

**APPENDIX C**

**SCENARIO PLANNING  
PROCESS**

**ConnectSF**

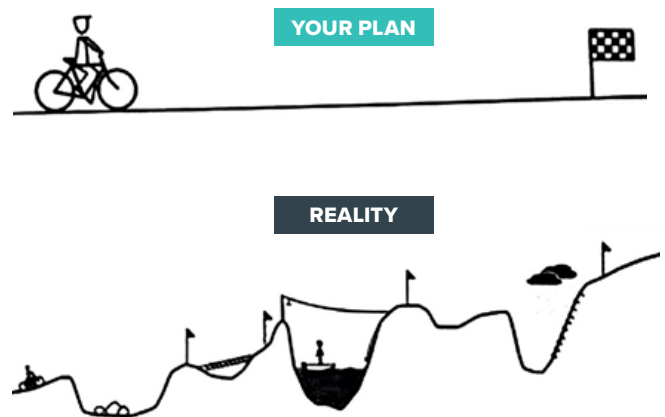
MARCH 2018

# About Scenario Planning

The ConnectSF vision was shaped by a scenario planning process and rigorous outreach to the community. The scenario planning approach is different from yet complements the more traditional transportation planning process usually referred to as an alternatives analysis. This alternatives analysis process usually develops alternatives and provides a technical analysis and evaluation of each alternative. While the latter has many merits, it does tend to be more linear in its examination of outcomes based on largely fixed assumptions about the future and excludes factors that could deter or disrupt development or implementation. Scenario planning includes a broader look at potential drivers of change that could influence how the future plays out so that people can be more prepared for both opportunities and risks that might appear.

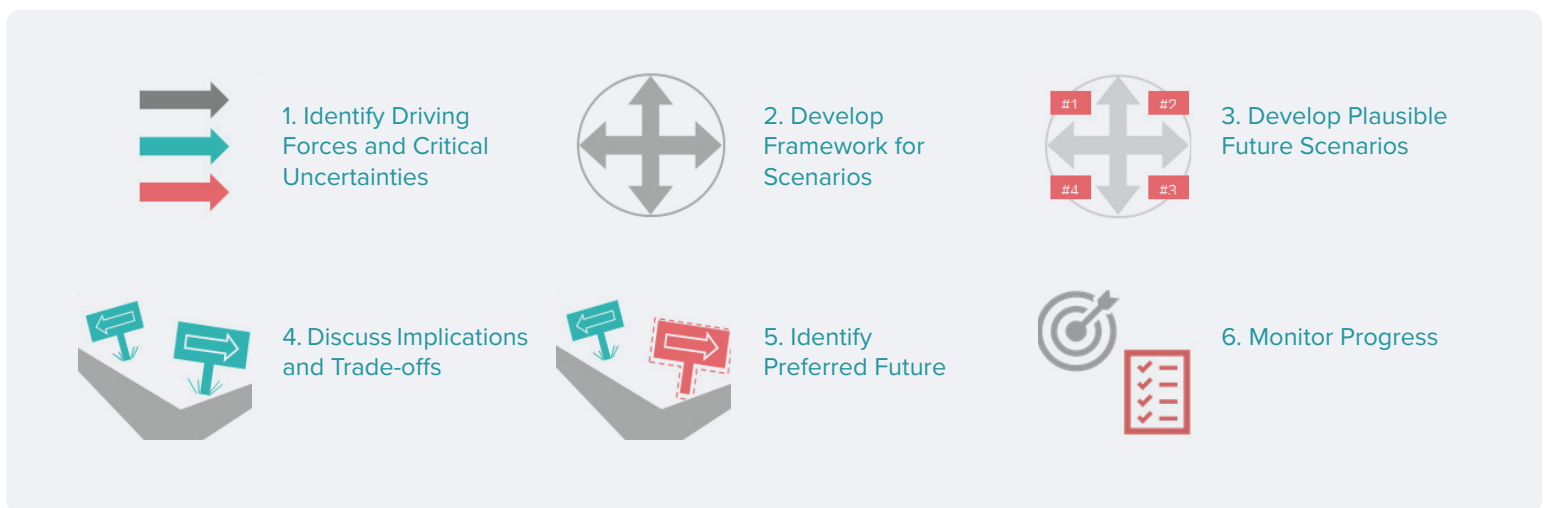
Scenario planning allows people to evaluate a wider variety of potential futures and determine what the community wants the future to look like. The scenario planning process can help people understand the driving forces of change and the collective choices they have to respond to these

