

San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission

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DRAFT MINUTES

TO: All Commissioners and Alternates

FROM: Lawrence J. Goldzband, Executive Director (415/352-3653;

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Reylina Ruiz, Director, Administrative and Technology Services (415/352-3638;

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SUBJECT: Draft Minutes of May 2, 2024, Hybrid Commission Meeting

1. Call to Order. The hybrid meeting was called to order by Chair Wasserman at 1:09 p.m. The meeting was held with a principal physical location of 375 Beale Street, San Francisco, California, and online via Zoom and teleconference.

Chair Wasserman stated: Good afternoon, all, and welcome to our hybrid BCDC Commission meeting. My name is Zack Wasserman, and I am Chair of BCDC.

Chair Wasserman asked Ms. Peterson to proceed with Agenda Item 2, Roll Call.

2. Roll Call. Present were: Chair Wasserman, Commissioners Addiego, Ahn, Eckerle, Eklund, El-Tawansy (represented by Alternate Ambuehl), Gioia, Gunther, Hasz, Lee (represented by Alternate Kishimoto), Lucchesi (represented by Alternate Pemberton), Moulton-Peters, Peskin (represented by Alternate Stefani), Pine, Ramos,

Ranchod (represented by Alternate Nelson), Randolph and Showalter.

Ms. Peterson announced that a quorum was present.

Not present were Commissioners: Association of Bay Area Governments (Burt, Zepeda), USACE (Beach), Department of Finance (Benson), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (Blake), Sonoma County (Gorin), Solano County (Mashburn), Governor (Eisen), Alameda County (Tam)

Chair Wasserman announced: We have a quorum and therefore can conduct business.

I want to thank all of you for being here. Particularly I want to thank the people who have responded to my request that on some of our meetings, roughly every other month, we get as many people as possible, as many Commissioners as possible here in person. There is a different sense, a different ability to communicate. Zoom has given us some very wonderful things; it is just not quite the same.

3. Public Comment Period. Chair Wasserman called for public comment on subjects that were not on the agenda.

No members of the public addressed the Commission.

Chair Wasserman moved to Approval of the Minutes.

4. Approval of Minutes for April 18, 2024, Meeting. Chair Wasserman asked for a motion and a second to adopt the minutes of the April 18, 2024, meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Nelson moved approval of the Minutes, seconded by Commissioner Gunther.

The motion was approved by a voice vote with no abstentions.

5. Report of the Chair. Chair Wasserman reported on the following:

First, since Commissioner Eisen is out of the country and not available to participate I have asked Commissioner Randolph to act as our Vice Chair for the meeting this afternoon and he has graciously agreed to do so. He has a fair amount of experience doing so.

Just as I thanked everybody for being here today, or as many as possible, I want to remind you that we cannot do that at our next meeting, it will be virtual because of construction. You need to give the address that you are going to be at to Sierra by end of business today. Please send that to her so that we can properly post it.

Will Travis. On a sad note, and yet a celebratory one, as you all know I believe, Will Travis, the longtime Executive Director of BCDC, passed away last week. I did not serve on this Commission with Will as Executive Director. We missed each other by about four months. But I knew him well before that and we talked a fair amount afterwards. There is a tribute to him posted and I urge you to read it.

He was certainly one of the leaders and effective leaders of both protecting the Bay but also thinking proactively and creatively on the things that we need to do and not simply reactively. He, I think, taught all of us a great deal. He was strong in his beliefs and not shy about sharing them, but he listened to people.

As part of the series of events that led me to becoming Chair of this Commission where there were some significant differences between regulated people, both governments and developers and others about what new rules should apply as we adapt to rising sea levels, he was very effective in shuttle diplomacy.

It was actually one of the great examples I have seen of public negotiations. Which are often not easy because most of them, albeit not all, need to be conducted in public and he really did a superb job of that. He understood people and he did listen, but he was absolutely not afraid to lead.

Others may wish to comment on him briefly. We have a lot of speakers, so I do not want to go on at great length. But I want to give people the opportunity because a number of people worked with him much more than I did. I will recognize the dean in the sense of longest serving member of this Commission, John Gioia.

Commissioner Gioia spoke: I had a chance to serve with Trav when I joined the Commission in 1999 when he was Executive Director, through his retirement in 2011. I just want to acknowledge one main point.

I think Trav more than anyone was really responsible for moving this Commission, this agency, toward addressing planning for sea level rise.

Not just the work of the Bay Plan Amendment, which established policies on sea level rise, but really just ramping up the work and it was really part of our planning function. I think our planners here are the lead group of individuals. There are many, but the lead group of individuals in the Bay Area who really work with local governments, state agencies and others in the private sector to work on planning for resiliency. I just wanted to acknowledge that point that really it was Trav's leadership to move the Commission into that. So instead of just dealing with a Bay that was potentially going to get smaller back in the 1960s, to dealing with a Bay that was going to get larger. So, I just want to acknowledge that.

Commissioner Nelson commented: I agree with everything the Chair and

Commissioner Gioia just said and I will add to that is that Trav was also, and I worked with him for many years before I was on the Commission when I was an advocate on Bay issues. Trav, on top of everything that the Chair and Commissioner Gioia have said, Trav was entrepreneurial, smart, funny and a ton of fun to work with.

Commissioner Eklund stated: Thank you very much for allowing me the opportunity to talk about Will Travis. I started working with the US Army Corps of Engineers in 1969 and the Army Corps of Engineers had a lot to do with the formation of the BCDC, believe it or not.

But I really got to know him when I moved over to the US Environmental Protection Agency. I was in charge of the Oceans and Estuaries Program for EPA Region 9. And that is where I really got to know and work with Will Travis on a lot of issues, because obviously, we were in the 301-H and 401 permitting process and everything else, so we worked with BCDC and all the other state agencies that were involved with water.

One of the things that I most admired about him is his willingness and his eagerness to listen to others and to try to solve problems. He did it in a way that you never felt that you were being put down and you never felt like you were not part of the group. I really respected him for how he treated others, even people that did not necessarily share his views.

I really spent a lot of time working with him because of both agencies. In fact, my boss, Gene Huggins, was the Director of Public Affairs for the US Army Corps of Engineers and that is how I first got to know about BCDC when it was formed in 1969. And then really got to know him when I was in charge of the Oceans and Water

Program for EPA.

He was just a really neat guy, and it is really sad to see people pass away. But he left a legacy, and he will always be remembered because of that.

Commissioner Randolph was recognized: I had the privilege of working with Trav for almost nine years as Chairman of BCDC at the time. He was always incredibly professional. Incredibly supportive of the Commission and of me. And he had, it felt like just right balance in his focus on conservation and development, which is what we are about here at the end of the day.

It was already pointed out that he was really the pioneer for us and BCDC and in the region among the agencies in focusing on sea level rise and adaptation, at a time when it was not really on the agenda. We knew there were issues out there, but there was no institutional focus and there was a gap. He led us into a leadership role in that. As Chair Wasserman said, it was not an easy territory, there were conflicting interests, to say the least.

But in the end, when we did take that first step forward, I think it was to amend the Bay Plan, it was unanimous support by what are otherwise contending camps. I think that was quite an achievement to get us to that point. I think it is one reason why we have been especially diligent ever since then about making sure we had everybody on board with us across the region as we go forward.

He was a terrific leader for the Commission, and he was also really engaging and charming. He was a terrific person who I will miss.

Chair Wasserman continued: All right. Thank you all. We will adjourn the meeting in his memory.

Next Meeting. Our next meeting, as I noted, will be in two weeks on May 16.

It will be virtual, and we expect that we may take up the following matters:

1. A permit application for PG&E's continuing operations and maintenance projects throughout the Bay;
2. A permit application for a development at 505 East Bayshore in Redwood City;
3. An enforcement case in the city of Richmond; and,
4. A Memorandum of Understanding among various state and regional agencies to better organize how we will fund and manage adaptation to rising sea levels in the Bay Area.

That last point is going to be really important. I do urge you to attend the meeting, albeit virtually.

Ex Parte Communications. If you have received a communication that is not on record on a matter that we are going to adjudicate you may report it now. If you have not reported it in writing you do need to report it in writing in any event and the portal is available to do that. Does anybody wish to make any ex parte communication reports?

Commissioner Gioia reported the following: And when you say, on matters that are adjudicated, obviously there is an issue coming before us on a potential permit. I have had conversations with bike organizations, residents, Bay Area Council, MTC, and residents for and against. Even though we have no application before us and we are not making any decisions, but just to be transparent.

Elected Officials Task Force. Chair Wasserman added: There was a meeting of

the Elected Officials Task Force on Bay Adapt yesterday and Commissioner Gioia, who chairs that, will give a brief report.

Commissioner Gioia spoke: We do have this very good group of elected officials, two per county around the Bay Area, to really address from a local level how we address sea level rise. The meeting yesterday had two great presentations about best practices that are currently out there, one from San Mateo County and Supervisor/Director Pine was part of that presentation; and one from Marin County and Supervisor/Director Stephanie Moulton-Peters was part of that. So great to see the work that is occurring.

What we said we would do is collect best practices from counties around the Bay Area and communities around the Bay Area about how cities and counties and the community are working together to address sea level rise. So, we will hear from other counties and other efforts. And we did get an update on the Regional Shoreline Adaptation Plan from BCDC staff. That was it.

Chair Wasserman asked: Any questions on that?

Commissioner Eklund stated: I do not have a question, but I do have a comment. I watched the presentation yesterday and I have to tell you, really impressed with what San Mateo has done. You are a large county and a lot of cities. Just having worked with a lot of folks down there too when I worked for EPA. It is really a good effort.

And again, I wanted to also compliment Supervisor Moulton-Peters too for initiating the action in Marin and getting that going. I am very interested in following that and that is why I watched it. I was just going, wow, go girl, go girl. So

anyway, both thank you very much for your fantastic presentations yesterday and discussion.

Future Meetings. Just as an alert for future meetings. There will be a meeting of the Environmental Justice Working Group virtually on the morning of May 16 prior to our Commission meeting, and a meeting of the Sediment Working Group the following day on the 17 in the morning, also virtually.

Our Executive Director had a sudden, not serious but needed attention, medical issue in his family; that is why he is not here. Steve Goldbeck our Deputy Director is here to make a report to us.

6. Report of the Executive Director. Chief Deputy Director Goldbeck reported the following on behalf of the Executive Director:

Thank you, Chair. I will keep the report very, very short because the Executive Director did not have one for today.

But he did want me to make an announcement that I am going to be retiring. It has been a pleasure and an honor to work for the Commission and the Bay since the 1980s but it is time to pass the torch.

I will not be leaving until the end of the fiscal year in a couple of months and may be returning in some capacity perhaps as a retired annuitant so you may have Steve Goldbeck to kick around for a while. But in any event, I wanted to thank you all and there is no need for any further speechifying right now. So that is my report.

Chair Wasserman continued: We will have time at future meetings to recognize Steve's yeomen work for this agency and on behalf of the people of California and the people of this region and the people of the Bay. Thank you, sir.

7. Consideration of Administrative Matters. Chair Wasserman stated: That brings us to Item 7, the consideration of administrative matters. We have been furnished a listing of them and Regulatory Director Harriet Ross is ready and willing to talk about any if you have questions.

There were no comments or questions.

8. Briefing on Richmond-San Rafael Bridge Public Pathway Pilot Project. Chair Wasserman continued: That brings us to Item 8, a briefing and discussion regarding the status of the four-year Public Pathway Pilot Project on the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge, originally authorized by the Commission several years ago as a permitting matter.

The briefing presented by Caltrans and the Bay Area Toll Authority (BATA) will include a report on the findings of the Pilot project, as well as proposed changes to the Pilot being contemplated for a vote by BATA, the Toll Authority, later this month. The Commission can expect a permit amendment request to be forthcoming after BATA's deliberations.

I want everybody to be clear in the public. I know there is a lot of public interest in this. We are not taking action today. We will not take action until after the agency that has actual authority over it takes action and then seeks our approval of a permit or a modification to a permit, as the case may be. But because we know this is an item of importance, this is on the agenda for people to talk. But I want the public in particular to understand we are not acting today because it is not timely for us to do so. We are a permitting agency. We are not the sponsors of this project.

Shoreline Development Program Manager Katharine Pan will introduce the briefing.

Do we have an estimate of the number of hands raised who wish to speak on this? If you have submitted a card already, we are counting you. A guess on virtual hands?

Ms. Peterson noted: The current count is 24 and climbing.

Chair Wasserman acknowledged: All right, I am going to ask you to do two things, please, for the public speakers. One, reduce your time to two minutes. And second, please try not to be repetitive.

If you simply want to come up and demonstrate that you have made the effort to come here or the effort to be on virtually and supporting what other people said, you can say that briefly. I do not want to restrict what anybody says, say what you wish to, but in respect for people's time, including the members of the public, I would ask you not to be repetitive.

With that, take it away Katharine.

Shoreline Development Program Manager Pan introduced Item 8: Thank you, Chair Wasserman. Good afternoon, Commissioners. I am Katherine Pan, the Shoreline Development Program Manager at BCDC. I will be introducing this item, which is a briefing on the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge Access Improvement Pilot Project.

A staff report on this briefing was shared with you on April 26, including a copy of BCDC permit number 1997.001 Amendment 4, and a written report from Caltrans and the Bay Area Toll Authority, or BATA, detailing the information that will

be presented today.

I will summarize some of the highlights of the staff report to provide the regulatory context for the project before passing things over to Caltrans and BATA who will provide a status report on the project.

Just to situate you, here is a regional map of the project location. The Richmond-San Rafael Bridge spans San Francisco Bay between Marin and Contra Costa counties. It is owned by Caltrans and managed in partnership with BATA, a sister agency of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, or MTC. The Bridge is a segment of Interstate 580 and is a designated segment of the Bay Trail.

The Bridge Access Improvement Pilot Project was a four-year Pilot to evaluate the use of the shoulder on the westbound upper deck of the Bridge as a full-time, separated, Class I multi-use pathway, and the shoulder of the eastbound lower deck as a peak hour third vehicle travel lane. And that was approved by the Commission in September 2016 as part of Material Amendment Number 4 to Permit Number 1997.001. That permit was originally issued in 1997 to authorize the seismic retrofitting of the Bridge.

At the time of the original permit, there was no bicycle or pedestrian access on the Bridge, although it was already designated as a proposed Bay Trail segment by the Bay Trail project.

When considering the project, the Commission heard from many community members advocating for a bicycle and pedestrian connection across the Bridge, and the findings of the original permit stated that providing bicycle and pedestrian access was desirable and would maximize the public access benefits of the retrofit project.

However, the Commission also found that there was a need for further study as to whether this kind of access could be provided safely, that could not be accommodated by the urgent timing of the project. Therefore, the original permit did not include any special conditions to require bicycle and pedestrian access across the Bridge.

Instead, the Commission decided to work with Caltrans to complete the necessary studies and the permit findings document that Caltrans voluntarily committed to using its best efforts to study the feasibility of providing non-motorized public access on the Bridge. And if such access was found to be feasible, that it would ensure that it was provided.

Nearly 20 years later in 2016, the Pilot Project followed from the series of studies and Commission briefings and discussions stemming from that commitment, which are further detailed in the staff report.

Material Amendment Number 4 authorized two elements of the Pilot Project, as well as some other permanent access improvements on the approaches to the Bridge that were not part of the Pilot.

On the eastbound lower deck of the Bridge, the Pilot involved the use of a four-mile-long segment of the shoulder as a vehicle travel lane during peak commute hours, and this part of the Pilot opened in 2018.

On the westbound upper deck of the Bridge, the Pilot involved a four-mile-long, ten-foot wide, two-way Class I accessible public pathway, as well as a 42-inch tall, 18-inch-wide moveable barrier to separate the path from vehicle traffic. Also, a safety railing and signage and usage instrumentation. This part of the Pilot opened

in 2019.

The purpose of piloting these uses of the shoulders was to seek a means of reducing congestion and travel time in the eastbound direction and providing pedestrian and bicycle facilities across the Bridge. Caltrans intended to evaluate the performance and usage to determine whether they should be made permanent.

The special conditions of the amended permit required Caltrans to provide a written and verbal report to the Commission on the status of the public pathway, including but not limited to, an analysis of public usage and benefits, an assessment of any operational and safety issues, and the need for any future changes to the facilities, including removal or making them permanent. This briefing and the written report attached to the staff report are intended to fulfill this requirement.

