

ALBANY CALIFORNIA



CITY OF ALBANY
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ALBANY, CA 94706
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December 6, 2021

Zack Wasserman, Chair
San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission
375 Beale St., Suite 510
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: Support for Bay Adapt: Regional Strategy for a Rising Bay

Dear Chair Wasserman:

I am pleased to let you know that the City of Albany City Council supports “Bay Adapt: Regional Strategy for a Rising Bay.” The Bay Adapt Joint Platform is the result of a stakeholder-led process to determine the best ways for the Bay Area to become regionally resilient to rising sea levels.

While the Bay’s shoreline constitutes one-third of the California coastline, the Bay Area will likely experience two-thirds of the negative economic impacts due to the flooding caused by rising sea levels absent adequate measures to adapt and protect people, places, and habitat. As sea levels rise at an accelerating rate, the confluence of more intense winter storms, extreme high tides, and higher runoff, with higher sea levels, will increase the frequency and duration of shoreline flooding long before areas are permanently inundated by sea level rise alone.

In the face of this challenge, the Bay Area must protect and energize vulnerable and historically marginalized frontline communities, enhance and restore an ecosystem that is already deeply affected by human activities, and reduce flood risks for existing built infrastructure along the vast bay shoreline. Yet, the increasingly frequent and severe impacts of climate change in the Bay Area do not conform to our governments’ jurisdictional boundaries or the planning and regulatory authorities of any one agency or organization. Bay Adapt begins to address these challenges by laying out a set of guiding principles, priority actions, and vital tasks that public, private, and nonprofit organizations, including local governments with land use authorities, can voluntarily implement in a coordinated and collaborative manner to adapt faster, better, and more equitably to a rising San Francisco Bay.

It will take tremendous efforts and investments to adapt the San Francisco Bay Area to a constantly changing shoreline and continue to improve its vibrant, diverse, ecologically unique, innovative, and pioneering quality of life. Implementing Bay Adapt will reduce flood risks for communities, businesses, infrastructure, and habitat, increase technical assistance for local governments and funding for adaptation, protect natural areas and wildlife, recognize and equitably support low-income, frontline communities, robustly integrate adaptation into community-focused local plans, and accelerate permitting and project construction of local adaptation projects.

The City of Albany City Council supports the Bay Adapt Joint Platform and will support its implementation by concentrating on issues related to sea level rise as detailed within the City of Albany Hazard Mitigation Plan and Climate Action and Adaptation Plan. We look forward to working with BCDC and all of Bay Adapt's stakeholders to ensure that the entire Bay Area thrives in the face of rising sea levels.

Sincerely,

Ge'Nell Gary, MBA
Mayor
City of Albany

1 **RESOLUTION NO. 2021-116**

2 **A RESOLUTION OF THE ALBANY CITY COUNCIL IN SUPPORT OF**
3 **BAY ADAPT: REGIONAL STRATEGY FOR A RISING BAY**

4
5 **WHEREAS**, climate change is accelerating rising sea levels, increasing storm
6 frequency and intensity, and moving groundwater toward the surface. The confluence of more
7 intense winter storms, extreme high tides, and higher runoff, with higher sea levels, will
8 increase the frequency and duration of shoreline flooding long before areas are permanently
9 inundated by sea level rise alone; and

10
11 **WHEREAS**, a major storm within the next decade in the Bay Area could result in
12 temporary flooding impacts to 13,000 existing housing units and 70,000 planned housing units,
13 28,000 socially vulnerable residents, 104,000 existing jobs and 85,000 planned jobs, and
14 20,000 acres of wetlands habitat that may become permanently inundated within 40 years; and

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16 **WHEREAS**, there are multiple local, regional, state, and federal government agencies
17 with authority over the Bay and its shoreline, and while local governments have broad authority
18 over shoreline land use they have limited resources to address climate change adaptation; and

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20 **WHEREAS**, individual local actions, absent a regional context in which to make
21 policy decisions, will lead to a “tragedy of the commons”; and

22
23 **WHEREAS**, the San Francisco Bay Area is a vibrant, diverse, ecologically unique,
24 innovative, and pioneering region that will be deeply and deleteriously affected by climate
25 change without tremendous effort and investments to adapt to a constantly changing shoreline.
26 The San Francisco Bay shoreline constitutes approximately one-third of the California
27 coastline, but the Bay Area is estimated to experience two-thirds of the negative economic
28 impacts due to the flooding that would occur absent adequate measures to adapt and protect
29 people, places, and habitat; and