changes. As there can be difficult trade-offs, public participation is important to raise awareness and foster collaborative thinking about how the city's future needs and desires can be met.<sup>1</sup>



Your Plan vs. Reality cartoon, source unknown.

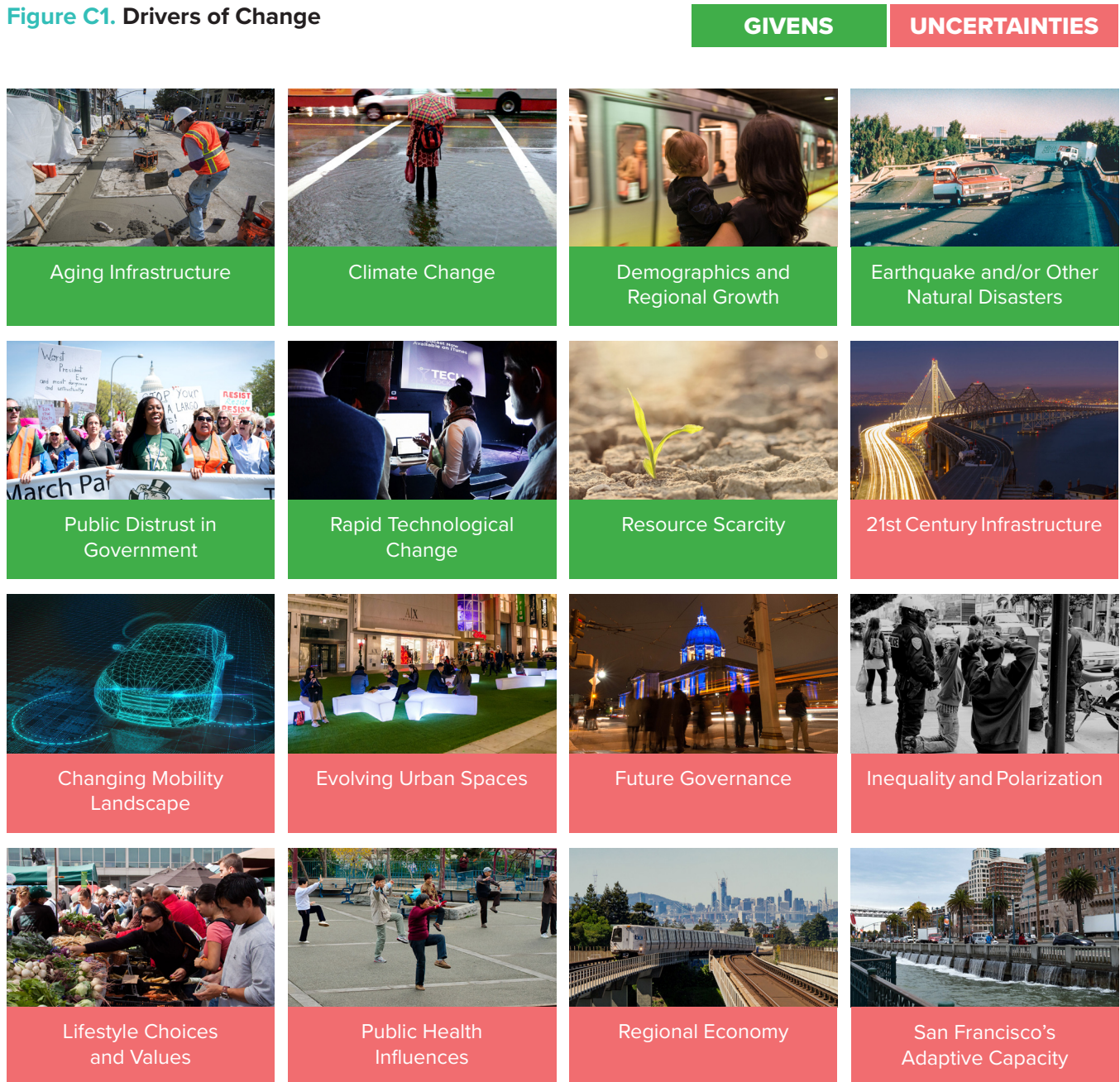
1 Federal Highway Administration, FHWA Scenario Planning and Visualization in Transportation, [https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/scenario\\_and\\_visualization/scenario\\_planning/scenabout.cfm](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/scenario_and_visualization/scenario_planning/scenabout.cfm)



