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## **40 PERCENT OF BAY AREA RESIDENTS CONSIDERING LEAVING, LARGELY DUE TO HOUSING COSTS, BAY AREA COUNCIL POLL SHOWS**

*Residents Point Finger at Their Own City or Town For Housing Costs*

**SAN FRANCISCO, Feb. 27, 2006** — Forty percent of Bay Area residents say they have seriously considered moving out of the region, according to results of the 2006 *Bay Area Council Poll* of 600 residents released today. This is the equivalent of about 2.7 million residents. Of those thinking of a move, 70 percent say that the high cost of housing is a major factor driving them.

Housing is the second most important issue facing the region, behind only transportation, according to earlier results of the *Council Poll*.

Few residents question the value of affordable housing. Three quarters (74 percent) of the Bay Area think a greater supply of affordable housing is very important to the overall health of the Bay Area economy. Another 17 percent say affordable housing is somewhat important.

Many residents are ready to squarely point the finger at their own city or town. Only five percent think their own city is doing an excellent job encouraging affordable housing, whereas 67 percent give their town a grade of very poor, poor, or fair.

When given the choice of how to address the housing shortage, most residents choose "infill housing" as deserving their support. Indeed, 58 percent support building more new homes and apartments on vacant lots or underused spaces within existing Bay Area communities. Only 25 percent would rather have new homes built on land outside of existing Bay Area communities.

"The housing crisis has continued, without pause, through economic upturns and downturns," said Jim Wunderman the president and CEO of the Bay Area Council. "If we are to affect it, it will require major legislation in Sacramento. Luckily, or perhaps ironically, since the housing crisis has spread like a flu from the Bay Area to the rest of the state, Sacramento is now paying close attention. The housing crisis is epidemic but it need not be terminal, especially if we can change some important state legislation."

The Bay Area Council is working with the Governor and legislature on a five point housing initiative:

1. Accelerate new housing, when in the right place, by having cities identify sites and zone locations today to meet the needs they will face for new population and jobs in 20 years.
2. Have California's regions synch their internal plans for transportation spending with their plans for new housing locations.
3. Modernize the California regulatory framework so that it supports rather than hinders new homes in existing urban areas that are consistent with local plans, plus avoid duplicative, time-consuming and unnecessary analysis.

4. Give cities the ability to get money to improve their infrastructure – such as sewage, water, electric, etc. – to accommodate new “infill” housing.
5. Develop a permanent source of supportive funds to increase the supply of housing for the very low and low income, which requires public investment.

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#### **About the Bay Area Poll**

A total of 600 residents of the nine-county Bay Area were surveyed in English and Spanish by Field Research Corporation during the period of January 16-23, 2006. 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**

Founded in 1945, the Bay Area Council ([www.bayareacouncil.org](http://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 hundreds of major employers throughout the Bay Area region whom employ more than 490,000 workers, or 1 of every six private sector employees in the Bay Area. Jim Wunderman has served as president and CEO of the Bay Area Council since April of 2004.