At this point I would like to introduce Larry Bonner of Caltrans and Lisa Klein of BATA and invite them to provide their status report.

Mr. Bonner addressed the Commission: Good afternoon. My name is Larry Bonner, I am the Caltrans District 4 Office Chief for the Office of Environmental Analysis. I am here today with Lisa Klein, the Bay Area Toll Authority Section Director for Field Operations and Asset Management.

To Chair Wasserman and the Commissioners, first of all, I just want to say thank you for the opportunity to provide an update on the Pilot today and for considering next steps. BATA and Caltrans are proud of this work and appreciate the Commission's support of the Pilot, which permitted the innovative uses of the shoulders on the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge.

BATA and Caltrans acknowledge BCDC's long history of advocating for access in

this corridor and we want to assure you that we take this very seriously.

We are pleased to provide this report and presentation today and acknowledge that this is a little later than we had anticipated. But COVID was not part of our original plan, and it was important to let the post-COVID usage patterns abate in order to provide accurate findings and make recommendations.

Lisa and I will be presenting updates and results of the Pilot Project on the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge along with some recommendations for the future. For today's presentation we will cover the following three topics: an overview and recap of the project itself, the findings and results from the project's Pilot Study efforts, and then we will conclude with recommended next steps and a proposal for the Pilot based on the current results and findings.

In 2014, BATA took responsibility for funding and implementing the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge Access Improvement Pilot Project, undertaken in partnership with Caltrans, the Transportation Authority of Marin, and the Contra Costa Transportation Authority, with the combined goals to address traffic congestion and provide bicycle and pedestrian access to and across the Bridge. This was undertaken to be consistent with the core strategies in the Plan Bay Area 2050, including the Bay Trail build out.

The project partners committed to a four-year pilot that in April of 2018 converted the lower deck emergency shoulder to a part-time third travel lane, followed in November of 2019 with the conversion of the upper deck emergency shoulder to a full-time 10-foot multi-use bicycle and pedestrian path.

Note for the sake of clarity please that the shoulder on the upper deck has not

been used as a travel lane since the 1970s and in no part of this Pilot or in the recommendations we will discuss today are we proposing to use the shoulder on the upper deck as a travel lane.

The Pilot Project was designed for two main purposes. The purposes of this project were to provide pedestrian and bicycle access along the Interstate 580, which achieved the Bay Trail connections between the East Bay and Marin County through the multi-use path on the upper deck of the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge and to reduce congestion and travel time on eastbound I-580 over the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge through the part-time third travel lane on the lower deck of the Bridge.

In addition, the Pilot Project provided for several permanent improvements including permanent Trail connections for bicyclists and pedestrians in Richmond and San Rafael and permanent traffic improvements through the widening on the Bridge approaches.

As mentioned in the previous slide, in addition to the Pilot Project improvements built, monitored and still under study, the project implemented non-pilot permanent improvements and connections to existing trails and landmarks on each end of the Bridge to promote connectivity in support of the goals of the Plan Bay Area 2050 Plan.

On the Contra Costa County side, the project installed a Class I bi-directional path for bicycles and pedestrians separated from automobile traffic by a permanent concrete barrier along the north side of westbound I-580 from the Tewkesbury/Standard Avenue intersection near Point Richmond to Stenmark Drive near Point Molate. This replaced the existing one-way Class II bicycle lanes that were

on both eastbound and westbound I-580.

On the Marin County side, the project widened a 10-foot sidewalk to provide for a bi-directional path for bicyclists and pedestrians along East Francisco Boulevard in the city of San Rafael.

In addition, there is an ongoing construction project to finish the remaining sidewalk widenings that will further close the gap between the multi-use path on the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge and the connections to Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, Anderson Drive and connections to the Bay Trail.

Throughout the pilot period, MTC and BATA also implemented initiatives to encourage bike commutes across the Bridge. They partnered with local organizations and coalitions for guided group rides, which included options to try e-bikes and bike education and safety demonstrations. They also started an e-bike commute program that provided discounts on e-bike purchases for qualified applicants.

As Katharine summarized in the beginning for you all, and as detailed in the staff report, BCDC has a long history regarding access in the corridor, and the permit reflects that. Thank you, all. Now I will turn it over to Lisa Klein.

Ms. Klein presented the following: Good afternoon. Thank you, Larry. I am going to pivot now to the Pilot Study results. The evaluation of the Pilot was conducted by UC Berkeley Partners for Advanced Transportation Technology, and I am going to call them UC Berkeley PATH for short. It was a data-driven evaluation that addresses the areas identified in the permit amendment.

The evaluation includes two reports. The Phase I Report was issued in the summer of 2022. It is included in full in your board packet. And as you might

suspect, and as Larry acknowledged, much of the data in that report reflects the COVID period.

The Phase II Report adds data through this spring, very current data, and it will be published in a couple of weeks.

We do have some preliminary results from that Phase II Report, and we have included those in the summary memo in your board packet and that is what I will be focused on in my presentation today.

I am going to very quickly run through the findings on the Lower Deck Pilot first because I suspect there is going to be more interest and discussion on the upper deck path.

The results for the Lower Deck Pilot are really quite clear. The project has been very, very well received by the public as well. Really, as soon as it opened that part-time lane essentially eliminated the eastbound congestion on the Bridge and it now saves East Bay commuters between 14 and 17 minutes on their return trip home in the evening.

We have also seen some reductions on the traffic on local streets and we have seen reduction in the traffic incidents or crashes. And we also find that drivers are generally following the rules about part-time use and not driving in it when it is in fact a shoulder.

When it comes to the upper deck, honestly the results here are far more mixed. This is true both of the data I will share with you and of the public reaction to the Pilot. We have, I believe, demonstrated that public access is important, and the path is quite well used, especially on weekends. At the same time, we have seen

some puzzling data emerging related to traffic incidents or crashes in these Phase II findings, and we believe that this suggests trying something a little different to see what more we can learn.

BATA and all of the partners and Caltrans and all of you, I believe, have heard very, very strong opinions that support keeping the path and very strong opinions that support removing the path, and also strong opinions regarding use of the upper deck shoulder as a third traffic lane.

I just want to reiterate, as Larry noted at the beginning, that that is beyond the scope of this Pilot decision.

The shoulder, because it has not been a travel lane for decades, requires an entirely different analysis and requires a full environmental review. BATA and Caltrans are embarking on some analysis at the direction of the BATA Board, but it is not something we are asking BCDC to consider now, there is quite a bit more work to be done.

There is a lot of data in the evaluation, and I am going to focus on a few key areas in my presentation. I will start with path usage and safety.

The daily usage on the path is about two and a half times higher on weekends than weekdays. This means essentially that the number of people using it over a weekend is about the same as the number of people using it over the work week. On average, there are 360 bicycle trips per day on a Saturday or a Sunday and 140 trips on a weekday. There is quite a bit of seasonal variation. For example, on Saturdays in the summer the average is closer to 500 trips total that day.

Someone asked me the other day about traffic volumes on the Bridge and

those average about 35,000 vehicles a day on the upper deck.

On the use of the path, the majority of trips, about 85%, are recreational based on surveys that were conducted in the evaluation. Over the course of a week, that would be about 1200 recreational trips and about 200 commute trips.

When it comes to safety, those who use the path say they feel quite safe and comfortable using it, giving it an 8 out of 10 rating.

There has been a lot of attention and some, I think, perhaps confusion about traffic congestion. It is true that over the past decade or so the congestion in this corridor has grown considerably.

When we look more closely at the recent data, however, the regular congestion patterns are not really that different today than they were before the path and the Pilot. That is illustrated by this graph here on the right. We call this a heat map. It shows when and where traffic speeds are slowest during the morning commute. It is really good for looking at what I will call regular congestion patterns, but it does not really do a good job of capturing the experience when there are incidents or crashes. I will come back to that in a moment.

The upper half of this colorful chart here shows 2019 conditions, and the lower half shows 2023. You can see that the patterns of red, and red shows speeds, they are really quite similar. That is even though the traffic today is about 90% of the volumes that used the Bridge in 2019 before COVID. The red indicates very slow speeds, less than 35 miles per hour, and the pink is up to 55 miles per hour.

The width of the graph correlates with the geography. If you start on the right, that letter D there in Richmond, correlates with Regatta Boulevard. Point C is

Stenmark Drive right about at the Toll Plaza. And then point B is Sir Francis Drake Boulevard in Marin.

The height of each graph represents the hours during the morning. If you look at the 2023 graph on the bottom, you can see that typically that congestion shown in red starts a little after 6 a.m. and it is very, very close to the toll plaza. Between 7:00 and 8:00 a.m. a backup grew, this is 2023, to Regatta Boulevard. And then it decreases over the course of the morning and dissipates there a little bit after about 10:00 a.m.

Compared to 2019, the backup in 2023 was about a quarter of a mile longer and it also dissipated about 15 minutes earlier. So, it is very, very similar.

Again, this is regular commute traffic, not really reflecting incidents. I think it is worth acknowledging that an incident probably generates much slower speeds on the Bridge. The speeds on the bridge are shown in the big pink box, I forgot to mention that. It would probably generate much more slower speeds on the Bridge and perhaps more backup in Richmond, I think that is probably more likely what people remember.

I am going to turn now to incidents. This is a place where the data leaves us, frankly, with more questions than answers. Honestly, it is harder than we would like probably to correlate incidents and congestion and we do have a lot of information on incidents and incident rates.

The Phase II findings suggest that incident rates overall are down about 15 to 20% over the course of the day, but they are up about 20 to 30% during the morning peak. That is of interest to us because the peak is when incidents are likely to cause

the most backup and the most headaches for commuters.

On the left of this chart in the blue and red there, the slide shows that the increase in incidents, the incident rates has gone up in the morning, it is largely in collisions that are rearends or sideswipes. Those are the most common types of incidents so that is perhaps not surprising.

On the right in the green and orange, the data shows that the increase in incidents are mostly the kind of incidents where there is no reported injury, as opposed to incidents where there is a serious injury or a fatality.

I spent a little bit more time on this topic. As you guess, the time that it takes for emergency responders to get to an incident really makes a difference. Not only have incident rates increased during the morning peak, but the UC Berkeley PATH Study also found it may be taking longer to respond to them.

Response times can really range a lot from less than 5 minutes to 30 or 40 minutes, or in a really extreme incident even longer than that. Today, the average is 16 minutes to respond and that is compared to about 13 minutes before the Pilot.

And I will acknowledge that sounds very small and you are probably wondering, why do we care if it is a small change. I will say we care because each minute of delayed response to an incident multiplies traffic by a factor of four. And this creates more uncertainty about travel times and that really can be a big deal when you have got to get to work on time.

I am going to briefly recap the findings here and then talk about our proposed next steps.

The results for the lower deck part-time lane are very clear and very positive

in terms of addressing the purpose of the project, relieving congestion.

As I just discussed, results for the upper deck path are much less clear. I do think we have really demonstrated the importance of access on this Bay Trail segment, especially on weekends.

While there is no increase in the regular congestion, there is some kind of thought-provoking data when it comes to weekday incidents, and we would really like to try something different so we can learn more.

That brings me to our proposal, which is graphically summarized on this slide. This is the BATA and Caltrans proposal, and it is still subject to Board approval as the Chair mentioned in his introductory remarks.

We are proposing to make the lower deck part-time lane permanent, a permanent condition, as it is. And we are proposing to extend the Pilot with some modifications on the upper deck to answer the questions raised by the data and to better understand the role of an emergency shoulder.

Specifically, we are proposing to retain the multi-use path on days where there is less commute traffic, restore the shoulder on other days of the week, and run a bike shuttle when that space is functioning as a shoulder.

The shuttle service operations and the days that we would provide the path, we are still working those out, to be honest. I think, you know, weekends and Fridays and holidays are good candidates for the path. We may even be able to open the path midday Thursday, and we will be reviewing the traffic and operations on that. If we could do that, we would really have an extension that was about half-time path and half-time a shoulder.

We are proposing to extend through the end of 2025, and we might possibly ask for a longer extension. That would really depend on the start date, how quickly we can get in front of you for a permit amendment, or if we need a little additional time for proper evaluation.

Let me just clarify what we are trying to achieve with this proposal. The first is it really allows us to learn more about this constrained real estate on the Bridge and how it operates, while we keep the Bay Trail segment open in the times it is most used. It allows us to get more data on safety and operations with the emergency shoulder open on weekdays. And it allows us a better understanding of access. I am curious, really, whether we would attract some different Bay Trail users with a shuttle service. And it allows us to take a closer look at equity.

The demographics and equity considerations of users was not something in the current, in the original scope for the UC Berkeley PATH and we think this is worth spending some time on. I think it is important when you think about the variability and congestion due to incidents in the morning.

It also allows us to continue working on projects such as the Richmond-San Rafael Forward that will make the approach to the Bridge and Richmond work better and speed up transit and carpools in the corridor.

Before I wrap up, I am just going to spend a minute on the Richmond-San Rafael Forward projects. These are fully funded projects that will move us toward a multi-modal corridor, and we believe they will alleviate but not eliminate congestion in Richmond.

Probably the most impactful of these projects, the biggest, is the Open Road

Tolling and HOV Lane Extension that would open by the end of 2025. This project will do two things. It will remove the toll booths at the plaza, and it will streamline traffic through the plaza to reduce the slowdown that happens when merging. Right now, the plaza widens out to seven lanes and then it goes back to a few lanes to get on the Bridge, so it will streamline that traffic.

It will also provide an HOV lane extension for carpools and buses through Richmond.

We are also working with AC Transit and Golden Gate Transit to install transit signal priority on Cutting Boulevard.

We expect to make some improvements to the Richmond Parkway interchange by 2026 that will help with some of the local congestion and the traffic diversion.

In parallel, although not shown on this slide, Caltrans and BATA are looking at the ability to use the upper deck shoulder on the Bridge as a carpool lane, potentially in conjunction with a part-time path. As I mentioned earlier, that really requires a full environmental review process, and it is not the subject of the item before you today.

This my last slide. In terms of next steps, we are certainly very interested to hear your thoughts and questions today.

Our first step though before we can come back to you for a formal action is first to ask BATA to authorize staff, that is me, to pursue the proposal. We will be making an initial presentation to a BATA committee next week and then we will be seeking approval from the full Authority at the end of the month.

Second, we need to really define the parameters of the modification like the

days of the week, the bike shuttle operations, and work more closely with BCDC staff on the best approach to the permit, particularly with respect to the lower deck.

Third, we would submit a formal request for amendment for your consideration at a later meeting.

Thank you very much for your attention and we look forward to your discussions after Katherine closes us out.

Ms. Pan continued: Thank you for that presentation. I also wanted to note that the current permit specifically prohibits the alteration or removal of the facilities without a permit amendment. And so in this sort of weird space where the authorization for the Pilot Project has run out, before the next amendment comes in, Caltrans has submitted a request for a non-material time extension to extend the authorization for the existing Pilot as-is to give them some time to finish up their proposal, finish up their evaluation and come back with a material amendment request later this year.

At this point, it seems worthwhile to share the legal and policy bases for how a future proposal for the Pilot will be analyzed.

First, as always, it is important to remember that Section 66602 of the McAteer-Petris Act finds that existing public access to the shoreline and waters of the San Francisco Bay is inadequate, and that maximum feasible public access consistent with the proposed project should be provided.

The Bay Plan further expands on this, in particular and its public access policies, and also includes a section of transportation policies and findings that are relevant to this case. And to paraphrase, Transportation Policies 1 and 4 require the

Commission to encourage the development of alternative modes of transportation and to include pedestrian and bicycle paths in transportation projects on bridges over the Bay.

These are based on findings that primary reliance on single-occupant vehicles for transportation in the Bay Area results in further pressures to use the Bay as a route for future roadways and bridges. And that pressure to fill the Bay can be reduced by providing safe and convenient public pathways for non-motorized forms of travel.

Before closing, I would like to offer some questions for the Commission to consider in your discussion. Staff appreciates any insights or direction you are able to provide in response to these questions as we prepare to return with the permittees later this year with their amendment request.

This first question is related to the conditions of the permit and simply asks whether the Commission believes that there is sufficient information at this time to remove the improvements, make them permanent, or propose an alteration.

