, the system had been promoted most strongly by the well organized business organizations of San Francisco and Oakland and by labor (particularly the construction unions). However, approval of the bond issue required approval by 2/3 of the voters throughout the district and the degree to which the costs of the system would raise property taxes became a major issue before the vote ever took place. San Mateo County, fearing much higher taxes, and already having the services of the Southern Pacific Railroad, withdrew from BART. Marin County also withdrew, citing technical difficulties of building transit across the Golden Gate Bridge, higher taxes and fears of rapid development in the largely undeveloped county. The issue of the tax burden imposed by building the system so threatened approval of the bond that BART in early 1962 persuaded the California Legislature to lower the required majority from 2/3 to 60%. When the vote came through,
approval was given, but just barely (61.2% approved overall; 68% in San Francisco, 60% in Alameda and only 54% in Contra Costa County). Contra Costa County initiated a tax payers suit against the reduction of the required majority and generally protesting the high-priced selling campaign which BART and the businessmen put into obtaining approval. The suit failed, and BART was given approval to develop its system.

However, as that occurred, two major problems arose. First, the initial funding estimates were woefully inadequate (even including funds delegated from Bay bridge tolls to finance construction of the underwater tube across the Bay). Thus BART was engaged (and continues to be today) in repeated clashes with the state legislature over approval of alternate means of funding (e.g., the sales tax). As long as this has not involved any new commitments of statewide funds, the legislature has served as a de facto regional government with key actors in the debates being the representatives from the Bay Area. But the continuing financial troubles of BART have affected the quality of the system implemented and soured the public image of the agency.

The second major problem involved design and construction of the system. The BART masterplan (of 75 miles after the two counties withdrew) was prepared with little local participation. Design of the stations, although originally delegated to noted architect Lawrence Halprin, soon reverted to the engineers when financial troubles hit and Halprin's ideas proved too costly. In many areas, proposed designs were presented, but strong community reaction forced additional delay as stations were redesigned. Perhaps the largest of these controversies occurred in Berkeley where the proposed elevated structures through the middle of the city would have created a barrier between
the poor black and affluent white sections of the city. Strong protests and offers from the city of Berkeley to pay for underground construction persuaded the BART engineers to redesign the portion of the system through the city.

As has become apparent in the past four years as the system has begun to operate, another major implementation problem involves the sophisticated electronic technology which was supposed to result in major labor cost savings for the system. As this is being written, the system, originally scheduled for total operation in 1971, has only recently opened its operations on both sides of the Bay. The trans-bay tube, the key link in the system, has not yet opened due to the system's technical difficulties (the current projected date is sometime in 1975). As one result of these technical delays, the current labor costs of operating the system (even without the entire system in operation), are higher than those originally predicted.

The development of the BART system represents almost a classic example of the three elements of the policy development and implementation process outlined in Chapter II. Taken as a whole, the decisions made as issues emerged and as policies were initiated and implemented reflect three important points about the political dynamics of the Bay Area. First, the system, oriented to providing commuter rather than intra-city rail transit, was influenced in its conception and design by the powerful business interests in downtown Oakland and San Francisco. In their eyes the chief benefits of the system were to reduce traffic congestion to the central cities and to raise property values in the CBD's. In the early stages of design and bond approval, their influence in the legislature (in getting the required majority reduced and getting Bay Bridge Tolls for BART construction) appears to have
been great.

A second point illuminated by the BART experience is that these central city interests in BART construction were opposed by strong suburban sentiments which supported the concept of the system but not its high cost. San Mateo and Marin counties both saw the costs of the system as too high for the benefits they would reap. Marin County also feared that some of the benefits (i.e., increased property values and development near BART stations) would damage its undeveloped areas. Even part urban, part suburban Contra Costa County showed ambivalence towards the system despite the considerable support for the system in the county (54%). While these suburban fears of tax increases clearly affected the ultimate size of the system, the suburban influence in the early years of planning and approval seems to have been less than that of the central city business interests.

The third point which the BART experience brings out involves the nature of regional decision-making in the Bay Area. Many key decisions (e.g., establishment of BART transfer of toll monies to fund construction, lowering the required bond approval minimum) could not be made by any regional group and thus became the province of the state legislature. But within the state legislature, a form of de facto regional government emerged. Purely regional issues (i.e., those involving not taking funds from other parts of the state) were generally resolved by the legislators from the Bay Area and ratified by the rest of the legislature. Thus, in BART's early stages, the influence of the pro-BART forces and the traffic crisis in the Bay Area brought the Bay Area delegation to strongly support BART. As BART's problems have grown, as disfavor with BART's management has increased and as some of the suburban areas have grown in population and political strength, this
regional forum has not been unified on BART actions.

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Fighting the Freeways\textsuperscript{14}

In California, the major impetus for development of a comprehensive freeway system has come from the federal and state levels. The federal highway trust fund, established in 1956 with gasoline tax revenues, provided 90\% of the funds for construction of the extensive Interstate Freeway System in California and other states. The state's interest in establishing a freeway system was strongly expressed in 1959. Senator Randolph Collier, then chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee, directed a study by the state Department of Public Works which recommended implementation of a 12,000 mile system funded by state and federal highway funds. The State Highway Commission, a board appointed by the governor, was charged with overseeing the expenditure of state highway funds and the implementation of the freeway system. To implement the system, the State Division of Highways, (formerly a portion of the State Department of Public Works and now part of the new Department of Transportation) today maintains 11 semi-autonomous district headquarters, each charged with planning and designing the freeways and overseeing their construction in their particular geographic areas.

Despite the general dominance of the state in deciding highway matters, one key California legal provision ensures that the local community plays a role. Essentially, any local community holds a veto power over road construction by refusing to sign the required "route adoption" and "freeway agreement" for the closing of streets during construction of the project. In the Bay Area, this provision provided the key leverage in a major turnabout in local views of highways in the late 1950's and early 1960's.
During the early stages of freeway development in the Bay Area, the Area's political actors were generally in favor of freeway construction, even in the crowded urban core areas. A 1948 master plan for the freeway system in San Francisco, which was approved by the Board of Supervisors in 1951, included major freeways through the city including one (the Western freeway) through Golden Gate park and another (the Embarcadero-Panhandle freeway) along the harbor front connecting the Golden Gate and Oakland bridges. The latter was seen as a critical link in the San Francisco and state highway systems. Until the middle and late 1950's, freeway construction proceeded smoothly with strong support from local political actors, the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce and the local press.

However, proposals to build through Golden Gate Park and the initial construction of the Embarcadero freeway as an unsightly two-tiered structure in the late 1950's brought about strong protests of the aesthetic and environmental impacts of such construction. Active lobbying with the city-county supervisors was engaged in by neighborhood groups (largely from affluent neighborhoods) and conservation groups. The California Division of Highways and the San Francisco Department of Public Works were at the time advancing predicted traffic figures which they felt justified building the freeways. But the opposition groups countered that new roads would only encourage more traffic, that any design severely damaged their neighborhoods and that transit, rather than highways should be developed to provide transportation service. This effective opposition combined with the fact that the chief private proponents (the S.F. Chamber of Commerce) were preoccupied at the time with developing and selling a regional rail transit system (and thus could not effectively lobby for the freeways), brought about the adoption on
January 29, 1959, of the "Freeway Revolt Resolution," which stated that no freeway agreement would be signed for the critical central portions of the San Francisco freeway system.

Although this "revolt" was the first such drastic action in the Bay Area (and in the nation as well), similar issues also emerged in Berkeley (the Ashby Freeway) and in Oakland (the Mac Arthur and Grove-Shafter Freeways). While these controversies did not always result in a total halt of freeway construction as occurred in San Francisco, the events clearly played a role in creating two characteristics of the Bay Area's reactions towards highway construction. First, a general feeling emerged that highways could not serve the transportation needs of the core areas fully, that they severely damaged the urban environment and that considerable improvement in transit service was needed as well. The mayors of San Francisco were the leading promoters of this attitude. The core area business community continued to support further freeway construction, but in a passive manner, as did the suburban and more rural sections of the Bay Area. As a result, with the exception of a few links in Oakland, San Francisco and Berkeley, the California Freeway and Expressway system in the Bay Area has largely been constructed.

A second major characteristic has involved the bitterness of personal and institutional relations between major political actors in the Bay Area and the state structure of highway decision-making. San Francisco's Mayor Shelley and his successor Joseph Alioto have taken strong personal stands against highway development and the people who perform it. Despite the loss of money intended for San Francisco freeway construction (the Embarcadero freeway) to a project in Los Angeles (or perhaps as a result of that loss), Alioto, in 1967, attacked the California Highway Commission and
the engineers of the Division of Highways as "arrogant and power drunk." His dislike for the state role in highways development (and the similar feelings among San Francisco Supervisors) has greatly influenced other controversies in the Bay Area. In one, the Junipera Serra freeway dispute (1967-68) the city protested the impacts of the freeway on city owned reservoir properties, but the discussion of the alternatives to that location sounded more like a name-calling contest than a substantive discussion of the issues. While the entire Bay Area does not share the extreme views of San Francisco (in fact San Mateo and Santa Clara counties were angered by San Francisco's blocking of the Junipera Serra freeway) the feelings being expressed are felt in other portions of the region as well. Most importantly, the fact that regional decisions about highways were made by the remote California Highway Commission (a group strongly influenced by the gas, trucking and automobile highway lobbies) has angered Bay Area groups.

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Maintaining the Existing Transit Service

Transit service in the Bay Area (other than BART) is administered by three very different agencies. In the East Bay, transit is provided by the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District (AC) established in 1956 to take over the about-to-be-defunct Key system. AC's progressive management has developed good quality bus service to the different urbanized parts of the East Bay and has maintained a sound financial picture through good management of its profitable trans-bay service.

In San Francisco, a city department, the Municipal Railway (MUNI), is responsible for extensive bus and trolley service. MUNI is in a very different position from AC, facing a shortage of capable management expertise.
and very costly labor agreements with MUNI employees. The rapidly increasing deficits of the system (encouraged by fares kept very low by political pressure) have been an annual source of city controversy. The image they have created of MUNI as a burden on the tax base makes it very difficult to obtain public approval of bond issues for needed capital and equipment improvements.

The third major operator in the area, the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District has only recently entered the transit field. The district, consisting primarily of San Francisco and Marin counties, was initially established in 1928 to construct and administer the Golden Gate bridge. In the late 1960's, when the bridge's bonds were about to be paid off by the continued toll collections, the District considered several courses of action: (1) dissolving the district and giving the California Division of Highways responsibility for maintaining the bridge, (2) adding more car lanes to the bridge and (3) expanding the responsibilities of the district to include development and operation of Marin county transit service and development of Marin-San Francisco ferry service. The district, with the blessing of the state legislature, chose the latter course in 1968. The district's move toward this broader perspective was particularly spurred by Marin county's interest in developing transit service and not encouraging more automobile oriented growth in the area and San Francisco's interest in not encouraging more automobile travel into the already congested city. Since the time of the change, the district has used bridge toll surpluses to finance the purchase of equipment for and the operation of bus and ferry service for commuting and other trips between Marin County and San Francisco.

The development of the Golden Gate and AC transit districts clearly
reflects conscious attempts by portions of the Bay Area to resolve transportation issues as they have emerged. The three agencies together play important roles in providing intra- and inter-city transit service. However, as the region has developed each agency to respond to a particular issue, these agencies were not formed with a comprehensive view of providing coordinated intra- and inter-city transit for the entire region. When BART is also added to this group, conflicts between the agencies' objectives which hinder careful coordination become complex. Thus, transit in the Bay Area has developed under four different agencies, all competing for the limited resources available from the property taxes in each of their constituent counties. As of the late 1960's, these agencies had neither the centralized planning and coordination of the California Division of Highways nor the abundant funding of state and federal highway trust funds with which to provide transit service to the Bay Area.

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Strides and Little Steps toward Regional Government

The tendency of the Bay Area to resolve different issues which have emerged by establishing different agencies has been mentioned several times above. In the late 1950's and early 1960's, it became apparent, however, that conflicts between these various agencies were causing as many issues to emerge as were being resolved by the individual agencies. Once again, proposals were made to create agencies to resolve these new problems, but this time they were in the form of overall regulating and coordinating agencies which were beginning to look much more like regional governments. The first major proposal, made in 1961, was for a Golden Gate Transportation Commission, to merge existing bridge and port facilities under one agency. While the
proposal itself did not pass, it had one important effect. Local city and county governments, fearing the imminent reduction of their own powers with the establishment of such a regional agency, banded together into the voluntary Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), the first of its kind in the country.

ABAG was formally organized only for the discussion of mutual problems and had no powers over its members. It has played the role in the region of advocating the interests of local governments in any discussion of regional government (and in fact fought to defeat the Golden Gate proposal). Thus, when the city of Berkeley proposed the establishment of a separate, stronger regional planning agency, ABAG voted to assume the duties of such an agency and received funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to do just that. ABAG also played a major role in establishing and guiding the Bay Area Transportation Study Commission, a comprehensive study of highway and transit development in the region funded by various federal and state agencies. Eventually, ABAG was designated as the A-95 clearinghouse for review of all federally funded projects in the region.

However, ABAG still held few real powers and couldn't resolve major issues effectively. When, in 1963 and 1964, filling of the Bay and the need to conserve the Bay emerged as major regional issues, ABAG was split on what action should be taken to protect the Bay. Some of its members, still seeking to increase their tax bases by taking advantage of Bay filling opportunities, effectively blocked ABAG from taking any actions in support of restrictions on such fillings. In place of ABAG action, the state legislature established a study commission on Bay filling in 1964 and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) in 1965. BCDC was given power to restrict
Bay filling through permit issuance and charged with preparing a plan for
the continuing protection of the Bay by 1969. Thus, with ABAG unable to act,
the region's de facto government in the state legislature established the first,
if somewhat temporary, portion of a regional government.

Building on this base, the movement for regional government advanced.
In 1967, the legislature convened a Joint Committee on Bay Area Regional
Organization (BARO), made up of representatives from the Bay Area. This group
was charged with studying the region's problems and need for regional
government and making recommendations on a government plan. In their deli-
berations, it became evident quite rapidly that the new agency would have
to have some form of regulatory or controlling powers to effectively govern
the region. But two key issues remained. First, the question of how
representation in the new organization would be structured was paramount.
Regional organizations, such as the League of Women Voters and the Bay Area
Council (a business group) strongly supported direct election of representatives
from districts within the region. The NAACP, fearing a severe loss of power
for minority groups if decisions shifted from a local to regional level, also
argued for direct representation to ensure some black representation. ABAG,
on the other hand, expressed fears of loss of local control and supported
constituent representation; the system by which ABAG's policy body was
chosen (i.e., representatives appointed by local city and county governments).
Within ABAG, however, opinions varied. Contra Costa and Marin counties
both strongly supported the ABAG position, as did Alameda County, but San
Francisco was not very pleased with the effectiveness of an ABAG type agency.

The second key issue involved what types of problems a regional
agency could deal with. BCDC advanced a proposal with mixed representation
for a multi-functional regional government, including the functions of BCDC.
The BATS commission also proposed a regional government scheme, with a powerful metropolitan transportation authority (for both planning and operating all transportation in the region) as one part. Ultimately, BARO proposed a directly elected government with broad powers in: transportation, environmental quality, regional parks and open space, Bay conservation and development and planning for public and private utilities. The government, which had to be approved by a regional referendum, would have had especially broad powers in apportioning state highway funds within the region.

However, agreement on full scale regional government was not easily reached. ABAG made its own home rule proposal which would have established ABAG itself as a regional government and generally opposed the BARO plan. In the state legislature, in 1969, the BARO plan was vigorously and effectively opposed, primarily by Senator Collier, an advocate for the State Highway Commission, by the freeway lobby, and by Governor Reagan, in response to these other groups. The fear was that local control over State Highway Fund allocations would effectively undermine the State Highway Commission's authority in this and other regions of the state. As a result, the proposals for large scale regional government, even when amended in subsequent sessions, have not yet found substantial support. Certain portions of such a government have, however, been enacted. BCDC, originally intended to expire in 1969, has been permanently extended as a state funded agency with local and regional policy direction. The Metropolitan Transportation Commission has also been established.

Despite the lack of implementation of regional government proposals, the dynamics of proposal initiation and change point out or elaborate important aspects of the Bay Area's political context. First, it is evident that
several broad regional interest groups have emerged. Business, which in BART's early days took the form of downtown businessmen's associations, has evolved into a regional advocate for efficient, good government (the Bay Area Council), joining established groups such as the League of Women Voters. Conservation interests, such as the Sierra Club, have succeeded in developing a regional conservation agency (BCDC) which now serves as a regional voice for conservation issues. Even black groups, in the form of the NAACP, have maintained a voice in the ongoing debate.

