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Bay Area Residents Embrace Smart Growth For Housing, According to the Bay Area Council's *Bay Area Poll*

SAN FRANCISCO, Jan. 14, 2005 — Fifty-five percent of Bay Area residents said new homes should be built near job centers, according to the 2004 *Bay Area Poll* released today by the Bay Area Council.

Housing is one of the top three issues facing the region, behind transportation and the economy, according to earlier results of the *Poll*. Today's results reflected residents desire to reduce time and distance between work and home.

Residents also indicated (52 percent) that the Bay Area should have a regional growth plan, backed by compliance incentives, such as transportation funding. Such incentives might be needed, as 42 percent of residents said local governments are not doing enough to encourage home ownership. Only four percent of respondents said local governments are doing too much to encourage home ownership.

A recent Bay Area Council study found that the Bay Area has a current housing deficit of 36,427 units needed to maintain pace with the current number of jobs in the region. The study also found that at the current pace, the overall deficit will grow to nearly 300,000 units by 2030.

"The Bay Area Council is supporting policies that will help reverse the underproduction trend in the region, by providing local governments with incentives to permit more homes," said Jim Wunderman, President and CEO of the Bay Area Council. "The fact that Bay Area residents agree with those policies should make our elected leaders take note."

Chronic underproduction and the resulting housing shortage have resulted in a multitude of negative effects for Bay Area residents. Escalating housing costs have caused many Bay Area residents to leave the region or move to its edge, increasing commuting time and distances, exacerbating regional traffic congestion, increasing air pollution, and further segregating households by income. Employers repeatedly identify the high cost of housing as a serious challenge to attracting and retaining a highly skilled workforce.

The *Bay Area Poll* found that only 63 percent of residents in the Bay Area own a home compared with a national average of 69 percent in 2004, according to the U.S. Census. Of the 37 percent in the Bay Area that rent, only six percent do not hope to own a home someday.

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About the *Bay Area Poll*

A total of 600 residents of the nine-county Bay Area were surveyed by Field Research Corporation during the period of November 18 -24, 2004. Survey respondents were selected using a random

probability sampling technique that gives all residents with telephones (listed or not) an equal chance of being selected for the survey. The sample was stratified to obtain representative samples in each of six Bay Area regions: Alameda County, Contra Costa County, San Francisco County, San Mateo County, Santa Clara County and the North Bay counties of Marin, Napa, Solano and Sonoma. After the completion of interviewing, the sample was weighted to conform to actual population estimates of the nine-county Bay Area. Findings are subject to a sampling error of plus or minus 4 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level.

About the Bay Area Council

The Bay Area Council established the *Bay Area Poll* in 1980. Founded in 1945, the Bay Area Council (www.bayareacouncil.org) develops and drives regional public policy initiatives and researches critical infrastructure issues. Led by CEOs, the Bay Area Council presents a strong, united voice for more than 275 major employers throughout the Bay Area region in promoting economic prosperity and quality of life. Jim Wunderman became the president and CEO of the Bay Area Council in April 2004.