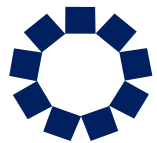


# Priority Conservation Area Grant Program

 Webinar for Applicants



ASSOCIATION OF BAY AREA GOVERNMENTS  
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

March 15, 2024



# What we will cover in this webinar

- 1) **Context**
- 2) **Grant Program Overview**
- 3) **Eligibility Criteria**
- 4) **Selection Criteria**
- 5) **Next Steps**



# Context: Plan Bay Area 2050 and PCAs

## Plan Bay Area 2050



The long-range plan charts a course for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area, focused on the **future of transportation, housing, the economy, and the environment.**

## Guiding Principle: Healthy



A **Healthy** Bay Area where the region's natural resources, open space, clean water and clean air are conserved and the region actively reduces its environmental footprint and protects residents from environmental impacts.

## Plan Element: Environment



The first-ever **Environment Element** prioritizes the preservation and improvement of land, air and water in Bay Area communities through strategies that conserve current resources, mitigate the effects of climate change, adapt to hazardous climate events.

## Key Themes



### **Reduce Risks from Hazards**

### **Expand Access to Parks and Open Space**

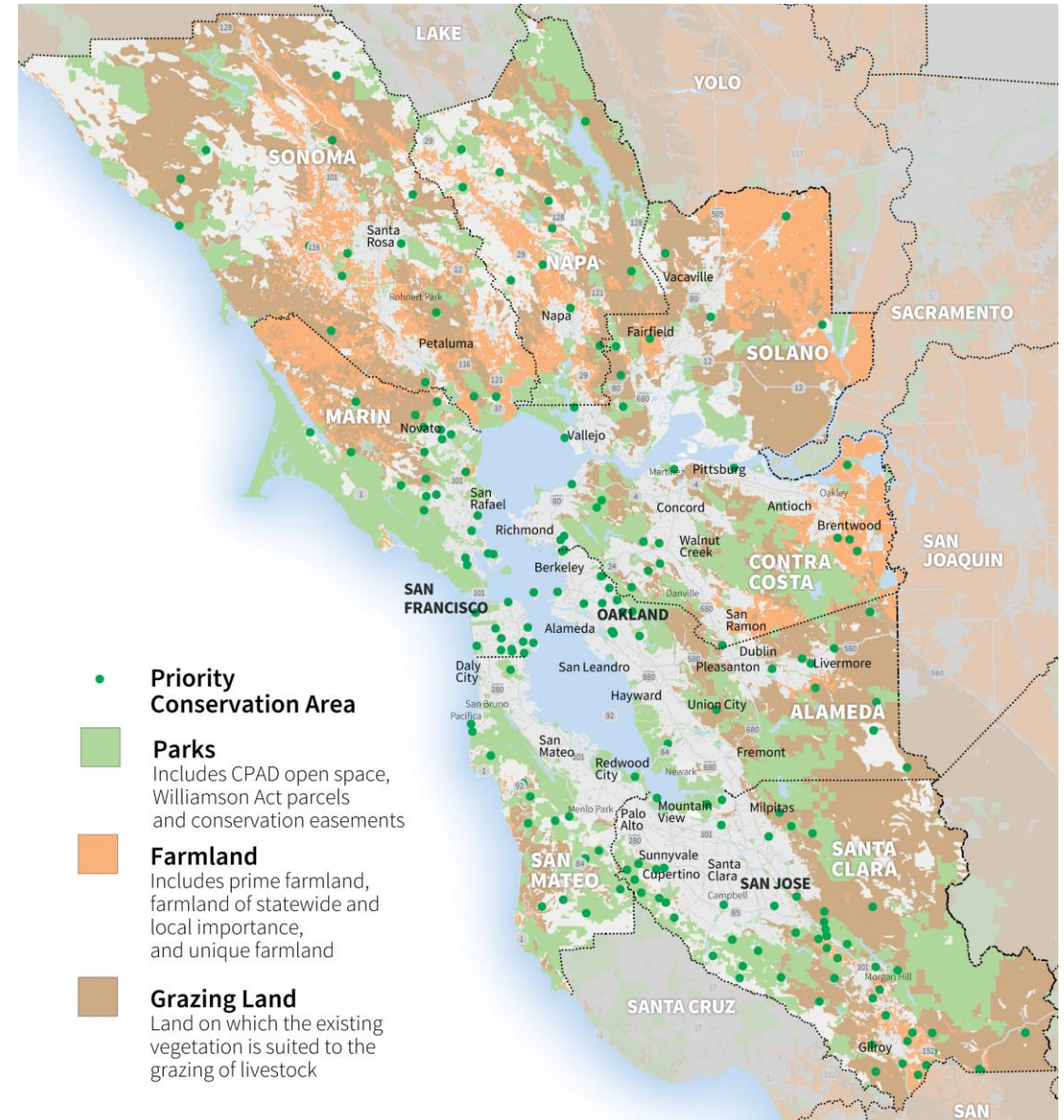
## Key Strategies



# PCA Designations

Currently, there are **185 designated PCAs**, representing approximately **2.3 million acres**