A second aspect of the Bay Area's political context illustrated above is the strongly defensive behavior exhibited by local governments in the debate over regional government. While ABAG seems to recognize (at least after the pressure of the past 7 years) the need for strong and effective regional government in several priority areas (including housing and sewage disposal, which are not in the BARO proposal) and also seeks to absorb related regional agencies into such a government (e.g., the Bay Area Air Pollution Control District), ABAG strongly fears control of such a government by directly elected representatives. If that were to occur, the risks of local governments losing long held powers to a regional government would be high. Despite differences among ABAG members (i.e., rural and suburban counties seem to fear regional government more than the urban core counties), the local government voice in deciding upon a regional government decision-making structure has apparently been quite effective in opposing other than their own proposals.

A final aspect of the Bay Area's political context which is further elaborated by the regional government debate is the nature of the political dynamics of the region's de facto regional forum, the state legislature. The
establishment of the special regional joint committee was a clear case of the legislature allowing the Bay Area to work out and propose its own regional government solution; and debate by regional legislators was most probably influenced by their ties to particular regional interest groups (e.g., local governments, conservation groups). But in this case, defeat of the BARO proposal was apparently predicated as well upon the opposition of the state freeway lobby to the transportation portion of the bill (because it gave control of highway funds within the region to the new government). Randolph Collier, a Senator from two of the Bay Area's counties (Sonoma and Napa), was, at the time, the powerful chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee. Thus, power he had acquired within the Senate on statewide issues, when applied to opposing a Bay Area regional government bill, could be much more effective in the state legislature than the power of the other Bay Area representatives which was based largely on their own constituencies. Statewide issues and the power of one person involved in those issues could therefore prevent the Bay Area from establishing a regional government and making regionwide decisions.

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The Metropolitan Transportation Commission is Born

As was apparent in the discussion of the Bay Area's debate over regional government, transportation planning and development has figured heavily in Bay Area regional politics. The establishment of the Bay Area Rapid Transit District and the 1961 proposal for a Golden Gate Transportation Commission provided early impetus to the discussion. In the later 1960's, the general discussion of regional government proposals and the specific proposals of the Bay Area Transportation Study Commission (BATSC) continued the
debate. In 1968, BATSC proposed a Metropolitan Transportation Authority to operate or control bridges, highways, rapid transit, bus and street car systems in the nine-county Bay Area. If regional government were to be established, the Authority would be merged into it (until that time, its board would consist of 18 representatives appointed by each of the state legislative representatives from the Bay Area and 7 representatives appointed by ABAG). One encouragement to such a development was an apparent shifting in attitude within the Reagan administration to allow a larger measure of regional control over highway construction. This was also aided by the movement of Senator Collier to the chairmanship of the Senate Finance Committee, thereby taking him out of direct control of the Transportation Committee which would have to endorse such a bill. Also, the void in overall transit planning and decision-making in the region, which hindered the development of a well-planned transit system to compete with the region's highway system, necessitated the development of some such structure. Without good transit and highway planning, the federal government, through the Federal Highway Administration and the Urban Mass Transportation Administration, was threatening at the time to reduce federal funding to the Bay Area (or provide none at all).

But major proposals such as that by BATSC ran into opposition from BART, Golden Gate Highway Bridge and Transportation District, and AC, who didn't want to be taken over by another group (as well as from local governments who feared a major new regional entity out of their control). Despite support of such proposals by several Bay Area legislators and apparent disenchantment with the management capabilities of BART in the legislature, the powerful Authority concept was not approved.

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It remained for John Foran, a member of the Assembly Transportation Committee from San Francisco, to propose a modified Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), which would have planning and veto power over major transit development in the region and would suggest priorities for highway development by the State Highway Commission. The board was to be made up of appointed representatives of various county and city governments. In its composition the bill reflected a series of compromises. First, control was by constituent representation, the procedure which ABAG supported, rather than direct election. Second, the state maintained final decision authority on highway priorities in cases of "overriding statewide significance." Third, the agency would not operate transit or highways but would seek to coordinate existing agencies. Nonetheless, MTC was a quite powerful agency and to support its activities, the bill provided that ABAG money for transportation planning would be transferred to MTC. It would also be merged with any broader regional government should that be established.

ABAG opposed the bill, but not very strongly as it reflected a transportation agency which local governments could control. The Governor and the state Business and Transportation Agency, on the advice of the Governor's Task Force on Transportation, strongly supported the bill. The freeway lobby did not oppose it and the bill nearly sailed through the legislature in one session. In September, 1970, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission was created.

The establishment of MTC further confirms some of the observations made about the Bay Area debate on regional government. The Bay Area could establish a regional transportation agency but only if first, the decision
structure of the agency was closer to that which ABAG desired (i.e., constituent representation) rather than direct election and if, second, state-wide interests in highway development would not be fully deleted from the decision process. In addition, the pressures from AC transit, Golden Gate Transit and BART to maintain their autonomy were apparently heeded in developing the bill. These independent stances, it would seem, will play a major role in the ongoing attempts by MTC to coordinate these various agencies.

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Developing a Regional Transportation Plan

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission was established with broad planning and decision-making authority over Bay Area transportation development. But MTC's enacting legislation specified that:

"66508. The commission shall adopt, by June 30, 1973, a regional transportation plan for the region. Prior to the adoption of such a plan, the operation, construction and modification of those transportation systems under the purview of the commission may be undertaken without the approval of the commission."

In other words, MTC really couldn't begin to coordinate the Bay Area's transportation system until it had a plan. In addition, the plan was supposed to include both a specific 10 year multi-modal schedule of project priorities and a financial plan. But MTC was a brand new agency (which didn't really get started until mid-1971) and the process of building a staff and developing a planning process could not be done quickly (after all, it took BATSC five years to develop its transportation plan). Further, MTC would have to be careful in developing regional transportation priorities for fear of angering one or more agencies whose cooperation they might later seek (and who where initially contributing some of the money and staff to
With these difficulties in mind, MTC took over the transportation planning activities from ABAG (ABAG quickly became closely tied to MTC: the Commission's chairperson was Joe Bort, an active member of ABAG from Oakland, and MTC set up offices in the same building with ABAG). The Commission held seven meetings in late 1971 and early 1972 to discuss the general aspects of plan development (e.g., financing, environmental aspects, travel demands, population projections). However, this more theoretical process was soon bypassed by pragmatic concerns for getting a plan developed. According to one of the key planners with MTC at the time, much of the actual 'planning' was done in a very short time (8 months). This involved collecting intended programs of improvement from the various agencies in the region (e.g., the Division of Highways, BART) and piecing those together to identify where conflicts and opportunities for coordination existed and what the total cost of all the proposals was. MTC then stimulated community discussion of the identified conflicts and issues (e.g., environmental impact, the priorities for different improvements) in various portions of the region. Out of this rapid process came a plan which consisted of (1) broadly stated policies which were heavily pro-transit (i.e., oriented toward reducing overdependence on the automobile); (2) a facilities 'plan' which basically identified issues and categorized particular projects as I. "committed," II. "recommended for further study," III. "an issue is recognized," IV. "not included in the plan at this time;" (3) a series of program elements (e.g., transit fare coordination projects) aimed at improving transit service; and (4) a set of priorities and financial plan which were very optimistic in the projection of funds which would be available and very loose in setting any actual project priorities.
In essence, the regional transportation plan was a "plan to plan" which had attempted to identify what planning needed to be done for further transportation development without specifying what would be built before the identified issues were resolved (very few projects were in the "committed" category). This loose structure evolved from three factors: (1) the short time available for any definitive analysis (if it could be done at all) which would determine regional priorities, (2) the need on the part of MTC to not anger the different agencies which would be implementing the plan at this early stage of MTC's existence, and (3) the related feelings of MTC's director and executive director, and the chairman of the commission, that an absolute master plan would not guide regional transportation development any better than their loose plan because the issues they had identified would have to be resolved before implementation anyway and how they would be resolved could not be clear until each was directly addressed.

Of these reasons, the latter two clearly played a more important role in shaping the plan. The interests of the major agencies played a role in establishing what projects were to be in which categories. For example, the original staff recommendations for categorization were shifted so that 19 projects from categories 3 and 4 were shifted up to category 2 by the commission, with the feeling that these projects had only one or two minor issues to be resolved before implementation could proceed (as opposed to the staff's feelings, based on rough transportation and environmental analysis, that these should not be considered so close to implementation). Also, an explicit scheme of priorities was added to suggest the importance of particular projects but this was not an actual schedule of improvements. The advocacy of a still relatively loose plan by the commission's top personnel did succeed
in keeping such recategorization from turning the plan into a rigid master plan, and thereby allowed the Commission to keep the great majority of its options open for dealing with transportation issues as they arose in the region.

One interesting aspect of MTC's plan development was community involvement in the planning process. Fifteen 'town meetings' (and four official public hearings held 2 weeks before June 30, 1973) were held as the plan was being developed to seek community reactions to the proposed planning format and to identify issues which might arise from implementation of particular portions of the plan. The communities' comments are as interesting for what they suggest about the dynamics of transportation politics in the Bay Area as for their substantive content. First, two regional groups, the Sierra Club and the League of Women Voters took an active role in commenting on the plan, taking extensively researched positions at meetings throughout the region. Second, the largest single category of community comments had to do with specific project issues with local officials and real estate interests often taking positions in favor of a project and environmental groups and social action groups (e.g., La Raza Unida, NAACP) protesting the negative impacts of particular projects. Third, a large number of comments provided general support of the overall policy statements of MTC in favor of transit, emphasizing growing concern in the region for transit development rather than highway development. Fourth, a number of comments questioned the consideration of social and environmental issues in the plan, and suggested the need for an environmental impact report before the plan was officially adopted. One interesting aspect of this environmental concern was the diversity of interests expressed for encouraging
growth (e.g., Solano County), and discouraging it (e.g., Marin County) in the different portions of the region.

Thus the MTC, in developing a regional transportation plan, developed a general pro-transit policy position, but shied away from developing that position into an explicit master plan for development, in part in deference to existing transit and highway agencies in the region whose cooperation MTC would have to seek in later attempts to coordinate regional transportation development and in part out of a feeling that many project issues would arise which would quickly invalidate any master plan and that therefore, the most desirable stance for MTC was a flexible one. In developing the plan, MTC had identified project related environmental issues but the lack of a systematic environmental impact report was criticized widely by the community (and Bay Area members of the state legislature as well). MTC's planning efforts, therefore, now have to respond to this criticism if MTC is to maintain credibility in the region. Perhaps the most important issue not treated by the plan was the question of financial priorities for the development of transit and highways. While MTC's open-ended plan allowed for resolving specific funding proposal issues as they came up, some of these issues (most notably decisions on extensions of BART lines and possible future transfers of highway funds to transit development) might require a better structured and more comprehensive approach to recognizing the budgetary interdependence between projects. Nonetheless, MTC's plan was adopted, allowing the commission to begin to fill its fuller role as a regional decision-making body for transportation issues.

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In conjunction with state and regional agencies, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (acting under the U.S. Clean Air Act of 1970) has been developing transportation control plans for metropolitan areas with high pollution levels, to attempt to reduce the number of vehicle miles travelled in the regions and thereby reduce transportation's contribution to regional air pollution. Where local authorities have not developed plans to the EPA's liking, as in the Bay Area, EPA has taken upon itself to promulgate plans which drastically reduce central city parking capacity, which encourage transit improvements and which restrict further highway development.

In the Bay Area, as elsewhere, local officials have strongly agreed with the improvement of regional air quality but strongly protested the severity of the economic impact likely to occur from the EPA plan. Environmental groups such as the Bay Area Sierra Club and the San Francisco Ecology Center have supported the plan. While it is unlikely that all of the strict provisions of the plan will ever be implemented, efforts to develop better planning tools for air quality have been initiated by the California Department of Transportation (incorporating the former Division of Highways), BART and MTC. Further, the EPA pressure has resulted in some planning efforts for express bus lanes, carpooling and other incentives to reduce vehicle travel.

In one particular respect, the EPA has significantly affected, at least for the time being, the proposed expansion of Interstate 580, a freeway in the Livermore Valley which connects the agricultural land of California's central valley to the harbors of the Bay Area. Between 1964 and 1969, the State Division of Highways developed plans to expand the existing four lane I-580 to eight lanes to accommodate growing truck and commuter traffic through
the Livermore Valley. In 1970, however, a proposal to modify the original design to include space for the possible eventual construction of a BART extension in the median delayed implementation. As a result of this delay, the project became subject to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act and therefore had to submit an environmental impact statement (EIS) to the Federal Highway Administration before construction could proceed. In 1971, a draft EIS of roughly 50 pages was prepared which included one general paragraph on the air quality impacts of the proposal. After much concern was expressed, however, over the growth-inducing impacts of the proposal and the related increase in vehicle miles travelled and air pollution in the Livermore corridor (which had one of the worst levels of air quality in the Bay Area), the EIS was redrafted in 1973 to include a large study of air pollution impacts (but one, unfortunately, which was limited in its methodology).

At this point, MTC had adopted its regional plan and it had to approve the I-580 project before the Division of Highways could present the proposal to the FHWA. In MTC discussions with the community, the proposal was widely supported by commuter groups, homebuilders, businessmen, several local governments and the Alameda County Department of Public Works. A widened Route 580 had been a part of local general plans for a number of years and these would all have to be redone if it wasn't built. In addition, it was argued that traffic congestion on the road was getting very bad, and would likely get worse. Very few local groups opposed the road and the largest opponent appeared to be the Bay Area Sierra Club. MTC voted to approve the project with Chairperson Joe Bort (a supervisor from Alameda County) citing the dependency of local plans upon its completion but with some environmental groups criticizing the general bias which the county supervisors on MTC had
toward any new public works construction as a necessary and valid investment.

However, MTC was to be overruled in this case. In the Council on Environmental Quality, the federal group which oversees the implementation of the National Environmental Policy Act, the EPA persuaded the Secretary of Transportation to direct the Federal Highway Administration to reject the project's EIS because it lacked adequate air quality information. The project's implementation is for the time being, therefore, dependent upon the region's development of adequate traffic forecasting and air quality prediction techniques, despite MTC's official support of the proposal.

This case illustrates two important points. First, in the absence of strong local opposition, NTC voted to support a major highway expansion project despite its alleged interest in increased emphasis on transit in the region. However, the proposal had strong local support from residents of the area and did include the possibility of transit development. Therefore, support of the proposal did appear to be responsive to the interests of a particular portion of the region. Also, the Livermore population is not a large portion of the Bay Area and the regionwide impacts of satisfying these Livermore interests, as long as the money for the road is specifically allocated to interstate highway construction and cannot be transferred to other uses, are likely to be small.

The second point concerns the interesting interjection into the debate of more purely technical concerns about air quality impacts by a federal agency. This was not the first case of federal intervention in the Bay Area (in the Junipera Serra dispute, the Federal Highway Administrator openly supported the San Francisco side of the case), but it does reflect
the continued presence of the federal government as an actor in Bay Area affairs. In fact, the federal government has had a 15 year history of requiring planning efforts in the Bay Area (and elsewhere) before federal funds for transportation improvements could be allocated (e.g., the 3-C process for transportation planning, the Unified Work Program for transportation planning). Despite the Junipero Serra case, most of this intervention has been done from the perspective of the impartial technical actor interested in ensuring that an adequate planning process was developed. However, the actions of the federal actors clearly have influenced the nature and outcomes of planning and decision-making for transportation in the Bay Area.

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Freeways, (cont.)

The strong early reactions in the urban portions of the Bay Area against the construction of costly highways and against the people responsible for those highways (the California Highway Commission and Division of Highways), have continued to shape transportation politics in the Bay Area. Resentment among regional leaders of state level decision-making on regional highways and desires for increased support of transit improvements have spurred the region's discussion of regional government and the establishment of MTC. MTC, in its regional plan, clearly presented an orientation toward transit (even though it was somewhat vague) and toward reducing regional overdependence on the automobile.

The Bay Area has not been alone in these feelings towards state highway developers in California and, in late 1972, the California legislature transformed the State Department of Public Works into the California Department of Transportation (CALTRANS), with a governor-appointed State Transpor-
tation Board and with Divisions of Mass Transportation and Transportation Planning. In some respects the change was one of name, not of substance: the Division of Highways still had some 16,000 employees (the Division of Mass Transportation had 22) and they and the California Highway Commission still had control of the large state highway trust fund (very few similar funds for transit were available).

