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CREBL

Committee for Renewable Energy in the Baylands
Brisbane, California

January 3, 2011

Mr. John Swiecki
Community Development Director
City of Brisbane

Dear John,

In response to your request for scoping suggestions for the Environmental Impact Report that is being imminently prepared for the Baylands redevelopment area of the City of Brisbane, CREBL would like to submit the following comments:

1. CREBL is pleased that a map of the Renewable Energy Alternative was included in the Notice of Preparation. However, because the notice made no reference to its proposed components, we attach a description of the various land uses suggested by our plan alternative.

2. The EIR should focus on the merits of the suggestion that the Renewable Energy Alternative is environmentally superior to the UPC proposal and the other alternative described. The study should show how the smaller development footprint will generate far less environmental impact and require much less toxic remediation than the other development alternatives. On the other hand, the proposed generation of renewable energy from sun and wind will make a significant contribution to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Also, the existence of PG&E's Martin Substation immediately adjacent to the Baylands would nearly eliminate the impacts, including energy loss, of long and costly transmission lines. All of these effects should be quantified and compared with the other development alternatives.

3. The Renewable Energy Alternative presumes that the Baylands would be a desirable location to businesses engaged in green technology research and development as well as retail sales and light manufacturing of related goods. The EIR should indicate what factors would facilitate that type of development. The EIR should also investigate the presumption that businesses with a green orientation would be willing to take a long-run perspective on sustainability in their development investment in the Baylands.

4. It should be noted that the Renewable Energy Alternative includes the open space, wetlands protection, and public space components of the so-called Community Preferred Alternative, which partly evolved from a public process enjoying wide participation. However, the development of 8 million square feet of buildings shown in the Community Preferred Alternative was not generated from a similar public process, but was evidently merely a presumptive figure transferred from the initial 2006 version of UPC's Specific Plan. It is likely that a maximum of 1 million square feet of buildings proposed in the Renewable Energy Alternative would more closely approximate the preferences of the community at large. The Recology variant is also included as a compatible land use.

5. The Renewable Energy Alternative also includes a crucial parameter for the Baylands redevelopment consistent with the current General Plan that was approved by a vote of the citizens of Brisbane in 1994: No housing in the Baylands. Evidently the voters believed that the site is unsafe and therefore unsuitable for residential occupation. Subsequent to that vote, plans for the regional jobs-housing mix have evolved to a point where thousands of units of new housing development have been approved by San Francisco immediately adjacent to the Baylands. Therefore, another aspect of the EIR that should be studied is the impact on Brisbane of this major neighboring housing development. Furthermore, it should be studied how the jobs projected to be created by the land uses proposed by the Renewable Energy Alternative would contribute to the regional jobs-housing relationship.

6. Finally, though the Renewable Energy Alternative, at the request of the City Council, does not propose any acreage for the potential site of a high-speed railyard in the Baylands, it might be a useful side issue to study the suggestion that a solar farm could be located atop the railyard.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to the Environmental Impact Report and to the opportunity to comment further.

Respectfully yours,

COMMITTEE FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY IN THE BAYLANDS

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Attachment: Renewable Energy Alternative Concept

Renewable Energy Concept
ALTERNATIVE FOR BRISBANE BAYLANDS

Principle:
Instead of **negative** environmental impacts that have to be **mitigated** by new development, emphasis should be placed on **positive** environmental effects. To maximize readily available **sustainable** resources, this alternative concept emphasizes land uses that will serve the City, the region, and the nation in the long term and provide practical, feasible solutions to environmental problems.

Open space/area:
In addition to the already planned River Park and Lagoon access, the area south of the creek should be devoted to **open space** or recreation. The water needs of that land use should be met by a reclamation system covering the entire Baylands area.

Renewable energy generation:
1) To fully utilize the prevailing wind tunnel in the Candlestick Gap and the immediate proximity to PG&E's Martin Substation, a row of vertical **wind turbines** extending along the Geneva Extension, west to east, should be included. Current wind power technology creates less noise and is harmless to birds and cost-effective.
2) Because the entire Baylands is open to the sun, a **solar farm** of ca. 104 acres of photovoltaic cells for electricity should be planned. Any construction should not only be required to minimize energy use but also include solar and wind power for a zero carbon operating status.
3) At the lagoon outfall, **tidal turbines** could be installed to power the immediate needs for street lights and lagoon-related power.

Related industrial production:
In keeping with the Governor's call for "a million solar roofs" and recognizing the solar equipment industry as the currently fastest-growing business segment in California, sufficient land area should be designated for **manufacturing** solar panels, windmills, bicycles, and other products serving renewable energy purposes. Because technology in this area is advancing rapidly, allowance should be made for flexibility in acreage reserved for this purpose.

R & D and Retail:
In the transit-oriented NW corner of the Baylands, an office campus for **clean technology research** and related retail should be developed. There could be **solar panel/wind turbine** showrooms, **bicycle** shops, **organic farm** product markets as well as other businesses and organizations promoting renewables. Maximum total floor area for buildings should be 1 million square feet.

Historic site:
An extended area around the **roundhouse ruins** should be developed for a historic and educational exhibit on the Baylands, past and future.

Existing land uses:
Recology (formerly Sunset Scavengers) is proposing a facility for biofuel and other renewable production at their site. Such land use would be consistent with this alternative. The existing lumber yard would not need to be relocated, as long as it would expand its product mix to include **recyclable building materials**.