

San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission

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DRAFT MINUTES

TO: All Commissioners and Alternates

FROM: Lawrence J. Goldzband, Executive Director (415/352-3653; larry.goldzband@bcdc.ca.gov)
Sierra Peterson, Executive & Commissioner Liaison (415/352-3608; sierra.peterson@bcdc.ca.gov)

SUBJECT: **Draft Minutes of October 16, 2025 Hybrid Commission Meeting**

1. Call to Order. The hybrid meeting was called to order by Chair Wasserman at 1:09 p.m. The meeting was held with a principal physical location of 375 Beale Street, San Francisco, California, and online via Zoom and teleconference.

Chair Wasserman called the meeting to order: Good afternoon, all, and welcome to our continuing hybrid BCDC Commission meeting. My name is Zack Wasserman, and I am Chair of the Commission. I want to thank the people who are attending here at the Metro Center as well as those who are participating virtually.

Chair Wasserman announced Kat Riley was filling in for Sierra Peterson and Jessica Fain was acting as Executive Director for Larry Goldzband.

Chair Wasserman asked Ms. Riley to proceed with Agenda Item 2, Roll Call.

2. Roll Call. Present were: Chair Wasserman, Vice Chair Eisen, Commissioners Addiego, Ahn, Dorsey, Eckerle (represented by Alternate Kimball), Gauthier, Gioia, Gonzalez, Hermosillo, Kato (represented by Alternate Pemberton), Lee (represented by Alternate Kishimoto), Mashburn (represented by Alternate Vasquez), Moulton-Peters (represented by Alternate Cox), Ramos, Showalter, Tam and Taylor (joined after Roll Call). Catherine Stefani, appointee of the Speaker of the Assembly (represented by Alternate Falzon) was also present.

Chair Wasserman announced that a quorum was present.

Not present were Commissioners: Association of Bay Area Governments (Eklund), USACE (Beach), Department of Finance (Benson), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (Blake), Governor (Hasz, Randolph, VACANT), Business, Transportation & Housing (El-Tawansy), Regional Water Quality Control Board (Gunther)

3. Public Comment Period. Chair Wasserman called for public comment on subjects that were not on the agenda.

Allison Chan spoke: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Commissioners. My name is Allison Chan, and I am the Political Director at Save the Bay. I am pleased today to share a brief update on Save the Bay's plans to increase our advocacy for completion and maintenance of the Bay Trail.

Many of you know that 350 miles of Bay Trail are currently in place, and BCDC's requirements for maximum feasible public access through permits on the shoreline are a big reason why. Save the Bay's role in helping to establish BCDC in the 1960s was motivated by our founders' devotion to stopping massive filling of the Bay and increasing access to the Bay at a time when there was only six miles of public shoreline.

We continued to support public access consistent with protection of wildlife and habitat because more people experiencing the Bay builds public support to protect and restore it.

There are, of course, still 150 miles or more missing from the Bay Trail, and these gaps limit public access, especially to underserved communities. And there are also many sections needing maintenance where BCDC's permit compliance and enforcement could be stronger. And much of the existing trail needs greater resilience to rising tides.

So, we are excited to identify the most urgent opportunities to complete and strengthen the Trail, employing strategies and partnerships that help cities and communities make faster progress, working with BCDC, MTC, the Bay Area Trails Collaborative and others. And we are identifying additional funding for our work so we can expand and sustain our staff to take on more of that important work.

For 35 years the Bay Trail Project staff at ABAG worked with a dedicated board of volunteers to build a spectacular regional shoreline trail for all of us, and now they have asked Save the Bay to take on the next phase of that work. We hope that our program planning and the fundraising to support our implementation will position us for more public announcements about our role in early 2026 but we did not want to wait to share our aspirations with all of you.

BCDC will be a crucial partner to complete and improve the Bay Trail, and we look forward to working with you to achieve that vision. Thank you very much.

Chair Wasserman continued to the Report of the Chair.

4. Report of the Chair. Chair Wasserman reported on the following:

A scientific report came out last week, I believe, calling the first passing of a tipping point for climate change in the globe, and it was about coral reefs that I feel in particular - I am an avid snorkeler; did just have a short snorkeling trip in the Caribbean. The tipping point means we have gone beyond the point where we can expect coral reefs to survive.

As with everything in the scientific community there is, of course, some difference of opinion. But if any of you have been snorkeling or diving in recent years you will know that most of the coral throughout most of the world is bleached, dying and gone. And that was certainly true on my trip.

There are always a few hopeful signs. There were a few colors left on a few coral fans. There is evidence of a fight against it, as there are in many areas where there are coral reefs where they are creating artificial structures to attract new reef growth. So, it is not that it is totally over, but it is a very sad and disappointing sign.

Here, of course, while we are always concerned about mitigation, we are more concerned about adaptation.

The concern that I have, and I know many of you share, and this is not about climate change, is how close we are to a tipping point in our own country in terms of maintaining our rights, our freedoms, our ability to walk the streets freely, our ability to criticize our government freely. Hallmarks of what this country has stood for so long, and yet they are threatened.

I do not think we have passed the tipping point in this country yet. I do not know how close we are. I will simply urge all of you to be out on the streets on Saturday in the No Kings marches. We need to demonstrate that there is opposition to what is happening.