Nonetheless, a certain change of attitude has begun to take place. District offices are now Transportation (rather than Highway) districts and the CALTRANS enabling legislation directed the newly created Division of Transportation Planning to carry out the development of a statewide transportation plan. Regional plans are being developed by the local Councils of Governments or regional planning agencies unless they have specifically asked the CALTRANS districts to prepare them. The State plan will incorporate the regional plan and schedule of improvement priorities except where issues of "statewide interregional interest" were not addressed by the regions. Once regional and state plans are adopted, the California Highway Commission is supposed to follow the priorities set by the regional plans. Prior to the official establishment of formal regional priorities, the CALTRANS districts are attempting to formally involve the COG/RPA's in setting highway priorities (through review and comment on the Division of Highway's existing technical priority list).

In the Bay Area, where MTC already has a 'plan' and is supposed to be setting priorities, the CALTRANS district, long considered a villain, has taken a low profile in influencing MTC priorities. However, the state has not fully abandoned its role as highway advocate. The technical list prepared by the CALTRANS investment programming staff is quite sophisticated, and the
projects in it have already had many years of planning done on them. While some projects are now being dropped or reduced in scope because costs have escalated and state highway funds could not build all of them, the state's list of possible projects clearly defines the only projects using highway funds which will be on the region's agenda in the near future. Any new projects would require planning lead time of several years, state highway funds are not now available for transit development and MTC's planning and programming capabilities are just now beginning to equal those of the CALTRANS districts. But even within these constraints, it is likely that priorities among these projects will be the responsibility of MTC. This responsibility, along with increasing technical sophistication as it becomes better established, should make MTC the primary regional decision-making authority on highway development. Two recent issues illustrate the potential and the problems of this role.

Construction of Route 24 (the Grove Shafter Freeway) in Oakland has been subject to major controversy for some time now. But despite the controversy, everything but a short final section has been completed. For this piece, the controversy has intensified. The road is a major component of a proposed redevelopment project in downtown Oakland and local officials strongly support its construction. If not for their support and their strong pressure on CALTRANS, the local CALTRANS district apparently would see little real system importance to building the link and might not ask for high priority for it. On the other side, the redevelopment project and the road will likely cause major relocation of black residents of Oakland and community groups have been strongly opposing it. MTC, in its regional plan, named the link as of high system importance and placed it in Category II (to be placed
in Category I if relocation problems are solved). Thus the issue revolves around a conflict of two groups within the same community and it is really much broader than transportation alone. MTC has an opportunity to ensure that community objections are resolved (i.e., to play overseer to the local political process) and has apparently opted not to commit itself beforehand to a decision. But MTC has authority only over transportation, and the roots of this issue go beyond transportation so that MTC's real jurisdiction may be very limited. The case also illustrates that local officials (e.g., from the Oakland city government), who make up MTC's board, may be promoting positions on issues which are opposed by large minorities of their constituency. To a certain extent, this brings into question the responsiveness of MTC's board to these minorities on other issues as well.

A second issue which MTC currently faces is the proposed construction of the Napa River Bridge. Questions have been raised by environmentalists about the growth-inducing impacts of construction and the unnecessary duplication of existing bridges in the area which the construction might occasion. In the staff recommendations the bridge was placed in category IV but before adoption of the plan, it was moved to category II. It so happens that the bridge is to be named for the powerful Senator Collier and, although he is no longer chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee, he is now Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee. According to top MTC personnel, he has threatened to hold up any state funds for MTC (now a sizable portion of their funding) if the bridge is not approved. It appears that MTC will now approve the bridge without further study. Two points should be made: first, it is not uncommon for state legislator's opinions on transportation projects to hold considerable authority but second, it appears that in this case author-
ity is tied to the legislator's statewide power and not so much to his local constituency.

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Transit Extensions and Coordination

The two key transit issues currently facing MTC are the decisions on priorities for extension of BART and decisions on actions to coordinate existing transit agencies. Both issues illustrate key aspects of the political atmosphere in which MTC is operating.

For BART there are currently five extensions under consideration, and MTC has to approve which extensions will be built. Four of them are in areas within the current BART district (Livermore, Pittsburg-Antioch, Oakland Airport, and Northwest San Francisco). One, the extension to San Francisco Airport through San Mateo County, is not. BART directors from Alameda and Contra Costa counties would like to see those areas of their counties which have been paying property taxes to support BART for 10 years without benefit of BART service have first priority for extensions. They fear that MTC, under the control of all nine counties (the six counties outside of BART have more votes than the three within), will vote to extend BART outside the district to San Francisco Airport and that San Mateo County (which originally withdrew from BART when initial construction meant very high taxes for the community) would get service from the entire BART system for less than the cost of their share of the total system. The San Mateo costs would be reduced even further by the existence today of much higher federal subsidies (2/3 of cost) for transit construction.

To head off an extension outside of the BART district, the East Bay directors attempted to get the state legislature to curb MTC powers and to
"freeze" BART extensions within the current BART district. But the de facto Bay Area regional government in the legislature, responding to strong objections to this freeze from San Francisco and San Mateo legislators, defeated the proposal. Once again, a regional issue was decided in the legislature, but this time, the decision was one to keep the actual extension decision within the region by giving it to MTC to resolve.

MTC has its work cut out for it, for the issue is not simply one of the BART counties vs the non-BART counties, but involves a deeper disagreement between East and West Bay counties for regional priority and between Oakland and San Francisco for access to their respective airports. Planning studies are underway in all areas (they have been completed for the San Francisco Airport extension) and the relative costs and revenues of each extension are certain to play a role in the decision given BART's serious financial problems. But the two major issues which will have to be resolved prior to an MTC decision are (1) what is an equitable cost for "buying into" the BART system for San Mateo County and (2) is this sufficient to offset the cost to East Bay areas where taxes have been paid but no BART service exists?

Beyond these extension issues, the central Bay Area (the three BART counties) also has an existing transit system (or rather, four systems--AC, BART, Golden Gate, and MUNI) and certainly one objective of any regional government is the better coordination of existing services. In the past three years, two major issues have come up, one concerning the coordination of BART and AC service in the East Bay and across the Bay to San Francisco, the other concerned with MTC's role in allocation of state transit funds between BART and MUNI.

The BART-AC conflicts have a relatively long history. Both
agencies participated in the Northern California Transit Demonstration Project, an effort to plan for coordination of BART, AC and MUNI. AC rerouted a number of its buses to provide better service to BART stations. However, two issues have not been resolved. First, AC complains that BART stations were largely designed for automobile access, not for buses, making connections difficult for their passengers. Second, and more important, BART and AC compete with one another for passengers on several routes, most notably the routes across the Bay (which are currently very profitable for AC). No fare sharing or unified share plan has yet been negotiated, raising the possibility that AC will continue to operate across the Bay even after BART begins service, thereby operating in direct and inefficient competition for passengers.

Recognizing the severity of this problem, several groups, including the San Francisco Planning and Urban Renewal Association (a professional planning organization), suggested in 1971 that MTC should step in as mediator to this dispute. In response MTC took two actions. First, it established a Transit Coordinating Council as a forum for discussion of coordination issues between transit operators. Top leaders of MTC suggest, however, that they are not taking the lead role in this group, but merely bringing it together. MTC's second response involved initiation of an AC/BART coordination project. While this project is directing specific attention to the issues, its first report, in January 1973, was nothing more than a broad identification of the issues. In playing the role of mediator, MTC has taken a cautious role in using its powers to bring the two large existing agencies together.

The second transit dispute confirms MTC's need to use its powers
cautiously. The state legislature, in 1971, passed the Transportation Development Act establishing a state sales tax collection to support transit (or highways when no transit need exists). The money is intended to be spent only in the county of its origin and most regional agencies can only review and comment on claims made by transit agencies without any control over the total amount of money to go to each county. But in the Bay Area (where the total funds are $35 - $40 million annually), three overlapping agencies, BART, MUNI and AC, vie for the funds from three counties (San Francisco, Alameda and Contra Costa) and MTC not only reviews claims but also apportions those monies between BART and AC and between BART and MUNI. Since the money can be used for both construction and operating subsidies, this provision gives MTC considerable official clout in shaping transit agency actions.

Within MTC, grants are reviewed by 4 staff members and a grant review subcommittee of the Commission. In 1973, the subcommittee was made up of two East Bay members and one from San Mateo. In preparing the allocations for BART and MUNI, the committee voted 2-1 to give a substantial portion of the funds for the next five years to BART for the addition of new cars. MUNI, as was mentioned previously, is in continual need of financial aid to meet its deficit and San Francisco officials were complaining that BART was not yet even running in San Francisco and that therefore, San Francisco should not have to sacrifice MUNI funds to pay for further BART expansion. Interestingly, San Francisco (which holds four seats out of twelve on the BART Board of Directors), got support on this issue from two East Bay members of the BART board in part because the East Bay members wanted to be able to count on San Francisco's support in the future when AC might need money. Ultimately, MUNI and BART reached a compromise in which MUNI got more money and the whole MTC
In this issue of transit agency conflict, MTC served as a forum to resolve the issue. MTC staff, using no technical information other than that presented by the two agencies, had made a proposal to support the long range goals of BART (with support from two East Bay commissioners). However, the stronger interest expressed at the time was in keeping MUNI running. MTC apparently responded to this stronger interest, and MUNI won a more satisfactory settlement of the claims.

What arises out of these issues is a sense that MTC cannot simply direct these transit agencies to coordinate on a sound technical basis but that various MTC commissioners represent different interests in what priorities for development of the regional transit system should be. Thus, whether the issue is priorities on extensions, coordination or allocation of state funds, the decisions MTC makes are likely to be colored by its members and the interests they represent, and the power each of its members hold.
D. Conclusion: Building an Understanding

This review of transportation and other issues in the Bay Area has hardly been a complete one. But as the issues were discussed, various aspects of the political context in which MTC is operating emerged. The task which remains is the weaving together of the various threads of these difficult issues so that a basic understanding of the political context in which planning is being done can be developed. With this understanding, the planning director of MTC would hopefully be able to organize the activities of the Commission's planning staff to perform planning activities which complement the ongoing political decision process.

Building this understanding requires the identification of three facets of the Bay Area political context. First, the planning director must identify the actors who play a role in regional decisions, the interests they express and the resources they have to express those interests (i.e., political power, technical assistance). This type of information is necessary if the director intends to structure his or her agency so as to play the role proposed in Chapter II of overseer to the political decision process (i.e., ensuring that the interests of a wide range of groups are expressed in and considered by the political decision process). Second, the processes by which issues emerge in the Bay Area must be identified. In order to organize a planning staff to provide technical information on issues as they emerge, the planning director must be able to identify emerging issues at the earliest possible time and to assess which actors in the region are likely to initiate issues and which are likely to play reactive roles (i.e., reacting to ensure that their interests are considered as issues are resolved). Finally, the types of issues which emerge and the types of decision dynamics
which govern the resolution of these issues should be identified by the planning director. This knowledge provides (1) a guide to the technical aspects of these issues which are considered in decisions and to the types of technical analysis which should be performed by a planning staff and (2) insights on which actors do have opportunities to have their interests considered as issues are resolved, and which do not.

The Actors - The review of the issues suggests that there are a number of actors who participate in the various regional issues and that they express a diverse range of regional interests. The actors involved include private interest groups, local governments and officials, members of the state legislature and the various regional, state, and federal institutions with special authority in the Bay Area. Different sets of these actors take part in decisions at different levels (e.g., local officials and community interest groups at local levels, local officials and regional interest groups at regional levels). For different decisions there will be different official decision-makers, and the issues reviewed above suggest that the responsiveness of these sets of decision-makers (e.g., the legislature or local governments) to the various private interest groups is not always complete. Briefly, the major sets of actors are:

Local and Regional Interest Groups - Five sets of interest groups have been involved in the various issues. First, business interests, who in earlier years played a major role in support of BART and freeway development, continue to support improved transportation facilities which provide better service to their firms (e.g., central city interests in good BART service, regionwide interest in good highway service). They have emerged, as well, as vigorous regional advocates of directly elected,
efficient regional government. Second, labor interests, particularly in the construction unions, have expressed strong support for capital construction of highway and rail transit systems which provides employment. Third, conservation and environmental interests have been building at the local and regional level. At the local level early opposition to freeways (e.g., the Embarcadero) has continued through to today (the Napa River Bridge). This has been aided by federal environmental impact statement requirements (and similar California ones) and pressure from the U.S. EPA for improvement of air quality. At the regional level, these groups have been particularly effective in establishing the BCDC as a regional environmental advocate.

Fourth, social action interests (e.g., black and Chicano community groups, the NAACP, etc.) have played a role in the urban areas of the region. On local freeway issues (e.g., the Ashby Freeway, the Grove-Shafter Freeway) they have been effective local opponents. But in regional transit decisions (i.e., the commuter orientation of BART) they apparently have been bypassed to a certain extent. Some groups (e.g., NAACP) have actively entered into the debate on regional government to assert their interest in protecting representation for minorities in a regional government. While this issue has not been fully settled, the establishment of MTC with a board made up of local government officials and not guaranteeing minority representation suggests that they have been less than successful. A fifth active regional group has been the Bay Area League of Women Voters, most often advocating the principles of "good government." While their influence has not appeared to be great, they have played the role of identifying key issues and bringing them into the general public discussion to ensure, somewhat, the comprehensiveness of that discussion.
Local Governments and Officials - As was suggested in the introduction on metropolitan political cultures, local governments (cities and counties) often both desire greater regional autonomy from state level decision-making and fear loss of local power to any formal regional decision-making body unless they have control of it. In the Bay Area, local governments, by organizing ABAG and advocating constituent representation in regional government, have maintained a significant amount of control over regional decision-making bodies (e.g., MTC and ABAG as the land use planning agency). But the various issues suggest that this unified defensive stance does not imply unified interests. Certain clear distinctions arise, most notably the split between urban and rural areas, with urban areas expressing desires for strong regional commuter transit to maintain their economic importance in the region and often opposing freeway construction in the city itself, and with rural areas expressing conservative worries about rising tax rates and generally supporting freeway construction. Also, the competition between San Francisco and Oakland for allocation of new monies to spur urban growth (i.e., the airport access issue) can (and has) raised further conflicts of interest between local governments. Finally a significant difference exists in attitudes toward growth and environmental concerns. Both the inability of ABAG to act on Bay filling policy (caused by a split in ranks) and the more recent pro-growth (Solano County) and anti-growth (Marin County) attitudes expressed at MTC public hearings indicate the diversity of interests represented by local governments. MTC, with a board made up of local government officials in the Bay Area, is somewhat more likely to respond primarily to the business interests in their communities and resolution of regional differences by MTC may not always reflect the interests of the diverse segments of the community.
Special Agencies and Districts - In several cases the Bay Area pattern of developing special purpose regional or subregional agencies to resolve particular issues has been identified. In addition, the state maintains two major special purpose agencies in the area, the Toll Bridge Administration and the local CALTRANS district. Each of these agencies has responsibility for part (or part of one part) of the regional transportation system (or water or sewer systems in other cases). While they primarily play an implementation role (i.e., constructing and operating BART or the highway system) they have, in the absence of any regional planning, their own extensive planning activities and priorities for improvement. While the current separation of highway funding from transit funding reduces the number of conflicts between modal agencies, the competition for funding and transit coordination problems between agencies are often quite severe. Each agency, once established, develops its own identity based on its single purpose (some call this tunnel vision) and while they often succeed in getting things accomplished, in doing so, they themselves become new interest groups in the region. The problems these create are the type which MTC might well address as a regional forum. But (1) some of the agencies, such as MUNI and BART, are directed by the same local officials as those who sit on MTC, perhaps giving them more access to the board than AC transit or the CALTRANS district, and (2) some of the issues clearly involve priorities for expansion of transit service outside of the existing districts and MTC, which has a majority of its counties without major transit service, may not be the best forum to deal equitably with new transit development.