## IDENTIFY DRIVING FORCES AND CRITICAL UNCERTAINTIES

Scenario planning encourages iterative thinking about the future, including identifying drivers of change and critical uncertainties, which are both opportunities and challenges. This step factors in external forces that could influence how the future unfolds. These external forces or drivers of change can be social, technological, economic, environmental, and/or political. The drivers of change identified for San Francisco's future in ConnectSF's scenario planning process are shown in Figure C1.

**Figure C1. Drivers of Change**



## DEVELOP FRAMEWORK FOR SCENARIOS

From this set of drivers of change, two key uncertainties were selected to form a framework or matrix from which potential futures could be derived. For ConnectSF, this included social and political will on the vertical axis of the matrix and changes in the economic system on the horizontal axis of the matrix. See Figure C2.

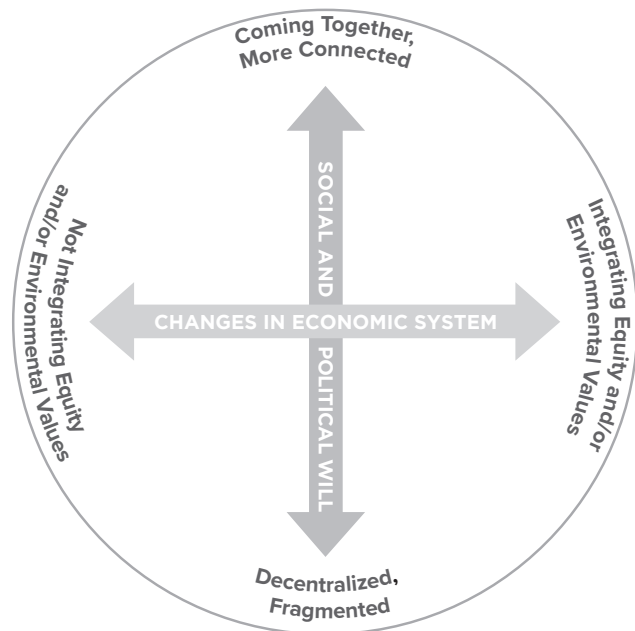
Social and political will, on the vertical axis, is defined as San Francisco's ability to effectively respond to its current and future challenges over fifty years at two levels. Social will refers to the public's willingness to initiate and/or support meaningful change. This implies changes in civic engagement, public trust, and social cohesion as a city. Political will refers to the effectiveness of our leadership and systems of governance, including an ability to adapt, take risks, move forward, and make difficult decisions. Putting both of these together, the uncertainty for this axis is:

- » **Coming together/Connected:** The city as a whole is thinking and acting in a more cohesive manner. Decisions are made in a way that recognizes that the city is an ecosystem of individuals, families, and neighborhoods whose economic and social well-being are tied to one another. People, politicians, and policymakers are willing to act in a manner that maintains and strengthens these connections.
- » **Decentralized/Fragmented:** Identity, decisions, and actions reflect interests that are aligned with the interests of one neighborhood, business interest, political viewpoint, ethnic group, or other affiliation. There is more trust and interest in local resources, assets, and expertise as well as a tendency to preserve and protect these interests.