A. Commission Meeting Schedule: Coming much closer to home, we will not hold a meeting in two weeks on November 6, and we will meet again on November 20, the week before Thanksgiving. We will also hold a meeting two weeks later on December 4, and are currently reviewing whether we will hold our scheduled meeting on December 18. We will not hold a meeting on New Year's Day, which is the first Thursday of the month. So, we will see each other in the new year on the 15 of January.

B. BARC Update: A brief update on BARC, the Bay Area Regional Collaborative. As you know I serve as Chair of BARC currently. We have decided to cancel our scheduled October 17 BARC Governing Board Meeting. Leadership from the member agencies, the Chairs and the Executive Directors have met a number of times to clarify and advance BARC's mission. Unfortunately, we have not yet agreed on a specific long-term plan to promote regional solutions to the challenges that span our respective agencies' missions.

In the interim, BARC and agency staff will continue to make progress on this year's BARC Work Plan. A written report on the BARC Work Plan, including progress on the interagency MOU on Sea Level Rise and Flooding, a related effort to develop Sea Level Rise Technical Assistance Directory, and a new project focused on growing green infrastructure through enhanced regional agency coordination, was circulated with BARC Board Members. If anybody wishes to see that please let me know and I will get it to you.

The Transition Leadership Group will meet again in November with the goal of identifying current policy issues that may benefit from additional coordination. Please feel free to reach out to me if you have thoughts on this question specifically and regional collaboration more generally.

C. Next Meeting: At our next meeting on November 20, we expect we will hold two public hearings and at least one vote on a consistency determination and a briefing or two. Please let us know as soon as

possible whether you will be available in the afternoon of November 20. We expect that agenda to include:

A public hearing and possible vote on the Army Corps of Engineers' proposed dredging program in the Bay;

A public hearing on BCDC's draft regulatory reform package; and

A briefing on BCDC's current and previous-year budgets.

D. Ex Parte Disclosures: That brings us to ex parte disclosures. If any Commission member has had an ex parte communication on a matter that needs to be reported — and these are not on policy matters, these are on enforcement or adjudicatory matters — and has not made a written report, now is the time to make it verbally. You do still need to make a written report. If anyone does so, please raise your hand and make a brief report. I see no hands.

5. Report of the Executive Director. Acting Executive Director Jessica Fain reported: Thank you, Chair Wasserman. Good afternoon, Commissioners.

I would like to start by making a few announcements on some staffing changes and updates:

First, I would like to acknowledge the new staff who have joined BCDC over the past month and several of them are in the room. So, if you don't mind, new folks, please stand up and I am going to let you go around the room and call your names.

Lia Bobay has joined us on our Shoreline Development Permitting Team.

Shawn Wagner is our new Enforcement Attorney.

Juliette Chasusson is our new Senior Adaptation Planner.

And Sabrina Lopez is our new Adaptation Planner.

Lindsey Martin has also joined us on our Shoreline Development Team.

Welcome to all the new faces, you will be seeing them at future meetings presenting and doing all sorts of great things.

With your approval, we also plan to make the following five hires and promotions:

First, Kat Riley is facilitating today's meeting but will soon be joining the Long-Range Planning Team as a Coastal Planner. For almost three years Kat has worked on our clerical team, first as an Office Technician and then over the past year as a Management Services Technician, where she has supported Permitting and Planning. Through this role Kat has gotten to know BCDC really well, dipping her toes into our policy and planning work, supporting the RSAP last year, the Sediment for Wetland Adaptation

Project, and our Environmental Justice Program. In addition to her BCDC cred she is a Bear, holding a bachelor's in English from UC Berkeley.

Another familiar face is Erich Miller. Erich is joining as our new Enforcement Analyst. Erich comes from a humble background, born and raised in Hawaii with a love and respect for nature and not much else. He has a degree in environmental science from SFSU, go Gators. He is the first person in his family to graduate college, summa cum laude no less, and eventually found his foot in the door here as a BCDC volunteer over a year ago. So, we are welcome to bring him on board as a full-time staff member.

We are also pleased to welcome Maddeline Huffman to the Sediment Management Team. Maddie is joining us from the Sacramento Army Corps of Engineers where she worked on Section 408 permits including NEPA, Federal Endangered Species Act assessments and environmental assessments. She also worked on the Los Padres National Forest Act and collaborated with non-profit organizations on restoration projects amongst other experiences. She has a bachelor's of Fish and Wildlife Science from Oregon State University, which makes her a Beaver. Welcome, Maddie.

We are also pleased that Candice Kesner will be joining us as our new Human Resources and Training Manager. Candace is transferring from State Hospitals in Napa, where she currently serves as a Staff Services Manager I in Human Resources. Candice has a BS in Business Administration with a minor in HR from DeVry University. I did Google DeVry University, and they do not have a mascot, which they should work on that.

And then lastly, we are excited to welcome Sam Stromberg as a Graduate Student Assistant to BCDC. Sam is a master student at UC Davis (go Aggies!) studying Environmental Policy and Management. Sam supported BCDC in the spring as an intern and we look forward to welcoming him back to continuing his work with the GIS program to support updates to regulatory data and tools over the next eight months.

Now on to policy.