State Legislators - As was illustrated many times above, the legislature has served as a de facto regional government for the Bay Area. Legis-
lators from the Bay Area (elected from 18 districts) are somewhat diverse in their interests, and include several members of minority groups. As a result, when the legislature as a whole allows this sub-group to develop its own proposals for the Bay Area (or resolve conflicts which arise between Bay Area legislators), they can be a relatively responsive and effective regional decision body. But as we have seen, one state legislator, backed by the powerful statewide freeway interests whom he has made his constituency, clearly has had stronger influence on this group than the others. Through Senator Collier, the oil and trucking interests who strongly support freeway development and who have been angered by the Bay Area's negative attitude toward highways, could therefore block any plan which gave the Bay Area absolute control over freeway decisions within its region. Thus the nature of a regional government body (MTC) and its ultimate powers were shaped by statewide groups. In recent years, as the lobby has declined somewhat in strength, MTC has, however, been established as a regional decision-making forum to take over some of the role of the state legislature. But MTC is dependent on the state legislature for its funding and therefore responsive to the legislative delegation in two important ways. First, a legislator's preferences on particular issues may hold considerable importance in MTC's decision-making if they do not wish to anger the legislator. In Senator Collier's case this is especially true. Second, when regional issues emerge which MTC does not resolve to the satisfaction of all major interests, these groups may go beyond MTC to the legislature (e.g., the BART extension issue). While the legislature may not always overturn an MTC action, the slightly broader representation of regional interests in the legislature (i.e., for minorities) may provide an effective check on the responsiveness of MTC decisions to the full set of regional interest groups.
State and Federal Agencies - In addition to state agencies which actually construct and operate Bay Area facilities (as mentioned above) a number of state and federal agencies influence the process by which decisions are made, the actors involved and the funding priorities within the Bay Area. Both state and federal agencies have established extensive procedures for environmental impact reporting and community participation which often help bring out major social and environmental issues (e.g., air quality in Livermore). Also, the federal A-95 review delegated to ABAG and the requirements for a Unified Work Program (combining all transportation planning funds for the region) have created pressures for increased coordination. Now, the federal government is moving further in not allowing highway construction until air quality concerns have been addressed, and also not allowing the region to get 2/3 federal funding for transit until MTC has developed a 10 year priority plan for improvements. Thus the majority of the state and federal interventions have dealt with shaping the process from an impartial technical point of view. But major influence on regional transit and highway development also has been exerted by the state and federal highway funds which provide highway development to the area at no direct cost to the region (and which cannot be used for other than highway purposes). However, this powerful bias in funding for transportation may be ending as the Federal fund was opened in 1973 to be partially used for transit, as other federal and state transit funds have been made available and as the California highway fund has recently been opened up.

The Issues - One key aspect of the transportation issues characteristic of the Bay Area is that the Bay Area does have a well developed highway and transit system and that therefore, the focus of the region's transport
issues is on completing the last few segments of the system, developing extensions (rail and highway) to less developed areas, coordinating the various parts of the existing system and maintaining the system.

The review above suggests some idea of how this more limited set of transport issues is likely to emerge in the area. Above all, the issues will be somewhat constrained by those which existing agencies have put on their agenda. The CALTRANS district, with its continuing priority list for highway improvements and backlog of planned routes ready for implementation, will certainly define, at least for the near future, what highway projects can actively be considered. Similarly, BART, AC, MUNI and Golden Gate have all defined continuing transit capital improvement programs. But it is highly unlikely that the funds available to the region over the next 10 to 20 years for transportation improvement will cover the costs of all of these projects, and so there remains a role for MTC to play in identifying issues which are raised by these different projects, resolving these issues and setting priorities among the various projects.

The region, from the review above, apparently goes about identifying these issues in several different ways. First, as with Rt. 580, or Rt. 24 or the extensions of BART to different parts of the region, issues are likely to emerge into the regional decision arena as a result of strongly expressed local interests (i.e., in building, or opposing, a highway project, or in seeking commitment to extend within the BART district before extending outside it). In some cases, consideration is spurred by special funding which has been set aside for the project (e.g., Interstate funds for I-580) or by interest from a particularly powerful regional actor (e.g., Senator Collier and the Napa River Bridge). In essence, though, a process of various
private interest groups and local officials expressing their interests and lobbying for action or no action has been in existence for some time.

A second source of issues are the various special institutional interest groups which have emerged in the region. For example, the CALTRANS district, identifying what it sees as a necessary improvement in a highway, will prepare planning studies and an environmental impact statement, hold public hearings and seek approval of the project from MTC. Or AC transit will protest that its interest in providing good quality bus service in the East Bay will not be served by BART's unwillingness to coordinate its stations with AC buses and its reluctance to share revenues from the profitable trans-bay service. Special authorities, each with their own boards of directors (the State Highway Commission in the CALTRANS case), are expressing their interests and seeking to have them served by the political process.

Finally, issues will emerge in the yearly round of funding allocations which MTC oversees. In highways, (where funding is now predominantly separate from transit) the annual priority setting process for highway projects regularly raises highway issues. In transit, MTC's decision authority on allocations of state Transportation Development Act funds as well as its approval authority on transit agency applications to the federal Urban Mass Transportation Administration for funds (the total amount of which are limited), also requires resolution of transit improvement priority issues. These include, as in the case of MUNI and BART, decisions on the support of improved regional rail transit as opposed to the support of local intra-city transit. If, as appears to be the case, highway funds are increasingly made available for transit (if the region decides to use them that way) the funding issues are likely to expand in number and in intensity (e.g., if BART and the CALTRANS District
are both seeking approval of major construction projects with the same limited funds).

**Political Dynamics of Issue Resolution** - Two Bay Area regional forums for transportation decisions have been identified. The state legislature, particularly the Bay Area delegation, has served as a regional government on many issues. In most cases, their deliberations reflect a fairly full range of regional views. But in some, the power of certain Bay Area personalities in the state as a whole can strongly influence Bay Area action. In recognition, in part, of this state control of regional decisions, the area sought and obtained approval to establish its own regional forum for transportation decisions, the MTC. MTC is made up of local government representatives and has been established to resolve major regional issues.

The brief review of issues above suggests that four different types of decisions will have to be made by MTC in resolving regional issues, and that each will involve different types and numbers of actors with different distributions of power. First, there are decisions where the issues being addressed are essentially local. The Rt. 24 controversy in Oakland between black community groups and business leaders and local government, where the road does not have major regional significance, is an example of these. The issues often involve many local concerns other than transportation (Black-White relations, local economic development goals). But MTC is given a role in such decisions because the funding for the road comes from the state and they must decide on the priority of the issue's claim on regional funds (i.e., what other projects might use the funds and are eligible for them). Sometimes, they may also be interested because a large local interest group (e.g., the
black community in Oakland) has expressed an interest in the issue and is not satisfied with the way it has been resolved locally. Issues of a primarily local type are not likely to occur very often. When they do occur MTC can play the role of ensuring that all local community interests have been adequately considered, but where local government officials who sit on MTC are predominantly supporting a position opposed by local minority groups, it may be that the other local government officials who make up MTC will defer to their colleagues' interests and ignore the interests of the minority groups.

A second set of decision are of a regional-local nature. Freeway issues for major links fit into this category. Decisions to provide transit funds to essentially local transit agencies (such as AC or MUNI) or to a more regional agency such as BART are another example. Local interests may agree on an issue (as in the MUNI case) or be split (as in many highway controversies with pro- and anti-highway advocates) but other portions of the region have a say in resolution of the issue. For example, in BART-MUNI, the entire regional transit system would have to hold up purchase of new cars if San Francisco is allowed to use a larger share of the transit funds allocated to San Francisco for local transit. MTC can play a strong role as decision forum for such an issue. However, the name 'regional-local' may be misleading. In the BART-MUNI case, some portions of the broader 'region' supported San Francisco (thereby helping San Francisco gain a favorable settlement) in return for later support when they would be primary actors in a similar dispute. Thus, there may be no major spokesperson for regionwide interests and local goals will be supported in return for the same treatment at a later point. In providing a forum for this kind of 'local-protection' political behavior, (rather than bitter confrontations at public hearings between local groups and
state or regional agencies) MTC may pave the way for development of a more cooperative spirit among regional agencies and local actors. Decisions such as these are likely to arise often as the need for resolution of conflicts between local interests and regional and state interests continues.

A third form of decision, and perhaps the most common type, is the intra-regional decision. This can take several forms: conflicts between counties over BART extensions, conflicts between center city and suburbs over setting aside regional highway funds for transit (should this become feasible) or conflicts between environmental or social groups and business and existing institutions over implementation of an air quality transportation control plan or over the orientation of a regional rail transit system (i.e., suburban commuter vs intracity). Basically, major regional interest groups are expressing different concerns, desires and priorities for transportation development. Where the conflict is between major regional government actors (e.g., counties, BART and CALTRANS), MTC can play an effective role as a forum for resolving the differences. But where the dispute is between interest groups (e.g., environmentalists or social action groups and local officials or business), MTC may provide a much better forum for the latter interests than the former. These types of issues are likely to occur often, as counties within MTC seek to maintain their own interests and federal intervention (and increased public awareness) continue to bring social and environmental issues to the fore.

Finally, a fourth set of decisions occurs, generally emanating from within the region, but involving state and federal actors as well. Were, for example, MTC to decide, under the 1973 Federal Highway Act, to try to transfer funds intended for widening of Interstate 80 to the development of
transit, MTC itself becomes an actor in the arena, advocating the region's position with the California Highway Commission, the legislature and the Federal government. In a recent example, the regional and state decision to build I-580 was overturned by federal pressure for better consideration of air quality. While technical factors can play a role in such decisions, decisions are more likely to be resolved by regional, state and federal legislators. Decisions are also likely to be sensitive to how firmly committed to the action MTC and the region are. But while the decisions are certainly important, they are not likely to be numerous (there are limits on funding transfers as well as on the powers of direct intervention of the federal government). Nonetheless, MTC's role as regional advocate in such decisions is an important one.

This assessment of the Bay Area's political context is somewhat cursory, as the exact responsibilities and powers of all of the actors have not been outlined, and their behavior in the whole range of possible issues have not been fully reviewed. But based on the tentative conclusions above on the Area's political context, several observations can be made about the nature of regional decision-making and the role which planning information has played and might play in decisions.

First, there are indications that the decision forum (MTC) as currently structured, may tend to favor business and local government interests in its decisions. As a result of federal and state impact reporting requirements and the efforts of several regional interest groups (the League of Women Voters, the Sierra Club), many environmental and social issues are now likely to emerge in the region's decision process, but the groups who express the strongest interest in these issues may not hold enough power to influence
decisions or have access to the MTC decision-makers because the MTC member's interests tend to be aligned with other regional groups. To a certain extent, the more diverse 'back-up' regional government, the legislature, may provide a good check on MTC's straying too far in favor of one group, but as we have seen, this group too can be dominated by one set of interests. While planners, except perhaps advocate planners for community groups, cannot hope to significantly build any one group's power, they could play the role of advocate for and supplier of information on social and environmental considerations in transportation decisions. By developing well-balanced, sensible information on social and environmental issues which can be easily grasped, planners might (1) provide information to make less powerful regional groups aware of their stake in decisions and (2) promote environmental and social considerations in their contacts with MTC decision-makers.

A second observation concerns the lack of 'neutral' information for use in MTC decisions. Almost all of the information which is available for use to guide complicated decisions on financial issues (e.g., AC-BART, MUNI-BART or the CALTRANS Highway Program) is developed by the operating agencies themselves and often represents many major, undocumented, apriori assumptions about goals and objectives. A second task for the planner, then, would be the sorting out of all this information to provide the decision-maker with a clearer view of what the decisions are. This might involve, in the near term, gaining access to the agencies' information, assessing the differences between the ways in which the information is developed and differences in the predicted outcomes, and summarizing this analysis for the decision-maker. As MTC becomes better established, it may be possible to work with the agencies to coordinate efforts to develop common bases for analysis.
A final observation concerns a major type of MTC decisions, the intraregional decision. Often, the key questions here are what counties or groups gain by a particular decision and which lose. Sometimes, as in the case of the BART extensions, this requires complicated financial and travel analysis. But the key factor here is not so much what the aggregate regional effects of one or the other BART extensions will be, but what the key benefits (e.g., reduced travel times, increased development) and the key costs (e.g., increases in tax rate, loss of a chance for BART service) will be for each county (or portion of a county). It is likely that regional distributions of power will ultimately control which interest groups' views will win out, but to establish their initial position on the issues, adequate local information on the costs and benefits for each group may be useful.
CHAPTER III

FOOTNOTES


8. Mogulof, op. cit.; Federal Bureau of the Budget Circular A-95


Boyce, David E., Norman D. Day and Chris McDonald, Metropolitan Plan Making, An Analysis of Experience with the Preparation and Evaluation of Alternative Land Use and Transportation Plans, Monograph Series Number Four, Philadelphia: Regional Science Research Institute, 1970.


12. op. cit. p. 246.


15. San Francisco Chronicle, March 6, 1971; Colcord. op. cit.


17. Oakland Tribune: 11/22/68, 11/20/69, 1/18/70, 4/24/70, 5/6/70; San Francisco Chronicle: 10/9/69, 11/20/69, 9/21/70; California State Assembly Bill No. 363 (Metropolitan Transportation Commission Act), Introduced January 26, 1970.


20. California State Assembly Bill No. 69 (Department of Transportation Act), 1972; California State Transportation Board, Regional Transportation Plans, Guidelines, April, 1973; MTC, Regional Transportation Plan, Berkeley, June 27, 1973; Summary Transcripts, MTC Public Meetings Nos. 1-4 on Regional Transportation Plan, June 11-14, 1973; Meetings with Highway Programming Staff, CALTRANS District 4, Joseph Bort, MTC Chairman, January 1974.

A. Introduction: MTC and the Role of the Planner

It was suggested in Chapter II that the planner, in order to play a more effective role in creating the linkage between knowledge and governmental action, should organize his or her planning activities to guide the ongoing set of decisions on public policy development and implementation. To accomplish this the planner may not want to expend exorbitant amounts of limited planning time and resources on master planning activities, but might rather seek to make each incremental decision by the public decision-makers the best possible decision that can be made at that time. The planner becomes a sort of overseer for the political process, attempting to ensure that decisions are as comprehensively considered as is possible, that all affected groups are informed and encouraged to participate in decisions, and that decisions reflect long range as well as short range considerations.

In taking on this role, the planner seeks to develop information which is understandable to the decision makers on the implications for various interest groups of a particular decision.

To carry out this role, the planner may play a staff role to a chief executive or a broader decision-making forum (e.g., a city council), a 'neutral' role financed by civic groups interested in good governmental decision-making (e.g., the Passaic Valley citizens' Planning group in Rabinovitz, or the League of Women Voters), or an advocate's role for a group with strong interests.
in a governmental action, but no well organized voice in decision-making.

While each of these is likely to be an important role, the first, as staff for a chief executive or for a broader decision-making forum, is likely to be the position with the most financial resources and the one (as Walker and Kent have argued) with the most opportunities for influencing ongoing political decisions. Rabinovitz has pointed out that a staff role for a chief executive, while potentially valuable when that actor holds power and is seeking information from the planner on the long range and comprehensive effects of decisions, can damage the planner's claim to objectivity and his or her later effectiveness should the particular actor lose power. Therefore, if one is seeking to shape planning activities to best link knowledge to governmental action with sufficient planning resources, it seems most valuable to focus on the design of planning activities which best suit the planner's role as staff to a broader decision-making forum.

The San Francisco Bay Area Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) provides an example of such a broader decision-making forum. To better understand how the role concept for planners proposed in Chapter II could be applied to organizing the planning activities of MTC, this chapter reviews the specific roles which MTC was created to fill (i.e., through its enabling legislation) and the type of role MTC has established for itself as it has evolved. This review is based on documents prepared by MTC during the course of its first three years of existence and on interviews with a variety of MTC personnel.
B. The Legislative Mandate

On September 16, 1970, California Governor Ronald Reagan signed into law a bill creating the Metropolitan Transportation Commission in the San Francisco Bay Area. Established to "provide comprehensive regional transportation planning for the region," the Commission is made up of 14 representatives appointed by city and county government, one each from the Association of Bay Area Governments and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission, and three non-voting members from state and federal agencies. The basic task initially delegated to the MTC was the development, within three years, of a regional transportation plan. The plan was to include highways, transbay bridges and mass transit systems and was mandated to "pay particular attention to the interfacing of the various modes of transportation." It was to consider previous planning efforts by the Bay Area Transportation Study Committee and other regional and subregional planning organizations, as well as the "ecological, economic and social impact of existing and future regional transportation systems upon various facets of the region." Finally, the plan was to include a 10 year estimate of regional transportation needs, a schedule of priorities for constructing and maintaining the regional transportation system and a financial plan for that system. Specifically, MTC was mandated to develop the financial plan "without regard to any constraints imposed by law on expenditures . . . and, if necessary, recommend appropriate legislation to secure . . . financing."

Once the regional transportation plan was adopted, the Commission had to (1) revise the plan periodically, (2) approve the construction of any transbay bridge (or expansion of existing bridges) except for projects already well underway, (3) approve the construction of any public multicounty transit system within the region, (4) develop priorities for highway development to
which the California Highway Commission had to conform except in cases of
overriding statewide significance and (5) review all local applications for
state or federal funds which have transport elements and approve and forward
only those applications which are compatible with the plan. In addition, the
Commission was directed to study the roles of harbors and airports within the
region as they relate to surface transportation and to "render all available
assistance to transit systems operated within the region by any city or public
agency to ensure adequate feeder service to public multicounty transit systems."