1
2 **WHEREAS**, the Bay Area region’s most socioeconomically vulnerable frontline
3 communities are at the greatest risk of exposure to climate threats, and the impacts of historic
4 and ongoing social and economic marginalization will compound the risks posed by flooding
5 to those communities by reducing a community’s or individual’s ability to prepare for, respond
6 to, and/or recover from a flood event; and
7

8 **WHEREAS**, the Bay ecosystem is already stressed by human activities that have
9 drastically lowered its adaptive capacity, and climate change will further alter that ecosystem
10 by inundating or eroding remaining wetlands, changing sediment dynamics, altering species
11 composition, increasing the acidity of Bay waters, changing freshwater flows and/or salinity,
12 altering the food web, and impairing water quality. Moreover, further loss of tidal wetlands
13 will increase the risk of shoreline flooding; and
14

15 **WHEREAS**, flood damage to vital shoreline development, public infrastructure, and
16 facilities such as neighborhoods, commercial centers, airports, seaports, regional transportation
17 facilities, landfills, contaminated lands, and wastewater treatment facilities absent adaptation
18 will require costly repairs and likely will result in the interruption or loss of vital services,
19 large-scale social dislocation, and degraded environmental quality; and
20

21 **WHEREAS**, the increasingly frequent and severe impacts of climate change in the Bay
22 Area do not conform to jurisdictional boundaries or the planning and regulatory authorities of
23 any one agency or organization; and
24

25 **WHEREAS**, in 2019, BCDC, in collaboration with a Leadership Advisory Group
26 comprised of 35 Bay Area public, private, and non-profit leaders, embarked on the
27 development of “Bay Adapt,” a consensus-driven strategy for regional sea level rise
28 adaptation. The Leadership Advisory Group includes representatives from numerous public
29 agencies, including the Association of Bay Area Governments/Metropolitan Transportation

1 Commission (MTC/ABAG), San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board, State
2 Coastal Conservancy, Caltrans, BARC, BART, East Bay Regional Parks, US Army Corps of
3 Engineers, San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority, San Francisco Public Utility
4 Commission, Marin County, and BCDC, as well as environmental justice, environmental,
5 business, scientific, civic, organizations, local government and flood manager networks, and
6 academia; and

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8 **WHEREAS**, in 2020 and 2021, hundreds of stakeholders participated in the creation
9 of the “Bay Adapt Joint Platform” through nine Leadership Advisory Group meetings, two
10 public forums, many expert Working Group meetings, ten community and stakeholder focus
11 groups, over 50 presentations to local governments around the region, and a month-long public
12 feedback opportunity; and

13
14 **WHEREAS**, the Bay Adapt Joint Platform lays out a set of guiding principles, priority
15 actions, and vital tasks whose implementation will enable the region, and most notably local
16 governments, to adapt faster, better, and more equitably to a rising San Francisco Bay. If
17 fulfilled, it will reduce flood risks for communities, businesses, infrastructure, and habitat;
18 increase technical assistance for local governments and funding for adaptation; protect natural
19 areas and wildlife; recognize and equitably support low-income, frontline communities;
20 robustly integrate adaptation into community-focused local plans; and, accelerate permitting
21 and project construction of local adaptation projects; and

22
23 **WHEREAS**, the Bay Adapt Leadership Advisory Group supports the Joint Platform
24 and many members agreed to help implement it at its October 2021 meeting, the BARC
25 Governing Board endorsed it on September 17th 2021, and BCDC adopted the Joint Platform
26 on October 21st 2021; and

27
28 **WHEREAS**, implementing the Joint Platform’s many and varied actions and tasks
29 goes beyond the capacity of any single organization or jurisdiction, requires strong and diverse

1 leadership and participation in all aspects of its implementation, and a broad coalition of
2 stakeholders share responsibility for the success of the tasks outlined in the Joint Platform.

3
4 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:**

- 5
- 6 1. The Albany City Council supports and Bay Adapt Joint Platform, a regional
7 strategy for a rising Bay, including the guiding principles, actions, and tasks
8 contained within; and
 - 9
 - 10 2. The Albany City Council looks forward to championing and supporting the
11 implementation of Bay Adapt to ensure that it serves the City of Albany and the
12 Bay Area as a whole in achieving resilient and equitable adaptation to sea level rise.
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GE'NELL GARY, MBA - MAYOR