First, a short update on the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge Pilot implementation.

Back at the Commission's August 7 meeting Commissioners approved a continuation of a pilot program on the upper deck of the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge with modifications. This includes reducing the availability of the multi-use public access path on the upper deck from full-time to Thursday afternoons through Sunday evenings, with additional availability around certain holidays.

Caltrans and BATA have informed staff that they are proceeding with implementation of the pilot modifications with an intended start date of October 27. Per the permit requirements, they began posting notices along the path on October 6. The permit also requires a free shuttle service for cyclists and pedestrians for the duration of the modified pilot. On October 9, BATA met with members of the cycling community to test the functionality of the shuttle's bike trailers.

Information about the planned pilot and shuttle service is available on signage on-site and on MTC's website. Caltrans and BATA are continuing to coordinate with BCDC staff to prepare the environmental

justice analysis methodology and benchmarks. We anticipate bringing this item before the Commission for consideration in the early part of next year.

Lastly, you may be used to seeing your staff here in the Metro Center, but our staff has been remarkably visible across the region and state over the past month. So, I just thought I would give a quick roundup of where you maybe caught glimpse of a BCDer out in the wild:

You may have seen us sponsoring and tabling at the Fourth Annual San Mateo Climate Summit.

On the stage at the National American Shore and Beach Preservation Association in Long Beach, discussing West Coast coastal management.

Talking with planners at the California American Planning Association Conference in Monterey.

Discussing dredging and beneficial reuse of sediment at the Bay Area Flood Protection Agencies Association's Annual Meeting in Martinez, and again at the Bay Planning Coalition's annual Dredging Workshop in downtown Oakland.

At the Coronado Library, near San Diego, with Assemblymember Tasha Boerner and the Assembly Select Committee on Sea Level Rise and the Economy.

At the Ocean Protection Council's Board Meeting talking about the RSAP.

And at other venues include the Alameda Sea Level Rise Planning Fair, the Contra Costa Mayors Conference.

Next week you will catch a glimpse of us at the Santa Clara Shoreline Cities meeting with Commissioner Showalter.

Many of us will be at and speaking at the State of the Estuary conference.

And we will be at the California Economic Summit up in Stockton, and probably more.

So, if you see us out there, come say hi, we would love to see you. That concludes my remarks, Chair Wasserman.

Chair Wasserman noted: Commissioner Gioia has a comment.

Commissioner Gioia commented: I was just going to say, it is always really gratifying to see all the new staff to come on board. I have been on this Commission now for 26 years and there has been just great staff throughout that time. Folks have moved on, passed on their institutional knowledge to others. New people come on in leadership positions.

And just to say you are really joining, I think, an historic agency. The first agency in the United States that actually had land use authority above a city or county, and specifically for the shoreline and the Bay

itself, which was a really big deal, right, back in the 1960s. Of course, you are probably all familiar with the history of how this agency got formed and the resident advocacy that led to it.

So, I just want to just acknowledge that. It is great to see new staff and great young minds, of which I guess maybe when I started 26 years ago, I may have been that, I don't know. But after being here 26 years I feel somewhat older but seeing this great youth and wisdom and knowledge. Congratulations and thank you for joining this great agency.

Chair Wasserman asked: Any other Commissioners?

I would like, in addition to welcoming all of the new people and sharing John's sentiment absolutely. I would like to thank Jessica for talking about all of the ways in which BCDC staff have been out in the community interacting with other agencies. And we have talked about this from time to time, that this really represents a somewhat different approach than BCDC has taken in the past. We are much more aggressively, and progressively, being out there talking about our achievements and our challenges and I think it makes for a much healthier environment for all of us and so I thank all of the staff who are doing that.

6. Consent Calendar

a) Approval of Minutes for September 18, 2025 Meeting

Chair Wasserman reviewed the items on the Consent Calendar and called for public comment.

(No members of the public addressed the Commission.)

Chair Wasserman asked for a motion and a second to adopt the Consent Calendar.

MOTION: Commissioner Cox moved approval of the Consent Calendar, seconded by Commissioner Addiego.

VOTE: The motion carried with a vote of 18-0-0 with Commissioners Addiego, Ahn, Cox, Dorsey, Gauthier, Gioia, Gonzalez, Hermosillo, Kimball, Kishimoto, Pemberton, Ramos, Showalter, Tam, Taylor, Vasquez, Vice Chair Eisen and Chair Wasserman voting, "YES", no "NO" votes, and no "ABSTAIN" votes.

7. Commission Consideration of Administrative Matters. Chair Wasserman asked if there were any questions for Regulatory Director Harriet Ross regarding the Administrative Listing.

(No members of the public addressed the Commission.)

(No questions were posed to Ms. Ross.)

8. Public Hearing & Possible Vote on an Amendment to BCDC Permit No. 2003.007.06 to Authorize Additional Bay Fill Material for Levee Maintenance (Application for BCDC Permit No. 2003.007.07.

Chair Wasserman announced: That brings us to Item 8, a public hearing and possible vote on an

application by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for a Material Amendment to BCDC Permit No. 2003.007.06 which authorizes operations and maintenance activities, including levee maintenance within the Eden Landing Ecological Reserve in the city of Hayward.