Thus, MTC was developed by the legislature to adopt a regional
transportation plan and program of improvements and was then given the power
to regulate the implementation of that plan. The Legislature suggested that
MTC was to be supported by federal, state and local sources, but that actual
funding (or sharing of staff) would have to be worked out between MTC and the
various agencies. Clearly, the process of creating a new agency, seeking funds
for that agency and establishing a role for that agency in its political context
can shape how the agency goes about filling its legislatively mandated role.
Given this brief overview of the mandated role for MTC, the following section
describes how this role appears to have evolved as the agency has developed.
C. The Evolving Role

MTC's role has been shaped by two sets of activities. First, its mandate to create a regional transportation plan and develop continuing regional planning played an important role in shaping its early activities. Second, a number of issues which MTC could not fully resolve until it had its plan, but which demanded immediate action, forced MTC to develop mechanisms to deal with these issues in the short run.

As a result of the need to develop a regional plan in the context of pressing decision, MTC viewed the plan as "the first milestone in the beginning of a continuing regional transportation planning process that will provide the commission with a framework for making decisions about transportation for the entire Bay Area in the years ahead." The Commission identified four major areas of policy concern which should guide their actions: (1) the land use - transportation relationship, (2) local vs regional concerns - establishing criteria for identifying particular facilities or issues of regional significance, (3) environmental impacts and (4) resource allocation and institutional constraints - identifying a framework for better coordination of existing agencies. All of these concerns were seen both as elements of a regional transportation plan and planning process, and as a basis for assessing ongoing regional actions on priorities for development, the approval of particular projects and the coordination of the various agencies in the region.

In developing its planning activities, MTC took over and continued (as directed in the state legislation) the transportation planning activities of the Bay Area Transportation Study Committee (BATSC) and its successor, the Regional Transportation Planning Committee. This work involved large scale regional transportation modelling (in conjunction with ABAG's land use modelling)
and development and maintenance of a regional data base. MTC initiated, as well, a large scale, federally funded study of the impact of the BART system in the Bay Area. Essentially, the tasks involved continuation of many of those which had been carried out in regional transportation studies across the country. They were intended to serve as the basis for the development of the MTC plan.

As the same time, however, four major activities more directly tied to pressing implementation issues (rather than long range planning) emerged in MTC's first years as important portions of its work program. First, one of the initial justifications for establishing MTC, the satisfaction of federal planning requirements for transportation planning, became paramount. The Federal Highway Administration had categorized the Bay Area as not yet having continuing regional planning and decision-making. More importantly, the Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA) was not, in 1971, considering the Bay Area eligible for its newly enacted funding programs which provided 2/3 federal funding of transit projects. Without continuing transportation planning, decision-making and agency coordination, UMTA only allowed 50% funding of Bay Area projects and was threatening to cut off all projects. For BART and MUNI, who sought to add new equipment to their systems, these restrictions were damaging. Thus MTC, while interested in long range planning efforts, also held a major interest in the rapid adoption of a plan so that it could establish its decision-making power to satisfy these federal requirements.

A second activity in which MTC became involved, in part as a response to these federal requirements, was the establishment of a formal Transit Coordinating Council with members from all of the major transit operators in the region. The development of this council was also spurred by the ongoing difficulties of coordinating BART and AC transit in the East Bay area. Joseph
Bort, Chairperson of MTC and a supervisor from Alameda County, called the council "a demonstration (to federal officials) of the coordination and planning among transportation authorities in the Bay Area." However, MTC's role in spurring coordination through this mechanism was limited (1) by its lack, initially, of funds with which to support coordination and planning activities for such a council and (2) its lack, in early 1971 when the Council was created, of a plan with which to guide decisions on regional transit issues. Nonetheless, MTC's establishment of the Council placed them in the role of overseeing a forum in which conflicts between agencies could be discussed and resolved.

A third activity in which MTC quickly became involved was the initiation of or participation in a wide range of specific transit improvement studies. The transit agencies and many local governments had identified transit improvements they wanted studied or issues they wanted resolved. MTC joined with these agencies and sought federal and state funding for these studies. The studies included airport access, extension of rapid transit to different areas, improved coordination of services between different operators, assessment of bus service in local communities and for groups with special transportation needs and a survey of recreational transit needs. Eleven such projects were initiated in 1971, ten more were added in 1972. The studies were guided jointly by MTC, other agencies and local governments and while MTC added some staff specifically funded to perform these studies, most of the staff either came from other transit agencies or from consultants. In most cases, MTC was to provide regional transit travel projections, at first derived from BATSC projections but later to be provided by a special project to develop new modelling capabilities for transportation. By beginning to fill long
neglected gaps in transit planning at both the local and regional level, MTC was becoming heavily involved in the ongoing planning for particular transit projects and issues.

A final activity, which emerged from an act of the state legislature, forced MTC to develop a basis for decision-making on the allocation of transit funds. The State Transportation Development Act of 1971 (SB325) established local transportation funds in each county (funded from the sales tax) to be used primarily for "(a) the support of public transportation systems" and "(b) aid to public transportation research and demonstration projects." Under the law, all transit operators within a county make claims for a share of the money in the county fund. While the total money in each county is fixed, the local transportation committee, regional council of governments or statutorily created regional transportation planning agency is to decide on the allocation of funds among operators and approve the proposed uses of the money.

In MTC's case, where BART, AC, MUNI and Golden Gate Transit overlap, the act specifically states:

"The commission shall approve those claims which will not result in the undesirable duplication of public transportation services, and which will provide for a coordinated public transportation system in the region."

"The commission may, on its own motion, arbitrate differences (1) between the various applicants, (2) between an applicant and a city or county regarding the costs of the extension of services, and (3) between the various entities within the region regarding priorities and the order that various improvements are to be made." (emphasis added).

For the Bay Area, the annual SB325 funds range between 35 and 40 million dollars. To administer these, MTC established a small staff (4 new people) to review claims and to work with a 3 member grant review subcommittee of the Commission in approving claims. As the dispute between MUNI and BART
over these funds indicates, MTC was now being asked to help resolve major and immediate issues prior to the development of its regional plan.

Thus, while MTC was involved in large scale planning activities and had intentions to use these capabilities in the development and evaluation of its regional plan, it was being asked to engage in the resolution of several pressing issues before its plan developed and in one case to make decisions on those issues. As a result, the concerns to be addressed in the development of the plan were oriented toward providing a framework for immediate decisions, rather than to make all the decisions about the future (i.e., a rigid master plan).

As the political analysis of MTC's plan in Chapter III suggested, the plan (adopted June 27, 1973) provided only a very vague guide to transportation development in the region. This resulted from deference to the many existing transport agencies to not set rigid priorities (and thereby eliminate future actions by some of the agencies) as well as from the pragmatic orientation of the Commission's top leaders who recognized the uselessness of developing a rigid plan when many issues concerning particular elements of the plan could not be resolved prior to actual implementation. Essentially, the plan did little more than identify the issues which were likely to emerge and, by fulfilling a legislative requirement, provide MTC with its mandated decision powers to resolve these issues.

With its plan, MTC could now make decisions on key regional transportation issues as they arose. How it would resolve each issue had for the most part been left open, and one key question which now faced MTC was how to organize its planning staff to provide analysis of these issues to help guide Commission decisions.
D. Conclusion: Pragmatism and Theory

MTC's regional transportation plan represents a politically pragmatic approach to planning for transportation development in the Bay Area. MTC's roles, shaped by the development and adoption of this plan, are (1) to make difficult regional decisions on the allocation of resources between existing agencies and between different portions of the region and (2) to foster coordination of transportation service provided by different agencies. The plan included general support for guiding regional transportation development toward improvements in transit service, but the task of establishing the process and the criteria for making difficult decisions has been left to the Commission (with its representative structure drawn from local city and county governments) and to the Commission's executive director and planning staff.

In several respects, the theoretical role concept for the planner developed in Chapter II should be useful in helping the Commission and its staff develop a framework in which to make these decisions. First, the planning staff clearly has an opportunity to provide guidance to political decisions as they emerge. The staff is directly responsible to the Commission and the number of major decisions which must be made by the Commission will necessitate that the staff help the Commission to review and make these decisions. Second, the staff has no direct ties to other agencies in the region, placing them in a position where they can develop information which is not automatically viewed as biased toward one group or another. While some members of the staff may hold strong personal views on particular issues, it is not likely that the top members of the staff, who must be sensitive to the interests of a diverse set of groups to maintain their credibility and who also decide what work is performed and reports are prepared by the rest of the staff, would allow work
which reflects these personal biases to be developed. Finally, the mandate by the legislature (and from state and federal requirements) for MTC to be comprehensive in its planning approach should encourage the staff to consider a broad range of social, economic and environmental effects of proposed actions. In addition, the sensitivity of MTC's representatives to different portions of the region should encourage the development and consideration of information which identifies the differential effects of proposed actions on these different portions of the region.

Of course, any attempt to pragmatically apply this theoretical concept to organizing the MTC staff will be constrained by activities which MTC is already required to carry out due to historical precedent or federal and state regulations and by limitations on the staff and resources which MTC has available to it. Application of this concept, therefore, will require careful consideration, within these constraints, of what planning activities MTC seeks to perform and what type of organizational structure MTC should develop to assign people to carry out these activities.
CHAPTER IV

FOOTNOTES


3. California State Assembly, Metropolitan Transportation Commission Act, Assembly Bill No. 363, Introduced January 26, 1970; All quotes in this section are from this bill.


8. ibid. Article 6, section 99302.

CHAPTER V

THE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION:

DEVELOPING AN ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGY

A. Introduction: Organizing for Planning

Developing an organizational structure for an agency is a difficult task which requires a knowledge of the role the agency is intended to play, the types of activities necessary to fill that role, the resources available for hiring staff and the diverse personalities of that staff. For MTC, this structure must be capable of identifying transportation issues as they emerge, recognizing their relationship to other possible issues, setting priorities for review of particular issues, developing comprehensive reviews and summarizing those reviews in a way which is clear to the community and the MTC decision-makers. In essence, this does not require only a structure portrayed in an organizational chart, but also a conscious organizational strategy to identify what activities must be carried out and with what priority.

This chapter analyzes MTC's current organizational strategy. First, based on the political analysis of Chapter III and the discussion of MTC's evolving role in Chapter IV, a series of planning activities which should be performed by the MTC planning staff to complement the ongoing political decision process is identified. Second, the current set of planning activities performed by MTC are assessed in light of this 'ideal' set of planning activities. Finally, within the financial and technical constraints under which MTC operates, an alternative organizational strategy is suggested which attempts to coordinate planning activities to respond better to the ongoing set of issues and decisions.
which come before MTC. This approach will be limited by not being fully aware of the personalities of the staff which the MTC director can use to develop an organization. Nonetheless, it will begin to identify potential shifts in the agency's current organizational strategy to provide more timely and relevant information to guide political decision-making.
B. Planning Activities to Complement Regional Decision-Making

In Chapter IV it was suggested that the theoretical role concept for the planner to complement the ongoing political decision process by serving as a type of overseer to that process was well suited to MTC's political context and the role MTC has sought to play in that context. In applying this role to developing a strategy for organizing and coordinating transportation planning activities within MTC, a number of planning activities necessary to support the role can be identified. These include some activities which have been required by federal or state agencies over the past fifteen years as well as several activities which can aid the planner in linking his or her knowledge to the political decision-making process. The full set of these activities is described below.

Required Activities - Federal and state requirements for regional planning activities have expanded greatly over the past fifteen years. Beginning with efforts in the early 1960's by the Federal Housing and Home Finance Agency and the Federal Highway Administration to develop a cooperative, continuing and comprehensive land use and transportation planning process (the '3-C process')\(^1\), these requirements have now been continually updated and expanded to reflect experience with the 3-C process and newly emerging issues. In the Bay Area, these requirements have continued to play a role, particularly in stimulating the development of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. Now, continuing requirements at both federal and state levels, as well as the analysis needs of the various issues emerging in the region, are shaping what planning activities have to be accomplished by MTC and other regional agencies. These activities are of four major types:
1. Transportation and Land Use Modelling - Continuing efforts are required to update and revise methodologies developed during the 1960's for predicting regional transportation flows and land use. In the Bay Area, this is a particularly sensitive issue as many of the early efforts of BATSC, it was thought, did not provide adequate modelling of transit travel behavior, thereby biasing any analysis of alternative regional transportation plans. It also has become important to seek better behavioral models to attempt to understand the effects on travel behavior of transportation controls such as those proposed by the Environmental Protection Agency. Perhaps most importantly, the analysis of specific issues (e.g., the extension of BART) which are to be decided by MTC requires some analytic base to begin to understand regional and subregional travel patterns and how a particular proposal will affect those patterns (as well as to provide patronage projections, etc.). The need to provide timely information to decision-makers, the high cost and cumbersome nature of many of these existing models and the questionable accuracy obtained from many of these existing models suggests that less expensive, easier to use methodologies with less sophistication should be developed.

2. Social, Economic and Ecological Assessment - Both the federal government and the State of California now require environmental impact statements for transportation projects (in California they are also required for plans). The protested environmental impacts of particular transportation facilities (especially highways) in the Bay Area have been one major reason for the development of MTC to plan for transportation. MTC did not, however, develop a formal environmental impact statement for its plan and is now in the process of developing such a statement.
Capabilities for assessing environmental impacts require understandings of the existing social, economic and ecological situation and predictive tools for analyzing the various impacts of plans and facilities. These types of capabilities for air pollution impacts are required for the implementation of Route I-580 in the Bay Area. The nature of the political context of MTC and the loose plan the agency developed suggests that environmental issues are most often raised over particular projects (this was not totally the case for air quality), and that any regional capability will have to provide a framework for assessing the project related issues which are likely to arise in the continuing decisions of MTC.

3. Fiscal Analysis and Planning - Transportation development and planning is funded from a variety of sources with differing restrictions on how funds can be used. Federal requirements for improved fiscal planning in the Bay Area include the Unified Work Program to coordinate the funding of all planning funds in the region and UMTA's recent requirement that a ten year schedule of priorities and financial plan be developed before the region could get 2/3 federal funding for transit. These have spurred efforts to improve financial planning.

While funding sources are currently restricted so that certain funds (such as the Highway Trust fund) cannot be used for other than specific highway development and planning, (1) recent changes have reduced these restrictions, thereby forcing consideration of overall allocation of resources between modes and (2) even within modes, there are considerations of tradeoffs between different types of service (e.g. local vs. regional transit service). If an agency is to resolve issues as they arise in a comprehensive fashion, the fiscal implications of a particular commitment of resources (i.e. the other actions which will not
be undertaken because of a lack of funds) must be understood. To accomplish this requires a realistic and a thorough understanding of the funding sources and constraints in the Bay Area and the relative financial costs and interdependencies of transportation proposals.

4. Community Participation - The increasing number of controversies over highway development and urban renewal in the Bay Area and elsewhere during the 1960's spurred increasing federal and state requirements for citizen participation in transportation and other types of planning. MTC held 15 'town meetings' throughout the Bay Area to discuss issues in the development of its plan and 4 formal public hearings near the end of the development of its plan. This was done in recognition of the importance of participation by all groups, not just local elected officials, if all important issues involved in deciding upon and implementing a transportation proposal are going to be identified and resolved at the earliest possible point.

If ongoing decisions are going to be guided by participation, planners for MTC will require skills at explaining complex issues to diverse community groups and communicating with those groups (verbally, in writing and graphically) about their particular interests and concerns. Otherwise, the political process may neglect certain concerns in deciding to implement a proposal, only to have them surface later as major issues which might block implementation.

Other Planning Activities - In addition to the activities required by state and federal agencies which can help guide decision-making on transportation issues, several others should be performed. These include:

1. Transit and Highway Implementation Planning - MTC, in the evolution of its role, has identified and begun to fill gaps in regional and local transit
planning activities. Highway planning, while better coordinated under the local district of the California Department of Transportation, will hopefully further be improved through the newly developed Traffic Management Council.

While much of current detailed highway and transit planning is being performed by existing agencies, MTC should have a stake in developing implementation planning capabilities for several reasons: (1) MTC can play a "neutral" role in providing staff work to either the Metropolitan Transit Federation or the Traffic Management Council (they are mandated to play this role for decisions on SB325 allocations) - to accomplish this requires capabilities for understanding analyses of issues performed by existing agencies, combining these analyses to provide a common basis for coordination and perhaps performing the analysis itself; (2) control of implementation planning activities by operating agencies limits the planning work done and the proposals under consideration to only those projects in which the agency is interested - both transit and highway implementation of major projects require substantial lead times for implementation, and by studying only those projects of interest to each particular agency, the types of proposals that can be considered at any one time by MTC are decided upon by each agency, not by MTC, suggesting that MTC should begin to understand how the 'pipelines' in different agencies work, what the lead times for different projects are and perhaps to begin to perform studies where currently there are none underway (such as the Transit Improvement Studies); (3) environmental issues related to the overall acceptability of particular projects often do not arise until detailed planning begins - to ensure that MTC maintains the flexibility to reverse earlier decisions on implementation should this occur, it will be necessary to monitor ongoing planning activities and ensure that all major issues are identified and resolved before the agency
is committed to one final plan for implementation and (4) highway and transit implementation planning may often have to be closely coordinated - while BART and the local district of the State Department of Transportation have developed several coordinated projects, MTC can play a role in identifying where further coordination is necessary and overseeing that coordination.

