

San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission

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TO: Commissioners and Alternates

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SUBJECT: Memo on the Final Recommendations from the Commissioner Workshop Series on Rising Sea Levels
(For Commission consideration on October 6, 2016)

Memorandum

The Commission launched a monthly workshop series in January 2016 to explore issues related to rising sea level in a collaborative environment that included Commissioners, Alternates, stakeholders and other members of the public. The goals of the workshop series and the findings from the first three workshops can be found in the staff report that will be posted and mailed on September 23, 2016.

In the fourth workshop, Commissioners and Alternates discussed the findings and preliminary recommendations from the first three workshops and directed staff to:

1. Revise the recommendations based on input from Commissioners and Alternates at the fourth workshop;
2. Add a sixth action on education and outreach; and
3. Add a seventh action on exploring the idea of a regional data repository.

On October 6th, the staff will recommend that the Commission review, refine as necessary, and adopt the staff's recommendations. Additionally, staff will request that the Commission direct staff to develop approaches to implement each of the recommendations and bring these approaches for Commission consideration at a future meeting. The staff report that accompanies these recommendations will be mailed to Commissioners and Alternates and interested parties and posted on the Commission's website on September 23, 2016. The recommendations that will be presented to the Commission are:

1. ***Create a regional sea level rise adaptation plan that serves as a framework for implementing future actions, while allowing for immediate early actions to be developed in advance of the plan.***

Possible actions:

- Create a collaborative and inclusive Regional Adaptation Plan (RAP), modeled on the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) process, which would prioritize adaptation actions and projects in an iterative and integrated manner that reflects local, regional, state, and federal priorities; the RAP would be led by BCDC and supported by a regional working group/steering committee; consider seeking state legislation to place the RAP in statute after developing a working RTP. This work would also consider SB 379 and the role that local hazard mitigation plans could play in the RAP and how to integrate the work that will be done by local jurisdictions to comply with SB 379.
 - Form and lead a regional working group/steering committee.
 - Lead a comprehensive discussion about, and help promote, new viable, innovative financing options for different types of projects, perhaps through implementing a new Commissioner Working Group on innovative financing called “Financing the Future,” which would consist of Commissioners, Alternates and external stakeholders.
 - Create a real-time measurement dashboard that includes visual depictions of the progress toward regional resilience based on a portfolio of projects.
2. ***Complete multi-sector, county-scale sea level rise vulnerability assessments for all nine counties using the Adapting to Rising Tides Program.***

Possible actions:

- Use existing vulnerability analyses as base information for assessments.
 - Combine this action with Action #1 to build the information necessary for the success of the RAP, including adaptation actions.
 - Develop a financing plan to complete ART for all nine Bay Area counties in an integrated manner within three years.
3. ***Explore new institutional arrangements to address the impacts of climate change in a way that promotes a shared regional perspective and increases collaboration for action.***

Possible actions:

- Encourage regional perspectives and planning by supporting and promoting local and regional cooperation, coordination, collaboration and partnerships that build the Regional Adaptation Plan described in (1) above.
- Use the 2017 Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), and other efforts where appropriate, to further a Bay Area-wide policy discussion on adaptation.

- Include rising sea levels in the scenario development and scenario selection for the 2021 SCS.
 - Identify existing arrangements that can be reproduced, improved and expanded.
 - Although not a current recommendation, consider whether a new regional authority is needed and determine whether it would be a new organization, housed within an existing organization, or be formed among existing organizations, following efforts to implement bullets (1) and (2) above.
4. ***Identify regionally significant natural and built assets and vulnerable communities and develop approaches to minimize and mitigate damage from flooding in ways that creatively adapt to changing natural circumstances such as rising sea levels.***

Possible actions:

- Identify the types of projects that are likely to be successful and scalable based on case studies (e.g., ART Hayward Resilience Study, ART Transportation Study, ART Oakland/Alameda Resilience Study) and/or ongoing pilot projects to help tell a compelling story.
 - Identify or develop tools to assist local, regional, state and federal decision-makers in utilizing full life-cycle accounting for evaluating and comparing infrastructure investments and alternatives, including both natural and built infrastructure, as well as for use in BCDC planning and regional investments.
 - Help build a Bay Area-wide consensus to beneficially reuse a vast majority of dredged materials to increase the viability of nature-based adaptation projects, and carry this forward to the state and federal levels.
 - Establish a non-regulatory Adaptation Review Board, to provide technically sound advice and non-binding guidance for project applications along the shoreline.
 - Support the State Coastal Conservancy by initiating a Green Shoreline Infrastructure help desk to connect project proponents, local jurisdictions, BCDC, and other agency staff with technical experts to help design, build, maintain and adapt green infrastructure projects and help implement the Baylands Ecosystem Goals Habitat Update around the shoreline.
5. ***Change existing laws, policies and regulations to more fully consider the local and regional impacts of rising sea levels in permitting and decision-making processes as needed.***

Possible actions:

- Complete the *Policies for a Rising Bay* project, which analyzes fill policies in light of rising sea levels.
 - Change BCDC’s permit application to require information on the potential impacts of a project on adjoining properties in a way that can inform local and regional resilience efforts.
 - Develop a comprehensive multi-agency permit application and approval process (based on the success of the Long Term Management Strategy and Dredged Materials Management Office (DMMO)) for projects that place fill in the Bay to accelerate the region’s resilience, starting with nature-based adaptation solutions.
 - Discuss possible amendments to the McAteer-Petris Act and BCDC regulations regarding the definition and use of “fill”.
- 6. Work with others to develop a regional educational campaign to increase awareness of rising sea level and how the Bay Area can adapt successfully to its challenges.**
- Use existing classic education models (e.g., recycling expansion and anti-smoking) and collaborate with existing partners (e.g., Exploratorium) and new ones (e.g., LEAP, Alliance for Climate Education) to target school-age children and young adults.
 - Expand existing educational efforts to create an education and outreach program for public officials and the general public about rising sea level, the Bay Area’s regional assets at risk, and successful examples of adaptation.
- 7. Assist efforts to define, identify, and fund one or more regional data repositories to collect and share data in ways that best inform rising sea levels strategies and actions.**
- 8. Develop a new Commissioner Working Group on innovative financing called Financing the Future, which would consist of Commissioners, Alternates, and external stakeholders.**