The proposed project would involve placement of an up to an additional 50,000 square feet of fill material in the Bay to protect and maintain existing Bayfront levees throughout the Reserve. The project would exclude raising or widening the levees beyond their historic footprints.

Schuyler Olsson of our Bay Resources Permitting staff will lead off the presentations.

Mr. Olsson presented the following: Good afternoon, Commissioners. My name is Schuyler, and I am a Permit Analyst on the Bay Resources Team at BCDC. I will now present a brief introduction to the proposed Eden Landing Levee Maintenance Material Amendment proposed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. After my presentation the Project Team will then describe their project in further detail, before I conclude with the Staff Recommendation.

The Application Summary and Staff Recommendation for this project were sent to you on October 3 and October 10 respectively.

The proposed project is located within Eden Landing Ecological Reserve in the city of Hayward in East Bay. The Ecological Reserve outlined in red on the right is an approximately 6,400-acre system of restored salt ponds, diked marshes and upland transitional areas managed by CDFW for resident and migratory water birds and tidal marsh habitats and species.

The project site is bordered by the communities of Hayward and Union City to the east, State Route 92 and San Mateo-Hayward Bridge to the north, San Francisco Bay to the west, and Alameda Creek to the south. The project is located within a Wildlife Priority Use Area designated under the San Francisco Bay Plan.

I will briefly describe the site history to contextualize the project. This application is different from most applications you see. It is a material amendment to an existing permit.

The original permit issued to CDFW in 2004 authorized the South Bay Salt Ponds Initial Stewardship Plan after CDFW acquired the former Salt Ponds from Cargill, Inc. This involved Operations and Maintenance, or O&M, and other activities to prepare the site for large-scale tidal restoration.

The permit has since been amended several times, including to authorize Phase 1 of the South Bay Salt Ponds Restoration Project, which included expansive tidal restoration, managed pond enhancement and public access improvements, and to authorize ongoing O&M throughout the Reserve.

The current permit, as amended, authorizes O&M through 2029 including specific quantities of fill for levee maintenance in the Commission's Bay salt pond and shoreline band jurisdictions. CDFW has reached the limit of authorized Bay fill placement, which is currently approximately 10,000 square feet, but not the limits for fill in other jurisdiction types.

Separately, there is an open, incomplete BCDC permit application to authorize Phase 2 of the South Bay Salt Ponds Restoration Project, the planned next phase of restoration at Eden Landing, which will restore approximately 1,400 acres of tidal marsh, enhance approximately 800 acres of managed ponds, and add more than four miles of new Bay Trail.

The currently proposed levee maintenance is critical to enable the future Phase 2 Project, as I will explain on the next slide, but it is a wholly separate permit application.

The Project Team has requested authorization to place an additional up to 50,000 square feet of Bay fill material, including soil and riprap, beyond what is currently authorized to repair and protect existing Bayfront levees throughout the reserve.

The existing levees to be repaired are historic salt palm berms that were not designed to modern engineering standards and do require periodic maintenance to raise low spots, fill eroded side slopes and bring the levees back to consistent elevations.

CDFW would use the minimum fill necessary to repair levees within their historic footprints and would not raise or expand the levees beyond those levels.

As CDFW will describe further, the proposed levee repairs are needed to protect existing wildlife areas, public access areas and critical infrastructure, including an East Bay Dischargers Authority pipeline.

Repairs along the Pond A2 Bayfront Levee are needed to enable Phase 2 of the South Bay Salt Ponds Restoration Project, as I mentioned, as this levee protects 1,400 acres of ponds that currently provide foraging and roosting habitat for many bird species and they will be restored as part of Phase 2.

According to CDFW, the Pond A2 levee will be at significant risk of failure if it is not repaired this year in advance of upcoming winter storms. The initial levee repairs are circled in yellow on the right and will be described further by the Project Team.

For public access the existing permit requires approximately 3.8 miles of trails, a watercraft launch area, multiple interpretive stations and viewing areas and related amenities, all at the northern end of the reserve.

The proposed work for the subject amendment would not include new public access, as it is a continuation of existing maintenance activities and would not involve a substantial change in use or new development impacting existing public access or activities that would generate demand for new public access.

Certain repairs may occasionally result in temporary public access closures or detours, but these instances are expected to be infrequent and limited in duration. When temporary impacts are expected the Project Team would submit a public access closure and detour plan for BCDC review and approval to ensure impacts are avoided and minimized.

With regards to sea level rise resilience, the project can be considered repairs of existing facilities as described under Bay Plan Climate Change Policy 3 and therefore staff did not apply the climate change policies that require a Risk Assessment and Adaptation Plan to this project.

The levees would not be raised beyond their historic elevations.

As described previously, the levees will provide protection for existing and future tidal restoration areas, including Phase 2 of the South Bay South Ponds Restoration Project. That project will provide flood protection and sea level rise resilience benefits for adjacent communities. A sea level rise analysis has been separately conducted for the Phase 2 Project.

Similarly, for environmental justice. As discussed previously, this is a continuation of O&M activities linked to Phase 1 of the project and the proposed activities do not represent qualitatively new significant impacts to Bay resources or public access.

Planning for Phase 1 included four years of extensive community engagement, including over 40 meetings, workshops and chats(??)with the public, agency representatives and stakeholders that informed that project's overall restoration plan.