In transit planning, these roles for the MTC planning staff require knowledge of facility design, environmental impacts, fare and revenue structures, route planning, identification of service needs, etc. For highway planning the needs are similar with emphasis on operations planning (e.g. ramp metering, carpool lanes) as well as on facility development. The transit improvement studies undertaken by MTC provide a start in this direction, although these are not always performed with in-house capabilities. In addition, the requirement for MTC's development of a Unified Work Program for regional transportation planning activities should provide impetus to coordinate what planning on what projects is being done in the region.

2. Community Technical Assistance - While the transportation agencies and local governments in the Bay Area are represented on MTC or its coordinating councils and have available to them resources for planning and policy analysis, citizen interest groups in the region do not always have such expertise available. Among these citizen groups, some, such as the Sierra Club, the League of Women Voters and the businessmen's Bay Area Council, do have staff available, while others, such as poor and minority groups from Oakland, San Jose and San Francisco, do not. In the Boston Transportation Planning Review, funds were set aside and administered separately from the ongoing studies to provide technical assistance to such groups to ensure that (1) they understood the impacts on them of particular decisions and (2) their interests were expressed and
considered in decisions. In MTC, where the political analysis above identifies a certain bias in the current representation structure, this assistance may be crucial to ensuring comprehensive decisions. However, the mechanism for establishing a community technical assistance group which can use the planning and data resources of MTC but which openly encourages opposition to particular actions may be politically difficult to develop.

3. Issue Evaluation and Summarization - A critical portion of a staff role for the MTC planning staff is that of "creating the linkage" necessary for technical knowledge to be understood and considered in decisions by the commission. This requires an ability to evaluate issues from the perspective of all of the different interest groups involved and to summarize these issues quickly (i.e. when decisions arise), concisely (so as to make them understandable, but brief) and in a way which suits the working style of the different members of the commission (e.g. short report, graphics, verbal presentations). The reporting of planning findings is not just an added piece of paperwork at the end of sophisticated planning work, but the critical process by which planning information can be linked to decision-making. As a result, it may be valuable to make such activities a conscious portion of an agency work program, with certain individuals, with talents in writing and graphic display and an understanding of the working style of the different members of the decision making body, specifically assigned to these activities.

To perform all of these activities to their fullest extent would require nearly unlimited resources of time and personnel. In the Bay Area political context, however, it would seem that the MTC director should be seeking to include at least the essential components of all of these activities in the
agency's work program. To accomplish this on an ongoing basis requires an organizational strategy which includes: (1) an organizational structure which coordinates these various elements to provide concise, comprehensive information to the decision-makers as issues arise and (2) a strategy on the part of the director to prioritize how much effort should go into each of these activities and which particular transportation issues should be being considered at any one time.
C. The Current Strategy

In the MTC legislation, the Commission was designated to appoint an Executive Director, who was in turn to appoint all necessary employees. In the early years of the Commission, the Director and Deputy Director were primarily involved in establishing a basic role for the agency in the region, acquiring funds to support the agency and overseeing the necessary work to prepare a regional plan. As the agency's funds have increased (from increased state and federal aid) and the regional transportation plan has been adopted, the agency's staff has grown tremendously. In its early days, informal working relationships between the 20 to 40 staff members could be maintained and the agency's various tasks could be performed. But as the staff has increased (75 in January 1974, planned to reach 100), as the number of outside consulting contracts which MTC is overseeing has grown in many diverse directions, and as the demands for formal and careful review of issues coming before the Commission have multiplied, MTC has been forced to develop a more formal organizational structure. This structure (as illustrated in Figure V.1) is not so totally formal as this neat chart might suggest. However, it does represent a conscious assignment of responsibility to different parts of the organization and decisions on which activities the organization should be performing.\(^3\)

**Activities** - The current organization is overseen by the MTC Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director. These people play the major role in liaison between the planning staff and the Commission, identifying planning which needs to be done, priorities for work items and overseeing preparation of presentations to the Commission. The executive office is aided in this by a work program management group with three people and by a secretariat with four
FIGURE V.I CURRENT MTC ORGANIZATION

EXECUTIVE OFFICE
- Executive Director
- Deputy Executive Director

SECRETARIAT
- Coordination with Commission and Committees
  Staff: 4

WORK PROGRAM MANAGEMENT
- Work Program Development and Coordination
  Staff: 3

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND ANALYSIS
- Environmental Analysis
- Land Use and Transportation
- Data Management
  Staff: 19

IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING
- Plan Revisions
- Capital Improvements Programs
- Financial Planning
  Staff: 16

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
- Project Review
- SB 325 Review
- Administration and Budgeting
  Staff: 11

AGENCY SERVICES AND SPECIAL PROJECTS
- Personnel
- Public Affairs
- Graphics
- Special Projects
  Staff: 12

TRANSPORTATION IMPACT (BART STUDY)
- Long Range Studies
  Staff: 8

Source: See Footnote 3
people responsible for coordination with the Commission and specification of the reports the Commission has requested from the staff.

Below this executive level, five divisions have been established. The one with the most funding, the group studying BART's impacts on the Bay Area, is only indirectly controlled by MTC and is largely concerned with monitoring in-depth consulting studies which are not directly tied to the remainder of the MTC work program. A second division, with twelve people, is concerned with providing services to the remainder of the agency and overseeing minor special projects. This division has responsibility for personnel, public relations and graphics. A third division, resource management, administers the various resources and review powers which MTC has directly at its disposal. These include administration of claim review for the local Transportation Development Funds (SB325), project review for Commission approval of all state and Federal (A-95) grants and other transportation projects, and agency budgeting, accounting, contract administration and other fiscal responsibilities. The division has considerable contact with the various agencies and local governments submitting claims and projects for review. It is staffed by eleven people.

Planning activities in MTC are primarily carried out by the fourth and fifth divisions. The first of these is concerned with implementation planning, overseeing the numerous transit and highway improvement studies under MTC's aegis, identifying necessary revisions to the regional transportation plan (based on changing funding, community acceptability, etc.), preparing revisions for Commission consideration and developing and updating the ten year capital improvements program for the region. Their duties also include development of potential alternative regional transportation plans for evaluation by MTC and ABAG. The division has extensive contacts with various operating agencies and
local governments with which MTC is jointly participating in the development studies. The activities are carried on by sixteen people.

Finally, the transportation planning and analysis division, with nineteen people, is responsible for comprehensive planning activities, including land use and transportation modelling with ABAG (carrying on the work of BATSC), testing of alternative transportation plans (should they be developed), overseeing the development of an environmental impact assessment procedure (by a consultant) and applying this environmental procedure to the analysis of alternative transportation plans as well as to the environmental assessment of particular projects. The division is also responsible for management of regional data sources and attempts to coordinate this work with other regional and sub-regional agencies to provide data for their planning needs and to develop a common regional data base.

Interactions - As was briefly suggested above, these formal divisions of MTC do not fully reflect the working patterns of the agency. To carry out its various duties, a number of interactions between groups within the agency and with various external actors are undertaken. The integration of the planning work in the agency is overseen by the Deputy Executive Director with the aid of the work program management group. If requests for information are made by the Commission, the secretariat develops the specifications for reports which should be prepared (i.e., what information, how lengthy), and the Deputy identifies people responsible for producing that information and oversees its development. When proposals are submitted for review, specific groups receive that proposal (e.g., proposals for studies or inclusion in the ten year capital improvement program go to implementation planning; project and SB325 claim reviews go to resource management). Each of these, in consultation with the
Deputy Director, set priorities for which issues receive priority and what level of analysis should be done.

The proposals are then circulated to other appropriate divisions for review of particular portions of the proposal. For example, project reviews are made with the coordination of the implementation planning group, which comments on the place of the proposal in the current capital improvements program and identifies other project dependencies, and the planning and analysis group which assesses, if possible, the transportation impacts of the proposal and reviews the proposal's environmental impact statement. With its recently developed environmental procedures (which include sensitivity mapping), the planning and analysis group may also apply simple conceptual models (or perhaps a soon to be developed detailed air quality model) to predicting environmental impacts. With these inputs, the resource management division then develops a summary review of a proposal for presentation to the Commission. In this way, the staff pulls together relevant inputs from each of the divisions to develop comprehensive reviews.

A second set of interactions involves the staff and the Commission. Primary contact is developed through the Executive Director, who oversees what activities are carried out by the agency and presents the agency's budget to the Commission for approval. In addition, several committees of the Commission work closely with portions of the organization. The finance committee is primarily concerned with overseeing the agency's budget (prepared by the resource management division for the Director). The work program committee works with the deputy executive director and the work program management group to develop priorities for the agency's work program, oversee the carrying out of that work program and report to the overall Commission on proposed revisions to the pro-
gram (as well as reviewing submitted revisions to the plan). This committee plays a key role in providing political guidance to the technical processes. Finally, the grant review committee coordinates with the resource management division on the review of specific proposals (and priorities for reviewing those proposals) and on the review and arbitration of claims for SB325 Funds. This committee recommends approval or disapproval of actions to the broader Commission.

While these three committees can all play key roles in guiding MTC activities, they are limited in these roles by the fact that the commissioners are part time and unpaid, and often have many local issues in their own jurisdictions to resolve. Nevertheless, certain members of the Commission (most notably Joseph Bort, its first chairperson) have taken active roles in guiding what activities are carried out and which issues are given in-depth attention by the staff.

The third set of interactions involves the staff, other agencies and the public. MTC's strong powers over the actions of other regional and subregional agencies have brought about intensive interaction between MTC and these agencies. While much of the interaction is at a high political level (i.e., through Commission members to the Executive Director), MTC's staff also maintains important ties to these agencies. Project review personnel normally assess the information developed by the proposing agency and reviews criticisms with those agencies (although at the end of their proposal development process). Review of claims for SB325 Funds are carried out by 3 or 4 junior staff at MTC (overseen by senior staff) who play liaison roles with particular agencies. Transit and highway development studies are overseen by the implementation planning division and members of that division have regular contact with representatives from the
other agencies which are involved in the studies (e.g., the different members of the Transit Coordinating Council). In addition, capital improvements programming has involved extensive review of the programs of different agencies. This has focused primarily on transit program development (where there was a lack of centralized planning) and is only now beginning to include coordination with the highway program development staff of the local district of the California Department of Transportation. Finally, agency contact has been carried out on a primarily technical basis between the transportation planning and analysis division and other agency planning groups. This has included coordination of data bases, or air quality prediction capabilities, and, in the case of the local districts of the California Department of Transportation, sharing of staff in network travel modelling and environmental analysis.

Public involvement has also taken several forms. Major regional interest groups, state legislators and other public officials communicate directly with the executive office or with members of the Commission. In addition, the agency has developed a sizable public information program with a regional mailing list and a well-maintained community letter file to record opinions and ideas. Finally, members of the staff from various divisions have attended a number of regional and local public meetings and hearings concerned with transportation to identify issues and gather reactions on specific proposals and on the regional transportation plan. The number of staff in attendance, their area of planning specialty and their rank within the organization varies with the size of the meeting, its subject matter and the type of presentation (if any) MTC is expected to make.

An Assessment - MTC has, of necessity, developed a flexible planning organization to develop information to guide Commission decisions. Specific duties
of the Commission (e.g., project review) are assigned to particular portions of the staff, who then call upon the rest of the staff to provide elements of the overall analysis of an issue. During the year, as issues are analyzed and decisions are reached, needs for revision of the plan are identified and recommended to the Commission. This process is managed by the Deputy Executive Director and the Commission's work program committee, who serve to prioritize issues and identify what work needs to be done. Throughout the agency, numerous contacts are maintained with other agencies and the public, and these provide some direction for the activities of the agency.

As is apparent from this review, many of the planning activities described above as necessary to complement political decision making are to some extent being performed by MTC. Land use, transportation and environmental analysis, financial planning (at least for transit) and community participation have all been given attention. A significant portion of MTC's resources and personnel are involved in implementation planning for highways and transit, although sometimes only as overseers of work by other agencies or consultants. But in terms of the political context in which MTC is operating (i.e., diverse interest groups with unequal access to decision-making; issues continuously emerging from these interest groups), and the role MTC has established for itself (primarily as a forum for resolving issues as they arise), the current organizational strategy of MTC is lacking in several areas. Specifically:

1. The process to set work priorities and coordinate work may not be able to identify all issues which are likely to emerge and is hindered by separations within the agency.

The prime priority setting group is made up of the Executive Director, the Deputy, the Commission's work program committee and the small work program...
management group. Informally, the heads of the three primary planning divisions (resource management, implementation planning, and planning and analysis) are also involved. However, issues are raised in many forms and by many groups which have contacts with different parts of the MTC staff. Agencies submit projects for review and claims for funds to groups at lower levels of MTC and various interest groups express environmental and other concerns to the actual proposal reviewers. Under its current priority setting mechanism, MTC primarily uses inputs from the Commission (and through them from high level heads of agencies) which do not always represent the full set of issues which are likely to emerge (or which are not always sensitive to broader community concerns). One result of such limited priority setting is that lower level staff may sometimes expend a large amount of time developing detailed analyses, only to find that the Commission (1) can only read the briefest of documents and (2) are not aware of the need to consider the full range of issues the planning staff has addressed. Detailed project reviews may then be ignored by the Commission, or may never be seen by them, frustrating agency staff, and wasting valuable resources. Also, Commission actions might be taken without considering certain issues which will nevertheless emerge at a later point to block implementation. A more responsive priority setting forum might improve this aspect of the priority setting process.

In addition, the separation of the different divisions within MTC can hinder integration of work activities which would increase the agency's effectiveness. For example, project reviews regularly come at the end of an agency's proposed development process, making agencies unwilling to change project details in response to an MTC critique. However, MTC, in its implementation and financial planning activities, plays some part in developing these projects.
Currently, however, no formal mechanism exists to identify, during the work priority setting process, projects which are currently under development, which are likely to require Commission review and which could benefit from the early involvement of the project review staff for environmental and other aspects of evaluation.

Finally, while both high level and staff level liaison is necessary to maintain effective regional planning efforts, MTC currently has a wide range of such liaison which can hinder the coordination of MTC relationships with particular agencies (and confuse priority setting for MTC work). For example, MTC can take four types of actions on proposals to either approve or disapprove them. It can (1) approve the use of implementation study funds for particular studies (e.g., extension of BART), (2) include funds for implementation in the capital improvements program (e.g., acquisition of new rolling stock), (3) review a particular project (e.g., a BART station development) for environmental and other considerations and approval of the Commission or (4) approve a claim for SB325 Funds submitted by an agency (e.g., funding of BART's deficit). All four types of proposals may be made by a single agency at any one time, yet the first two actions are overseen by MTC's implementation planning division and the last two by its resource management division, with different committees of the Commission involved. Thus, it can be difficult to coordinate the various actions MTC may take and to set priorities for work to be done on analyzing each action.

2. Large scale planning activities continue as they were under BATSC, without adequate direction from the Commission on developing planning tools which are useful to guide ongoing decisions in the broad framework outlined in the regional plan.
A large portion of the joint ABAG-MTC land use and transportation planning program (40%) is devoted to the development of plan alternatives and the testing of these and the current MTC regional transportation plan for transportation and land use effects. In that the MTC implementation planning group has been given prime responsibility for developing alternatives, alternatives are likely to reflect some realistic constraints on resources. However, the MTC plan does not currently represent a commitment to an entire transportation system. As a result, alternatives developed for evaluation (1) would have to reflect the uncertainties of future implementation of most of the projects in the MTC plan and (2) would have to provide information, as issues arise, on what the long term implications (i.e., options open and foreclosed; impacts) of making near term decisions and commitments of resources are. The expensive and cumbersome methodology which BATSC (and now MTC-ABAG) have developed has not proved useful in providing timely information to Bay Area transportation decisions (witness the current delay of one year in all transit extension studies due to problems with the models). It may be necessary, therefore, to develop more flexible and less expensive tools to quickly predict transportation flows (much like the simple conceptual models being developed for MTC by its environmental consultant). It may also be useful to develop a formal mechanism, sensitive to the interests of the Commission, which identifies what types of alternative plans are investigated and what priority is placed on different plans.