The horizontal axis represents the evolution of or changes in the economic system, which is intended to incorporate other sectors and values such as health, education, the environment and ecological services, and community cohesion. The spectrum of this axis lies between these two end points:

- » **Integrating equity and/or environmental values:** Transformative changes occur in the economic system that include equity, environment, and other non-financial values.
- » **Not integrating equity and/or environmental values:** Incremental changes occur, with the current market-driven model evolving to be either more laissez-faire or libertarian.

**Figure C2:**  
**Framework for Development of Scenarios**



## DEVELOP PLAUSIBLE FUTURE SCENARIOS

After creating this framework, scenarios were developed that imagined what San Francisco would look and feel like in each of the four quadrants, implications for land use and transportation, and adherence to ConnectSF's goals.

Figure C3 depicts the framework of potential future scenarios using the matrix from the previous step.

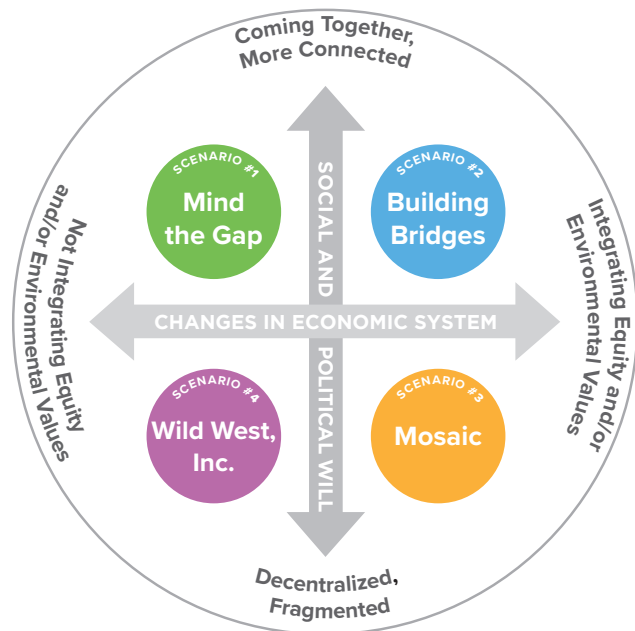
**Scenario 1: Mind the Gap:** The city is a desirable but elite enclave with services that work well for wealthy and established residents. While amenities for an urban lifestyle are abundant, life in San Francisco is a struggle for less wealthy people, who tend to live outside of the City and commute in to work and/or provide services.

**Scenario 2: Building Bridges:** San Francisco is a regionally minded city with effective governmental institutions and an engaged citizenry. Residents and policymakers work together to solve challenges around equity, climate change, and other issues. All neighborhoods are well-connected and have good access to quality schools, public spaces, and affordable housing. Population and employment increases significantly, allowing for far more diversity.

**Scenario 3: Mosaic:** San Francisco is a collection of distinct neighborhoods, some of which are more self-sufficient than others. Given the low trust in government and lack of public funding at all levels, entrepreneurs and small or micro-businesses have emerged to fill the gaps in City services. Self-reliance and local control define how people live, work, and get around, and people have shifted away from materialistic, market-driven lifestyles.

**Scenario 4: Wild West, Inc.:** San Francisco is a neo-company town, where corporations and the "market" are the dominant factors in City life. Public institutions and governance have withered, and public-private partnerships have formed to provide the vast majority of City services. With increased reliance on technology and emphasis on profit and efficiencies of scale, this has not necessarily boosted employment, and the City is marked by social and economic divisions.

