

September 8, 2021

Measure X Community Advisory Board
1025 Escobar Street
Martinez, CA 94553

RE: Prioritizing Measure X Funds for Equitable Climate Resilience

Dear Members of the Measure X Community Advisory Board,

We know there are many pressing items to spend Measure X funding on, but we urge you to think about our future safety and climate resilience by prioritizing at least **\$500,000 in annual Measure X funding to support climate and equity goals** within the Conservation and Development Department. This increased capacity is critical to taking the coordinated climate response needed for the safety and resilience of the County. **The current lack of staff capacity at the County level will prevent the County from accessing upcoming state and federal funding opportunities** from SB 155 (CA), SB-170 (CA), and the \$1 trillion Infrastructure Bill (Federal) that could provide significant funding resources for climate adaptation and equitable resilience programs to serve the County's most vulnerable communities. These upcoming opportunities come in addition to existing grant programs (see HMC SLR Staff Report, 4/6/21) that the County could pursue, if there was a staff person dedicated to applying for, and managing, resilience projects.

The immediate health and safety of Contra Costa residents is at risk. In 10 years, Contra Costa will likely see at least 6 inches of Sea Level Rise, and in just 30 years, the County will likely experience one to two feet of Sea Level Rise ([BCDC](#)). These changes will have very real impacts on the County -- **in East County alone, over 11,700 households are at risk of experiencing disruptive flooding** -- many of which are those already experiencing environmental justice concerns, inadequate housing resources, and public health concerns. These impacts will disrupt business operations for the region, displace County residents, and result in billions of dollars of damages.

But sea level rise and flooding are not the only impacts of climate change, wildfires and extreme heat are already endangering County residents. California's 11th District (covering most of Contra Costa County) will likely experience **8 more days with temperatures over 100 degrees by 2050**, if no adaptation or mitigation action is taken ([Union of Concerned Scientists](#)). Measure X investments in public health and services will be pointless if nothing is done to adapt to this changing climate. **This increased capacity is necessary for addressing the impacts of flooding, wildfire, and extreme heat through coordinated efforts, grant funds, and proactive planning. The time to act is now.**

For over 60 years, Greenbelt Alliance has worked towards a vision of a Bay Area made up of healthy, thriving, resilient communities where all members are given equal protection from climate risks and equal opportunities to enjoy the benefits of the environment and other nature-based infrastructure. In reviewing the various proposals for Measure X funding around sustainability and resilience, you will notice that there

is a lack of clearly defined projects and proposals -- this is not due to lack of need, but instead, due to a severe lack of staff capacity and organization around topics of climate resilience and adaptation. **Measure X funding for increased capacity would be a catalytic step in protecting our communities from the impacts of climate change.**

Sincerely,

Amanda Brown-Stevens
Executive Director
Greenbelt Alliance