The Project Team is currently conducting additional community engagement to inform design of Phase 2 of the project.

The primary issues raised by this project are its consistency with the McAteer-Petris Act and the San Francisco Bay Plan, including the policy areas listed here; as well as the Wildlife Priority Use Area for South San Francisco Bay, which require that the area be reserved for wildlife uses as is proposed for the project.

I will now cede the floor to the Project Team. We have Dave Halsing from the South Bay Salt Ponds Restoration Project who is going to discuss the project in greater detail.

Mr. Halsing addressed the Commission: Good afternoon, Commissioners and BCDC staff. And thank you, Schuyler, for that very thorough overview and introduction. I am Dave Halsing with the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project. I am here on behalf of our partners at the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the land management agency for the Eden Landing Ecological Reserve. John Krause from CDFW is available virtually today. He is here and online. He is in the field doing emergent work out there. Nick Torrez from Ducks Unlimited is here and can help answer questions, as can Colin Dudley, the Ducks Unlimited Engineer behind some of this, so we can call on them during the Q&A as needed.

As Schuyler mentioned, we do have an existing O&M permit, but we need more fill than is currently authorized by that permit.

The current limit of 10,000 square feet in Bay jurisdiction was not determined by any ecological analysis or anything. It was strategically set to stay under a California Code of Regulations definition of minor repairs or improvements, with the idea that that amount of fill in Bay jurisdiction would be sufficient to

let us finish the design and permitting for Phase 2 of the Restoration Project, which would lower the maintenance burden needed before Phase 2 could be implemented.

Sadly, and unfortunately, because of some necessary redesigns to address concerns by the Alameda County Flood Control District we have had some delays in the Phase 2 Restoration Project permits, and so there are a couple of locations that are in need of time sensitive levee repair.

We also have some anticipated future repairs that we want to get some added coverage for now under a material amendment, with the idea that the Phase 2 permitting and the project are still to come.

Schuyler already showed you this map so I will not repeat this, except just to orient you to Eden Landing. Again, this is a mix of restored marshes, enhanced managed ponds and some areas that are yet to be restored.

CDFW at Eden Landing conducts the normal O&M activities that you would expect, manipulating water levels, doing monitoring surveys, managing vegetation.

There is daily trail use there on the network of trails that Schuyler showed you except for 10 days a year when CDFW has waterfowl hunting out there.

The two items in yellow are really the larger kinds of O&M activities that are the types of things that trigger permits: Water control structure repair; replacement, especially including the riprap and the head walls around the culverts of managed ponds; as well as levee repairs to fix erosion, importing fill, compacting it, placing it, things like that.

All of these activities will remain unchanged, and they are reported on in advance in terms of the plans and then after the work is performed.

Those two areas of the time sensitive repairs are at the outer levee of pond E2 in Southern Eden Landing, where there really has been an ongoing and extensive loss of old salt pond levee berm due to sea level rise and the loss of fringing marshes and just increased wave exposure. That levee is now at ongoing risk of failure and increased flood risk to the communities behind it as well as the risk of CDFW losing the ability to manage the habitats behind it and impairing the upcoming construction of our project.

At the North Creek Marsh levee near the East Bay Dischargers Authority pipeline there is an existing failure and several areas of erosion that are scouring towards the pipeline, and we would really like to get that repaired before any damage to that outflow effluent pipeline.

This map, again, is very similar to the one you saw before. These are the two areas I am going to be discussing one at a time.

This is the access route to the outer levee of Pond E2. The entry is from Veasy Street in Union City, and the perimeter levees with the dashed lines there can be used to reach that repair area on the outer levee.

There is one section at the north end of that levee as well as five more tightly clustered locations at the lower end.

The repairs there will be done with a mix of earth and fill and riprap, which is the way that those outer levees in Eden Landing have been done, maintained first by Cargill and subsequently by CDFW.

These repairs are estimated to take about 500 truckloads of fill to deliver over about 20 days of construction. The total area and volume are listed there. It is about .85 acres and 7,100 cubic yards. There is no existing public access at this site or along the whole route. We will be adding some in South Eden Landing as part of Phase 2 but there is nothing out there now.

The way the repair would work, this is just a typical cross section with the Bay on the right and the pond interior on the left. The construction equipment would take, would excavate down to create a clear area in which they could do some benching, onto which the imported fill would be placed and compacted. There would be some geotextile fabric and then riprap placed. Again, within the old project footprint and up to the existing levee height.

The North Creek Marsh Levee is two to three miles inland from the Bay and yet is in Bay jurisdiction because North Creek is tidal. It comes up through Eden Landing. It was some of the earliest areas restored in Eden Landing, full tidal marsh has established there, and there has been some scour on that levee.

The repair area is in that red circle. The yellow line is the is the EBDA pipeline. It is fully tidally influenced and so it is Bay jurisdiction.

The way the site would be reached, the repair site is in the red line, that little short section of red line there. The yellow is the existing public access network, all levee-top trails. Some are Bay Trail. Some are part of Phase 1 of the Salt Pond Restoration Project. Where the line is dashed is where the haul route to deliver the material to the North Creek levee repair site would overlap with that public access trail. The blue line is where it is just a levee-top road, no public access there.