**Figure C3:**  
**Potential Future Scenarios**





**Figure C4:** Summary of Strategic Implications and Trade-offs

<p><b>SCENARIO 1</b></p> <p><b>MIND THE GAP</b></p>	<p>The primary perception of this scenario is a well-functioning, high-amenity city that is heterogeneous, insular, and accessible to high-income earners. For many, this scenario calls to mind a gated community that is comfortable and desirable to live in, as quality public services would be provided. Stronger political and social will combined with a higher tax base would see to the implementation of infrastructure projects. For example, transportation options would be abundant, high-quality, but expensive in this scenario. At the same time, the city would lack the vibrancy and diversity that people usually seek in an urban setting. San Francisco would lose its “soul” or “character” in this scenario. The features that draw people to San Francisco in the first place would be lost. Some participants also felt that social tensions would emerge from class divisions, given the tremendous income gap.</p>
<p><b>SCENARIO 2</b></p> <p><b>BUILDING BRIDGES</b></p>	<p>For this scenario, people pictured a city that accommodates a diversity of people, incomes, and amenities. San Francisco in this scenario would be more dense, populous, and inclusive as there is relative ease of access to public services, regardless of income. This is made feasible through different funding mechanisms and higher taxes, with some portion going to subsidies for services to lower-income earners. For example, many local and regional transportation options are available, with much of them being publicly provided shared services. The character of San Francisco as a city and its neighborhoods may alter given the influx of people, jobs, and infrastructure. There may be an exodus of people looking for a more suburban environment, or people who feel that there is too much government regulation.</p>
<p><b>SCENARIO 3</b></p> <p><b>MOSAIC</b></p>	<p>People saw this scenario as one where local and community needs are heard and where planning decisions and investments align with local priorities. Better alignment would stem from greater community investment and strong localized community leadership and collaboration. However, some thought of Mosaic as being too “parochial,” and thought that this thinking would leave out the needs of the larger city, including those related to equity, transportation investments, and connectivity. This was seen as undesirable as people did not want a future where there is not an emphasis on citywide and regional issues and solutions. In Mosaic, it would be hard to plan beyond immediate needs and to plan comprehensively. As a result of this type of planning, larger infrastructure investments might not get built, which would adversely affect less affluent communities and neighborhoods.</p>
<p><b>SCENARIO 4</b></p> <p><b>WILD WEST, INC.</b></p>	<p>This scenario was seen as a future where there is much innovation, robust information, responsive government, and nimble decision-making. Due to the free market and efficiency in decision making and implementation, many kinds of lifestyles and needs can be met. However, the decisions about what resources are available to communities are weak and disjointed. This weak decision-making, brought on by less planning and regulation, would leave historically disenfranchised and underserved communities even more vulnerable. There would be less emphasis in balancing investments in infrastructure and the people who need it or use it most.</p>

## **DISCUSS IMPLICATIONS AND TRADE-OFFS**

This step delved deeper into what San Francisco could be like if any one of these scenarios were realized. By examining these potential scenarios and their implications and trade-offs, various approaches that can shape the future are examined, including pathways that could lead to a preferred future.

Futures Task Force members and focus group participants who joined them were asked to discuss current events that could signal the advent of each scenario; benefits and drawbacks of each scenario; potential tensions and trade-offs that could emerge from these outcomes; and strategic lessons or planning insights that could assist in heading off tensions and balance trade-offs. This exercise was designed to help participants grapple with the potential implications of what various facets of the city could be like under each scenario, e.g., demographics, housing, transportation, etc. Highlights of this discussion are summarized in Figure C4.

The ConnectSF staff took this step slightly further by hypothesizing quantitatively what specific indicators could look like for each future scenario. We have a decent understanding of what the population, transportation, jobs, diversity, and other characteristics of San Francisco are like today. What would any of these look like in the future quantitatively, especially compared to today?

