

City votes to rejoin AMBAG

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The council voted 6-1 to rejoin the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments, reversing its earlier decision to drop out of the organization to save the \$10,000 membership fee.

"I voted to withdraw from AMBAG because I was convinced that we were paying to duplicate efforts," said Councilman Mike Rotkin. "It's now clear to me that I was incorrect, and that we should rejoin AMBAG."

AMBAG collects statistics and creates population projections for all cities in the Monterey Bay Area, whether or not they are paying members. These figures are supplied to the state government. Members of the council expressed concern that the projected population figures for Santa Cruz are far too high for the city's limited housing stock, and want to lobby AMBAG to have those figures reduced.

"If we don't have statewide projections we can deal with, (the city) may end up being sued for not providing enough housing," said Rotkin.

Councilman Joe Ghio voted against rejoining AMBAG, saying the organization was attempting to pressure the city into rejoining.