These are small repairs, earth and fill only, no rock needed for that. Ten to 15 days of construction. Something like 150 truckloads over three or four days to deliver the material. It is a smaller footprint collectively, about .17 acres, and 1,250 cubic yards of fill.

Very similar repair on the plan view on the top there. You can see the EBDA pipeline running left to right. The scour areas are the smaller sections there and then the full breach is the larger area in the middle. Those would be repaired in a really similar manner with benching established to create a solid place for new material to be placed and compacted, restoring and matching the existing grade on all sides, and towing into the marsh at the breach location.

We do want to, in addition to those two repairs, we are probably a year to two away from beginning Phase 2 construction and several years away from completing it. We know that there is going to be some other erosion and scour on some of the tidal areas and so we are asking for a little bit of extra headroom under the O&M permits within the five-year permit period. We do not want to have to come back to you, take your time, our staff time, re-amending that O&M permit. And so, we are asking for an approximately 5,800 square feet and 1,200 cubic yards. CDFW will, of course, develop and provide specific details within that added limit as they are developed and become necessary.

It is important to, as we all agree, minimize impacts on public access. I mentioned this before, but it bears repeating. Neither of these areas are actually in an existing public access.

We will have to haul material across one section of public access to reach one of the sites. There will be brief trail closures, 15 maybe 20 minutes at a time to deliver the material and equipment, only at the North Creek Levee site. Typically, the way this works is what we have done everywhere, including at Mountain View as Commissioner Showalter mentioned, we have flaggers. They hold the Trail traffic, if there is any, so that a batch of trucks can go through. Then they let the Trail users go, then they let the trucks go back out, and do that as often as needed.

This section of Bay Trail does not get a ton of use, particularly during the middle of the work week, and so we expect use to be minimal, but we will have flaggers and signage. And we will put signage out in advance at Trail crossings and parking lots and on the website so that people know it is coming and to be ready for it.

I was encouraged to link this proposed O&M work to the South Bay Salt Ponds Restoration Project. It is important to note these are true O&M activities that would be needed whether or not there was a restoration project.

Except that Phase 2 of the project would have addressed that scour along the Pond E2 Levee already, and making that increased fill in Bay jurisdiction a part of our Phase 2 work. It is a voluntary, net beneficial restoration habitat enhancement project, and so we were hoping to get to it as part of that.

However, because of the challenges with redesigning the project to avoid unplanned and unacceptable introduction of tidal flows into the interior of Eden Landing, which is the thing the District has been worried about we are now at a place where that erosion has proceeded and we are at risk of that very thing. And so, we are trying to get ahead of that, avoid that problem, with increased flood risk and increased cost and difficulty of implementing the Phase 2 Restoration Project.

So, in summary, you have heard all of this a couple of times, right? We are looking for this material amendment to the existing O&M permits. Raising the limits and areas of volumes of fill for critical levee repairs with minimal impact on public access and avoiding several different types of adverse consequences.

And we will still proceed with the Phase 2 permitting, of course.

These numbers are all in your information packet and I will just have them here for reference, I will not read them off to you, but these are the areas and volumes of fill by type, by location, in this table, and we can refer to these as needed.

And so with that, I am done with my presentation, and I am prepared to answer any questions, and I am probably going to call on some of my colleagues as needed. So, thank you for that.

Chair Wasserman acknowledged: Thank you for the presentation.

We will now open the public hearing. Do Commissioners have any clarifying questions?

Commissioner Addiego chimed in: I was interested in what material constitutes the riprap.

Mr. Halsing stated: It is rock.

Commissioner Addiego asked: Natural rock?

Mr. Halsing answered: It is clean, natural rock, yes. Good question.

Commissioner Addiego stated: Great.

Commissioner Showalter had questions: Two easy ones, I think. One, what kind of pipeline is it? And two, when do you expect to come forward asking us about the permit for Phase 2?

Mr. Halsing replied: Excellent questions, Commissioner Showalter. The EBDA pipeline is, I am not an expert on this, but it is a pipeline for treated effluent from several of the different wastewater treatment plants in the East Bay. And it is a pipeline that eventually goes out into the deepwater channel of San Francisco Bay and that is where that treated effluent is disposed of. That is my understanding. That is almost all I know of it, so I am not going to say anything else.

Your second question was about when the Phase 2 permits will come forward. We are nearing the end of a revised design package. We are expecting to have a basis of design report ready to go both to CDFW's internal engineering people in Sacramento as well as to the Alameda Flood Control District around the end of the calendar year. Nick and I are already working on some updated permit applications. So, as soon as those are thumbs up from those entities, we will be hoping to begin submitting revised permit applications to all of the different agencies sometime in the spring. But I would hate to be more precise than that because I do not know how long the reviews are going to take at these agencies.

Commissioner Showalter stated: Thank you. Yes, you never know how long that is going to take. Thanks very much, Dave.

Commissioner Gauthier commented: Just quickly. Thank you for the presentation. How does this project engage or does this project engage environmental justice communities or local stakeholders in the design and monitoring?

Mr. Halsing answered: I understand that question, thank you. It is important to make a distinction between the specific project being requested here today, which is an increase in the O&M fill limits, from that of the overall South Bay Salt Ponds Restoration Project.