- **2007** - The PCA planning framework established a process for nominations for regionally designating areas of regional significance that have **broad community support and an urgent need for protection**.
- **2014** - Minor framework update established four primary designation types: **natural landscapes, agricultural lands, urban greening, and regional recreation**
- **2024** - **PCA Refresh** developing updates to the planning framework and designation process, particularly to advance the use of **data** and the integration of **equity and resilience**

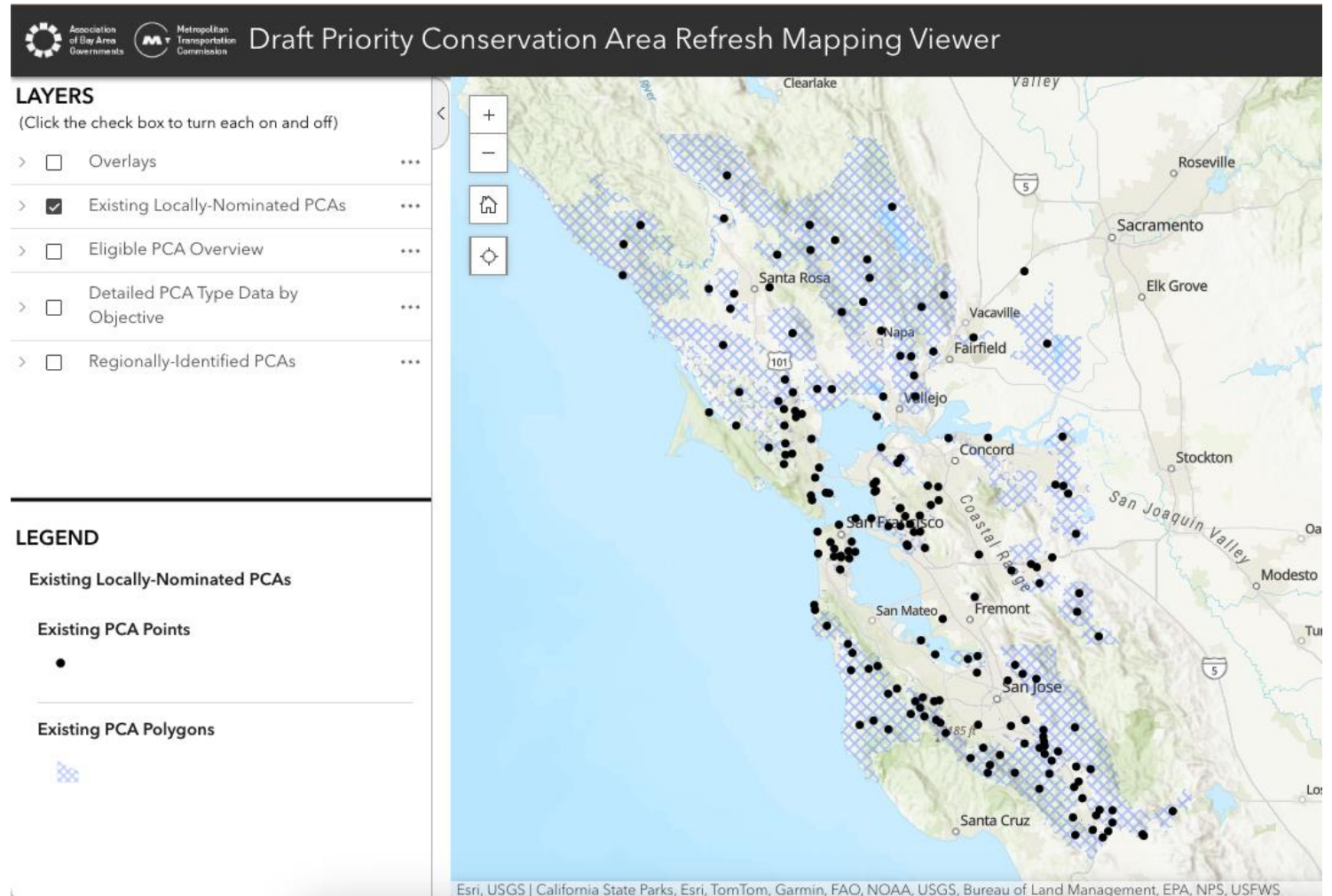




# PCA Designations – Map Viewer

## Includes:

- PCA Points
- PCA Polygons
- PCA Name
- Nominating Agency
- Acreage
- Year Designated

