



March 7, 2012

ABAG Board and Regional Planning Commission
101 8th Street
Oakland, CA 94607

Re: Benicia Northern Gateway PDA – Response to WCHB Comment Letter

Dear Board and Commission Members:

The City of Benicia is very appreciative of all the work that ABAG and MTC have done to make the Priority Development Area effort so successful, including establishing employment centers as eligible for PDA status. Accordingly, we are hopeful that you will approve of our application for a Northern Gateway PDA.

I regret that we have not been more successful in communicating the City's intent in pursuing PDA status for our Northern Gateway area with the largest property owner in our industrial/business park area. Contrary to the February 17 letter submitted to the Board by legal representation for West Coast Home Builders (WCHB), the City's intent is not to try to plan any portion of the proposed PDA without the involvement of WCHB or any other property owner. If and when planning efforts occur, the City will strive to include all interested parties through extensive outreach and communication efforts.

Our clear intent for the PDA is to become eligible for future funding for planning and infrastructure to support businesses and job creation in the area, in large part via improved transportation systems, to shorten commute distances for the full income range of employees and thereby help reduce vehicle-related emissions.

We are appreciative that WCHB points out the embarrassing error in our acreage calculation (1,450 acres instead of 925) and gives us an opportunity to acknowledge that indeed it would be development of the "Benicia Business Park" parcel owned by WCHB that would account for the majority of new jobs within the PDA.

Although City staff worked closely with WCHB for several years on an application for a project on the site, that proposal ultimately was withdrawn by the applicant. Therefore, contrary to the assertion in the February 17 letter, there are no adopted plans for the PDA.

Finally in response to the WCHB letter, infrastructure is indeed in place within the PDA. The need for additional infrastructure to serve a future development on the WCHB parcel will depend on the development plan for the site and will be primarily the responsibility of the developer, as is the case Statewide.

We look forward to your consideration of the Benicia Northern Gateway PDA proposal, and to working with WCHB and all other stakeholders to improve the viability of our major employment center in the regional effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CK/K', is positioned above the typed name.

Charlie Knox
Public Works & Community Development Director

cc: City Manager and Council
George Speir, Miller Starr Regalia
Albert Seeno III, West Coast Home Builders
Steve Heminger, MTC