

Council CEO Appointed to Committee with Broad Power Over Bay Area and State Land Use

Today, the [California Air Resources Board](#) appointed Jim Wunderman to represent the voice of business on a committee that will help decide land use for the Bay Area and all regions in the state for the next 15 years, or more. The other 18 members hail largely from local governments, environmental organizations, social equity groups and transportation groups.

No doubt up to the task, Jim's only comment was nonetheless, "Gulp..."

Without drowning our readers in an alphabet soup of initials, this committee is an product of [SB-375](#) – called the "Holy Grail of Sustainable Development" – which the Bay Area Council long championed and helped pass. Signed by Gov. Schwarzenegger in 2008, SB 375 ties together greenhouse gas emissions reductions from transportation, regional planning, transportation funding and planning for affordable housing. It also puts real teeth in regional planning.

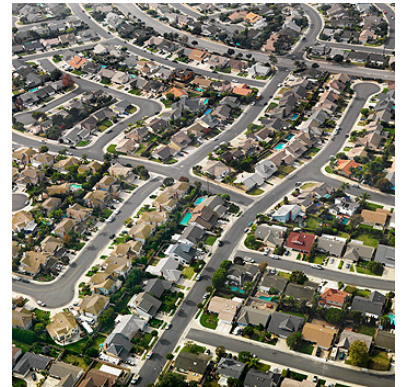
In the next 20 years, the Bay Area will add more than 1.6 million new residents, and California will add 8.4 million more. That's like folding in the entire populations of Washington and Oregon. Yet, during that period of growth, our region and the rest of the state must reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 20% by 2020, and 80% by 2050. There simply is no way to get there without changing where and how housing, retail and commercial space are built. The rubric for the change is to reduce "vehicle miles traveled," or the length and amount of car and truck trips.

The committee Jim was appointed to – where again he is the sole business voice – has the humble task of helping decide how regions can do this and how they will be measured. In creating the Committee, CARB said it "should recommend a method to evaluate the full potential for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in each major region of the state, and statewide, using improved land use patterns, indirect source rules, enhanced bike, walk and transit infrastructure, and pricing policies where applicable (including congestion, toll and parking pricing)."

They also must decide how much carbon dioxide equivalent must be reduced by land-use planning. The current thinking is a reduction of 5 million metric tons annually, but that could be revised up or down. Without a doubt, this Committee can have far-reaching impacts on the lives of millions of Californians. Jim seeks your advice, good wishes, and – if you are religious – your prayers.

Story of the Week

Daniel Weintraub, Columnist at the Sacramento Bee, [writes about how a Constitutional Convention](#) could be a viable means to achieving much needed reforms in California.



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