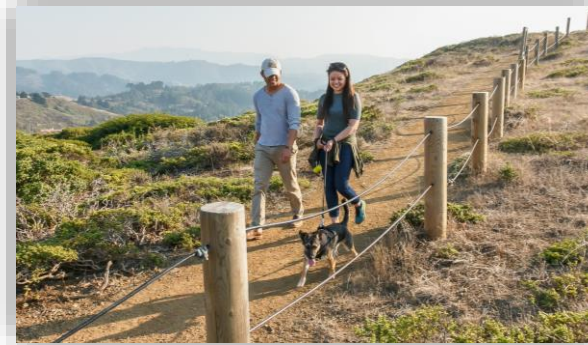


<https://mtc.ca.gov/planning/land-use/priority-conservation-areas-pcas>



# PCA Grant Program

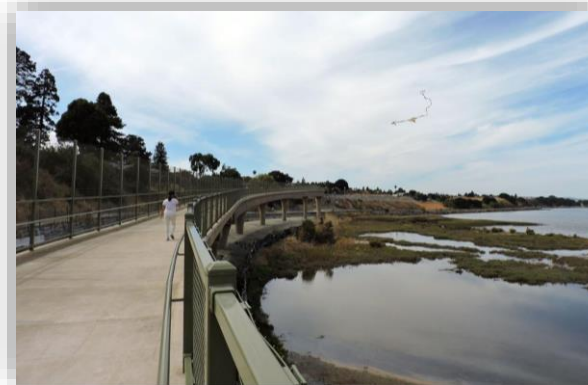
- Co-managed by MTC and the State Coastal Conservancy
- Eligible project types have included:
  - Protection of natural resource, open space, or agricultural lands and ag economy
  - Habitat restoration or enhancements
  - Bicycle and pedestrian access improvements
  - Urban greening
  - Planning activities
- Two separately managed programs:
  - North Bay (CTAs)
  - Rest of Bay (MTC/SCC)



Milagra Battery Trail  
Image Source: Vivien Kim Thorp, Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy



900 Innes Park Planning  
Image Source: San Francisco Recreation and Parks



Pinole Shores to Bayfront Park  
Image Source: Karin Betts



Dotson Family Marsh  
Image Source: East Bay Regional Parks District





# What's New

## 1) Regional Call:

- Call for Projects will be for all nine counties
- MTC/ABAG and SCC evaluation committee will recommend projects for funding

## 2) Available Local Funds:

- Ability to support broader suite of regional conservation priorities

## 3) Two Phases of Funding

- Current – Support near-term need
- 2025 – Incorporate PCA Refresh





# Funding Phases

Funding Round	Anticipated Funding*	Eligible Geographies	Focus
<b>Phase 1</b> March 2024	• <b>\$8.5 million total</b>	• Existing PCAs	• Address near-term conservation funding needs
<b>Phase 2</b> 2025	• <b>\$8+ million total</b>	• New, updated, and existing PCAs	• Incorporate PCA Refresh framework and priorities • Support General Plan Open Space Element updates (SB1425)

