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DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

A California State Agency

June 2, 2017

Chair
Randy Fiorini

Metropolitan Transportation Commission/Association of Bay Area Governments
MTC Public Information
375 Beale Street, Suite 800
San Francisco, CA 941105
Submitted via email: info@PlanBayArea.org

Members
Frank C. Damrell, Jr.
Patrick Johnston
Susan Tatayon
Skip Thomson
Ken Weinberg
Michael Gatto

Executive Officer
Jessica R. Pearson

RE: Support for Draft Plan Bay Area 2040 and Request for Additional Engagement in Resilience Actions

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Draft Plan Bay Area 2040 (Plan) and Draft Environmental Impact Report (Plan DEIR).

Established by the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Reform Act of 2009 (SBX7 1), the Council is an independent state agency charged with furthering California's coequal goals for the Delta through the adoption and implementation of the Delta Plan and its regulatory portions of which became effective on September 1, 2013. As stated in the Delta Reform Act of 2009 (Delta Reform Act), the State has "Coequal goals' (which) means two goals of providing a more reliable water supply for California and protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Delta ecosystem. The coequal goals shall be achieved in a manner that protects and enhances the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource, and agricultural values of the Delta as an evolving place" (Water Code section 85054).

Through the Delta Reform Act, the Council was granted specific regulatory and appellate authority over certain activities that take place in whole or in part in the Delta and Suisun Marsh, which are referred to as "covered actions". The Council exercises that authority through development and implementation of the Delta Plan. State and local agencies are required to be consistent with the 14 regulatory policies of the Delta Plan when carrying out, approving, or funding a "covered action". The Delta Reform Act established a certification process for such covered actions to demonstrate their compliance with the Delta Plan (Water Code section 85022). Although the Delta Plan provides exemptions for Regional Transportation Plans/Sustainable Communities Strategies from the covered action review process, there are areas within Solano, Alameda, and Contra Costa counties that are covered by the Draft Plan Bay Area 2040, that also fall within the planning area of the Delta Plan and are of interest to the Council.

"Coequal goals" means the two goals of providing a more reliable water supply for California and protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Delta ecosystem. The coequal goals shall be achieved in a manner that protects and enhances the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource, and agricultural values of the Delta as an evolving place."

– CA Water Code §85054

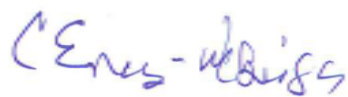
We would like to acknowledge the significant effort and extensive analysis that has gone into to the Plan Bay Area, originally adopted in 2013, and this updated and revised Plan. The Plan Bay Area 2040 thoroughly analyzes the transportation and land use strategies that will need to be implemented in a consistent manner across the next two decades to support ongoing and long-term regional challenges. The Plan's provision for over 660,000 new jobs and housing units within the existing urban footprint and priority development areas, along with creating strong incentives for preservation of open space and agricultural lands is consistent with our own approach to protect and enhance the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource, and agricultural values of the Delta as an evolving place. The viability of working lands is under constant threat – the Plan has identified some of these risks – gentrification, urban expansion, and climate change resiliency, but these lands will continue to be at risk from other drivers. We would like to encourage Metropolitan Transportation Commission/Association of Bay Area Governments (MTC/ABAG) to continue to work with local communities to identify and plan for priority conservation areas with the Delta and Suisun Marsh that would assist property owners and local jurisdictions as they plan for the long-term economic viability and resiliency of working lands and restored habitats.

The Council has been and will continue to act as a leader in long-range planning for the Delta. We work with a range of local, State, and federal agencies, as well as non-governmental, academic and other stakeholders on the implementation of the Delta Plan, including facilitation of the semi-annual Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee. We currently have a memorandum of understanding in place with the Bay Conservation and Development Commission to coordinate in the development of policies related to sea level rise and other climate change impacts and to jointly participate in forums with other State and federal agencies, scientists and stakeholders to develop climate change adaptation strategies. We have recently renewed our involvement in other regional planning initiatives such as the Implementation Committee for the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) or Estuary Blueprint, and are finding value in increased coordination and collaboration with our partners in the Bay Area. Please consider the Delta Stewardship Council as a partner in implementation of the Plan's Resilience Actions (page 78) including: development of a regional governance strategy for climate adaptation projects; providing stronger policy leadership on resilient infrastructure; creating new funding sources for adaptation and resilience; establishing and providing a resilience technical services team; and expanding of the region's network of natural infrastructure.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss how our current projects and programs are supporting the Plan's resiliency actions. We are in a position to be a strong support for these actions, and look forward to the opportunity to work closely with MTC/ABAG to pursue long-term sustainability of the region. If you would like to discuss further, or have any questions, please contact me at (916) 445-0258 or Cassandra.enos@Deltacouncil.ca.gov.

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Sincerely,



Cassandra Enos-Nobriga

Deputy Executive Officer, Planning and Performance Division
Delta Stewardship Council