We have done no separate outreach or engagement specific to the levee repairs as they are old levees that are simply being repaired so they do not accidentally fail. Frankly, the need for this was not as foreseen as would have been necessary in order to conduct separate environmental justice outreach anyway.

For Phase 1 of the restoration project, a long time ago after the ponds were acquired there was an extensive multiyear, it took I think four or five years. John worked on it and is here and is nodding at me, so I am on the right track. Several years of stakeholder engagement with everybody around the areas. They were geographically-specific working groups. They were topically-specific interest groups. There was a National Science panel. There is an ongoing stakeholder forum. All of those things were done to set up the original restoration project, a vision and plan, as well as the Phase 1 specific actions.

For Phase 2 we built on those beginning in about 2013 or 2014 or so. Of course, we did all of the required public outreach engagement with regard to CEQA and NEPA. We were already in what we thought was permitting and what we thought was going to be done with permitting by the time the BCDC Social Equity Environmental Justice Policy was established. But we are very much of that mindset and so we retroactively developed an Equitable Outreach Engagement Plan, working with then-staffer Nahal, Ghoghaie, right? So, we worked with Nahal.

We developed a plan to conduct targeted outreach in certain disadvantaged communities in Union City and in Hayward. I even think we did a little bit in Fremont. We have offered several different walking tours. I have done presentations at different park districts and community meetings. We have tabled at events in Hayward and Union City and tried to introduce the project to people. We developed an opportunity for people to weigh-in on their preferred locations of different interpretive areas and the kinds of content they wanted on the signs. We developed an online survey. We had QR codes people could scan on their phone and take a survey to submit their input. So, I think we have been trying to do the right kind of outreach. We spent a pretty active year or two on that, several years back.

We then put this project on hold until we could figure out what the actual footprint of the project was going to look like because we have had to re-envision it pretty meaningfully in order to address the Flood Control District concerns, and we did not want to propagate information we knew was going to change.

So, we are not done but we are on hold with doing any added outreach until we have a clearer picture and then we will renew that, probably beginning early in 2026. And I hope that answers your question. Maybe that is more detailed than you wanted.

Commissioner Gauthier replied: No, I appreciate it and I will just continue to monitor that outreach. So, when you get ready for the next phase I would love to understand what that looks like.

Mr. Halsing acknowledged: It's great. Thank you.

Commissioner Gonzalez was recognized: So, you had mentioned concerns from the Alameda Flood Control District. Can you just summarize those again for me, please.

Mr. Halsing stated: Boy, summarize a decade-long negotiation.

Commissioner Gonzalez acknowledged: Exactly.

Mr. Halsing continued: They are concerned, I think rightfully, about introducing tidal. Right now, these salt pond berms were not built as engineered levees, they are not true flood protection features. FEMA does not recognize them. But they do nonetheless provide almost accidental/de facto flood protection, right? They keep the Bay here and the community here, right? So, if we were to open up one or more of those ponds, we would be bringing the tide in closer to the developed communities.

So, we have had some challenges with the Flood Control District on how much improvement inside and behind the remaining berms is necessary in order to make sure that we are not increasing the flood risk. We are planning and designing substantial improvements to the remaining levees, including ecotones and some erosion protection inside some of the tidal areas. We are raising and improving some of the burns around the managed ponds so that they do not accidentally fail. So, we are doing quite a lot of that so I think we are good on that front.

There was at various times concern about connecting to Old Alameda Creek and creating a backwater flooding problem. It is supposed to be a non-technical presentation. But essentially, you can imagine having the ponds very full of tidal water, and then the ebb tide, and all that water is trying to flow out a few different breaches. If there was storm water coming down Old Alameda Creek at the same time, the flows from the ponds would dominate the outflowing fluvial flows, and it would pose a risk of a backwater flooding problem.

We spent more than a year modeling that and actually showed that it that it was a very small increase. But we found some design tricks around that, that we thought we were all agreed to, and we had started to move forward with those. And then there were other concerns and other objections and so we are just not touching Old Alameda Creek at all anymore. We are now moving the breach to a Bayfront location so that we do not have to worry about that backwater flooding problem. There is more too.

Commissioner Gonzalez stated: I think that gave me the level of detail I was looking for. The other question that I had; this is what I call just the common sense. Anyone who listens in to this meeting might have this sort of question. If the objective is to let some tidal water into the space, and right now you have got a levee breach that lets tidal water, presumably, into that space potentially, why is it that we are looking to repair it? Is it a matter of how we control the flow of water? Is that the biggest issue?

Mr. Halsing explained: That is part of the biggest issue. We really do want that outer levee to mostly hold until we can complete the construction of a number of internal repairs. I do not know if it is okay

to reshare the screen or maybe I can just describe it. But essentially the four largest ponds on the Bay side are going to be the fully tidal area and everything to the east of that is going to be retained and enhanced as habitat ponds for a variety of wildlife.

So, we are going to raise all of the levees around those managed ponds and improve them, compact them, put erosion protection around them, and that will make the remaining system far more resilient to tidal flows and erosion overtopping and ensuing flood risk. And so, we need to make sure we finish that work before we introduce tidal flows.