3. Review and approval of SB325 is not closely tied to financial and implementation planning activities.

Review and approval of the claims of different transit operators in the region for SB325 funds is one of the key leverage points which MTC holds over
the shape of transit agency financial plans (and management). In its role as arbitrator between BART and MUNI or BART and AC, MTC can shape what kind of long range plans the agencies can have, what types of management capabilities it has (by disapproving funding of subsidies without improvements in management) and how much the agencies are willing to cooperate with MTC. Many of these considerations are directly related to the financial planning activities of identifying needs for transit service and opportunities for fare and route coordination, as well as developing ten year capital improvement programs and financial plans. But SB325 review is under a different division from financial and implementation planning and has a small separate staff which develops its own liaison with the transit agencies and isolated reviews of claims. Thus far the most significant issue which the review process has brought to the attention of the transit agencies has been to pressure them to participate actively and cooperate with the Transit Coordinating Council (now the Metropolitan Transit Federation). In the BART-MUNI dispute over funds it remained for the two agencies to work out the financial details of the compromise resolution, with MTC providing political pressure for compromise, but without detailed financial analysis by MTC staff. Better coordination of these activities might have provided MTC with the knowledge to play an active mediating role, providing relatively neutral information as a basis for understanding the positive and negative effects of different potential resolutions of the dispute.

4. MTC has not carefully structured its organization to produce concise, understandable analyses of issues for the community and decision-makers.

While the secretariat does prepare specifications for reports to the Commission, the actual preparation of the reports is left to the particular
division assigned the responsibility for the reports. Further, agency services, which provides graphics, has not played an active role in shaping presentations to ensure good graphic presentation. Finally, no one group has been assigned to assess materials produced as to their clarity and conciseness for community groups (this is done, to some extent, by the executive director for reports to the Commission). As a result, MTC produced a first progress report on the development of the environmental impact report for its plan which was long, incomplete and hard to comprehend. Their unified work program for the region, outlining proposed planning work for MTC and other regional and local agencies for the 1973-74 year, while required to have certain components by Federal regulations, was also long and complex. To develop information which can guide political decision-making, the MTC planners must develop better prepared, more easily understandable planning analyses which clearly provide information to help resolve the key issues being addressed.

5. MTC does not take an active role in encouraging and aiding community groups to participate in the planning and decision-making process.

MTC currently maintains substantial efforts at gathering community reactions to major issues (such as the development of the plan). However, many critical issues were not resolved in the adoption of the plan but rather were left to be resolved as particular issues arise and MTC sets priorities to study or defer them. Well-organized regional interest groups (i.e., Sierra Club, League of Women Voters) are likely to maintain ongoing relationships with the MTC staff which serve to incorporate some of their interests in work priority setting and decision-making (e.g., both of the groups mentioned above are likely to submit extensive recommended revisions in this year's cycle of regional transportation plan revision). But many groups (e.g., La Raza Unida
[a Mexican-American group], NAACP, etc.) do not have organized efforts to provide ongoing input to MTC actions, in part because their priorities for action are elsewhere, but also in part because they have neither the technical assistance necessary to identify their interests in regional transportation proposals nor a specifically designated contact person within MTC (i.e., neither the members of the Commission nor the top level staff are seeking extensive and continued inputs from these groups (except at times when very specific issues [e.g., Route 24 in Oakland] arise). MTC (or perhaps some other regional or subregional agency) may want to remedy this problem.

Several criticisms of the current MTC organizational strategy have been discussed above. They are aimed at identifying portions of the MTC strategy which might be altered to improve the effectiveness of the MTC staff in linking their technical knowledge to decisions by the Commission. In a way, developing an organizational strategy for a planning and decision-making agency like MTC is itself a sequential learning process, much like the process of making decisions about the implementation of transportation improvements and the future of the region. With the knowledge available at any one time, decisions are made about an organizational strategy. Then, as the strategy is implemented and problems and opportunities arise, changes in the strategy are decided upon, based on improved knowledge. In a very similar fashion, MTC has begun to identify some of the problems discussed above and to develop responses to those problems. For example, the Deputy Director is now trying to develop a preliminary priority setting process to identify issues which only require staff approval, issues which also require committee approval and issues which require the attention of the entire Commission. In this way,
priorities for what types and amounts of work need to be done on each issue can be set, and limited resources can be used more carefully.

It may be that the limited resources with which MTC is operating and the personality constraints which must be considered in developing an organizational strategy will preclude MTC from ever remedying all of these problems at one time. Nonetheless, an attempt is made in the following section to propose an alternative organizational strategy which is more consciously sensitive to MTC's environment. The alternative is constrained to use the same personnel resources as the current MTC organizational strategy and its advantages and disadvantages are compared to those of the current strategy.
D. An Alternative Strategy

Essentially, the activities currently being carried out by MTC include the major activities which such an agency would be expected to perform. However, to develop an organizational strategy which carefully sets priorities for work which are responsive to diverse interest groups and which provide timely technical information to guide decisions, it may be necessary to restructure the way priorities are set and alter the priorities placed on different types of staff work. In Figure V.2, an alternative strategy for organizing MTC is presented. The major portions of this revised structure, and the changes in the activities of each portion, are described below.

The Executive Office - The agency is still run by the Executive Director and a Deputy, but with slightly different adjunct activities. The secretariat maintains its duties of coordinating information for the Commission and specifying what information and reports are desired by the Commission. In addition, personnel in graphics and public affairs are added to the secretariat to further advise on the formats and content of reports to be prepared, with an eye to clarity and conciseness in presentations. The second adjunct to the executive office becomes the administration section, involved in personnel matters, budget preparation (primarily summarizing the work of the work program group for the Commission and Executive Director), budget administration, and agency services including the library. The Executive Director maintains the position as key staff decision-maker and liaison to the Commission. The Deputy Executive Director continues to oversee work program development and priority setting in conjunction with the Commission's work program committee but also now with the aid of an internal issue identification and work program development forum.
FIGURE V.2 AN ALTERNATIVE STRATEGY

ADMINISTRATION
- Executive Director
  - Deputy Executive Director
- Staff: 9

EXECUTIVE OFFICE
- Staff: 3
  - Planning and Analysis
    - Environmental Analysis
    - Transportation Analysis
    - Alternative Program Testing
    - Staff: 10

SECRETARIAT
- Coordination with Commission
  - Graphics
  - Public Affairs
  - Staff: 8

WORK PROGRAM MANAGEMENT
- Oversee Report Preparation
  - Internal Coordination
  - Staff: 3

ISSUE IDENTIFICATION AND WORK PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT
- Priority Setting, Project Review, SB 325
  - UWP, Plan Revisions, Plan Alternatives
  - Staff: Community Liaison (3)
    - Agency Liaison (3)
    - Junior Staff (3)

CORE PLANNING STAFF
- Implementation Planning
  - Project Review
    - Detailed Studies
    - Development of Alternative Programs
    - Staff: 13

FINANCIAL PLANNING
- Project Review
  - Funding Forecasts
  - Alternative Capital Improvements Programs
  - Staff: 8

TRANSPORTATION IMPACT (BART STUDY)
- Long Range Studies
  - Products shared with Core Planning
  - Staff: 8

COMMUNITY TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
- Staff: 5

INDEPENDENT POLICY BOARD

COMMUNITY GROUPS

TRANSIT AND HIGHWAY AGENCIES
Issue identification and work program development - This new group (reconstituted out of the resource management division) becomes the key forum for setting work priorities for the agency. The Deputy Executive Director and the work program committee of the Commission now engage in regular work priority setting meetings with this group. Also, prime responsibility for identifying plan revisions to be studied, transit or highway improvement studies to be initiated, project reviews to be studied or SB325 claims to be analyzed, lies with this forum.

The group is made up of six people (of a fairly senior level) who serve as the prime MTC liaisons with community groups and the transit and highway agencies in the region. It also includes three junior level people as staff. Among the liaison positions, the three people charged with community liaison would spend half of their time establishing contacts with diverse regional and local groups, identifying issues related to specific projects or to allocations of funds, and expressing those issues in the work priority setting forum. The other half of their time would be spent identifying issues on which MTC is doing planning which require community interaction, developing strategies for that interaction, identifying teams from all parts of MTC to be involved in that interaction (with the approval of the broader priority setting group) and helping those teams prepare their presentations.

Those charged with liaison with highway and transit agencies (as well as the Metropolitan Transit Federation and the Traffic Management Council) would be the prime contact persons between MTC and these agencies. Although other groups (such as implementation planning and financial planning) would also have contacts with these agencies, these other activities would need to be coordinated with the key MTC liaison person with that agency. The prime
duties of these key liaison persons, in addition to this internal coordina-
tion function, would be to identify issues which the agencies see as of top
priority, to express these in the issue analysis and work program forum and,
with the direction of that forum, to work with the agencies to develop SB325
claims which are in conformance with the regional plan. In this last duty,
these personnel might work closely, as well, with the Commission's grant re-
view committee.

The overall work priority setting forum, with ten senior members (three
Commission members, the deputy executive director and the six liaison person-
nel) and three staff members, would function as follows. At regular inter-
vals (2 weeks or a month) it would meet to identify issues that have been
raised (e.g., requests for project review or study initiation) by agencies,
the community and the Commission. The current work loads of different parts
of MTC would be assessed and priorities would be set for analysis, review or
initiation of studies on particular issues. With the help of their staff
(and the financial planning group), the group would identify potential financial
interdependencies between new and existing issues and implementation
planning work already underway which is related to new issues. Based on this
background, and with the advice of the secretariat on report preparation and
of the community liaison people on necessary community interaction, the group
would specify what financial, implementation and environmental issues need to
be addressed in the analysis, what groups in MTC would be responsible for pre-
paring the information and how reports should be presented. The three staff
members and the work program management group would then ensure that the work
is assigned to the different planning portions of MTC and one member of the
staff would be given prime responsibility for pulling the work together.
In addition to these short range, ongoing activities, the issue identification and program development group would have several important longer range responsibilities. First, the annual cycles of SB325 claim reviews would require that the group, with input from the Commission and the implementation and financial planning groups, establish policies for the allocation of the funds and priorities for the types of transit improvements they would like to see reflected in the claims (e.g., funds to subsidize unified fare structures or route coordination experiments). These policies and priorities would then guide the work of the transit liaison personnel as they work with the agencies to develop their claims. Second, the annual Federal requirement for the development of a regional unified work program for Bay Area transportation planning should be met by this group. Longer range needs for shifts in the distributions of planning resources (e.g., from large scale analysis to implementation planning) can be identified, and issue areas which need increased funding for analysis (e.g., transit coordination studies, or environmental impacts) can be assessed. In this way, this diverse group can aid MTC in beginning to substantively coordinate the planning resources of the entire region.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the annual revision of the regional transportation plan and the capital improvement program should be overseen by this group. The set of issues which arise throughout the year is likely to serve as a basis for revisions to the plan (e.g., changes in categorization, changes in what is included in the capital improvement program). The yearly cycles of plan review and revision provide opportunities for integrating these various issues and understanding the interrelationships among issues more fully. To accomplish this, the issue identification and work program development group might identify, once each year, alternative sets of regional funding assumptions.
(about total monies available, monies available for transit and highways), alternative sets of improvements and actions to be developed over the next ten to twenty years within these different funding assumptions (e.g., a program of actions (i.e., pricing policies, facility improvements) to improve air quality, one to improve transit for low income areas, etc.) and transportation, social, economic and environmental criteria by which to assess these alternatives. By identifying these alternatives in a forum which can be sensitive to the concerns of the decision-makers, the community and other agencies, the group can guide the core planning groups within MTC to develop alternatives in some detail which reflect diverse objectives held by different groups in the region and to prepare comprehensive evaluations of those alternatives. By developing the alternatives as realistic, sequential programs of improvement within different funding assumptions, the MTC staff can develop a set of basic evaluation tools for revising the plan and analyzing particular new issues as they arise. 

With evaluations of these different alternatives in hand and with a set of proposed revisions to the regional transportation plan to be reviewed, the issue identification and work program development group can, with the aid of the financial planning group, assess which funding assumption appears most realistic at a given point in time and then identify how the set of proposed revisions (i.e., revisions to change categories or change funding priorities) fit into the alternatives which were developed under that particular funding assumption (e.g., would approving the proposed revision not be consistent with providing transit service to low income areas [i.e., by using up limited funds to build suburban transit extensions] or would approving the proposed revision encourage rapid growth in highway travel, thereby not being consistent with an air quality alternative?).
These sets of alternatives would also be useful throughout the year as a basis for analysis for particular issues which arise. Each year, this set of alternatives could be revised to reflect changing knowledge of funding constraints, project uncertainties, etc. By overseeing development of these alternatives, the issue identification and work program development forum can provide politically sensitive guidance to MTC's planning staff to help them develop timely answers to the actual questions being asked in the region by decision-makers, the community and the other agencies. To make effective use of this guidance, the core planning groups would begin to shift the kind of activities they are undertaking and the kinds of information they are preparing.

Core Planning - To respond to the more conscious and responsive priority setting activities of the issue identification and work program development group, the three basic components of MTC's planning staff (financial planning, implementation planning, and planning and analysis) must carefully integrate their respective activities and develop planning capabilities which can respond to issues with timely and appropriate information. The heads of these three groups might also sit in on meetings of the work priority setting forum, to provide substantive planning information to that group and to get direction from that group on what activities they should be performing. Specifically, the three groups would operate as follows:

-Financial Planning - This group, which would increase in size by taking some personnel from the planning and analysis group, would be charged with providing information on potential sources of funds, likely constraints on the uses of those funds and potential actions (e.g., legislative recommendations) to increase the funds and the flexibility with which they can be used.
With the implementation planning group (and the guidance of the issue analysis and work program development forum) they would develop alternative capital improvement programs under sets of existing, likely and optimistic funding constraints. The financial analysis of what kinds of projects and programs can be included under different funding assumptions and the legislative analysis of changes necessary to increase funding would be tied to the transportation and environmental analysis performed by the planning and analysis group. This should help the Commission revise the capital improvements program of the regional transportation plan, providing information on the total allocation of funds to different types of transit and highway improvements and the amount of money which will either have to be raised locally or be obtained from newly developed sources of funds.

In developing its financial analysis and alternative programs, the group would have to understand the programming procedures of all other agencies within the region. For example, they would work with these agencies in the joint development of computerized financial information systems (the local district of the State Department of Transportation already has one of these for highways) to facilitate the quick development of financial summaries for different programs of improvements. Their contacts with agency programming staff would be reported in regular meetings to the key MTC liaison to those agencies, to keep that person abreast of all of the latest financial information from each agency.

**Implementation Planning** - This group would play a role similar to that which it has played. At the direction of the issue identification and work program development forum, this group, in conjunction with other regional agencies and the other portions of MTC's planning staff, would develop the
format and work program for studies on particular implementation issues, con-
tract out or perform those studies and report back to the issue identification
and work program development forum on findings. Here again, regular meetings
with the key MTC liaison people with the different agencies might be held (in
conjunction with the financial planning people) to keep the liaison persons
informed of all implementation planning activities of the different agencies.

The MTC implementation planning group would also play a key role, in con-
junction with the financial planning group, in detailing alternative programs
of transportation improvements, by identifying the likely "lead times" neces-
sary for implementation of different projects and the interdependencies of
different projects (e.g., if one major highway is built, two other connecting
links will also be necessary). From its familiarity with implementation
issues in particular portions of the region, this group may also be able to
identify particular social and environmental issues of community concern
which (1) the planning and analysis group should specifically analyze and
(2) which might delay portions of a program or cause redesign, increasing
costs (and therefore decreasing the number of improvements which can be real-
istically included under any one financial constraint). This group essen-
tially plays the role of including specific implementation issues in broader
regional financial allocation and policy decisions.

-Planning and Analysis - This group is charged with providing transporta-
tion, social and environmental analyses of particular project issues and of
alternative programs of improvements. They have been reduced in size to
allow for the expansion of other groups. To compensate for this, they will
need to develop close coordination between themselves, the ABAG staff and the
travel forecasting and environmental staffs of the State Department of Trans-
portation (they have already begun to do this). In addition, they would, wherever possible, make use of the products of the BART impact study.

To respond to the many project issues in the short time frame necessary, and to be able to evaluate many alternative plans, this group would concentrate on the development of analysis tools which produce reasonable predictions quickly. The environmental impact assessment procedure which is currently being developed consists of mapping of important environmental and social characteristics of the region and the development of rough conceptual models to predict impacts of particular facilities and to aggregate those impact for programs of improvements. While the development of good, large scale travel models and more sophisticated impact prediction models will be necessary (e.g., good travel estimates [sensitive to policy as well as facility charges] and air quality prediction to satisfy the EPA), the development of both sophisticated and simple capabilities should be carried out. In this way, the planning and analysis section can provide rough assessments of the basic differences between alternative programs of improvements and also more detailed analyses of particular corridor or project issues. However, careful development of all of these tools may require additional personnel, suggesting either priority for new personnel (above 75) being assigned to planning and analysis or shifts within the organizational structure as it has been described.