For the second question, knowing that the permittee plans to request an amendment to the permit for a modified Pilot Project, what information would the Commission like to be included in the application and/or the staff analysis to support a determination of whether the proposed modifications are appropriate?

For the third question, at the conclusion of the Pilot, including any extended or modified version of the Pilot, what information should be provided to support a determination of whether non-motorized public access is feasible on the Bridge?

Lastly, at the conclusion of the Pilot, what information should be provided to

support a determination of whether any proposed permanent project would be providing the maximum feasible public access on the Bridge consistent with that project?

With that, thank you very much for your attention to this presentation. Staff and the permittees are happy to answer any clarifying questions you may have.

Mr. Scharff interjected: Chair Wasserman, I would just like to make a short statement. I just wanted to remind everyone that this is an informational briefing and that this may come before us for a permanent amendment as you have heard.

Therefore, I just want to state that now is not the time to state support or opposition to something that may come before us for a permit amendment. That general comments and concerns that do not state how you would vote on a permit amendment are okay, and that the focus should be on responding to these four questions that staff has posed.

Chair Wasserman continued: I am going to start with questions for clarification from the Commissioners and then we will go to public comment. I am going to start with Commissioner Gioia.

Commissioner Gioia commented: Thank you for the presentations. As someone who lives in Richmond and represents the area that is the approach to the Bridge, and I have been both a driver in my car on the Bridge and a biker across the Bridge, so I have experienced the enjoyment of biking, the frustration of delays, so I understand the dynamics of this.

I do have a number of questions that will help us later to answer the Commission questions, but one of them deals with air quality studies that you may

do; and I wanted to get Greg Nudd before he leaves and then I will have Lisa come up.

Greg is a senior official at the Air District. As Greg comes up, because I think part of it is what are we going to ask for in the study, and I know you are going to be doing air quality analysis we will ask. As an Air District member that is an issue that is been raised.

I do think it is important to clarify. Because there is a lot of good information and not-so-accurate information that is out there in the public about all of this potential proposal. I know it is clear that there is no proposal to make this lane a vehicle lane for cars, potentially an HOV transit lane, but not just a vehicle lane. A lot of the comments we hear, I think people think it is going to be turned into a vehicle lane.

Then there is this stuff going around that the bike lane has caused more air pollution, which has not happened. But I wanted to understand, Greg. Can you just comment about air pollution impacts so far, as part one. And part two, if we were to ask, as they do studies, what kinds of studies would make sense?

It sounds like the alternatives you are looking at, using it as a shoulder, using it as an HOV/transit lane have different implications for congestion and air quality. I know you had to leave so I wanted to ask you that before going back to MTC.

Mr. Nudd commented: Sure, I will keep it brief. Right now, we do not have any evidence that the bike lane is causing greater air pollution in Richmond. The data that we see is consistent with what we see near every freeway in the Bay area where there are significant increases in air pollution in the mornings. But that is

typical of pretty much every freeway in the Bay Area.

In terms of things to consider. When you are doing an air quality evaluation of a traffic improvement project you want to look at the types of vehicles that are traveling. By that I mean light duty vehicles versus diesel trucks. You want to look at vehicle speeds before and after; and you want to look at total vehicle throughput before and after.

What we are finding recently is because light duty vehicle tailpipe emissions are so low, congestion is not really an issue for light duty vehicles from an air quality standpoint.

Obviously, it is an issue from a quality-of-life standpoint, and it can be an air quality issue if it causes traffic to back up on surface streets, especially if there are diesel vehicles in that traffic mix.

The thing to be careful about though is induced demand. If you make some modifications that end up having greater throughput through the area you can actually see increases in particulate matter, even though the congestion is lower. It is a little bit of a different framework than what we are used to dealing with in terms of congestion. And that really has to do with, first of all, having cleaner cars, which is great, but also having better understanding about the impacts of brake wear and tire wear and road dust from an air quality standpoint.

Commissioner Gioia asked: How does more congestion versus less congestion affect the larger source from cars now, which is there brake and tire wear and road dust as opposed to the tailpipe emissions? How does having congestion versus not having congestion affect that part?

Mr. Nudd explained: Tire wear tracks directly with vehicle miles traveled (VMT), as does road dust, so the more vehicle miles traveled you have the more tire wear you have.

A recent study came out showing that most of the microplastics in the Bay are actually tire wear. So, the more VMT you have, the more tire wear you have, more air pollution, more water pollution.

With electric vehicles we are seeing increased tire wear because folks use their tires as brakes through regenerative braking, but you see less brake wear, so the net impact of electric vehicles on that is questionable.

In terms of diesel, if you have got diesel trucks idling that is going to be a big problem for the community, especially if they are on surface level streets.

Commissioner Gioia acknowledged: Thanks, Greg, that is all I had. But it sounds like when you do a study the Air District will be involved making comments and reviewing the parameters of the study to ensure that we are getting the right overview and the right comment on that. And the Air District is prepared to do that.

Mr. Nudd agreed: Yes, we are happy to help MTC, provide some technical support on that. We are already working with them on the overall improvement projects and helping make sure that they have got the right technical approach with the contractors they are using for the air quality analysis.

Commissioner Gioia acknowledged and continued: Great, thanks.

I just had a few questions on the presentation, maybe to Lisa or Caltrans, just to be clear.

You are not proposing a through lane, you are proposing HOV and transit long-

term, but your permit application may seek just to have a shoulder for a period of time and then this HOV transit lane. How are you going to be able to distinguish during this modified period the changes under the modified permit if you are also making the changes which are going to benefit the Richmond-San Rafael Forward?

Because right now you have three lanes of traffic, going to seven at the toll plaza, going down to two. And your proposal is to have three lanes of traffic, three through the toll plaza, down to two, which is going to have, I think, a big positive effect on reducing congestion.

So, to the extent that you are looking at that benefit from that project, how are you going to distinguish that from what you are doing in the modified proposal, the modified permit? Assuming it is successful, right? To be really clear here to the public, we are asking questions to get information. We could potentially be disqualified from voting, as our counsel said, if we start specifying support and opposition. Plus, we do not have all the information to make a decision, right?

Ms. Klein replied: Right, that is right. No, that is a very good question, and we are trying to thread a needle here. What we would hope to be able to do is very quickly come back to you. Submit the request for the permit amendment to try this modification. As you noted, the modification would restore the shoulder on the weekdays, no traffic on that lane. And we would like to be able to run that through before. We would like to be able to open that pretty quickly. Run that next year before the Forward Project opens. The Forward Project is projected to open at the end of 2025 and so that would give us, hopefully, about a good year's worth of data before those improvements get made to the toll plaza.

Commissioner Gioia asked: It is your belief the Forward Project is going to have a great benefit at reducing congestion there. Have you thought about how much?

Ms. Klein answered: I think the Forward Project is not going to eliminate congestion at the toll plaza, right. We would not be building an HOV lane if it would because you would not have an advantage. I know that I have those numbers in my notes and how much it is. I think it is a few minutes worth of relief for the general lanes. It is far more beneficial to the carpools and the transit vehicles that will be able to use the HOV lane and it was a few minutes worth.

Commissioner Gioia continued his questioning: How are you thinking of doing enforcement? I have had an electric car for 10 years. I drive in HOV lanes that are packed all the time because I think more than half the drivers do not have the number of passengers or have an electric car. Obviously, there is the potential for a traffic lane. How are you going to address that?

Ms. Klein replied: Yes, and that is a really good question. Enforcing carpool lanes is tough, there is no doubt about it. You all see that all the time on the road and so do I.

We do a little bit better on the bridge approaches. It is a little bit easier on the bridge approaches than it is, say, on Interstate 80 in your neck of the woods there. And that is because the drivers are going through a single point at the toll plaza where there is an HOV lane. They are currently a little slower right there than they are on Interstate 80. You can put a highway patrol vehicle pretty much right there and they can look and see who is in the lane. And that is much easier than

having them drive by when cars are moving with traffic on the regular freeway.

Commissioner Gioia asked: Could you collect this same data with less days of modified changes? You just proposed something that was a Thursday through Sunday, which is potentially 50/50. How many days do you need to really collect the data to make a final decision?

Ms. Klein replied: I do not think I have a real specific answer to that question. What we are doing in trying to assess the number of days is really trying to balance the traffic patterns that we see where there is the congestion and the number of vehicles that are traveling on the Bridge, and we see very clear patterns thus far. Traffic volumes are very consistent Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday. Monday is very close to those and then Friday the traffic is lower. That is one of the things we are really considering when we look at what days we want to operate the path.

Commissioner Gioia continued: You have proposed a bike shuttle for the days that the bike lane is not available, which presumably is in the lane of traffic, which is also congested. Is there any reason your proposal could not include a bike shuttle, on the shoulder, a smaller vehicle on the shoulder, that puts the, again assuming this goes forward, right?

Ms. Klein answered: Right.

Commissioner Gioia continued: That puts bikes on the shoulder that gets them across. Bike or pedestrian I should say.

Ms. Klein stated: I think that is a really interesting idea and I think it is something we would have to look at. We would want to really work through that with Caltrans as the owner of the Bridge and understand what that kind of operation

would mean. I think it is a really interesting suggestion and something we will look at.

Commissioner Gioia continued: This is more to BCDC. One of the things we obviously have to consider, maximum feasible public access, all those standards. Have shuttles been used on some temporary or long-term basis to deal with public access issues? This is really to the staff. Have they? And maybe it is also a legal question of whether or not it meets public access having a shuttle.

Ms. Klein stated: I am looking at Ashley to see just in terms of, like, detouring, I guess.

Commissioner Gioia continued: Yes, how does the maximum feasible public access interplay with using a shuttle on some days in place of actually providing the access?

Bay Design Analyst Tomerlin fielded this question: Ashley Tomerlin, Bay Design Analyst. We have seen shuttles on the Richmond Bridge previously and then at Middle Harbor Road related to Middle Harbor Shoreline Park.

The use of shuttles does not seem to be popular either with user groups or the agencies running them. The Richmond-San Rafael Bridge shuttle was run prior to the 1997 Richmond Bridge permit, and it was cancelled due to low ridership and dissatisfaction on the parts of the bicyclists just due to unreliability.

Commissioner Gioia acknowledged: Just wondered. Okay, thanks.

And just a couple of final. Is there a reason you want to go forward with the shoulder as opposed to waiting, collecting more, and apply for a permit when you have done the analysis to look at an HOV transit lane?

Ms. Klein answered: Yes, that is a good question.

Commissioner Gioia continued: Because you hear, a shoulder is a shoulder, and I will get to the incident question in a second.

Ms. Klein continued: Right. I think it really does relate to the incidents. It has been a while now since we had a shoulder on that Bridge, right. It has been four years and there was COVID in between it, right. And I think one of the things that we wonder a little bit about is, do people really remember the experience of the Bridge before the Pilot and is there maybe some? It has been a while.

So, this question about what happens when there is an incident? At this point we only have the more recent experience, right, where we have the path, and we do think that there is some value in getting fresh data.

It is also true that traffic is 90% of what it was before COVID and so it may function a little differently now in this period than it did back in 2018, 2019. That is one reason we would like to go ahead and do it now.

Commissioner Gioia asked: How long is it going to take you to analyze and determine whether it is feasible to have a HOV transit lane there? Because I assume that is where you ultimately are trying to end up in your permit application, but this intermediate use of a shoulder is just different. How long is it going to take you?

Ms. Klein answered: Right. Well, I do not know where we are trying to end up. I think we are looking at options and we want to understand what the analysis will show.

In terms of how long the analysis takes, it is a two-step process. We are doing an initial analysis, we call it a design alternative assessment, and we are trying to

move very expeditiously through that and complete that by the end of the year. That will give us a general sense of feasibility.

In order to really pursue this and to come back for a permit, we would have to complete a full environmental review. It would be comparable in scope to the environmental review we did for the current pilot and that was a two-year process. So, it is a good two-plus years before we could come back and ask for a permit for an HOV lane, two plus years, probably three.

Commissioner Gioia acknowledged: So, the Commission is looking at maybe three general alternative options. One is whether to continue the current status quo, second is whether to amend the permit to a shoulder, third is whether ultimately to amend the permit to have HOV and a transit.

What you want us to do, it sounds like, is study what the benefits or not of the shoulder are. And if we found that there was not a great benefit, that we would potentially go back to status quo or then entertain later an application on an HOV.

Because there's different cost benefits, I should say for each of those, right? A shoulder versus HOV transit is a big difference, with different cost benefits and different impacts on congestion and air quality and all of that. But you are only going to collect data on the shoulder, you are not going to collect data on the HOV and the transit.

Ms. Klein acknowledged: Right, that is true. We will be doing analysis in parallel though on the HOV lane on the shoulder. So, the trick is to bring all this together.

Commissioner Gioia stated: But you are not going to have data from an HOV

transit.

Ms. Klein replied: We will not have data for it. I think one of the challenges in traffic analysis is this notion of incidents and this non-recurring congestion and that is a place where I think real life experience is especially valuable.

Incidents are tremendously variable, right? It is anything from you get a flat tire and you pull over, to a major crash. They vary on the weather and the time of day and the lighting and there is just so much variation. So, I think that is an area where direct experience is particularly valuable. I think as an industry, if you will, we do a little better at traffic analysis when we are talking about, you know.

Commissioner Gioia continued: Right. You calculate there were some increases in incidents, I get it, in the morning, 6:00 to 9:00. But how many incidents are we talking about? What is the actual absolute number of incidents? And what is the data you have that shows what the impact of that incident was on any increased congestion or not?

Ms. Klein explained: Right, yes. We measure the incidents as rates, typically, and the rates are the numbers that are included in your packet. It is rates per million vehicle miles traveled so it is a very, very small number. Which is really a good thing, right, because you do not want a lot of crashes. So those numbers are in your packet. I would have to go back and look at the actual number of incidents over a period of time. I do not have that on top of my head.

Commissioner Gioia stated: I think that is useful and how much then? That is a question I have to come back to us. How many days was that and how much did it actually affect congestion or how much did it affect delay?

Ms. Klein concurred: Right.

Commissioner Gioia noted: We do not have that really. Thanks. Those are some questions about it.

Commissioner Nelson was recognized: A couple of additional questions. The first is very much along that same line. I had struggled when I was looking at those graphics to look at number of incidents per million miles traveled. I have no idea what that translates to in terms of the real-world number of incidents. How they are distributed. Do they happen at different times of day. If you are considering varying the use of that shoulder that distribution might matter. We do not need those answers now. But as we think about moving forward as you folks are preparing to come back to us, it would really help if those numbers came back to us in numbers that we could understand.

A couple of other questions. I share Commissioner Gioia's questions and concern about not seeing this as a one-way step toward a transit line. We have not made that decision yet and you are not proposing we make that decision yet. But the debate here really is about emergency.

The tradeoff is really not about traffic, it is about emergency use of that lane compared to, it is emergency-related traffic congestion related to the current bicycle use, right. That is the tradeoff we are talking about. So, I just want to make sure we are all clear about that.

One of the things just with that in mind I was trying to understand, you said that the volume of traffic today is about 90% of the pre-COVID levels but the congestion level is pretty similar or maybe a little bit worse than pre-COVID. Can you

help us understand why that is? I would expect the congestion to be lower.

Ms. Klein replied: A little bit lower. I think that is one of the questions. I would say it is comparable. I would not say it is a little bit worse, I would say it is really very comparable. It is a little different in shape, but it is really pretty comparable. I think that is a good question and I am not sure we have a great answer for it. Still, a lot of the congestion really has to do with that toll plaza and the fact it widens out and it comes back down. You have got to merge in the back. So that is one of the considerations.

The PATH Study did find, I did not highlight it because I do not think it is necessarily central to the discussion today, but the PATH Study did find that there is a slight decrease in capacity on the Bridge with the barrier in place. That may have to do with how the cars are moving across the Bridge, they may be a little slower right next to the barrier, they may be choosing more to be in the left lane because they do not want to be next to the barrier.

But what we found is that it has not really dramatically affected the performance on the traffic across the Bridge, it is sort of hiding in the background there.

Could it be something with traffic? We do not know now if this is a new normal, we also do not know that, right? If traffic were to grow back, could it be a consideration? Could it make the backup worse? Maybe it could. That is also very hard to test in real life when traffic is low.

