

Is Multiple Agency A Regional Answer?

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article is an excerpt from the sixth of 12 "Regionalist Papers" sponsored by Metropolitan Fund, a non-profit research and education agency in southeastern Michigan. The writer is from the department of political science and institute of governmental affairs at the University of California, Berkeley.

the lines of the earlier Know bills, and requiring the plans and policies of all local agencies to conform to the mandatory elements of the regional plan.

Under the 1963 act, the governing board would have, in addition to city and county representative, nine "citizen members" appointed by the respective county boards of supervisors.

Hearings in the Bay Area are scheduled on the bill this fall. In the meantime, three new regional special purpose agencies have been created since 1969.

Since one of the points of contention in the Bay Area is

over whether cities and counties should be represented on the governing body of the regional agency and since cities and counties as well as other units of local government and state and federal agencies will be involved in whatever scheme is finally decided upon, it is desirable to take stock of the corporate governmental actors.

Until 1960 the cities and counties may have taken a negative attitude toward regional government. In fact, the principal motive of cities and counties in the organization of ABAG may have been to block any effort

to create a 'multipurpose regional agency.'

Almost immediately after its formation in 1961, the city and county members began to develop a regional orientation and perception of Bay Area problems.

By 1965, it was clear that voluntary advisory council of governments could neither meet the regional problems of the Bay Area nor forestall the creation of special purpose agencies to handle regional problems.

In 1967 ABAG voted to request legislation to create a Regional Home Rule Agency in which cities and counties would be required to par-

ticipate and which would have authority to implement regional plans.

HOWEVER, THE ABAG Regional Home Rule proposal overlooked two other articulate movements in the Bay Area.

First, the politically powerful and functionally satisfactory existing special purpose agencies were not ready to accept ABAG hegemony.

Secondly, the conservationists and environmentalists, heady from their success in developing a plan to conserve and develop

the bay and from the permanent establishment of the Bay Conservation and Development Commission in 1969, were not willing to entrust comprehensive regional planning to an agency controlled by city and county officials.

Although seemingly intransigent positions were maintained on all sides during the 1960s, it was a decade in which attitudes were changed and communications were established among the antagonists.

AN ISSUE which has not been squarely faced until now is the relationship of a

multipurpose regional agency with existing special purpose agencies.

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission and possibly the Bay Area Sewage Services Commission would merge with a regional agency when established by the Legislature. But these are the newest of special purpose agencies.

The older agencies need to be involved in the process of regional planning, decision making and administration at the same time that they, along with cities and counties, are required to conform to regional policies.

Without waiting for the enactment of legislation, ABAG could in a number of ways initiate the process of formalizing their entry into an inclusive council of all governments.

Finally, there are faint but hopeful signs that the executive branch of the state government is considering ways of guiding areawide comprehensive planning organizations to develop into regional "umbrella" organizations. The history of ABAG is testimony to the desirability of this kind of state and federal strategy.

By DR. VICTOR JONES

The San Francisco Bay Area covers 1,000 square miles and has a population of almost 5 million. It consists of the consolidated City and County of San Francisco and eight other counties - all touching San Francisco Bay.

In addition, there are 91 other cities, a score of major regional special purpose agencies, and some 500 school districts and smaller special district.

The State of California and the United States government are active participants in formulating, and at times directly administering, public policies of regional and local impact. The state and national Governments, each with a multitude of programs and agencies, are as fragmented as local government.

There are two strands of regional governance operating and still developing in the Bay Area. During the past 15 years, the creation of new regional special purpose agencies has accelerated. At the same time efforts to coordinate or replace them with a multi-purpose regional agency have received widespread support.

THE GOVERNANCE of the Bay Area is an exercise of intergovernmental relations. Most of these relationships are still loose and fluid.

It is relatively easy to get a metropolitan system for planning, decision making and administration if one is satisfied to have important decisions made by functional specialists with little or no relation to each other and without a means of establishing priorities among their proposals.

