



January 24, 2014

John Swiecki, AICP, Community Development Director  
City of Brisbane  
Community Development Department  
50 Park Place  
Brisbane, CA 94005

**Subject: Brisbane Baylands Draft Environmental Impact Report**

Dear Mr. Swiecki:

On behalf of the San Francisco Bay Trail Project, I am submitting comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Brisbane Baylands project. The San Francisco Bay Trail is a visionary plan for a shared-use bicycle and pedestrian path that will one day allow continuous travel around San Francisco Bay. Currently, 334 miles of trail have been completed. Eventually, the Bay Trail will extend over 500 miles to link the shoreline of nine counties, passing through 47 cities and crossing seven toll bridges.

We are particularly interested in this development project and its circulation because it will complete a significant gap in the regional Bay Trail system, extend Brisbane's existing Bay Trail corridor and define bicycle-pedestrian connections between San Francisco and San Mateo counties.

The following comments focus on the Bay Trail alignment, safety, continuity and experience as analyzed in the DEIR:

#### **Bay Trail Alignment**

Both the Community Proposed Plan (CPP) and the Development Sponsored Plan (DSP) identify a north-south alignment for the Bay Trail across the site, linking existing Bay Trail adjacent to the Brisbane Lagoon to existing Bay Trail near Candlestick Park in San Francisco. Both plans propose to complete the 1.5-mile Bay Trail gap in Brisbane. The DSP identifies the Bay Trail alignment along the eastern edge of the development adjacent to the Highway 101 corridor. The trail is shown as a Class I facility, separated from traffic, extending from Lagoon Way, transitioning back to Class II bike lanes and sidewalks at Geneva Avenue. The CPP shows the Bay Trail integrated into proposed new parks, public spaces and along a linear greenway between Lagoon Way and Geneva Avenue. The trail crosses a few intersections within the new development grid. It is not clear whether the Bay Trail is a Class I or Class II in the CPP scenario.

- The programmatic DEIR did not provide a detailed analysis of the two proposed trail alignments. A Bay Trail alignment integrated into the development grid as a Class I facility will likely be a quieter and more visually appealing experience, but may introduce safety issues for bicyclists and pedestrians at intersection crossings. A trail along the highway corridor may be a preferred alignment for a commuting cyclist, but could be visually uninviting and noisy if placed between buildings and the freeway. Our preference is for the designated Bay Trail alignment to be safely integrated into the development as a Class I multi-use path rather than along the edge of the highway.

### **Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety and Experience**

The DEIR assumes that certain bicycle and pedestrian circulation network improvements shown in the DSP and DSP-V scenarios also apply to the CPP and CPP-V scenarios. Both plans have a combination of Class I multi-use paths and bicycle lanes/sidewalks for the Bay Trail. The proposal requires bicyclists and pedestrians to transition from a Class I multi-use path to bicycle lanes and sidewalks at N Street, along 8<sup>th</sup> Street and on the Geneva Avenue overpass.

The *San Francisco Bay Trail Plan* encourages the siting and design of the Bay Trail to accommodate the widest range of trail user skill levels.

Trail Design Policy 12. Provide access wherever feasible to the greatest range of trail users on each segment.

Trail Design Policy 13. Wherever possible, new trails should be physically separated from streets and roadways to ensure the safety of trail users.

The following changes are recommended:

- Class I multi-use paths are the preferred facilities in the development area and along the proposed new Geneva Avenue extension over Highway 101. A separated pathway for bicyclists and pedestrians is necessary for safe and continuous access between Brisbane and San Francisco.
- In Table 4.N.7, the footnote indicates that on the Geneva Avenue Extension, the Class II bicycle lanes will be open to through vehicular traffic during peak hours. Shifting vehicles into bike lanes causes confusion and a loss of consistent use of the facility. It also defeats the purpose of encouraging bicycle commute options by shifting bicyclists onto the narrow shoulder during peak commute hours.
- Mitigation Measures 4.N.19 and 4.N.11 should require fully-separated Class I multi-use paths throughout the development area, including the Geneva Avenue Extension.

I would like to be involved in future discussions about bicycle and pedestrian circulation and decisions about the new Bay Trail alignment in Brisbane. Thank you for considering these comments and please contact me at 510-464-7935 or laurat@abag.ca.gov if you have questions.

Sincerely,



Laura Thompson  
Bay Trail Project Manager