Commissioner Nelson continued: A couple of other questions that would be helpful if you could provide us more information when you come back. And I suspect

we are going to be hearing about some of this from the public.

The documents indicate that the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge is the second-most popular bridge for bicycle transit compared to the Bay Bridge. It would be good to have those numbers as well. That connection does not go all the way across currently but those would be good numbers to see.

I would also be really interested, and I would be interested in members of the public talking about this as well, is to what extent, if any, is the low use on the Bridge related to connections on either end? I was not quite sure.

Larry, you were talking about the connection on the west end of the Bridge, and I was not sure whether that was really affecting bicycle use in a significant way that might have an impact on use. So that is just a question for everybody about to what extent, if any, is the use being, frankly, lower than I would have expected, especially during the weekdays, related to access off of the Bridge?

And the last question is, if we are considering going back to a shuttle, it would be helpful to hear from the members of the public, and it would help us see the numbers. Staff just said that that was cancelled because of a lack of public support. That could have been unreliability of the shuttle, it could be the fact that members of the public are much more enthusiastic about traveling across the Bridge by bicycle rather than in the back of a van. But those would be good numbers to have before us as well. I think that is it, thank you.

Ms. Klein responded: Through the Chair, if you would like me to respond to any of those, I can tackle them now or I can hold them and we can do it when we come back.

Chair Wasserman replied: Unless you think there is something very specific, I think most of them are intended as guidance for what comes back to us.

Ms. Klein acknowledged: Certainly.

Commissioner Gunther was recognized: Just to follow up briefly. I think the discussion seems to be centering around the need for benchmarks to better analyze the quantitative information that you are giving us.

For example, there's 500 people each weekend on the Bridge. Is that a lot or is it not a lot? Did we project in 2016 what it would be? That kind of benchmarking would help us interpret, right, 14 to 17 minutes saved eastbound. I am getting the impression that is a lot. Compared to what? I think that would be really helpful. And just a couple of things like the number of incidents. Are there incidents in the pedestrian/bike lane?

Ms. Klein answered: It is a very small number, if there were any at all.

Commissioner Gunther continued: Would reducing the speed on the Bridge reduce the number of incidents?

Ms. Klein replied: Through the Chair, would you like me to respond now or this for guidance? I am happy to take your guidance. I know you have other business to take care of.

Chair Wasserman stated: I would take these as guidance for the information we need.

Commissioner Gunther continued: That is all they are meant for, thank you. I know that sometimes it feels like you are pulling something out of thin air. But in terms of interacting then with the greater public, as I was responsible for using

scientific information to decide if the Bay is healthy. Well, is it? How do you do that? There is no health meter you put into it, right.

You have to come up with a sense of what is good. Whatever you decide to do, and whatever we all agree to do going forward, to have some goals, some kind of benchmarks out there, we think this is going to reduce the number of incidents by whatever and then let's see what happens. At least we can get a sense from that of what these statistics mean.

Again, I am going to reiterate, there is no right answer to this, right. But, your expert judgment, informed by everybody else's, helps guide the discussion in the future. Thanks.

Commissioner Eklund inquired: I just have some clarifying questions because I have not been as involved in this project as a lot of others have been. What you are saying is that the lower deck, which goes eastbound, the bike lane will remain?

Ms. Klein replied: On the lower deck there is a part-time traffic lane. The lower deck is a vehicle lane 2:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Commissioner Eklund asked: It is not a bike lane?

Ms. Klein answered: It is not a bike lane, yes, that is correct.

Commissioner Eklund acknowledged: Okay. The bike lane/pedestrian is only on the upper deck.

Ms. Klein answered: That is correct, yes.

Commissioner Eklund noted: Okay. That is a very important clarification. So, you are looking at doing the upper deck, which is westbound. You would like to try to convert that to an HOV transit lane during the week, and then on the weekends

use that lane as a bike lane/pedestrian lane, correct?

Ms. Klein explained: There is a series of things over time, right, and we are a little more spread out. The immediate, it is not an ask yet because we still have to get authority. The immediate proposal is to extend the Pilot on the upper deck, restore a shoulder on the weekdays and have the path, retain the path on the weekends.

We are in parallel with that, and we would seek to get a permit to do that very soon. Perhaps have that in place ideally before the end of this year. In parallel with that, we are doing analysis studies, first a feasibility sort of analysis and then perhaps an environmental review that would look at using that shoulder as a bus and HOV lane. But that is a separate analysis.

We would not be able to come before the Commission with that for several years because it needs a full environmental review.

Commissioner Eklund stated: I guess I share some of the concern about how you are going to be able to compare different pilots since this proposal is substantially different than the pilot that has been occurring over the last few years. I share that very much so.

Help me to understand the public opposition. It is with the upper deck, correct?

Ms. Klein concurred: That is correct.

Commissioner Eklund continued: Okay. And it is the opposition to retaining it as a bike and pedestrian path, correct, or not?

Chair Wasserman interjected: I am going to give her a lifesaver. We are going

to hear from the public. I would rather hear it from the public than have the Caltrans representative be put in the position of speaking for the public.

Commissioner Eklund continued: I guess for myself and others that may not have been involved in this from the beginning, it would be helpful to have this is where we were, this is what we did, and this is what we are proposing. I come in like this in midstream and I hear a lot of controversy, but I do not know what the controversy is about in particular.

You stated this, congestion is triggered by the toll plaza. Has Caltrans ever looked at what they could do? You probably have. What you could do to the toll plaza to minimize if not eliminate that congestion? Maybe that needs to be in a separate document.

Ms. Klein answered: Deferring to the Chair whether to respond now or later.

Commissioner Eklund stated: If you can explain that later, that is fine but just some of these basics.

Why is it that the Bridge is more popular with bike and pedestrian? I think that is a good question. Because the Golden Gate Bridge is pretty popular. It would be interesting to have some of the other statistics too so we can compare them. I have some other ideas of what I would like to see but I think we have got a long way to go.

Commissioner Randolph noted: I guess this is an observation having been part of this conversation we had with the 2016 that I remember it very well at the time. It goes to, I think, two questions. Is it the optimal or most appropriate use of the space that is currently used as the bike and pedestrian lane as opposed to alternative

uses?

I remember when this first came up there was understandably a lot of advocacy by the bicycle community and ABAG said it is going to complete the Bay Trail, which is great.

But I registered a fundamental concern at that time, this is years ago now, that this was coming to us in the complete absence of any kind of data whatsoever. Some folks said, well, you know, bikes are so successful on the Golden Gate Bridge. Come on, the Golden Gate Bridge ends at the Presidio in San Francisco and at the other end it is in Sausalito, and it is a major tourist destination. Scenic, and I do not think any of us would call the San Rafael Bridge scenic.

There is very little at either end immediately that would draw people as a destination. You got to go pretty far away to get anywhere that is really going to.

Commissioner Gioia interjected: Folks in Marin and Contra Costa may disagree with that view. (Group laughter)

Commissioner Randolph responded: I live in Marin County, thank you very much, and I ride my bike out hundreds of miles. Anyway, I am a biker too, so I totally get it.

But I guess this goes to the question, one is I might use different terminology than you did that the upper deck path is quite well used. I am not sure I would say that 140 bikes a day is quite well used compared to the other traffic, so I would probably use different language.

I think we have the key data that we need, which is the number of bikes and pedestrians on the Bridge during commute hours and non-commute hours.

What I think would be useful, again when you said that the San Rafael Bridge is the number two most popular bridge for bikes after the Bay Bridge. It would be great to see what is the data? How many bikes use the Bay Bridge? How many bikes use other California bridges in the region? And how many use the Golden Gate Bridge? So, if we see the data of Golden Gate Bridge, Bay Bridge, San Rafael Bridge, San Mateo Bridge, any other bridges, I think that is the data. I think telling us it is number two does not tell us very much at all.

So anyway, I am glad we are having this conversation. I am glad we have the data. We could use a little bit more. And I think anything else that you can share with us that would help us understand the benefits of the shoulder, that would get us maybe, eventually if we go there someday, to the HOV lane. I know that is not this permit request. But I think anything to understand the benefits further of getting the shoulder back would be very helpful. I would love to see the data on all the bridges.

Chair Wasserman added: And just to complicate it a little bit more, I would like to see data on other well-used bicycle paths, commuter and recreational, not just limited to bridges.

Commissioner Moulton-Peters stated: Here is the Commissioner, along with our previous Commissioner, in Marin County, so I have some follow-up questions about the safety issues that you raised because I want to understand.

We talked about accident rates. But actually, the impacts of accidents go to everybody else on the Bridge at the time that it happens and backed up. I wonder if you could come back with us. You mentioned that minutes of delay on the Bridge

due to incidents have four times the impact and so I would like to understand that better. Four times the impact of what and to whom?

Because we are hearing from teachers and health care workers who need to be to work on time that they are coming across the Bridge one and two hours early now to offset the potential of an incident, they need to be at their jobs on time. So, I would like some better understanding of these impacts. Five incidents may happen, and they may affect 50,000 people.

Similarly, I wonder if you could come back to us with, on your heat maps you showed a longer period of delay in the commute in the morning, a more lengthy period of commute time that had increased over the pre-COVID times. And if there is any way to explain what is happening there. You said that the total volume of traffic has not changed, but the time duration of congestion is longer now. So, if it is possible to understand that.

A related question is, are you able to use INRIX data or other data to track commuters going over the Bridge, both by bike and by car in the morning? I know that we have origins and destination information about auto commuters, and we know where they go, part to Sonoma County, part to Marin. It would be good to get an update on that.

But also, the bicycle commuters because I am quite certain we have a cadre of bicycle commuters who use it during the week. But if it would be possible to determine, are these repeat users going over? Of the 140-something or other each week, how many are repeaters? That would just be helpful to understand.

I agree the usership on the Golden Gate Bridge would be interesting to know.

I can say, Chair Wasserman, incidentally that we have some 3,000 riders over a weekend on the North Sausalito to Mill Valley path. We have 3,000 riders a weekend, which is quite different. So, it would be useful to get some comparative data on all that.

I think those are my questions. Yes. I would just say, I realize we do have a serious trade off discussion of a constrained Bridge. It would be nice if it was a new Bridge, and we could outfit it with bike lanes in both directions. But we have what we have, we have to figure it out. So, thank you, those are my questions.

Commissioner Kishimoto had questions: I do have five or six questions. One goes back to history. I am just curious why do we have a part-time vehicle lane added heading west versus east and why was that decision made? I am just curious about that.

Second is, I read that a cantilevered bike and pedestrian facility was contemplated at one point, and I would be curious to hear how much research was done and is that a possibility?

I also had questions about the incidents per day so that is that.

Then regarding transit. I have to confess I do not even know if there are any buses crossing the Bridge today so that is kind of a basic question.

Commissioner Gioia interjected: There are.

Commissioner Kishimoto acknowledged and continued: There are, okay.

Is there contemplation of HOV buses or even other demand side strategies? It might be increasing the tolls and using the greater revenues for improving transit. And related to that, the Supervisor just mentioned the origin/destination studies. I

am sure there were studies done at that point. I would be curious to know some summary of that about where the 70,000 vehicles are going per day. Without that it is kind of hard to make suggestions on what would be the most effective alternative transportation.

I guess alternatives for cyclists who want to cross the Bay. I do not know what has changed since that last look.

And then there was some discussion about the landside bike connections, and it was not clear to me they are still under construction. If they are, when are they due to be done? So, it does seem unfair that we are looking at this with the landside bike connections not being completed.

I suppose the last one I will throw out is, if we are looking for some combination of emergency shoulder room for disabled vehicles, is there some way to combine it with narrowed lanes in some places for either pedestrians or bicyclists who might have to dismount to pass? That might be a crazy idea but wanted to throw that out there. I think that those are most of my questions, thank you.

Ms. Klein responded: Through the Chair, if I may make one clarification. The improvements on the Marin side and the Contra Costa County side, those are largely complete, the access improvements. There is some additional work we are doing on Marin that is under construction now, but we have really completed. On the Richmond side, those path improvements to access are complete and there have been substantial improvements completed already on the Marin side as well. I just want to clarify that because it has come up a couple times. Thank you.

Chair Wasserman noted: I do not see any other Commissioner comments so we

will now go to public speakers. We are going to start with speakers in the room. You have two minutes and please try very hard not to be repetitive.

Bruce Beyaert commented: Chair Wasserman and Members of the Commission, my name is Bruce Beyaert with Trails for Richmond Action Committee and a member of the San Francisco Bay Trail Project Board of Directors.

The Richmond-San Rafael Bridge Trail is a key section of the multi-use San Francisco Bay Trail. It should stay open 365 days per year. Cyclists, pedestrians, joggers have enjoyed about 380,000 trips across this Bridge since it opened in November 2019. There is no justification for shutting it down four days a week in order to provide a vehicle breakdown lane.

Page 7 of the Caltrans/BATA Report in your agenda package states, and I quote, a "... relatively small number of incidents have occurred on the upper deck of the Bridge ..." If there have been a relatively small number of incidents, why shut down the Trail for a breakdown lane?

My wife and I were driving across the Bridge a couple of weeks ago and there was a car broken down with a flat tire in the left lane. So what I would like to suggest, and some of the board members have alluded to this in their discussion today, is that rather than moving ahead now, and I am talking to both Caltrans and BATA also with shutting down the Trail four days a week to provide a breakdown lane, we should wait for the completion of the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge Forward Program that BATA is carrying out now.

The major problems of delays on the Bridge are the approaches. The Forward Program will make major improvements to the Richmond Parkway interchange

approach to the Bridge. It will eliminate, as discussed earlier, it will eliminate the toll plaza area going to open road tolling, it will extend the HOV lane from Regatta Boulevard to the Bridge approach.

That will make a huge difference in the traffic flow situation. And at that time, you will then have a new baseline. That would be the time to look at the options that are being considered, closing the Trail to provide a breakdown lane or provide an HOV lane or whatever ideas might come up. It is premature now to close down the Trail. Thank you.

Rosemary Corbin addressed the Commission: Chair Wasserman and Commissioners, I am Rosemary Corbin and I used to be a BCDC Commissioner and voted when we approved the recommendation to have the Bay Trail on the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge.

So here I am again. I am now the Chair Pro Tem of the San Francisco Bay Trail Committee, and I am here to tell you; I think you all received copies of our resolution. We passed a resolution last Friday in opposition to closing the Bay Trail across the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge four days a week for many reasons.

The Bay Trail is loved. Thousands of people around the Bay and the Commission has been supportive of it. The goal of the Bay Trail is to ring the Bay, and you cannot ring the Bay if you do not go across bridges.

I think we need to think about where the cause is. The congestion was there before the Bay Trail, and it will be there after the Bay Trail. The congestion is caused by the fact that Marin County and cities do not allow for the building of affordable housing for the people who work there. So, they have to live in the East Bay, and

they cross the Bridge every morning and then back at night. So please keep that in mind and do not make the Bay Trail a scapegoat. Thank you.

Tom Lent was recognized: Ditto on both of the last two speakers. I would also suggest that you do not really have the data you think you have yet, a lot has changed. I am Tom Lent, I come before you today as a user of the pathway. I live in Berkeley, and I use the bridge for both business purposes to attend meetings in Marin and San Francisco and for recreation access to a variety of locations in Marin. And I come also to give a voice to another group of San Francisco commuters from Berkeley who I ride with regularly who cannot attend a workday meeting.

I am also the E-Bike Project Coordinator for Walk Bike Berkeley. This is one change that is not captured in the data. E-bikes are a game changer for the practicality, the time practicality of crossing that Bridge. I know this because I have tested it myself against Google crossing times. And I do not mean just the Bridge, I mean going from places where people live in Richmond to places where people work in San Rafael, and an e-bike makes this practical. And e-bikes are just taking off now and so we do not have a lot of data for how people with e-bikes would use this Bridge. We also do not have data for how people will use the Bridge with the improvements in the access.

You previously had to ride on an expressway to get on and off of this Bridge. Rather intimidating to a lot of people, understandably. Now we have a different situation with access to the Bridge, a few more improvements still to come but much already there.

We should be looking at how it is used now with the current conditions, not

looking back at the previous four years when it was constrained and when people had different technologies for crossing it.

It is a really important link in our transportation infrastructure that we are just beginning to be understood and utilized. Do not chop it off now. It will be a major step backwards for the Bay Trail, for active, active transportation commuters and recreation, and for the residents of Richmond who will breathe the air and the particulate matter that increased vehicle miles traveled will put into their lungs. I have got answers on that bus, but I will hold. I hope someone else can pick that one up. Thank you.