This can be done through the creation of special purpose authorities which is the characteristic approach in the Bay Area. Or it can be achieved through state and national action to set national and state policies and create national and state regulatory agencies to administer such programs directly or through dependent regional special purpose agencies.

The major thrust in environmental protection - air and water quality, waste disposal, land use controls, open space, etc. - seems to be shaping up in this direction.

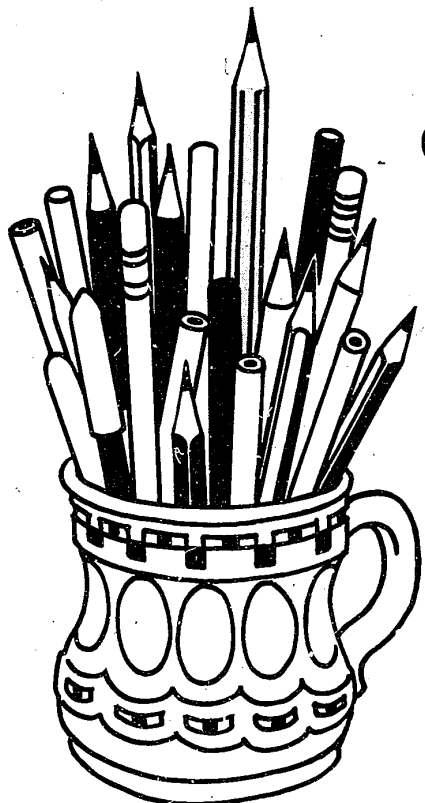
HOWEVER, many city and county officials and civic leaders believe that regional government of some kind is inevitable; that, in fact, it is already in the Bay Area in the form of special purpose districts, authorities and agencies with more to come.

They believe that it would be better if there were a multipurpose but limited regional agency empowered to prepare regional plans and to require other local agencies to conform to regional policies.

The widespread support of a limited multipurpose regional agency that has developed since 1960 is astonishing. Until 1971, however, agreement ended here and disagreement over the composition and selection of a governing board was bitter and intense.

Three major bills, two authorized by Assemblyman Knox and one drafted by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), were caught in these disagreements and stalled in the 1969 and 1970 sessions of the Legislature. A compromise was embodied in the Knox bill of 1971, wherein representation was both directly elected and ex-officio. However, this bill was narrowly defeated in the Senate under pressure from the conservative wing of the Republican Party.

IN THE 1972 session, Knox has introduced a bill sponsored by ABAG to convert the association into a regional planning district. This would be done through amendments to the Regional Planning District Act (1963) making membership of cities and counties mandatory, requiring the agency to develop a regional plan along



Grab a Sharp Pencil ...
we'll show you how to win

FREE

TICKETS TO THE 1972



Here's two easy ways to WIN . . .

the **WEDNESDAY**
want ad value!

All you have to do is add up the selling price of all the Real Estate or Automotive listings advertised in the Wednesday, November 1, 1972 want ad section. Bring your total of either the Real Estate or Automotive listings offered for sale to the Observer building located at 36251 Schoolcraft at Levan in Livonia starting Thursday, Nov. 2 at 9 A.M. The first 20 correct answers shall be awarded

4 FREE TICKETS

(Each ticket a \$6.00 value)

to the Ice Follies. Only one entry per family and only one winner per family. Entries shall be awarded on a first come, first serve basis. Entrants must line up at the main entrance to the Observer Bldg. Note if a price is not in the ad, value equal zero.

the **WEEKEND**
want ad count!

Put on your guessing cap and simply predict how many ads will appear in the weekend, November 4, 1972 Classified Want Ad section. The first eight correct answers will be awarded

6 FREE TICKETS

(Each ticket a \$6.00 value)

to the Ice Follies Show at Olympia. All entries must be received by Observer Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft at Levan, Livonia, no later than 5:30 p.m. Friday, Nov. 3, 1972. Enter as many times as you desire. Only one winner per family. Include your name, address, city and phone number on all entries.

observer want ads