\* *Minimum award: \$200k*

*Maximum award: \$1M*

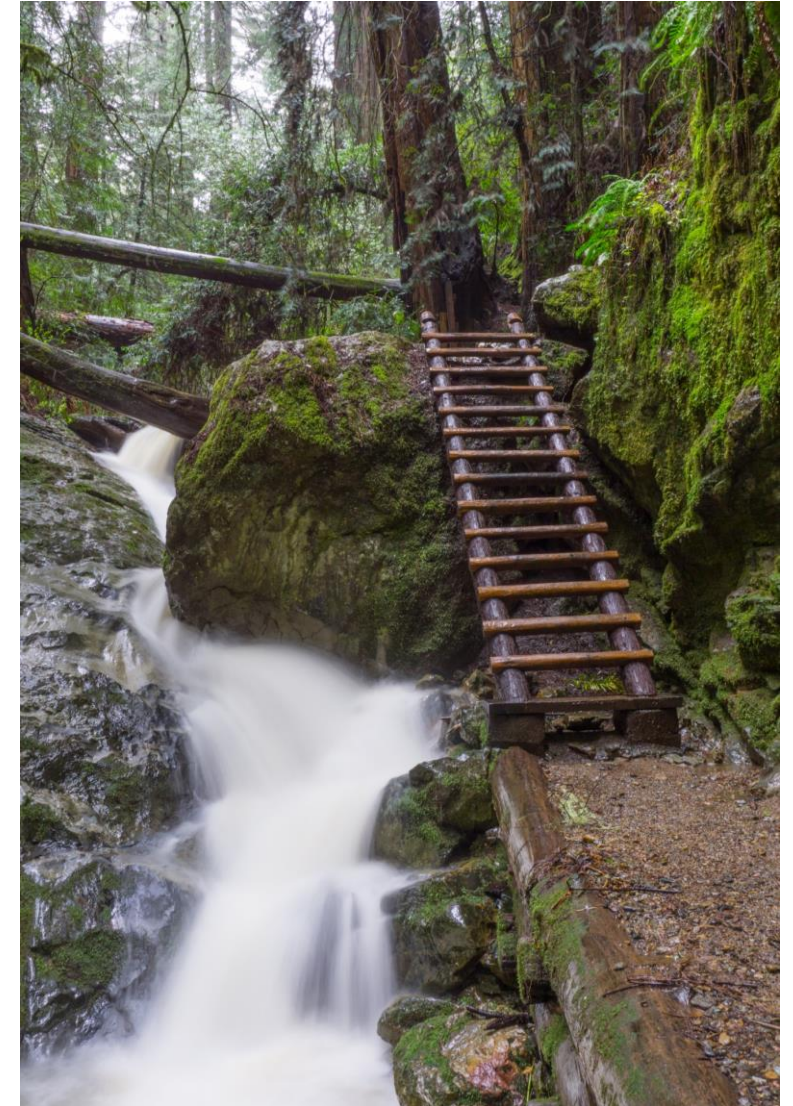






# Eligibility Criteria

- **Geographic Scope**
  - Nine County Bay Area
  - Within designated PCAs\*
- **Eligible Applicants**
  - Local governments (cities, towns, counties)
  - County transportation agencies
  - Parks and open space districts
  - Tribes
  - Water/utility districts
  - Land trusts
  - Non-profits and Community-based organizations



\*Projects not entirely within an existing PCA may be considered on a case-by-case basis.





# Eligibility Criteria

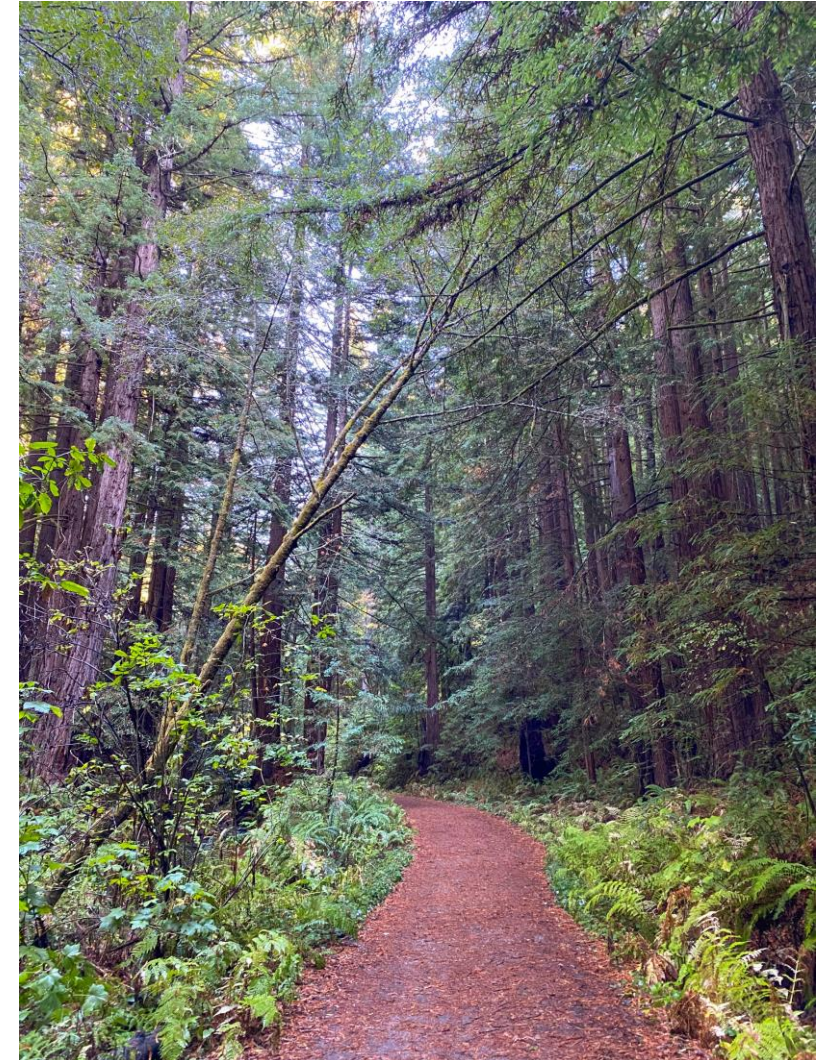
- **Eligible Activities**
  - Planning and design
  - Project implementation
    - Engagement
    - Permitting & environmental review
    - Project materials, labor, & construction
  - Acquisition and protection