These three elements would hopefully form an integrated core planning group, preparing analyses of issues for the Commission as they arise and making effective use of their planning resources and those of other agencies. The groups' activities would not shift radically from those they are currently performing, but they would be more carefully directed to deliver timely and
concise information to MTC's decision-makers and the community.

**Community Technical Assistance** - One other potential activity (which might not be a direct part of MTC's budget and therefore might not have to use MTC's personnel as has been assumed here) would be the development of a small community technical assistance staff (5 people). Using suggestions from MTC community liaison workers, organized regional and local interest groups and from a separate board of control made up of local and regional interest group representatives (e.g., NAACP, La Raza Unida), this group would identify community groups which had an important stake in a particular issue coming before the Commission (e.g., a major freeway, a new coordinated fare policy) and would seek to provide technical assistance to help the groups better understand their interests in a particular issue and to help them express those interests in the broader decision arena. The group would have access to the data sources (and perhaps some of the planning expertise) of MTC but would not be under the direct control of the Commission. While this may be politically difficult to achieve and five people may not be enough to work effectively all of the important issues, this group would represent a significant step by MTC toward ensuring that all affected interest groups have an opportunity to express their interests on an issue.
E. A Comparison

It is difficult to assess, without actually implementing this alternative organizational strategy, how much better this strategy would provide information to guide the ongoing decisions of MTC or how well the suggested allocations of personnel would work. Nonetheless, several general advantages and disadvantages of the strategy can be identified.

First, the strategy provides for a conscious, high level work priority setting mechanism within MTC aimed at providing timely, decision oriented information. The Commission is likely to have before it many more issues than it could ever fully appraise and only limited resources with which to assess those of highest priority. Currently, an informal process headed by the deputy executive director sets priorities for this work. But within this informal process, the work programs developed are not always tied directly to the issues before the Commission (e.g., the current joint ABAG-MTC program which emphasizes large scale, long term planning efforts rather than shorter term decision-oriented analytic tools) and the number of issues may make it difficult for one person to oversee the entire process. MTC is seeking to establish some procedures to deal with this problem. The proposed alternative establishes a broader forum, with its own staff, to attempt to set more careful work priorities.

Second, the alternative provides for a somewhat more responsive process of work priority setting. The current process primarily provides for work program guidance by the Commission's work program committee and it would probably be that they would maintain final priority setting control under the alternative. The alternative strategy, however, provides for formal inputs
from community groups and other agencies in the region, potentially broadening the range of concerns and issues considered for study. Such broader inputs also can aid in the development of more comprehensive specifications for studies to be done, making commission members and the deputy executive director aware of community issues and implementation interdependencies which should be considered for particular issues.

Third, the strategy encourages better coordination of MTC contacts with other agencies and the community, hopefully providing for a common base of information throughout MTC about intended agency actions and issues which might be raised by communities. MTC would benefit from a more consistent public image, from visible key liaison personnel for different interest groups and agencies, and from better dissemination throughout MTC of information about what the different parts of its own staff are involved in. In addition, attempts by MTC to encourage certain practices or policies on the part of other agencies (e.g. through SB325 claims or project reviews) can be aided by carefully coordinated backup analysis by the MTC staff.

Fourth, the planning activities carried on by MTC receive better coordinated guidance from the higher levels of the organization and the Commission on the development of information which is specifically aimed at providing technical guidance to MTC decisions. In response, these groups (financial planning, implementation planning and planning and analysis) can develop flexible analytic tools and reports which are concise, clear to the community and MTC decision makers, and which speak directly to the issues being resolved.

At the same time, this alternative approach may have several disadvantages. First, it could be criticized for sacrificing work to develop analytic capabilities for longer range planning efforts which is critical to providing
a framework for comprehensive regional decision-making to short term efforts to provide information to resolve immediate issues. Federal agencies currently require detailed efforts to develop long range planning tools. Also, MTC is faced with the possibility that the local CALTRANS district would step in and use its already developed modelling capabilities (which are strongly biased to highway travel) if MTC cannot develop its own capabilities.

While MTC cannot ignore these problems, this approach suggests sacrificing such efforts to develop long range techniques wherever possible to allow for development of less expensive, easier to use analytic tools. Issues continue to arise and decisions continue to be made (e.g., adoption of the MTC regional plan) while long range planning efforts go on. The decisions made often are major ones which will shape the future of the entire region without any reference to these long range efforts. This strategy therefore, only reflects an attempt to consciously incorporate comprehensive and long range considerations, as well as they can be understood with limited resources of time and analytic techniques, directly into these important decisions. As was suggested in the second chapter, this sort of decision guidance may actually be the most effective means of guiding decisions about the future, i.e., through a sequential learning process of making informed decisions, assessing the results of those decisions, and learning from that appraisal what other actions might be taken.

A second criticism of this alternative strategy is that it creates a form of 'invisible' regional government, in taking important decisions behind closed doors within MTC. It may be more responsive to have these decisions on work priorities (which will ultimately affect what gets done) made by the full Commission or by a special advisory group (made up of the Commission,
interest groups and other agencies). The attempt here was to provide a forum to openly make those decisions in the first place (i.e. instead of the previous informal process), to develop a more responsive forum (i.e. with liaison with the different agencies and the community) and a forum at least part of which deals with the issues full time every day (in that both the Commission and a special advisory group would have many other concerns and only a small number of their members would be able to deal with the ongoing and numerous decisions to be made on work to be done). Nonetheless, there is the danger that such a technical forum could be viewed suspiciously and not wholly accepted by the whole Commission or by other groups. Therefore, it would be important to stress broader review of specific issues (i.e., explicit community interaction strategies), documentation and wide circulation of all decisions made by the group (i.e., the minutes of its meetings) and periodic review of the group's activities with the entire Commission.

One final criticism is that adding this new formal layer (i.e., issue identification and work program development) will, when implemented, only add a new barrier to effective communication between the planning groups in MTC and the Commission. It is difficult to tell, but this new formality, when taken off of an organizational chart and put into the hands of people to implement, may become a new piece of bureaucratic rigidity, establishing rigid procedures for making decisions and throttling any innovation by the planning staff.

Of course, this type of criticism cannot be fully answered prior to implementation. One can examine the literature on organizational information flow and dynamics, but it is difficult to locate an exactly comparable case. Rather, it can be suggested that first, the alternative is attempting to
rectify apparent rigidities in the current MTC organizational structure which hinder internal coordination and responsiveness to a wide range of interest groups; second, the Executive Director, in staffing this new group would need to carefully select qualified high level personnel who are capable of working together, of communicating with other people and of maintaining flexibility in a more formal atmosphere; and third, the size of the group and its staff has purposefully been kept relatively small so as to make the key actors accessible to all levels of the organization without the need for rigid procedures.

In addition, this forum should avoid taking control of all aspects of MTC's operation, for fear of stifling creativity on the part of MTC's staff and bogging itself down in dealing with too many issues. The process of identifying different categories of issues (i.e., needs Commission approval, needs committee approval, needs staff approval) currently being developed at MTC should help the priority setting forum to focus its efforts on major issues.

Thus we see that the alternative strategy has several potential advantages over the existing strategy in improving the sensitivity of the planning activities at MTC to providing the types of information which are necessary for decisions by the Commission. Its several disadvantages, while serious, will probably not be so severe as to outweigh its advantages. Developing an organizational strategy, of course, can only be fully accomplished if one also has the opportunity to implement that strategy and alter it as the need arises. In designing a strategy as has been done here, an attempt has been made to consciously analyze existing knowledge about the political and technical
constraints on MTC's organizational strategy, and to link that knowledge to decisions on organizational actions by MTC, to help make the near term decisions on organizational strategy as well-informed as possible.
CHAPTER V

FOOTNOTES


8. Examples of such alternatives for the Bay Area can be found in: "Transportation and Community Values Project, State Transportation Plan Format Examples, Report to the California Department of Transportation, Task B.1 Working Discussion Paper 7, MIT, March 8, 1974.
9. Contract, MTC and Wallace, McHarg, Roberts and Todd, "Appendix A: Phase II Scope of Services"


12. Joint Meeting of MTC, CALTRANS and other agency officials to discuss problems related to Transportation and Air Quality Monitoring, San Francisco, January 9, 1974.


CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION: ORGANIZING PLANNING IN ITS POLITICAL CONTEXT

The process by which a planner (or planning agency) analyzes political issues and applies that analysis to the organization of planning activities is dynamic and complex. Many different issues surface simultaneously and numerous personal interactions (with the community, political actors and other planners) shape the planner's perspective. The diversity of issues provides the planner with many rich opportunities to integrate political and planning considerations. At the same time, however, the planner's personal involvement in ongoing political issues can limit his or her ability to step back and assess the role which planning can and should be playing to complement political decision-making.

Any formal attempt to simulate this analysis process in a written document is limited. The author has much more time to step back and reflect upon the interrelationships between various issues and actors. Also, the author's perspective is not being shaped by continual interactions with other people who participate in the political decision-making process. Instead, the author is allowed to make assumptions which are not constantly challenged by other actors or by events and to postulate and evaluate planning strategies without the means or the responsibility for implementing them.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the attempt to perform such analysis here has been valuable in two ways. First, it has begun to illustrate how and why the political context should be considered in decisions on organizing the activities of a planning agency. Second, it has identified several potential changes in MTC's current planning activities which would help to
create the linkage between planning knowledge and organized government action.

Specifically, the alternative strategy developed would accomplish three things. First, it would improve the timeliness of the information which is developed for decision-makers by improving the mechanism by which priorities for planning work are set and by suggesting the development of less sophisticated and less cumbersome analysis techniques to develop information when it is needed. Second, it would improve the comprehensiveness of the information developed for decision-makers by establishing a more responsive forum for setting work priorities, by attempting to provide technical assistance to interest groups which cannot otherwise have their interests expressed and by developing information on the long term impacts of near term decisions. Finally, it would improve the clarity and conciseness of the information by encouraging conscious consideration of the relationship of reporting formats and graphics to the working style of the Commission members.

The ultimate effectiveness of this strategy will depend on the interest of the political decision-makers on MTC in absorbing and assessing the information developed by planners. Nonetheless, the strategy attempts to provide analysis of the issues of most immediate concern to the political decision-makers in a manner best suited to the interests and style of those decision-makers. In so doing, the planner may not only create the linkage between knowledge and action more effectively, but may also benefit from improved credibility as an actor who can realistically assess problems and provide useful guidance for resolving those problems.

Implications for Planning Practice

MTC is operating in a specific political and technical context.
Within that context, the role which MTC has developed for itself (and for its staff) is very similar to the role proposed for the planner in Chapter II. One must ask, however, whether the type of organization strategy for Bay Area transportation planning developed from the proposed role for planners would be suitable in other regions, in other planning disciplines or at lower levels of government. Even more basically, one must ask whether planning practice in other regions and disciplines would benefit at all from the use of political analysis to guide development of organizational strategies for planning agencies.

While full answers to these questions are beyond the scope of this research, each of these other contexts for planning is briefly reviewed below to suggest opportunities and constraints for applying political analysis to organizing planning activities.

Other Metropolitan Areas - There are clear differences between the Bay Area and other metropolitan areas. First, interest groups can be different from those found in the Bay Area. Conservation interests may not be so active in areas with less prominent natural resources or minority groups might be better organized where there is only one central city. Second, issues will vary according to the history and geographic features of each area. For example, many areas are just now considering the development of massive rail transit systems, and the types of decisions which are being made and the types of planning information necessary to complement the decision process will be different. Third, even where interest groups and issues are similar, the decision-making dynamics will likely vary. Very few other regions have agencies as powerful as MTC. In their place, one will often find the unstable and ineffective COG's. In these cases, the political dynamics will vary according to the role of the state (e.g., in states with one major city such as
Massachusetts, the state will often be responsible for regional decisions), and according to the role of local government [e.g., strong home rule with many competing governments within a region (e.g., Los Angeles), strong home rule with few competing governments (e.g., San Diego) or relatively weak home rule (e.g., Boston or New York)]. Fourth, and perhaps most importantly, political dynamics will vary according to the distributions of power in different areas, with predominantly elite decision-making requiring different planning activities from more pluralist decision-making as was suggested in Chapter II.

Despite these differences, however, metropolitan areas tend to exhibit one major similarity. In almost all cases, one can perceive an "ecology of games" at work, with different actors pursuing their interests by initiating and supporting diverse private and public actions. It is this characteristic which has stimulated most regions to develop some form of regional decision-making body which can resolve conflicts between these diverse interests when they transcend local boundaries. Although the particular organizational strategy developed for MTC will very likely not be appropriate in other metropolitan areas, the existence in all areas of a political process which continually selects and resolves issues as they emerge will necessitate the same type of political analysis as that performed here for the Bay Area. By performing this type of analysis, planning agencies can make adjustments in their own activities and structures to provide timely, comprehensive information which is relevant to their particular political context.

Other Planning Disciplines - Application of political analysis to organizing planning activities should be valuable in planning disciplines other than transportation. In comprehensive health planning, for example,
Regional agencies are being granted increased powers to approve applications by local providers of health services for "certificates of need" before facilities can be expanded. As issues arise, the agencies seek to foster improvement and coordination of health service delivery to all groups. Similarly, land use and open space issues often involve particular proposed developments which are likely to change the character of a portion of a region (e.g., a suburban housing development on the open fringe of a metropolitan area) rather than issues which require overall master plans. In New York City, the nature of these issues has led to a recent emphasis on "mini-planning" (rather than large scale master planning), aimed at resolving issues in particular portions of the city. In Hawaii, recognition of the need to resolve issues as they emerge has led the state government to seek land use legislation which establishes a process for resolving land use issues rather than requiring the development of one master land use plan.

Of course there are also major differences between transportation and these other disciplines. Regional decision-making authority for transportation issues has generally been more widely established than authority over these issues. This is due, in part, to the nature of these other issues, where public agencies attempt to regulate private actions rather than initiate public actions. In addition, transportation planning has developed a more sophisticated set of analysis tools as a basis for developing planning information. This may provide an organization like MTC with more capabilities for providing technical guidance to political decisions than other types of regional agencies.

Nonetheless, increasing concern at national and local levels with issues such as the impacts of urban growth and sprawl, and the inefficiencies
of the health care system is leading many regions to establish powerful regional decision-making bodies in other disciplines. With the establishment of such groups, the need for planning activities to provide timely, relevant information for political decision-making will increase. As a result, experience with structuring transportation planning to complement political decision-making should provide a useful model for the application of political analysis to the development of organizational strategies for these new planning and decision-making agencies.

Planning at the Local Level - Local governments normally have scarce planning resources (particularly in smaller communities) and their ability to resolve many issues can be limited by the larger-than-local nature of the issues (e.g., major transportation improvements). Nonetheless, local government is the only authoritative level of decision-making for some issues (e.g., zoning and land use) and decision-making forums (e.g., city councils) have developed much more fully at the local level. Thus, the need to use scarce planning resources well and the need to understand constraints on local government's ability to resolve issues suggests that local planning agencies should carefully consider what activities they perform and how those activities are structured. At the same time, the existence of a well-developed political decision process within most local governments, and the relatively long experience of these decision processes with administration and decision-making for zoning and other regulatory actions, should facilitate rearranging the resources of city planning agencies to complement the ongoing political decision process. Interest groups should be better developed and fewer in number than at the regional level and regular processes by which issues emerge and by which policies are initiated and implemented should exist. Thus, identifying
interests which are not being considered in the decision-making processes and points in the processes which offer opportunities for linking planning information to decision-making should actually be easier than at the regional level.

Thus one can see that first, analysis such as that performed for MTC can provide valuable ideas for generally improving the linkage between planning information and governmental action, and second, that similar analysis potentially can be applied to a wide range of planning activities in varying political contexts. Such analysis will undoubtedly result in different organizational strategies in different contexts, shaped by variations in distributions of power and decision authority, by the level of planning sophistication and by the level of resources available for planning activities. Nonetheless, if planners are to complement the political decision-making process by linking their knowledge to ongoing governmental actions, they must, in any context, understand how issues emerge, what types of issues and interest groups are involved in resolving those issues, and what types of political dynamics guide the resolution of those issues.

Ultimately, how well any planner can play the role of complementing the political decision-making process will depend not only on how well he or she analyzes a political context, but also upon the capabilities and values of the person and that person's interest in helping the political decision-making process make comprehensive decisions which consider the interests of many different groups. The analysis performed here, therefore, cannot guarantee that the 'planner's dilemma' will be resolved. Rather, it provides only one step towards developing a planner's role which recognizes the limitations
on planner's abilities and seeks, within those limitations, to mesh the planner's processed knowledge with the personal knowledge of society's diverse actors as those actors make decisions which shape the future.


APPENDIX A

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