January 10, 2011

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

Subject: Brisbane Baylands Specific Plan EIR Notice of Preparation

Dear Mr. Swiecki:

On behalf of the San Francisco Bay Trail Project, I am submitting comments on the Notice of Preparation for the Brisbane Baylands Specific Plan EIR. 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, 310 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, connect bicyclists to a regional transit station and define bicycle-pedestrian connections between San Francisco and San Mateo counties.

The following comments are suggested for inclusion in the Baylands Specific Plan Environmental Impact Report analysis:

Bicycle and Pedestrian Connections
Safe and functional bicycle and pedestrian facilities for use as recreation and commute corridors are key elements of this development plan and should be thoroughly analyzed in the environmental document. The spine of the bicycle/pedestrian corridor in this area is the 1.5-mile gap in the Bay Trail between Candlestick Point State Recreation Area in San Francisco and the Brisbane Lagoon. The Baylands Specific Plan EIR should address the completion of a continuous bicycle and pedestrian corridor in two sections: 1) the east-west corridor from points east of US 101 to the Bayshore Intermodal Station, and 2) the north-south corridor through the Baylands from the northern boundary of the development to Sierra Point Parkway.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety
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.

Administered by the Association of Bay Area Governments
P.O. Box 2050 • Oakland, CA 94604-2050
Phone: 510-464-7900 • Fax: 510-464-7970
Web: www.baytrail.org

> 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.

Two major roadways create significant barriers to bicycle and pedestrian travel within the vicinity of the development area: US 101 (existing) and the Geneva Avenue Extension (planned). The analysis should consider safe bicycle and pedestrian crossings of these two roadways. The NOP's figures show the US 101 crossing to occur as bicycle lanes on the Geneva Avenue Extension. Given the significant vehicle turning movements expected with the interchange on- and off-ramps, we anticipate major conflicts between bikes and vehicles on the Geneva Extension and we prefer an off-street, separated bicycle crossings of US 101 (i.e., through the Alana Way Tunnel). The Geneva Avenue Extension will be constructed as a wide roadway funneling vehicle traffic on and off US 101 that will also create safety concerns for bicycle and pedestrian crossings. We propose that the EIR explore ways to provide a grade-separated bicycle/pedestrian crossing of the Geneva Avenue Extension rather than an at-grade crossing.

Trail Experience

A primary goal of the *Bay Trail Plan* is to locate the trail, where feasible, as close to the shoreline as possible. We understand that the shoreline edge is not accessible in this part of Brisbane because of the US 101 corridor. The Developer-Sponsored Plan (DSP) and Community-Proposed Plan (CPP) identify different alignments for the Bay Trail: along a frontage road adjacent to US 101 (DSP) and through the development area along a greenway corridor (CCP). We recommend that both alignments be analyzed taking into account the impacts of noise, visual experience, interface with the street network, safety at intersections, etc. In addition, we recommend analysis of a Bay Trail alignment that extends through the development site connecting directly to the Bayshore Intermodal Station (see comment below).

Connection to Bayshore Intermodal Station

The City of Brisbane is currently engaged with the City of San Francisco, the Association of Bay Area Governments and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission on a specific plan to increase access to the Bayshore Intermodal Station. We recommend that the potential Bay Trail link to the station be analyzed as a key facility to promote non-auto access to the station and reduce traffic. The NOP Circulation Plans do not show a Bay Trail connection to the Bayshore Intermodal Station. This is an opportunity to provide safe and direct bicycle/pedestrian connections to a major regional transit station. Around the region, the Bay Trail serves as an important commute corridor for bicyclists connecting transit, residential areas, commercial centers, schools and places of employment. The Bay Trail is part of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's Regional Bicycle Plan that seeks to reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) through the construction of continuous trail facilities that connect to transit. A direct Bay Trail connection to the Bayshore Intermodal Station would be consistent with the *San Francisco Bay Trail Plan*.

> Transportation Access Policy 34. Access to the trail by all forms of public transit should be strongly encouraged.

Local governments and regional agencies are further engaged in the reduction of greenhouse gases through the Sustainable Communities Strategy, a state-mandated program to reduce

transportation-related emissions through reductions in VMT and increased opportunities for non-auto trips. A bicycle/pedestrian link would support these goals as well as provide a stronger connection for current Brisbane residents and Bay Trail users to access proposed new development in the area.

Interim Transportation Improvements

During the buildout of the Baylands, a number of large land use projects in the area are proposed to be constructed and occupied, including the Bayview Waterfront Developments (Candlestick Point and Hunters Point Shipyard), Executive Park, and Visitacion Valley/Schlage Lock. In order to meet the expected demand on the transportation system caused by the growth associated with these developments, some interim transportation projects will need to be implemented. These projects may differ in design from final projects needed to support the Baylands development. For example, the Harney/Geneva Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) may have a different alignment in the interim, before Geneva Avenue and the Bayshore Station would be completed to support the Baylands. In addition, the increase in traffic from the area developments may warrant the signalization of the intersection of Alana Way with the US 101 on/off ramps. We recommend coordinating with San Mateo and San Francisco county agencies to determine which interim projects should be included in the future baseline scenario for analysis and to ensure that bicycle and pedestrian facilities are incorporated into the projects.

Thank you for considering these comments and please contact me at 510-464-7935 or laurat@abag.ca.gov if you have questions about this letter or the Bay Trail in general.

Sincerely,

Laura Thompson

Laura Thompson
Bay Trail Project Manager