# Eligible Project Types

- 1) Protection, Restoration or Enhancement of Natural Resources, Open Space, or Agricultural Lands**
  - Acquisitions or easements
  - Restoration or enhancements
  - Support ag protection and economy
- 2) Pedestrian and bicycle facilities**
- 3) Urban Greening**
- 4) Visual Enhancements**





# Evaluation Criteria

- **PCA Program Goals**
  - Meet one or more
- **Partnerships / EPC Benefits**
- **Regional Significance**
  - Serve a greater-than-local need
- **Likelihood of Success**
  - Programmatic capacity
  - Leveraging resources
    - Match not required but considered





# Phase 1 Funding Targets

- **Purpose**

- Invest a minimum of \$6M in projects that result in long-term protection, restoration and enhancement of habitats and agricultural lands

- **Location**

- Minimum 1 per county
- 50% of funds to PCAs in Marin, Sonoma, Napa, and Solano counties

- **Types**

- Mix of eligible activities





# Application Process

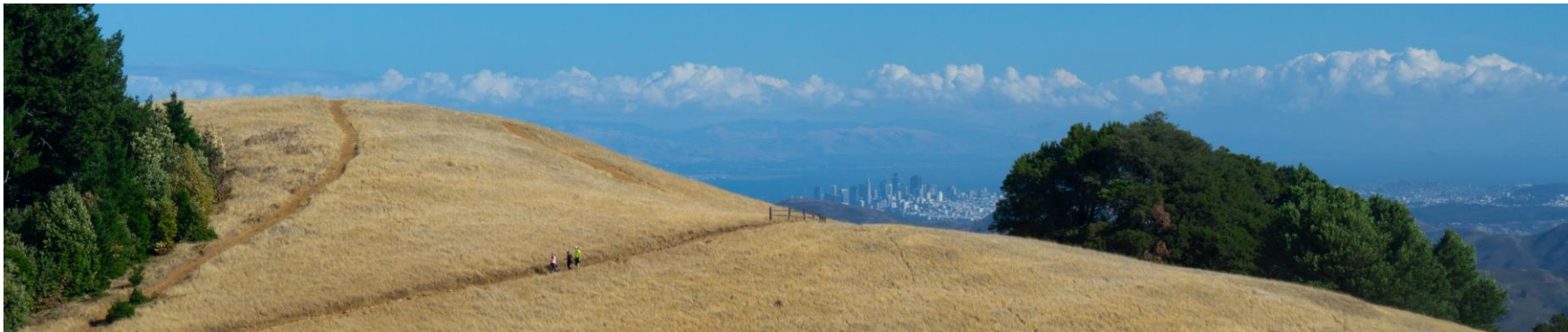
- **Two Step Application Process**

- 1) Submit a completed Letter of Interest Application Form

- **Due May 8**

- 2) Upon evaluation, a limited number of applicants will be invited to submit more detailed proposals

- **Due August 28**





# Phase 1 PCA Grant Schedule

- **Schedule and Deadlines**

- **May 8** – Letters of Interest Application Forms Due
- June 6 – Notices / Invitations for Full Applications Sent
- Week of June 24 – Office Hours for Invited Applicants
- **August 28** – Full Proposals Due
- November – MTC Commission Action
- December – Desired project start date





# Questions

- **Please submit questions to:**
  - [pcagrants@bayareametro.gov](mailto:pcagrants@bayareametro.gov)
- **Responses to FAQs will be posted to the MTC PCA Grants website:**
  - <https://mtc.ca.gov/funding/funding-opportunities/priority-conservation-area-pca-grants>







# Thank You

**Ben Botkin**

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415.778.5299



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