Robert Prinz commented: Hello, Commissioners, thank you for receiving my comment and happy Bike Month. I am Robert Prince, Advocacy Director of Bike East Bay, a nonprofit representing Contra Costa and Alameda Counties since 1972, back when we were called East Bay Bike Coalition, I am wearing my EBBC hoodie today, shortly after the BCDC was formed in the late '60s.

I mention that because Bike East Bay was formed as an organization, one of the primary goals of our organization was bike access across bridges connecting between the East Bay and other regions.

We are at six and a half bridges right now with bike access. We are working on that seventh path across the west span of the Bay Bridge, but we have never gone backwards. So, I want to really stress how historic and serious this proposal is to actually go backwards for the first time ever on these connections.

Yesterday, our organization submitted a coalition letter to this body as part of keeping the Trail open to people biking, walking and rolling at all hours 24/7. At the

time, there were 57 local, state and national organizations that signed on to that letter focused on issues of active transportation, sustainability, and the environment.

One of those was Save the Bay, an organization that was also foundational in the forming of BCDC back in the '60s. I am pleased to say that since then, even just yesterday, even more organizations have signed on. A new total of at least 65 groups. There is a huge groundswell of interest in this topic.

One of the purposes of converting the pathway to a breakdown shoulder mentioned by staff is the need for more experience. I would like to remind folks here that we do have 37 years of experience with the Bridge with a breakdown shoulder from 1982 when the pipeline was removed, all the way up until 2019. So far, we only have four years of data with the Bridge with the pathway on it, so if anything, I would encourage us to leave the pathway there for longer to have even more data about how the operations are handled with the current conditions so we can compare it against that 37 years prior.

Also, the primary responsibility of BCDC is to maximize feasible public access to the shoreline. So, closing the Bridge trail four days a week will affect that access negatively to a significant degree. I encourage you to center this in your future decision-making on the issue. Thank you.

Peter Gwynn spoke: Thanks. Like you mentioned, my name is Peter Gwynn. I am a Berkeley resident who works in San Francisco, pretty close by actually. I have two young kids ages two and five. I oppose the proposed path closure and support keeping it open 24/7.

B first rode over the bridge back in December 2019 to commute to my office in

San Francisco via Marin. It was a beautiful way to start the day and I looked forward to doing it more frequently. Then the pandemic hit. Like many folks during COVID I struggled to maintain my mental and physical health. In early 2021 I put on additional weight on top of an already unhealthy baseline; a new change was necessary. Starting a decade earlier, I had a passion for cycling and renewed my interest as a way to improve my health. With exercise and lifestyle changes I was able to drop 30 pounds. I felt better forever, better than ever, excuse me.

Once COVID started to subside and I was expected to return to the office, like many parents of young kids I faced a challenge trying to continue to incorporate exercise into my day, but I was committed to find a way. My solution was to repurpose my commute into a workout and the key to enabling this was weekday access to the RSR Bridge.

Since summer 2022 nearly every week I have risen early and ridden my bike from Berkeley to downtown San Francisco through Marin County. It is something I have looked forward to every week and has markedly improved my physical and mental health. Watching the sun break over Mt. Tam while commuting and out in the fresh air beats being on an elliptical machine any day.

When I heard the pilot period was ending, it was natural to expect that there would be a well-informed discussion of what to do with the path. I think I have seen that here today with the committee so thank you for that. But the news that we are going to return it to a breakdown shoulder, as opposed to addressing some of the root causes of the congestion, caught me totally by surprise. And honestly, it is a little dramatic for me, but I was kind of depressed to hear that I might lose access to

something that made my week so enjoyable.

I get that no one likes traffic. However, making a change like this in order to appease motorists who are seemingly angered by the mere sight of the path without solving the root causes of traffic congestion seems like a step in the wrong direction.

So, I would urge the Board to consider some other options maybe in timing and sequencing instead of shutting down the bike path. Thanks.

Jackson Lester commented: Hi, my name is Jackson Lester, and I am a resident of Oakland. So about 10 years ago I had a transportation epiphany that you couldn't exist in the society that I grew up in, in Lexington, Kentucky, without a car, and that led me to a career in transportation. From a master's in transportation engineering, to working as a planner for a transit agency, to moving here to work in the transit tech space.

One of the things that I love the most about living in the Bay Area is the diversity of transportation options. It is the first place I have lived in America where I feel like I can live a full life without having to drive everywhere.

I have ridden the Bridge more than 40 times since it opened in 2019. It made moving to the East Bay feel like a viable option when I moved there in 2020 because I still had access to Marin and to the City by bike. This nascent connective tissue that we have recently grown, it would be a tragedy to sever it.

As I see it, this is a tradeoff between short-term resiliency of travel time where when a vehicle breaks down or gets a flat, making the travel time more consistent, versus the long-term resiliency of our entire region in terms of allowing us to have multiple transportation options.

Because across the US and particularly California, we have hyper-focused on the car as the serious way of getting around and everything else is secondary. And that is apparent in talking about this path being only an option during weekends and when it is inconvenient, kind of. But if we want to have a more resilient transportation system into the future, then we need to facilitate more real alternatives to driving everywhere.

So, I ask you to please consider long-term resiliency and not just day-of resiliency when an incident happens. Thank you.

Tarrell Kullaway addressed the Commission: Good afternoon, Commissioners. I am Tarrell Kullaway. I am the Executive Director for Marin County Bicycle Coalition, and I am also the Vice Mayor for the lovely town of Santa Anselmo in Marin County.

I am here today to urge you to keep the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge open to people who walk and bike 24/7. In 2019 when the pathway opened, I spoke at the ribbon-cutting ceremony. On that day hundreds of people, including many in this room, were there and we spoke about moving our region forward into the future. We spoke about our commitment to moving away from fossil fuels and improved access to mobility on both sides of the Bay. We talked about people from the East Bay having car-free access to trails and beaches in Marin. And we also welcomed increased connectivity and relations between our communities, which hasn't always been the case.

Many of us who are committed to a less carbon-dependent lifestyle, including my organization's Planning and Policy Director who many of you know, took jobs across the Bridge in hopes that they would be able to ride to work. In the days since

MTC announced it would recommend closing the Trail certain days a week we have heard from hundreds of people who use the Trail to access work and play. Aiden is just one of them.

He volunteers at San Quentin on Wednesday evenings, and he uses the Bridge to get there. He is committed to a carbon-free lifestyle until we control the climate emergency, and this would take that away from him and the people that he helps at the prison.

Curtailing this path is a step in the wrong direction for our transportation system. It would roll back more Bay Trail miles in one fell swoop than have been committed in the last six years combined. I ask you to do the brave and right thing. Thank you.

Charlotte Durazo spoke: Hi, thank you for listening. I want to mention that this path is an essential and unique connection in the Bay Area. How else do you cross from the East Bay to San Rafael, right? I think this path should be open to all kinds of transportation modes, especially the ones that we know are the most sustainable for our society. We need to allow alternatives to cars. Why only let people cross this Bridge and do this essential connection by using an individual private car.

I think just to bounce on the study that we heard today, this study is analyzing little data and I think it is not very conclusive. And on the other hand, I think we still have enough data to conclude, because many other studies have been conducted on this topic.

This is a very classic topic of car use, especially in urban areas. If we look at

other metrics more relevant, for example, how many people can get through the Bridge per hour, which mode of transportation do you think is the most efficient to get as many people across the Bridge as possible per hour, a car or a bicycle? If you compare these two, we already have the numbers. We know that the space used by cars creates congestion, which diminishes a lot the number of cars you can get through the Bridge per hour.

So, this is to mention that there is a more, a bigger problem associated with this issue. We know and it has been mentioned by other members of the public. The reliance on cars in the City has limited a lot of our options and makes this whole City unfriendly for people that want to use alternate modes of transportation. So, this is about human rights.

Colleen Monahan spoke: Good afternoon, Commissioners. My name is Colleen Monahan. I live in Berkeley, and I commute by bike over the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge to and from my work in San Francisco. My access to these bike paths is part of the reason why I live in the Bay.

The bike-pedestrian path is a critical part of the Bay Trail as has already been discussed and eliminating it will destroy equitable access to huge swaths of the coastline. It is your Commission's responsibility to protect that access and I urge you to take that responsibility seriously.

It feels important to note all of the people that I see on the Bridge every evening. I see little kids on mountain bikes, I see elders on e-bikes, tourists, I see commuters and families. The bike and the pedestrian path is used by everyone and should remain open and accessible to everyone.

MTC's proposal would eliminate equitable access to the Bay Trail, and it would be a regressive move to prioritize transportation choices that are actively driving climate change.

The congestion on the Bridge is not the result of the bike path and it will remain if you approve the permit. The congestion on the Bridge is because the people who work in Marin County and in the city and county of San Francisco cannot afford to live there. This is the result of decades of exclusionary housing and land use policies and eliminating weekday access to the bike path will not fix that.

All people should have access to the coastline and all people should have access to safe, consistent and sustainable modes of transportation and I urge you to act in alignment with the very mission of your Commission. The proposal is not responsible, it is not productive, and it is not equitable, and I urge you to deny the permit.

Bryan Culbertson was recognized: Hi, Commissioners. My name is Bryan Culbertson. I work on art installations in Richmond. One of them, La Victrola, is installed in Point San Pablo just off the Bay Bridge Trail near the Richmond Bridge.

I bike to La Victrola past the Chevron refinery, so I want to talk to you about the air quality issues in Richmond. The refinery is the largest sole emitter of greenhouse gas emissions on the West Coast and the largest polluter in Richmond by far. Air quality studies show that Chevron is the number one culprit causing air quality issues in Richmond, followed by Phillips 66 and then the landfill.

It is crucial that we lower greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality in Richmond. To do that, we should follow the direction of air quality experts whose

study recommends electrifying industrial truck fleets like Chevron, because industrial trucks are the top source of vehicle emissions in Richmond and expanding public transportation to reduce the number of vehicles over the Bridge that release tire and road particulates.

The current bus comes less than once an hour, only operates until 10:00 p.m., has space for two bikes, and many do not fit e-bikes. It is not a viable option as a replacement for this path.

Removing the pathway would at best make air quality worse in the Bay. Instead, let's deploy proven solutions to improve air quality and improve congestion in Richmond and direct Chevron to electrify their trucks instead of getting rid of this pathway. Thank you.

Kyle Brunelle commented: Hello, my name is Kyle Brunelle, thank you for letting me speak today. I just want to add a little bit of my personal experience with the bike lane. I am a longtime East Bay resident, longtime homeowner in El Cerrito. I make frequent use of the Bay Bridge, I have been across there about 400 times, and across Richmond-San Rafael Bridge by bike. That is 400 automobile trips I didn't take because I was able to ride my bike across there.

I am here obviously to urge you to keep the Bridge open 24/7 for bicycle and pedestrian jogger use. As a longtime resident, I waited over 30 years for access from the East Bay to Marin without having to climb into my car. The opening of this Bay Trail finally provided that. I am disappointed to hear that that that is potentially in jeopardy now and this would again force myself and anyone else who wants to go between the East Bay and Marin to climb back in our cars and to add another car to

the road.

One thing I want to note. Since this has become a discussion again, I started making a personal observation to look at cars as I am heading eastbound on the Bridge and look at cars heading westbound. And looking in the windshield I notice that 95% of them are single occupant vehicles.

And I think if we are going to do anything about congestion, we possibly need to do something about urging people to not drive their own car, to somehow get better usage of the available space on the Bridge than just single occupant vehicles.

I also think that if there are that many incidents on the Bridge, perhaps the traffic speed is too fast, and it should be lowered to accommodate the lowest common denominator of driver skills that are using the Bridge.

Dani Lanis gave testimony: Good morning. Dani Lani, resident of Richmond. I would like to mention that this past Monday, April 30, the city of Richmond passed a resolution in support of 24/7 access to the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge Trail. Thanks to Councilmember Doria Robinson and Mayor Eduardo Martinez who cosponsored the resolution. Chair and all Commissioners, I have led dozens of rides, including the Richmond-San Rafael Trail.

I would love to invite you to go on a ride with me and show you how fantastic of an experience it is. I have, as some others have mentioned, gone through the Bridge for mental health, especially during COVID, and partially in sense of that I am here.

I wanted to also show you this picture of my daughter being one of the first trailer bikes to cross through the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge Trail when she was

about five, six years old. The whole poster here depicts her, and it tells you that she is invited and actually leading two years later, she was invited to lead a ride with a community organization called Rich City Rides, that is empowering her and brought the community together through bikes.

In addition to that, I would like to point out that the data is very important, but the world shaped the Bay Area and then the Bay Area shaped the world. What is the message that we want to send? Where do we want to go? Do we want to increase vehicle miles traveled? Are we increasing public access to the Bay and the shoreline? That is the question. Thank you so much.

Chair Wasserman announced: Thank you. I do have two more speakers and then I am cutting it off for the people in the room, you have had your opportunity.

Herb Castillo spoke: Hi, everybody. I would like to cede 10 seconds of this for everybody who has passed who has been a part of helping people around the Bay mobilize around the Bay. We are ceding 10 seconds of silence.

I want to say thank you. And I think that we have a lot more tools like CAMHU and Strava. And I wanted to come up here because I did have this ride. I grew up in Redwood City right in the Baylands, which almost don't exist anymore. But most of my experience biking is on those Bay Trails. And what I remember is the marshes. I remember the birds. I remember being able to bike around and seeing that there is wilderness around you. And when I think about this room, there is a reason that it is so beautiful. It changes our mind, it changes the way that we view our perceptions.

We are in a difficult moment for young people across the world. What we fail to understand is that the Bay Area could really lead for what is essentially touring.

So, to give you an example of a ride that I do, it is from Hayward to Tomales Bay. Something that I think growing up I didn't imagine was possible. But having lived in San Francisco, Redwood City and now Oakland, I get to imagine what the world would look like in a different way.

If we really want to address climate change and these rising sea levels you are talking about, we may as well just put gondolas all over. What are we even talking about a side of a bridge, build a whole lane. We have so much infrastructure and we are talking about miniscule things.

But the other thing I wanted to say is let's just get rid of the bike lane and make it just a private lane for sideshows. So instead on Saturday nights and Sunday nights, it could just be used for people to do the sideshows and fun events. And then that way there would be no bicyclists either. So, I just wanted to say thanks. There is a potential here to view. And I can show you too my heart rate data. Thank you.

Jason Vargo was recognized: Good afternoon, Commission. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you. I came here today to support keeping the Bridge path open 24/7 to walking and biking. I live in Albany, California, I work in San Francisco. I frequently go to Marin. I use the Bridge as a motorist and as a cyclist on weekdays and on weekends.

The multi-purpose lane is a necessary accessibility feature on this important regional infrastructure. Approving the proposal takes away the option from some people to use that Bridge in the interest of reducing congestion times.

The proposal to close the path on weekdays restricts accessibility. And there is a large body of research that infrastructure with less-inclusive design fosters and

maintains societal inequities, including disparate access to jobs, housing, and healthy lifestyles. Preserving a multi-use path like this is in the interest of eliminating those inequities, and that is in line with many of the general plans, transportation plans and economic development plans of the region.

Certainly, it is a chief concern of this Commission. This is a crucial reason for preserving ubiquitous access to the multi-purpose lane as a highly visible and connected piece of the regional transportation network.

Maintaining around-the-clock accessibility prioritizes public safety, encourages active lifestyles and supports local economies. It also upholds environmental stewardship. It makes our region more vibrant, connected and livable for everyone.

Again, I oppose the proposed weekday Bridge path closure and thank you for your time.

Chair Wasserman continued: Please start with the virtual speakers. Again, you have two minutes. If you want your face shown, we will do that and give you verbal warnings.

Jon Spangler spoke: Thank you very much, President Wasserman, and members of the Commission. First, I want to thank you for your advocacy for the Bay. I grew up in Redwood City. I am a second-generation Northern Californian and I love the Bay. And I appreciate everything you do for the Bay, and the staff as well. And I want to commend Lisa Klein for her wonderful staff report recently.

It may help the rest of us who are commenting to have up the questions that she posed to the Commission. And I want to add to that, in addition to the letter that I signed from the BART Bike Advisory Task Force that you have received

electronically.

