

**July 24, 2017**

**Dear Honorable Members of the Brisbane City Council,**

As housing, business, economic and educational leaders in the Bay Area, we are writing to you to urge you to include a substantial amount of housing in your final determination of land uses for the Brisbane Baylands site and to support you should you approve housing on the site. The need for housing has reached a critical level in the Bay Area and we believe every city has an obligation to do their part in meeting the Regional Housing Needs Allocations *and* taking advantage of large-scale opportunities that arise that can make a significant impact. *Brisbane Baylands is one of those opportunities to make a real and positive impact on the housing supply for the region.*

**The right location for housing is near transit**

The Baylands is not just any developable site. At 685 acres, it is one of the largest developable sites in the entire Bay Area, and it holds the distinction of being served by Samtrans, Caltrain and Muni, with close proximity to BART, being in one of the Bay Area's most important jobs and transit corridors. Between 2011 and 2016, the Bay Area built 94,000 new housing units, but created 531,000 jobs. San Mateo County added 68,000 jobs, and only 2,800 homes. And in Brisbane, from 2011-2014, the city generated over 1,000 jobs, but delivered only 15 housing units in that time frame. To prevent traffic, we must plan housing near transit. The Baylands proposal of 4,400 units can make a significant difference and improve the quality of life in the Bay Area.

**Housing is the #1 issue for major employers**

We know Brisbane alone didn't create the regional housing crisis. But, Brisbane, like most other cities in the Bay area, has said yes to more jobs and no to more housing. Per ABAG, in 2010 there were approximately 2,060 employed residents and 8,690 jobs in the city – more than four times as many jobs as employed residents and very few of those jobs near transit. Saying yes to new jobs without new housing is a mistake for our region that is beginning to cost us dearly with long commutes, clogged freeways, staggering housing prices, a volatile economic base because we are not adequately housing our region's workers and increasing pressure for sprawl development leading to tremendous loss of natural and agricultural lands.

While the workforce in the Bay Area, Sacramento, Northern San Joaquin Valley and Monterey Area has increased by 17% between 1990 and 2013, commuters crossing regional boundaries have grown by 78%. Major employers in the Bay Area cite the lack of housing near jobs as the number one issue of concern for their employees and potential employees.

In addition, soaring housing costs are causing highly skilled workers to leave the area for cities like Austin, Portland and Seattle. In February, the Washington Department of Licensing saw an unprecedented 20 percent of arrivals come from California. In 2011, 1 in 7 people in the Bay Area searched Redfin.com for homes outside of the Bay Area. Now it's 1 in 4. As major

employers look to relocate or expand they need not only sites to accommodate job growth but also look to locate those sites near housing and transit for their employees.

### **The need for affordable housing has reached a crisis level**

In addition, affordable housing is at an extreme and serious shortage in the Bay Area. For 2017, the median cost of a home is now \$720,000 in the Bay Area and \$1.3 million in both San Francisco and San Mateo County. The Baylands project can make a real difference by providing 15% of the units at below market rates. According to a recent Trulia study, Bay Area drivers' average commute time takes 27.2 minutes – one of the worst in the country. We cannot continue to force low income families to commute long distances. We need more affordable housing.

### **Sites needing environmental remediation can be successfully developed**

We know it is not easy to say yes to Brownfield development, but there are examples in the Bay Area that have successfully remediated railyard sites that now have housing, including Mission Bay in San Francisco as well as countless examples nationwide of successful Brownfield sites remediated for housing and commercial uses. In California alone, the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) completes an average of 125 site remediations each year. In addition, under-developing the Baylands with industrial uses perceived to be less risky will not provide the funding available to clean-up the site to the level desired and provide valuable community benefits, and could add to the site's toxic legacy. By approving residential land use, the site will be remediated to a higher standard than it would for industrial or commercial uses.

### **Saying YES to housing requires strong leaders**

We are here, as a region, to support you. We know how challenging it is when so many residents want to retain the character of suburbs as low scale development and primarily single-family homes. We also know that local control is at the root of our democratic process.

However, providing housing would help address local needs as well as regional needs. We simply cannot expect the Bay Area's three major cities of San Francisco, Oakland and San Jose to bear the brunt of developing higher density housing when the jobs are spread throughout the Bay Area. All Bay Area cities and counties need to take a fresh look at local opportunities and opportunity sites for housing that could help the region. ***The problem is regional but the solution is local.***

We all need to work collaboratively to help solve the problems that we created for our region through substantial economic development and job growth and the Bay Area, our Bay Area needs all of us, including Brisbane, to be part of the solution. We fully support you in your thorough process of review and will stand behind you should you move forward with housing as an approved use on the Brisbane Baylands site.

Sincerely,

Hon. Art Agnos, Former Mayor  
City of San Francisco

Hon. Willie Brown, Former Mayor  
City of San Francisco

Hon. Ron Gonzales, Former Mayor  
City of San Jose

Hon. Chuck Reed, Former Mayor  
City of San Jose

Hon. Glenn Sylvester, Mayor  
City of Daly City

Gloria Bruce, Executive Director  
East Bay Housing Organizations (EBHO)

Amy Buckmaster, CEO  
Redwood City – San Mateo County  
Chamber of Commerce

Tim Colen, Senior Advisor  
San Francisco Housing Action Coalition

Todd David, Executive Director  
San Francisco Housing Action Coalition

Rosanne Foust, CEO & President  
San Mateo County Economic  
Development Association

Michael Lane, Policy Director  
Nonprofit Housing Coalition

Jeremy Madsen, CEO  
Greenbelt Alliance

Gabriel Metcalf, President and CEO  
SPUR

James Ruigomez,  
Business Manager/ Executive Officer  
San Mateo County Central Building  
Trades Council

Evelyn Stivers, Executive Director  
Housing Leadership Council of San  
Mateo County

Jim Wunderman, CEO  
Bay Area Council

Kevin Zwick, Executive Director  
Silicon Valley Housing Trust