

August 25, 2016

TO: Brisbane Planning Commission; Brisbane City Council

FROM: Open Space and Ecology Committee (OSEC)

RE: Clarification of OSEC position re: Land uses on the Baylands; response to comments from Jonathan Scharfman, UPC

We are writing to reiterate and underline points made in our original statement acknowledged in the June 9, 2016 Planning Commission meeting, which seemed to be somewhat misinterpreted.

OSEC was asked to state its general opinions on land uses in the Brisbane Baylands. While we are well aware that specific proposals—a Developer Supported Plan (DSP) an Alternative Energy Plan (AEP) and a “Community Plan” (CPP) are under consideration by the Commission, we did not limit our thought process or comments to these plans. Rather, we sought to think as holistically as possible, taking into consideration not only the characteristics of the site, including its toxicity, but also known possibilities such as California’s high speed rail system; how the Baylands as a geographic area might integrate with the rest of the city; and how Brisbane might play a role in the sustainability of the Bay Area as a whole.

Thus, we recommended using part of the Baylands for maintenance facilities for the high-speed rail system—a use which we consider appropriate given the toxicity of the site, the past uses of the site, and the desirability of preserving open space for wetlands (climate adaptation) and wildlife habitat. Should the high speed rail authority be able to declare eminent domain to use the land for this purpose, we support the idea. Although this land use is not featured in any of the development plans considered so far, we do not think it makes sense to ignore this possibility.

We also mentioned a transit hub, probably centered around the Bayshore Caltrain station, as a desirable site use. We have been told that the lack of housing would make such a use impossible—but it seems to us that this is an example of a place where holistic thinking is useful. Thousands of housing units are planned and/or under construction only a short distance from the Baylands. The **cumulative** impacts of traffic from these developments is likely to be considerable even if nothing is built on the Baylands; the development of the Schlage Lock and Candlestick sites in San Francisco seem to us ample justification for at least considering a transit hub.

Thank you for considering OSEC’s point-of-view and concerns for sustainable development on the Baylands.

Regards,

Michael Abney, OSEC Chair