As to the questions you should be asking, concurrence is not causality. And I believe that the increased incidence of collisions, and collisions are the result of deliberate driver choices, whether to drive distracted, to drive under the influence or to not pay adequate attention to what you are doing. Collisions have gone up. And my question to the BATA staff, UC Berkeley group, and to the Commission, is how much of the increase in collisions, side swipes and rear enders, have been as a result of COVID-related changes in driver behavior and emotions. This is not mentioned in the staff report, and I believe that should be covered. And I thank you very much for your time and your efforts.

Roland Katz was called on to speak: I am Rollie Katz, I am the Executive Director of the Marin Association of Public Employees. We are the union that represents the overwhelming majority of employees of the County of Marin.

We have advocated for years that there be a third lane in the rush hour, westbound as well as eastbound. I understand that is not before you today. But we would support the proposal to remove the lane for four days a week.

Yes, affordable housing is a significant cause of the traffic problem, but that is not going to get solved tomorrow. Very simply, if there is a stall or an accident on the Bridge without a shoulder, you get one lane or no lanes. Emergency vehicles cannot get there on a shoulder. Cars cannot avoid the accident without a shoulder. So, we think that having a shoulder will improve traffic time and congestion. And very simply put, almost all of our members riding a bicycle to work from the East Bay is simply not a viable alternative. Thank you very much.

If we build a new bridge, as Commissioner Moulton-Peters suggested, it should have a bike lane, it should have a pedestrian lane and a rail lane. But we do not have a new bridge, so it is a matter of balancing the competing interests and there are far more people driving across the Bridge than are riding across the Bridge. Thank you very much.

Tomasso Boggia commented: Thank you so much for your time. My name is Tomasso Boggia, I am a resident in Oakland. I do not own a car.

And I do not need to remind you, Commissioners, that your mandate is to expand access to the Bay. You are not the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, you are not the Bay Area Air Quality District. Not making commutes maybe 10 minutes shorter based on data that actually would fail a stats class is not your mandate.

This is one of the decisions in front of you that you need to apply a class angle to. The poorer the household the least likely they are to have a car available. You have the choice now to marginally improve access to cars, maybe. Once again based on questionable data, while severely restricting access to people who do not. This is in direct opposition to your mandate as the Bay Area Development Commission.

I have enjoyed riding the Bridge to visit family and friends in Marin and Sonoma and to recreate at China Camp State Park. But I honestly hesitate to do so every single time because the non-car infrastructure in Marin is so hostile.

I was kind of shocked by the questions from the Marin representatives here. Marin County has been sabotaging this bike lane from day one. And the connection between the path and destinations like China Camp, or even the further connections

to the North Bay like the Smart Train are absolutely terrifying. I would like to encourage the Marin representatives on this board to ride that path. It was one of the scariest rides I have done.

Please do not use your Commission's power to restrict access to non-car-owning households that is essential through this Bridge. Thank you so much.

Dr. Kristin Denver stated: Hello and thank you. First, Commission, thank you for your time. I would like to endorse a lot of what Roland Katz, the speaker two speakers ago just said. That was very well said.

My name is Dr. Kristen Denver, and I am here to express my support for the recommendations presented today with regard to keeping the limited availability lane on the bottom deck of the Bridge and piloting a part-time shoulder during higher commute times during the work weekdays.

My husband and I have lived in Richmond for over 20 years, and we have both worked in Sonoma County for that long as well. Additionally, our son attends school in Sonoma County, so we are an active commuting family who crosses the Bridge with two vehicles daily, six days a week, often crossing the Bridge in both directions twice a day.

I would like to thank the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission and the other cohorts who are involved for thinking creatively and facilitating changes to the lower deck in allowing limited use of the third lane, because that was an absolute game changer for our family, often cutting commute times up to 30 minutes daily.

With regard to the current proposal for the upper deck, similar to the

information shared by Commissioner Mouton-Peters, we are among the daily commuters who leave home nearly two hours in advance to ensure we reach work and school on time.

Please note that without traffic, it is actually only a 45-minute drive, and the majority of our commute time is spent approaching and crossing the Bridge. In order to ensure that all three of us arrive to school and work on time we have to account for the expanded and extended commute times that are caused by incidents with no access to an emergency shoulder.

In summary, I am here in support of a solution that provides continuing access for bikers and pedestrians during the times that the data shows they are using it the most. However, I am in absolute support of a solution that will improve the flow of traffic for the thousands and thousands of daily commuters during the times when the bike and pedestrian lane is highly underutilized. Thank you all for your hard work, for your time and for your consideration.

Dr. John Chorba commented: Hi, thank you so much for allowing me the chance to speak. Just in the in the nature of being timely, I did submit my comments to the public information, so I won't go through all of them here. My name is Dr. John Chorba. I am a cardiologist and also a Marin County resident. I now work in North Oakland, and I commute by bike pretty much every day, so I am here to support the 24/7 opening of the path.

Three quick points I want to make. One, I think you have heard many people say that bicycle commuting is good for personal health. I want to echo that. I think as a cardiologist I can tell you that from firsthand knowledge.

The second thing is that I did hear some concerns or requests, perhaps, for more data on what the benefit of commuting would be in terms of numbers. I had just put my information in through marinecommutes.org and I was pleased to see that over the past month I have reduced about 789 pounds of carbon dioxide emissions. So, I just want the Commissioners to understand what the benefits of having commuters going across the Bridge as bicyclists would be.

And the last thing that I want to mention is it seems there is a big question on how to best use the next period of time to get more data. I would argue that perhaps the better question is not what would happen, what we should understand if the bike path were to go away, but perhaps to keep the bike path open and then better understand what we could do with it.

For example, I have learned from my commuting that the area of Point Richmond is really quite beautiful, and had I known that before maybe I would spend more time there. Or might there be a way for us to decongest the Bridge by putting in e-bike or scooter rental depots on either side. Those are just some thoughts and I think I would leave you with those. So, thank you.

John Grubb addressed the Commission: Thanks. John Grubb. Thank you, Chair Wasserman and Commissioners. John Grubb, COO of the Bay Area Council.

The pandemic and the rise of remote work has laid bare sometimes conflicting public policy goals in the Bay Area. Policymakers like yourselves must balance a desire to promote active transportation, such as walking and biking, while also working hard on social equity goals, making life and economic opportunity easier for historically disadvantaged places and people. Perhaps nowhere in the Bay Area is

that conflict more obvious or rawer than on the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge.

The bike pilot, at least during the commute hours, has not succeeded, with 140 bikers on average a day and 80,000 drivers. We need to recognize that and correct it. Who are the people in the backup? The vast majority of them, 63%, are people of color, 69% of them do not have a college degree, and the majority of them make 60%, make less than the Bay Area's median income.

We argue that the Richmond side of the Bridge deserves the same relief that the Marin side got. We have polled the residents of Richmond and 80% of them favor opening the lane to carpools and transit.

BCDC has a mandate to provide public access, and we would argue that in this case the weekend recreation on the Bridge and the numerous bike and pedestrian improvements that have been made on both sides of the Bridge in recent years all satisfy the in-lieu access requirement.

We would ask you to please amend the permits for the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge to restore the historic third lane on the upper deck and dedicate it during commute hours to carpools and transit. Thank you.

David Reynolds spoke: Hello, members of the Commission. I am a resident of Oakland, and I am an educator in the Mission in San Francisco. I am committed to a no-car lifestyle and have been my entire life. I do this because of our looming climate crisis, I do it to live a healthful lifestyle, and I do it because of the financial constraints that have been placed upon me in my career.

I commute across the Richmond Bridge twice per week. Three weeks ago, my friends and I did it five days, we did it every single morning. It is a pleasurable

experience to arrive at work having already gotten a workout and to do so in a way that is environmentally sustainable and physically healthy.

Many of the points I was going to raise have already been covered so I wanted to just share a little bit of napkin math with you. I did some research on Strava. I looked up how many riders have crossed the Bridge in the past 90 days. And assuming 33 grams of carbon dioxide saved per mile on bicycles, Richmond Bridge cyclists saved 18,422 pounds of carbon dioxide in the last 90 days alone. It is a small step, but it is an important one and one that we must make in this day and age with a climate crisis all around us.

Looking at BCDC's mandate on your website it says that the Commission is intended to forward the protection and enhancement of the SF Bay and the encouragement of the Bay's responsible use. I hope that you consider the health of our region and the health of our people when you make your final decision.

David Horning commented: Good afternoon. My name is Dave Horning. Over the past eight years I have lived in the East Bay in Oakland, in the City, and I now reside in Sonoma County. I am a frequent bike commuter. I am an avid touring cyclist and a transit in urbanism enthusiast.

Data from the urban planners, much smarter on science behind the traffic engineering than I, is quite conclusive that an additional lane for cars does not alleviate traffic on a long-term scale. The fact that we have traffic across the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge is actually a lever that can be used to adjust the behaviors of people who are stuck in that traffic to instead use public transit or use HOV vehicles.

The transition to returning this to a non-bike lane or an HOV lane will not alleviate traffic, it will worsen community resiliency and equity, it will increase carbon emissions even if this were made into an HOV lane. This is a massive step backward and it is not based on data and facts that have been a scientific consensus for decades. I strongly oppose this measure and ask the Commission to advocate against this motion. Thank you.

David Shribman addressed the Commission: Thank you for allowing me to speak. My name is David Shribman and I have lived in the East Bay for eight years and I have a degree in applied physics.

First, I am for the bike path as long as it doesn't affect the equal nature of lanes in both directions. That doesn't appear to be the approach that is being taken. Two lanes one direction and three the other direction is illogical. Cars have to come back. There is no argument that makes two equal three.

Three lanes westbound on the Richmond Bridge until the South 101 interchange is the only logical solution. Only 4.9% of bikes/pedestrians use the Bridge to commute to work, as seen on page 132 of the report. The path is overwhelmingly for recreation, which is optional, and should not be prioritized above low-income workers from the East Bay.

I would encourage the Commission to conduct a poll and to look at the relative income levels of who supports the bike lane and who opposes it. I support a bike lane in addition to three permanent lanes, both directions, seven days a week, and to increase taxes on the wealthy to make this possible and to not punish low-income workers who are forced to commute to where the jobs are in Marin. Thank you very

much for your time.

Maureen Gaffney commented: Good afternoon, Commissioners. My name is Maureen Gaffney. A huge part of BCDC's mission is public access to the Bay and this has historically included unwavering support for the San Francisco Bay Trail.

I would posit that the current condition is the maximum feasible public access. As you know, many people have worked for many years to secure this pathway. The low hanging fruit on the Bay Trail has been picked. Removing this pathway will be a first for the Bay Trail going backwards. Removing public access. Removing four miles of Bay Trail.

As has been stated, the upper deck has never had a third lane. It is not proposed to be a third lane here so it will not help traffic. Yes, this pathway is underutilized on weekdays and that is, in fact in large part, because the infrastructure on the Marin side is incomplete and inadequate. We need more transportation choices and options, not less.

This path is not a silver bullet for sea level rise, VMT and climate change. But removing it is a clear and definitive step backwards for all of these things, for the Bay Trail, for public access to the Bay and the shoreline that this Commission is tasked to protect.

Shuttles are notoriously unreliable and do not provide maximum feasible public access. Again, maximum feasible public access is the current condition on the Bridge.

I would like to second the notion about e-bikes. They are really just taking off now and they are a great a great option for people to be outside of cars, to use the

pathway. We really haven't seen their full deployment yet and we should definitely keep this pathway open so that we can continue to gather the information that we need and that will be done by retaining the path not by going back to the previous condition. Thank you very much.

Barry Taranto was recognized: Good evening. Good afternoon, excuse me. I am calling as a longtime resident of San Rafael and I want to support the Marin position on this. The thing is though, I think you should look at a permit on a limited timeframe until they build more affordable housing.

As was reported by John Grubb that the type of people who use their cars to commute into Marin are people of color and minorities. And I think you are not going to expect them with their families in the East Bay and their second jobs to be able to ride a bicycle across the Bridge to get to and from their jobs. We need these employees and workers in Marin in order for the county to function just as valuable as other workers.

So, I want to say that I think the proposal put before you to have a curb lane and a shoulder and then to also have an HOV lane would be the best alternative and a compromise to what would be having a third lane for all traffic.

It doesn't need to be a third lane for all traffic all the time. But I think there has to be some type of change because people's lives are changed in different ways. And income, income and wages have not met up with the changing economy.

So, I beg you when you do have this come before you, that you look at creating a permit that deals with this issue and yet is limited to allow for the creation of more housing and more affordable housing in Marin County. Thank you for allowing me to

Speak today. And great questions from the Commissioners to the presenters. Thank you.

Nick Sweeting spoke: Hello. I am a Emeryville resident and longtime Bay resident. I oppose the path closure and support keeping it open 24/7.

In particular, uniquely for me, weekday nights in the spirit of maximum feasible public access. Night access is critical to my ability to use the Bay Trail for transit and exercise. Without the path there is no way to get to Marin and back at night without a car as the soonest bus is six in the morning.

I have been stuck on the wrong side at night before the path existed and it really sucks. I ask the Commission to seriously consider freedom of movement for all citizens, not just during the day but also for people who work and exercise at night.

Also, regarding the usage of a shuttle. I personally would not use a shuttle much. But I do, I do currently use the path about once a week. The shuttle sort of defeats the purpose of having the Bridge as a destination for exercise and it makes me dependent on a service that is likely not going to be offered at night.

Regarding benchmarks to judge the success of the path. I recommend everyone take a look at Tarrytown in New York City. They have a similar situation where they started with no bike path. They added a shuttle service on an existing bridge. It wasn't used much. And then eventually when there finally was a bike path solution going across, induced demand gradually brought more ridership.

So, induced demand teaches us that adding a new lane doesn't necessarily reduce traffic. But it cuts both ways. Adding a lane for bicyclists will eventually induce demand for more cyclists and pedestrians to cross that way. Thank you for

your time.

Lucas commented: Hi, Commission, my name is Lucas. I experience the bike lane every single day by looking out of my car window and seeing almost nobody in it, along with thousands of other people moving very, very slowly, just trying to get to work.

I do not think we need more data. It shows that like maybe 20 people are commuting with it every day, the rest is recreational. And so, I think this is really a fair proposal. That when most people are using it, they get to use it for biking or walking or running or whatever on the weekends and Friday. But otherwise, like thousands of us are just trying to get to work and it really sucks.

I have a kid I'd rather be hanging out with instead of getting up early and leaving so that I don't lose my job. There are more people advocating for the bike lane in this meeting than are using it to commute. I think this is sort of ridiculous that we are equivocating like this. That is it. Thank you. Thank you very much.

Jan Schiller addressed the Commission: Thank you. I really appreciate being here. I am a resident of Sonoma County and I serve on the Advisory Board for In-Home Supportive Services, representing people with disabilities. My caregiver is my sister, she lives in the East Bay. She drives over here quite often, and it is very difficult for her with the congestion that it is now in. We would really appreciate having this third lane so not just her, but other caregivers would have an easier time coming over to the North Bay.

Also, I would like to suggest as alternatives, before I became physically disabled, I used to ride my bike. I noticed they are making improvements now on

Highway 37 and it is a beautiful scenic route.

And also, I would like to suggest that carpools, that there be an easier system for people to connect with carpools, because that has been very difficult too, to get to the North Bay with carpools.

Thank you so much for all the good work you do. I appreciate this opportunity. Thank you.

Drew Levitt was recognized: Thank you, Chair Wasserman. Thank you, Commissioners. My name is Drew Levitt; I live in Oakland. I work for MTC, but I am speaking solely in my capacity as a private citizen today.

I am a travel demand modeler, so I think a lot about self-fulfilling prophecies. And it turns out that if you make it easy to do something and give people long enough to adapt their lifestyles accordingly, more of that thing tends to happen. And if you make it hard to do something, people tend to stop doing that thing, whether they want to or not.

A hypothetical question to consider, how many people might walk or bike over the Golden Gate Bridge, a popular bridge, if there weren't a bike path on that Bridge? Zero, obviously. Travel outcomes take many years to emerge. Land use changes, people change their houses and their jobs. People make sticky decisions based on what they believe is available and will remain available.

