



Caltrans Division of Research,  
Innovation and System Information

# Research



# Results

Planning/ Policy  
&  
Programming

## Industrial Land and Jobs Study for the San Francisco Bay Area

Preserving industrial zoned land that will complement Metropolitan Transportation Commission's efforts to improve regional goods movement and reduce greenhouse (GHG) emissions.

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**Project Title:**  
Goods Movement and Industrial Land Supply

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### WHAT WAS THE NEED?

In order to meet the requirements of California's landmark 2008 Senate Bill 375 to accommodate future growth and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from cars and light trucks, the San Francisco Bay Area engages in long-range planning on an ongoing basis. Every five years, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) prepare a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), called "Plan Bay Area."

However, absent from the SCS is an effort to plan for jobs. Though Plan Bay Area attempts to direct job growth to job centers near transit in order to reduce vehicle miles traveled, it does not address the needs of the many industries that are not readily oriented to transit. These industries range from information technology businesses that occupy flexible space for production and research, and deliveries to industries like construction.

The location of industrial businesses and the related patterns of goods movement, affect the region's ability to meet GHG targets. The 2015 MTC's San Francisco Bay Area, Goods Movement Plan identifies critical areas for goods movement in the region, finds concentrations of economic activity and congestion - and the resulting need for investment. The Plan suggests the need for a goods movement strategy that supports global competitiveness, smarter delivery systems, and a modernized infrastructure via public-private partnerships.

This study complements that plan with an analysis of the demand for and supply of industrial zoned land in the nine-county region, both now and in the future.



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## WHAT WAS OUR GOAL?

The focus of this study was to analyze the demand and supply of industrial zoned land in the San Francisco Bay Area, in order to determine a strategy to preserve industrial zoned land that complemented MTC's efforts to improve regional goods movement and reduce GHG emissions. Ultimately, the results will be used to develop an industrial land strategy for Plan Bay Area, the region's Sustainable Communities Strategy.

## WHAT DID WE DO?

- Analyzed present and future demand for industrial zoned land in the San Francisco Bay Area.
- Determined the supply of industrial zoned land in the San Francisco Bay Area.
- Identified areas at risk for conversion.
- Analyzed economic and transportation impacts. The contractor examined the effects of the loss of industrial land on regional vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and job quality.
- Determined zoning effectiveness. This task focused on examining the types of zoning that are most effective at preserving industrial land and its businesses.
- Obtained business perspectives.
- Developed strategies for preserving industrially zoned land. This task analyzed how much land should be preserved and where the "Priority Production Areas" should be located.
- Prepared draft and final reports and obtained feedback from Caltrans, MTC/ABAG staff and technical advisory committees.

## WHAT WAS THE OUTCOME?

Overall, the analysis suggests the conversion of industrial land is proceeding at a slow and steady pace that is likely to accelerate in coming years due to the visions put forward in general plans and Priority Development Area (PDA) designations.

PDAs are areas where cities and counties have designated for future growth. By 2040, shortages of industrial land are likely to occur in the South and East Bay, with surpluses remaining in the North Bay.

Working with MTC/ABAG and key stakeholders, this study developed criteria in terms of transportation, economy, equity, zoning, environment, and location that could enter the decision-making. This criteria may contribute to designating Priority Production Areas (PPAs) in the future. These PPAs leverage existing infrastructure to support the development of industrial and related business clusters.

## WHAT IS THE BENEFIT?

This study analyzed the location of industrial zoned land in the San Francisco Bay Area, as well as the demand of businesses for this land. The location of industrial zoned land and businesses is closely linked to the availability of transportation infrastructure. The location of industrial zoned lands, as well as industrial businesses, have implications for vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in California regions, as well as their economic competitiveness. Thus, understanding location patterns in this region will provide insights into California's other metropolitan regions as well. Understanding how to optimize the location of industrial zoned lands in California's regions will help transportation and land use planners and modelers plan more efficient investments for Caltrans.

## LEARN MORE

<https://berkeley.box.com/s/bfv0lugj9p6p79ihvqzxawyxyioy9wx>

<https://www.planningforjobs.org>

**IMAGE**

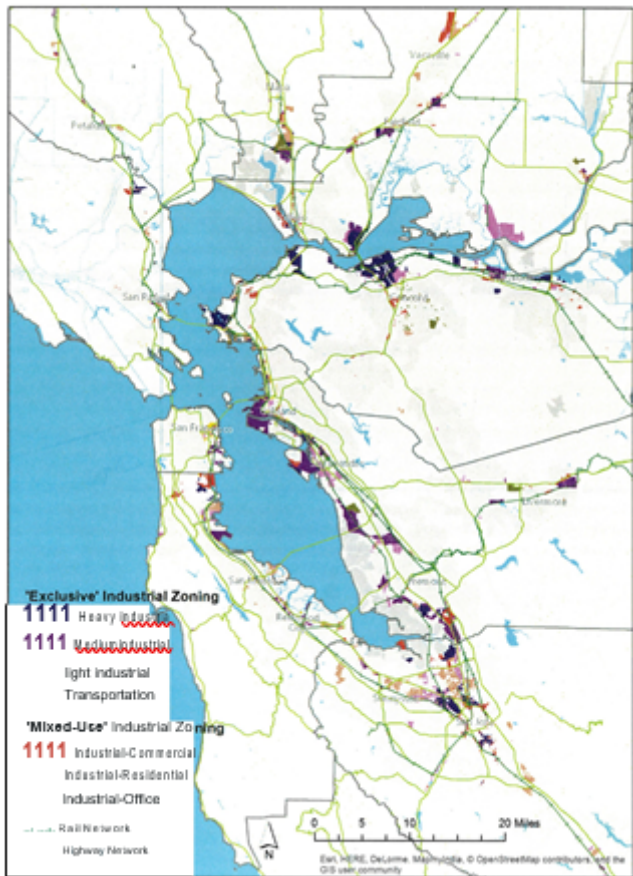


Image 1: Industrial Land by Zoning Classification (inner Bay): Including Rail and Highway Networks

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