For example, it is understood that population would likely change in the four scenarios but by how much? By going beyond “more” or “less” population, a better understanding of what each future scenario could look and feel like could be gained. This exercise was done using current and projected data from the census, city reports, and professional judgment to make both quantitative and qualitative estimates, and the outcome is shown in Figure C5. This comparison was shared with individuals who were part of ConnectSF’s outreach efforts, including the Futures Task Force and online survey respondents.

## **IDENTIFY PREFERRED FUTURE**

Amongst input from members of the Futures Task Force, focus group participants, and online survey respondents, Building Bridges emerged as the preferred future. This scenario would result in an inclusive and equitable city, where livability and access to resources would be available to the greatest number of people. Also important is the mindset, leadership, courage, and willingness of the city to collectively decide, plan, and act to pave a path to this future. Given the tremendous challenges we face as a city today and those that we will in the future, Building Bridges was the scenario that people felt that could take us to a future that would capture the city’s values and aspirations.

At the same time, it was recognized that the other scenarios included characteristics that were desirable and could be integrated into the ConnectSF vision. These include the importance of having a prosperous and resilient city with high-quality services (Mind the Gap); the nimbleness and efficiencies of the private sector (Wild West, Inc.); and the uniqueness of San Francisco’s individual neighborhoods (Mosaic).

**Figure C5: Comparison of Potential Future Scenarios to Today on Selected Variables**

	<b>SAN FRANCISCO TODAY</b>	<b>SCENARIO 1 MIND THE GAP 2065</b>	<b>SCENARIO 2 BUILDING BRIDGES 2065</b>	<b>SCENARIO 3 MOSAIC 2065</b>	<b>SCENARIO 4 WILD WEST, INC 2065</b>
<b>POPULATION</b> <small>U.S. Census, 2016</small>	<b>870,000</b>	<b>+10%</b> More people	<b>+60%</b> More people	<b>-10%</b> Less people	<b>+40%</b> More people
<b>RACIAL AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY</b> <small>2015 Five Year American Community Survey</small>	<b>51%</b> People of color	↓↓↓ Less diverse	↑ More diverse	↑↑ More diverse	↓↓↓ Less diverse
<b>MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME</b> <small>U.S. Census, 2016</small>	<b>\$81,000</b>	↑↑↑ Higher median income	↑↑↑ Higher median income	↓↓ Lower median income	↓ Lower median income
<b>JOBS</b> <small>SF Planning Commerce &amp; Industry Inventory, 2014</small>	<b>610,000</b>	<b>+50%</b> More jobs	<b>+70%</b> More jobs	<b>-30%</b> Less jobs	<b>+40%</b> More jobs
<b>MODE SPLIT</b> <small>San Francisco Performance Scorecard, FY 2016</small>	<b>30%</b> Of trips are in an SOV (single-occupancy vehicle)	<b>-20%</b> Lower SOV trip rate	<b>-70%</b> Lower SOV trip rate	<b>0%</b> No change	<b>+30%</b> Higher SOV trip rate
<b>CONGESTION</b> <small>MTC Vital Signs 2016</small>	<b>8.6%</b> Of vehicle-miles are in congestion	↑↑↑ More congestion	↑↑ More congestion	↓↓ Less congestion	↑↑↑ More congestion
<b>EQUITY OF ACCESS</b> <small>PBA Equity Analysis report, 2013</small>	<b>23 Min.</b> Commute from low-income areas is similar to average commute.	↑↑↑ Longer commute from low-income areas	No change	↑ Longer commute from low-income areas	↑ Longer commute from low-income areas
<b>TAXES</b> <small>SF property taxes 2015-16, divided by number of residents</small>	<b>~\$2,000</b>	↑↑↑ Higher taxes	↑↑↑ Higher taxes	↓↓ Lower taxes	↓ Lower taxes

This information is for illustrative purposes for ConnectSF and no other city projects or programs. It is not a forecast.