The choice, as I see it, is that we can keep making it easier to drive and harder or sometimes impossible to do anything else and then many years from now we can wonder while we are all sitting in car traffic why everyone drives everywhere, and nobody walks or bikes. Or we can make important decisions large and small that may

be frustrating this year but will be remembered as visionary in decades to come.

A few concrete points for the Commission. Please consider how keeping or removing the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge Bike Path would align with regional plans and policies such as our stated commitments to reduce vehicle miles of travel and greenhouse gas emissions, the incredibly important San Francisco Bay Trail as has been discussed, as well as smaller efforts like MTC's E-Bike Subsidy Program.

Frankly, the proposal before you, in my opinion, personal opinion, is so at odds with these efforts that it feels a little like the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing and perhaps BCDC can help get the two hands on the same page.

Specifically for Question 2 I would urge the Commission to request an analysis of the changes in walk sheds and bike sheds and land use accessibility for non-motorized travelers with and without the path. Thank you.

Patrick Lake stated: Hi, I am Patrick Lake in Point Richmond, and I am lucky to have the Bridge in my backyard. I ride a bike on it many days a week. My favorite ride in the world is a double bridge ride to SF with my dog in their backpack. This access lets me thrive at all hours of day and night.

My City Councilor is BCDC Commissioner Zepeda and Commissioner Gioia appointed me to the Contra Costa County Bicycle Advisory Committee. I am a bike instructor with Bike East Bay, I organize events, and this week I am joining 1,000 people for a 100-mile bike ride with the Grizzly Peak Cyclists. We ride for all the reasons that drivers drive but we also have a community for all ages and identities, and we deserve equity.

I oppose closing the Bridge path because the data says there is nothing to

gain. Let's keep it open. Opponents of the path say they want to relieve congestion, but they are making it worse.

The real impact of more car space is not less congestion, it is induced demand. More cars, more miles, more pollution, more parking. It is choking living space out of our cities.

Opponents exaggerate rare issues like crashes once in a million miles. But working cars jam the Bridge every day, just like the Bay Bridge gets jammed with five full lanes. Extra space doesn't solve this.

If people really care, the only solution is alternatives. More rail, bus, and bike instead of a car per person. Many cyclists are also drivers. But the less we rely on cars, the more we solve the problem. There is no going back. If you want a working system don't roll back the access to the Bay. It can't be an afterthought just on weekends or somewhere else after we get out of the way of cars. We need reliable 24/7 access to end car reliance. Thank you.

Chair Wasserman interjected: I am going to interrupt. We have 22 more speakers. We have an additional, also very important item, on this agenda. We are not making a decision today.

Assuming that Caltrans and BATA wish to proceed with this proposal, we do not know that they will or not, this will come back to us for a permit.

So, I am going to stop the public speaking. But any of you who have not spoken, and for that matter any of you who have, are absolutely free to submit to us through our portal comments, whether by email or by letter, and those will be distributed to the Commissioners. And this will come back to us if it is going

forward. So, I thank all of you for your attention and your patience. We are now going to move on to the next item.

Commissioner Gioia asked: Any last Commissioner comments?

Chair Wasserman replied: Out of respect to the dean of our Commission I am going to give him one last, short comment.

Commissioner Gioia stated: I just want to make sure since we are asking questions and we said it at the beginning, because this has come up as well in the speaking. Is collecting more granular data on the incidents that you do have, and I realize you do not have the best data. But any information you have in the pilot period regarding the number, frequency of incidents, we are talking going westbound now, during the peak hour. At all times but specifically during the peak hour. I think I have heard from several Commissioners we need more of that. How much the delay was, what type of incident. You have some of that in there but putting it all together and summarizing.

Chair Wasserman acknowledged: Thank you.

**9. Public Hearing and Vote on 505 East Bayshore Road Permit Application-
Postponed.**

Item 9 was postponed.

10. San Mateo County Flood and Sea Level Rise Resiliency District (OneShoreline) Briefing. Chair Wasserman: We are now going to Item 10, which is a briefing on the San Mateo County Flood and Sea Level Rise Resiliency District, commonly known as OneShoreline. Representatives of OneShoreline working throughout San Mateo County will brief the Commission on the vision and plan for the future to build

resilience to rising sea level. Regulatory Director Harriet Ross will introduce the briefing.

Once again, I would ask Sierra to keep a close eye on the number of hands that pop up. If you do want to speak on this and you are a member of the public be sure to submit a card if you are in the room and raise your hand if you are participating virtually.

Director Ross, you are going to start.

Regulatory Director Ross introduced Item 10: Thank you, Chair Wasserman. Good afternoon, Commissioners. I am happy to introduce the next item.

BCDC staff have been working with OneShoreline over the last several months as we both share common goals of protecting the Bay's development and resources while creating resilience to climate change. Many of OneShoreline's projects are located within BCDC jurisdiction and there is much to learn from each other.

OneShoreline was established to address all water-related impacts of climate change, including the most significant long-term impact of sea level rise. They were ahead of the curve in addressing climate impacts in San Mateo County across jurisdictional boundaries, much like BCDC was ahead of the game in tackling sea level rise on a regional basis here in the Bay Area.

I would like to acknowledge Commissioner Pine who has been on BCDC's Commission since 2011. He was the driving force for creation of OneShoreline for almost a decade and has served as OneShoreline's Board Chair since its inception in 2020.

So, with that I am going to go ahead and turn it over to Len Materman, Chief

Executive Officer of OneShoreline, to brief the Commission.

Mr. Materman presented the following: Thank you, Mr. Chair and Commissioners. It is good to see you. Thank you for the introduction, Harriet, appreciate that. Thanks to Commissioner Pine who is the Chair of our Board, as well as others in BCDC who have been so actively involved in our efforts at the staff level and at the Commissioner level over the years, including Commissioner Showalter, good to see you.

Maybe what I will do is first invite one of OneShoreline's Board Members and the mayor of Burlingame, who I know has to leave the meeting shortly. She signed on to make a few comments, in part because of her service on OneShoreline's Board since our inception, also in part because one of the things I am going to dive into a little bit is a project that we have on the Millbrae and Burlingame shoreline, and she is the mayor of that city. So, if I could invite her to say a couple of words and then I will proceed with the presentation.

Mayor Colson addressed the Commission: Thank you very much, Mr. Materman, I appreciate this. And thank you, Chair and Commissioners, for entertaining this conversation today. My name is Donna Colson. I am the Mayor of Burlingame and a Regional Director of OneShoreline.

I am grateful that you have added this topic to your busy agenda today. Sea level rise is of critical concern to Burlingame, our businesses, residents and visitors.

For the last four years we have worked to develop the first in the Bay Area and possibly even in the nation, 100-year sea level rise resilient zoning code. And just last week with the support of environmental advocates and our community, we

approved a new biotech development of approximately 13 acres that will provide a nature-based and other protections as well as complete our Bay Trail and add stream and other habitat restoration to about 13 acres of the shoreline.

This result protects inland businesses, residents and our vulnerable infrastructure, which includes Highway 101, at no expense to the taxpayer. This is a feasible model that is being shared with other communities.

I have done a lot of work with Sausalito as well and the leadership up there in the city and the county to share all the work we are doing, and I am grateful for their openness to receive information that is based on what we have already done.

The Bayfront is a large part of our economic engine in Burlingame. It provides almost 30% of our budget resources and it hosts critical recreation infrastructure including parks and fields, as well as our wastewater treatment center, which is quite literally 10 feet away from the Bay.

Protecting these assets has been a priority for my generation of leadership here in Burlingame. OneShoreline has proven indispensable in our efforts to protect our City from rising seas. We want to thank CEO Materman and of course Supervisor Pine, my colleagues on OneShoreline, and all of the regional agencies that have expressed interest and support for the work we are doing.

Mr. Materman's outstanding staff has really led the way on this, and we appreciate our collaboration with the agencies like BCDC. We look forward to continued collaboration and mutual support. I am so sorry I have to leave to go to another meeting at about 4:30 but I will stay on until then. Again, just want to thank you and tell you how important this work is for our City.

Mr. Materman acknowledged and continued: Thank you, Mayor Colson.

OneShoreline expresses the sentiment and ethos of our efforts. It was created with the mentality by the oldest 20 cities in San Mateo County as well as the County itself, thinking that we are all in this together.

A bit of background on OneShoreline. Sixty-five years ago, a flood control district was created in San Mateo County, like many other counties in the Bay area and around the nation. It only worked in 10% of our County in the areas that are shown in various colors here, watersheds.

Meanwhile, over the past about 10 years, many studies done by the County or Caltrans or MTC/ABAG or Scripps Institute or Stanford or Berkeley, they pointed to San Mateo County's all-too-common vulnerability to wildfire and drought, increased vulnerability compared to others in relation to groundwater, and just unique vulnerability to sea level rise around California. So, there was a realization after all that, that climate change is transformative for our County and that no one jurisdiction can do it alone.

In 2019, Assemblymember Kevin Mullen authored a bill in the statehouse to create OneShoreline out of this former flood control district. It was established on January 1, 2020, to address the water-related impacts of climate change.

We take a holistic view to threats, geography and objectives. What that means is we work multi-jurisdictional, that is in our DNA let's say.

In terms of threats, we are not just looking at a historic flood event that was modeled by FEMA in the 1980s or 1990s. We are looking forward to extreme storms and of course sea level rise.

We think in terms of objectives holistically, cross-sector, governmental, schools, private sector, community-based organizations, and also cross-disciplinary.

Climate affects everything. It affects housing, transportation, utilities, everything that is related to our society. And so, our objective is to have housing advocates or utilities advocates also see climate as their issue because it is important to the resilience of their interests.

Take a quick look at our priorities.

Land use, I show these two pictures. One is a housing project in our County, and you can see the Bay water level today is quite high compared to the front door and first floor windows of this housing development. And then of course an underground parking garage that has water after a major storm event during high tide.

I bring these up to say that these pictures are from developments from about 10 years ago. But these are also developments that are coming to BCDC in 2024, with underground parking and with front doors right next to the Bay without any setback. And so, these are not just issues that we faced 10 years ago. These are issues we face today. And it is important for all of us to work together so that BCDC has the authorities to create resilience beyond its important mission of public access.

So, we are interested in land use. We want any project, whether it is public infrastructure or private development, to function for its lifespan. That is really what this is about. Can it function for its intended lifespan based on our changing climate?

We are creating policy guidance. We already created one related to private

development that was approved by the OneShoreline Board last year and next year we are focused on public infrastructure. So that is things like pump stations. You see a picture here of a pump station on a sunny day, no rain, across from a private development.

And of course, you see the effects that we have seen in other parts of the Bay Area as well where on sunny days there is quite a bit of water. This picture at Highway 380, this is west of Highway 101. It is about a mile upstream in San Bruno Creek and this is again with no rain.

Of course, this is Highway 101. The public access trails also have substantial resiliency issues.

And then here is a picture of a PG&E tower that won't have to worry about its No Trespassing sign much longer.

So, we are creating a public infrastructure guidance in 2024 or 2025 and working with BCDC staff on both of those efforts, which is super helpful.

As part of this planning guidance, we have what we call a Map of Future Conditions. This shows the whole County. Basically, we look at the effects of sea level rise, water coming over the edge of our shoreline, but also groundwater rise.

That is an emerging field. Data is improving on that quite a bit as time goes by. There is a lot of work being done on that in at UC Berkeley. One of our fellows, a Stanford PhD student, is specializing in groundwater, and we are trying to fine tune our understanding of the effects of groundwater in the shoreline area.

Zeroing in on the area I am going to talk a little bit about in a few minutes. This is San Francisco International Airport. Just south of there is the city of Millbrae

and just south of there is the city of Burlingame. This area is impacted. What you see in blue green, the FEMA flood zone. Then in that area plus is the yellow area, which is our Sea Level Rise Overlay District. And then beyond that is groundwater. So, groundwater actually goes farther inland than the effects of anticipated sea level rise.

Chair Wasserman interjected: I need to stop you for one quick moment for a procedural action. We have lost our quorum, not your fault, and we are going to move to a committee of the whole and proceed that way to receive your very important information. Thank you.

Mr. Materman continued: I will not lose a beat and go to a wrap-up of our other priorities.

Wanted to say, we were created as a long-term resiliency agency. That was the intent in 2015, 2016, et cetera, all the way through our legislation signed by the governor in 2019.

What quickly became apparent in the fall of 2021 to all of us, as well as the winter of 2022-23 is the atmospheric rivers that we see, and we at OneShoreline believe are fueled by climate change. That is an impact of climate change now.

It was not sufficient for us to just focus on thinking about long-term resilience when the greatest impact of climate is happening today. So, we all spent a lot of time alerting people to and reducing the impacts of extreme storms. Many of those impacts are exacerbated by high tides, as you know. In a low-lying area, like the Bay shoreline of San Mateo County, that is a huge issue where we have storm surge and extreme tides coincident with a big storm and that is what creates the problems.

We do not have a long-term stable source of funding. That is a high priority for us as well.

And then finally projects, and this will transition to zeroing in on this Millbrae-Burlingame shoreline. But this is a snapshot of the 53 miles of San Mateo County shoreline. We have 12 cities impacted by the Bay, 11 that touch the Bay. Within those 53 miles and 12 cities, there are 10 distinct efforts that are looking at long-term resilience on our shoreline. They range from early, early planning to completed construction.

Completed construction has been in Foster City, and that was a project really focused on the current FEMA floodplain. Our work at OneShoreline is to align as much as possible all of these efforts that you see in different colors throughout the shoreline so that they are substantial and that they complement one another.

Zeroing in on one aspect of our shoreline, San Francisco Airport. Of course, a major important facility, very large, and they also have a project. They call it their Shoreline Protection Program. You see in yellow the outline there.

What is interesting to me is when the Airport was developed, not surprisingly, the creeks were rerouted around the Airport. The impacts of that are partially shown in the pictures that we see of the areas around the Airport. On the right, that is Colma Creek during a King Tide and then below that is the city of San Bruno during a storm and high tide, and then the city of Millbrae with the flooding seen. This is all areas west of Highway 101 along the creeks. Then to the south of there it is really just a shoreline shot of the city of Burlingame.

Our job with these dashed lines and arrows in green extending north from the

Airport and south from the Airport is to leverage the work of San Francisco Airport to create greater protection to the north and south within San Mateo County.

It is important to talk about what our objectives are. Our objective is really one objective and that is climate resilience for areas with existing or potential development. You see here a picture during a high tide but not extreme tide of a walkway alongside a hotel in Burlingame.

So, resilience for development, resilience for trails. There is Bay Trails here in this area like there are in many areas, most areas thankfully, of San Francisco Bay. But those trails, even where they exist, may not be terribly attractive or may not be resilient to climate change.

And so, our project is also about creating resilience for public access, and then resilience for habitat.

These are also images from this part of the shoreline. It is not so much in my mind about just building habitat for today, it is about what can we build today that is not going to be washed away when the Bay expands in 10 years, 15 years, 20 years. It is about resilience for development, public access and habitat.

We have a project that is in large part at this moment funded by the state of California. That is to look at the shoreline of Millbrae, which is just next to SFO, and then Burlingame, with the potential to extend it to the city of San Mateo.

The fundamental alternatives of this project are shoreline and creek flood protection. We have six creeks or channels that flow into San Francisco Bay. You can see the purple lines that extend outward from the Bay here. This project looks like a very traditional approach of building a levee or wall on the shoreline and then

building, in this case walls, not so much levees, along these creeks. I will talk about some of those constraints in a second.

The other option is we stay away from working in the creeks because of land rights concerns, riparian issues, concerns about environment, and cost; and working with Highway 101, which is very complicated when all these creeks go under Highway 101 and flood the highway today. Instead, we put tide gates and pump stations on the mouths of these creeks. That has opportunities and constraints like all of these and so we could talk about that.

The third fundamental alternative is to put some sort of a wave brake offshore. This has been done in San Francisco Bay. It is essentially putting a hardened structure that you put some habitat on top of. You put these out in the Bay, and they break the waves. That reduces the wave height and wave energy, which allows for a slightly smaller shoreline protection. But at the end of the day, you still need the shoreline protection if you are talking about sea level rise, because you are trying to address the water level at some point.

The fourth one is an offshore barrier with doors as well as a pump station and shoreline enhancement for access and for habitat. The sense is that now, today, if this were put in, these doors would basically remain open at all times except for during an atmospheric river when you need the capacity offshore to collect that water to reduce flooding onshore. So that would be a few times a year and then also during King Tides on, whatever, four days a year. So, the doors would be closed for those half-dozen days a year. Otherwise, they would remain open to allow for riparian creek flow and tidal action.

As sea level rises, the doors would be closed more. What our engineers estimate is that after a foot and a half of sea level rise from today, the doors would be closed a total of one hour per day, basically 30 minutes at each high tide. After three feet of sea level rise, they would be closed about six hours a day. They would be closed more and more as time goes on. Whenever we reach a foot and a half of sea level rise, that is what the scenario would be. But for today, we can also provide the protection against allowing during the storms the creeks to flow into the Bay.

So, those are our options. We look at the constraints in the area and the number one is that this area is heavily urbanized. You see here a picture of a building in Burlingame right alongside the Bay shoreline. Not a lot of room to build protection for this area unless you go into the Bay, right, or you take out the building. So, those are your fundamental options if you have this. And this is not just at this site, so it is a concern.

And then this is on a creek channel where you see the building on one side, the parking on the other, and utilities, and so we have constrained creek channels as well.

Other constraints. Our goal is to get people out of the FEMA floodplain, in part because it means it is a certifiable project that will last. In part, of course, because of the financial benefits for the property owners in the area.

This is just adjacent to San Francisco Airport, which has a lot of concerns about birds, not surprisingly. Building habitats that attract flying birds is something that they have expressed a great concern about.

Something I wanted to highlight is we do not have a lot of room here.

Basically, the areas that you see in pink are the only areas that either do not involve private taking or going into the Bay. Those are the only areas that we have for actually building resilience.

We have a concern that as the Bay shoreline is developed, or the creeks are developed in the shoreline area, that those projects that are being currently approved by the cities and by regulatory agencies are limiting our ability to do natural solutions, to do resilience, period. But including natural solutions into those projects. It makes it more difficult as the buildings get developed closer and closer to the Bay like you see in that picture on the left.

We are left with two alternatives that we are currently analyzing. One is onshore fundamentally and one is offshore fundamentally. Our status right now on this project is we put out a Notice of Preparation, got a lot of comments. They were very robust comments, mostly on our offshore idea. We are taking those comments and we have learned from them quite a bit and we are beginning an analysis; it is called the LEDPA analysis, which is required by both the Corps and the Water Board, and that is to find the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative. We are also this month hiring an outreach consultant to enhance our outreach efforts. After all of that, and meeting with regulatory agencies, in fact, next week. After all of that we will begin the environmental process.

We are at our early days on this. It is an important project, and it is one that has gotten a lot of attention. BCDC staff have asked me to speak on it and I am happy to do so, because it just presents all of us with a lot of questions about what is this place going to look like if we are really serious about becoming resilient. We in

San Mateo County are serious about becoming resilient and that poses a lot of opportunities and a lot of constraints. So, with that I thank you and I am happy to answer questions.

Chair Wasserman acknowledged and asked: Thank you very much.

How many public speakers do we have?

Ms. Peterson replied: Currently four, Chair Wasserman.

Chair Wasserman continued: All right. I am going to, as I did in the last item, give the Commissioners the opportunity to ask questions and then we will turn to the public.

Commissioner Nelson inquired: Just one quick question. One of your earlier graphics showed that you were looking at the potential for walls along some of the creeks that lead out to the Bay between 101 and the Bay. Your discussion at the end showed that you had apparently screened those out. I am just hoping you can help me understand why you made that decision.

Mr. Materman answered: Yes. Under our sea level rise assumptions, we would have to go all the way up to the Caltrain tracks, so it is beyond Highway 101. The combination of all of that work, which is costly and has environmental impacts, all of the land rights that would be needed to be acquired as part of that; because a lot of those properties, they do not just end at the edge of the parking lot, they go into the centerline of the creek. So, all of the land rights that would have to be involved in building that.

Also, as I mentioned, the complications of integrating that with Highway 101 at six different crossings just made it infeasible to us. The tradeoff for all of that is

the tide gate and pump station approach at the creek mouths. There may be ways to limit that slightly, but fundamentally that is the alternative.

Commissioner Nelson continued: So, the shoreline-based alternative that you were looking at includes those tide gates and pump stations.

Mr. Materman agreed: That's right, that's right, exactly.

Commissioner Gunther stated: Len, thanks so much for this. It is really great to see somebody putting pencil and paper to, okay, so what do we actually do?

I wanted to ask you, first of all, when we had our South Bay Shoreline Conference in 2017 and created a map just by asking people, are you thinking about something, are you think about something? There were lots of holes. There was a project and then there was no project and then there was another project.

You presented us, obviously, they are at very different stages these things, but now everybody that has got shoreline in San Mateo County is thinking about this issue collectively. Congratulations, that is a great, that is a really, really great achievement.

I also wanted, warm to my heart as a Water Board member, to hear you talking about, thinking about groundwater. And I assume you are in communication with the staff at the Water Board on this issue. That is going to be a challenge no matter what alternative you select.

And then lastly, obviously, you are going to eventually get into the dollars and cents of all this. Unless I missed it, and sorry, there has been a lot coming at us today. You did not seem to have an alternative in which some kind of retreat is mixed in with everything else. That is, the assumption is every building that is there

is going to be protected.

Mr. Materman asked: Do you want me to address that? I would be happy to.

Commissioner Gunther replied: I would like to hear because I know that is an alternative that is bandied about. But of course, every place is going to be a little different. But I just wondered if that was thought of at all and then how that compares to the idea of areas getting wet bringing more birds near the Airport. I did not know if that was part of the thinking.

Mr. Materman responded: If I could comment on the retreat question because it is an important one that we hear often. There are really two parts of my response to that.

One is we have put out this planning policy guidance that I discussed about land use policies that we recommend that cities adopt, and the county adopts, and many cities have. As Mayor Colson mentioned, Burlingame has taken the lead on that, the first one in our county to do that and in the area in general.

That planning policy guidance calls for setbacks from the shoreline. It is not a wholesale retreat of a community or a neighborhood, but it is retreat from water to enable us to do resilience measures, including natural features within those resilience measures, rather than just a wall. That is part one of my answer.

Part two is, in very specific areas of the county do we have land use authority. We do not really have land use authority; we have land rights in certain areas. And none of those areas are on the shoreline except for creek mouths in two locations.

As long as these projects are, and I am not picking on this area at all, I am talking about Bay Area wide. As long as these projects that build buildings right

along the shoreline are being approved by environmental regulatory agencies, and as long as they are being approved by local governments, cities and counties, our job is not to say that project you approved last year or the one you are considering in 2024 has to move.

Our job is to say, how do we take the context of our environment, not just on these development projects, on SFO as an entity. How do we take the context of the environment, small e, that we inherit, and turn that into the most resilient environment that we can?

So, I am not an advocate, and I am not talking about me personally. I am just saying organizationally I am not an advocate for large-scale retreat because that is not where our community, our governments are. And bodies like BCDC and the Water Board and other bodies, they are not at a place to compel that. And I think that should change, personally. But until that does, my job is to take the most vulnerable county and make it the most resilient county. That is all I can do.

Commissioner Gunther continued: Well, I really appreciate that. I am not, in asking this question, suggesting that retreat is actually the preferred alternative.

However, people say there is going to be either managed retreat or chaotic retreat, or there is going to be more hardening of the shore in the Bay Area like you are talking about.

And then I think this will come out a little, these alternatives will become clarified once we start talking about how much these things cost and who is going to pay for them and then what are other cheaper alternatives. And that will also be influenced by our sea level rise projections changing over the next few years. But I

really, I just really appreciate the way you guys are thinking about this.

Dave, is there an analogous public institution anywhere else? The way that you guys went and had the legislation rewritten. I do not know of anyone else in the Bay Area.

Commissioner Pine answered: I do not think so. We spent the better part of five years putting this together.

Commissioner Gunther continued: This is an approach of national significance I would think. I know you guys do not spend time thinking about yourself that way, but the integrated way that you are doing this on both shorelines. I mean, you are only talking about the Bay shoreline now. Is something that I think worth just remembering that you guys are on the cutting edge of what is going to have to happen.

Chair Wasserman stated: A couple of comments, one question. Terrific, is the major comment. I know there is a lot, a lot, a lot of work to do and a lot of problems. What you have done over the five years and beyond is terrific. I am sorry, let me ask my question first.

Your state legislation that created you or structured it to create you with the approval of the local agencies does give you specifically taxing powers. Am I correct in assuming that those taxing powers under the authority given still requires a two-thirds vote.

Mr. Materman replied: I will just say our voting thresholds are the same as any other public entity.

Commissioner Pine added: I would add that we made sure that the legislation

provided us with all the tools, revenue raising tools that are available.

OneShoreline did spend a tremendous amount of time looking at a potential parcel tax combined with fire, a combined fire and sea level rise funding measure, and the support just was not there.

Chair Wasserman continued: One of the issues that I know has been talked about in the past, I do not know if there is any current discussion about it, is changing the law for flood control districts to make them more like the utilities in imposing fees, which do not require two-thirds, do require a majority. As we are looking at our financing the future issues, that is one of the vehicles I think we want to look at.

Mr. Materman stated: If I may comment on that extremely briefly. There is a measure on the November 2024 ballot to lower the threshold for bonding from two-thirds to 55 percent. Right now, that lower authority or that lower threshold rests with school districts, but not with climate resilience projects or housing projects. The legislation in November, just for the general public and others who may not be aware, or anyone not aware, is to lower that for those types of projects.

One of the things that we are waiting on to think about, do we go to the voters in our county, is what happens this November in regard to that and other measures.

Chair Wasserman acknowledged: That makes absolute sense.

Commissioner Pine added: Our funding, simply put, is half funded by the county and half funded by the cities. Each of the 20 cities puts in a very modest amount, but they all contribute towards the operation.

Chair Wasserman stated: Most of the staff I am talking to, no disrespect,

Harriet, are not present for a variety of reasons. I think it would be useful, not necessarily at a Commission hearing but perhaps in one of our workshop formats, to have a more detailed presentation and interaction.

And we might want to include Sonoma in that. Because although they have not done what you have done, they have done some interesting and different things. I think OneShoreline and Sonoma are the two most progressive in thinking of holistic changes within government agencies to address the issues that we are addressing. I thank you very much for the work and the presentation.

We do have public comment. Sometimes you get wrapped up in your own thoughts. Please call the public speakers.

Arthur Feinstein was the first speaker: Chair Wasserman and Commissioners, thanks for the opportunity to talk on this.

I first recommend that all of you look at this scientific article published in *Urban Sustainability* in 2022. I hope staff can tell me whether you can distribute it to all of the Commissioners. Protection and restoration of coastal habitat yield multiple benefits for urban residents as sea levels rise. Now this is 2022.

Many of the scientists working on this, and there were like ten, are local ones working for agencies and for SFEI. They studied specifically the San Mateo coast to look at what were the problems and what could be the solutions. Their conclusion: This work adds to the growing body of research from around the world demonstrating that nature-based solutions help protect coastlines and yield diverse ecosystem services.

They also recommend, not recommend it already existed, but they point to

OneShoreline as an excellent way of bringing a regional perspective to a shoreline so you can address all the issues along that shoreline. Very similar to what the RSAP and the subregional SAP are doing.

The problem, I am going to run out of time very quickly, is that what Len is proposing for the shoreline, the off shoreline gates, it has already been proposed for the whole Bay. You put a gate across the Golden Gate and just stop the water and then we do not have to worry about any of this.

Mr. Materman interjected: Not exactly.

Mr. Feinstein acknowledged and continued: Well, it got shot down. I am similarly hoping that this gets shot down because it proposes the same reason. Every agency that has examined it has had problems.

Michael Brownrigg commented: Thanks very much. I am Michael Brownrigg; I am a longtime council member for the city of Burlingame. I really just am here in solidarity for the inquiry, in gratitude to OneShoreline and to Supervisor Pine for creating it.

This is, as Mayor Colson pointed out, a vital piece of our own economy. Without a healthy shoreline that allows businesses and recreational use our City would be devastated. So, this is a very serious matter for us, and we appreciate BCDC's willingness to explore all potential options.

In my view, retreat is not an option. I think the good news is back in Paris in 2015 we thought the world was on path to a four to five degree warming. Now we are down to two and a half to three, which is still unacceptable, but we are going in the right direction.

I have hope that we will, as a planet figure this out, but not before a wall of water comes at us and that is what we need to defend. I thank Len for his work and his team's work, and I appreciate BCDC and the spirit of inquiry that you guys are adopting towards this work.

I think the only thing that is less sensible than a bad answer is not doing the exploration and research at all, and I think that is the Dark Ages versus the Enlightenment. Thank you very much. I am done. I will give you the balance of my time.

Eileen McLaughlin spoke: Good afternoon, Chair Wasserman and Commissioners. Thank you for this these few minutes here. I am Eileen McLaughlin with Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge and have been studying and following the OneShoreline Project in Millbrae and Burlingame since last fall when it was first announced to the public.

I want to take and focus on the habitat issues here, one that would be affected by the barrier particularly. They plan a 2.65-mile barrier.

They want to have, at one area they have tidal marsh at one end, which is marsh that SFO must protect for the Ridgeway rails. That moves on down southward on to beach and broad mud flats that have waves coming back and forth on them and the shorebirds all winter long. Thousands and thousands use that thoroughly. And then down further to where the water gets deeper at the shoreline, every single day recreational fishermen or women or children are out there catching fish.

Because the hydrology of tidal action serves all of those different kinds of habitats. And underneath the waters there is eel grass, which is also known as

something that inhibits and cleans fresh water.

This is an area that the project says one of its threats and opportunities or objectives is habitat. But that barrier, even with all its breaks, is going to completely destroy the hydrological flow of this cove and all of the habitats and wildlife that use it today. Thank you.

Gita Dev was recognized: Good afternoon, Chair Wasserman and Commissioners. I know it is getting late. I want to thank OneShoreline for a lot of good work that they have done in San Mateo County, which is part of our Sierra Club's Chapter.

However, I have to tell you right up front, that every single agency and also the Airport has taken rather violent exception to filling in the Bay with a lagoon.

And it is clear to us that while this may seem like an easy solution, and we always appreciate research, but the scientific community has weighed in on the side of nature and using nature-based solutions, which they believe will help not only the land but also the Bay and will keep costs down.

I do want to point out that since OneShoreline worked on its guidelines, which we were very involved with and which we very much appreciate, SB 272 has passed, which requires all cities to follow Bay Adapt's six goals, the second of which is to put nature first whenever possible.

But that is because it recognizes that the Bay itself, its living shorelines and its ecosystems are as much at risk with sea level rise as the shoreline and the buildings and the infrastructure around it.

Therefore, to fulfill the obligations of that law we need BCDC policymakers to

make sure that the public, the staff and the consultant teams that work on it to extend the adaptation plans, to include integrating nature into their plans. Not just as vegetation on levees, but with some of the other elements that the scientific community in the paper that Arthur Feinstein mentioned includes. Thank you.

Chair Wasserman acknowledged and continued: Thank you. That concludes our public speakers.

Any Commissioner want a final comment on this?

Commissioner Showalter stated: Hi, Len, it is great to see you. I want to compliment you on this wonderful agency that you have created. In particular, I am delighted to see how you are looking at the protections as a continuum all along the shoreline.

Because one of the things we learned in Katrina was that those touch points, those connection points between projects, were where things typically broke down. And if that happened, you had a big flood. We do not want to do that anymore. Having you look at it all as a system is the best way to avoid that. I am really delighted to see that this has gone so well and so far.

I am bringing you greetings from Santa Clara County, where we are blessed with being ringed by old salt ponds that can be restored to marshes. But I just want to say that we are delighted to see that you are working with that.

And I as both a BCDC Commissioner, as the mayor of Mountain View, will do whatever I can to make sure that that connection between your county and my county works beautifully. Even though I know that the methodologies there will be different from time to time. But thanks, and thanks for this wonderful work and keep

it up. Let me know how I can help.

Mr. Materman acknowledged: Thank you.

Chair Wasserman moved to adjournment: Thank you very much, Len and David.

11. Adjournment. Upon motion by Commissioner Showalter, seconded by Commissioner Randolph, the Commission meeting was adjourned at 4:41 p.m. in memory of Will Travis.