And the second part of it is we then want, even though we are going to punch a hole in that outer levee we are going to armor both sides of that breach so that the tides go in and out through a controlled area instead of an uncontrolled area. That is important.

And the third reason is that we really want the rest of that levee to stay intact for one to two decades until the marsh can form in those ponds behind it. Based on the current elevation of the pond bottoms and the rate of sedimentation we expect, we think it will take somewhere between 10 and 20 years to have a fully developed marsh back there. Marshes are a form of flood protection, right? They slow tidal flows. We are going to build a good 30:1 ecotone habitat against that mid-complex levee. That is going to be an added buffer.

And so, until all that is done and established and in place, we want most of that outboard levee to remain intact except for the controlled flow that we are going to engineer and build into it.

Commissioner Gonzalez acknowledged: That makes sense so thank you. Those are my questions, Chair.

Mr. Halsing added: I am trying to hit the right level of detail here for that without going on and on. I can really talk. Apologies if it is too long.

Chair Wasserman stated: You are doing fine.

Mr. Halsing continued: Give me the kill sign if it is too much. What else?

Chair Wasserman noted: I think that is all from the Commission on clarifying questions.

Kat, do we have any public comment?

(No members of the public addressed the Commission.)

Chair Wasserman asked: Any other questions from Commissioners?

I would entertain a motion to close the public hearing.

MOTION: Commissioner Gioia moved to close the public hearing, seconded by Commissioner Cox. The motion carried with no abstentions or opposition.

Chair Wasserman called on staff: Schuyler, will you present the Staff Recommendation.

Mr. Olsson read the following into the record: Staff recommends approval of the Eden Landing Levee Maintenance Material Amendment, BCDC Permit Application No. 2003.007.07 with the conditions described in the Staff Recommendation and summarized on this slide, including to:

Submit annual work plans and completed work summaries;

Protect Bay natural resources and water quality during construction; and

Avoid and minimize temporary impacts to public access.

The staff believes that the project is consistent with the requirements of the McAteer-Petris Act and the San Francisco Bay Plan.

MOTION: Commissioner Showalter moved approval of the Staff Recommendation, seconded by Commissioner Cox.

VOTE: The motion carried with a vote of 18-0-0 with Commissioners Addiego, Ahn, Cox, Dorsey, Gauthier, Gioia, Gonzalez, Hermosillo, Kimball, Kishimoto, Pemberton, Ramos, Showalter, Tam, Taylor, Vasquez, Vice Chair Eisen and Chair Wasserman voting, "YES", no "NO" votes, and no "ABSTAIN" votes.

Chair Wasserman acknowledged: Congratulations. Thank you for a good project and a very good presentation.

9. Briefing on NOAA Assessment & Strategy. Chair Wasserman stated: That brings us to Item 9, a briefing on the BCDC draft Five-Year NOAA Strategy, which is required as part of our federal-state partnership, our nation's Coastal Zone Management System, to create a BCDC- and NOAA-approved Assessment and Strategy Policy aligned with the requirements of the federal Coastal Zone Management Act.

This briefing will describe the survey data results from BCDC's stakeholder outreach, recap key findings, and provide an overview of the upcoming five-year strategy and work plan.

Long-Range Planning Manager Erik Buehmann and Ujay Siddharth will present the draft assessment and strategy. Erik will kick off the presentation.

Long-Range Planning Manager Buehmann addressed participants: Thank you, Chair Wasserman. I am Erik Buehmann; I manage the Long-Range Planning Team at BCDC. With me today is Ujay Siddharth who is a scientist working on our Data and Science Team, the Adapting to Rising Tides Science Team. Ujay has been working on this process for about a year and has done all the work and today we are going to present the five-year update to BCDC's NOAA Assessment and Strategy.

Now, despite the name, this is not a comprehensive strategic plan for BCDC, that is the next agenda item. Instead, it is a process NOAA has developed that is meant to help BCDC identify how we spend a portion of BCDC's annually received NOAA funds. These funds represent just a small fraction of our

annual budget, and you will see it is meant to bolster and align with BCDC's overall Strategic Plan. So, nothing in this presentation will really be a surprise.

Rather than a strategic plan it is more accurate to think of it as a high-level grant report and a high-level grant work plan. NOAA has a prescribed process for developing this, which we will go over.

There is no action today by the Commission. But we brief you as part of the public process and to give you a little insight into how we fund our work.

Before we start, I want to acknowledge our NOAA liaison, Sarah Van der Schalie, who would normally be here but is not because of the federal shutdown, and we want to thank her for her close assistance in helping us go through the process and develop this document.

The Coastal Zone Management Act is an important partnership between the federal government and the states. It is a federal law that allows NOAA to certify a coastal agency's Coastal Management Program. We are an agency along with the Coastal Commission and the Coastal Conservancy with a certified Coastal Management Program. The program, when I say program, is basically the McAteer-Petris Act, the Bay Plan. All of BCDC's important sources of regulatory authority.

The CZMA basically allows the state with a certified Coastal Management Program to have two big benefits.

First, it gives BCDC some review authority over federal government activities in the Bay or that affect the coastal zone. These are called consistency determinations, and those of you who have been on the Commission may have voted on a few of these over the years.

Two, it also allows NOAA to provide us with grants to help the agency evolve over time. Specifically, the NOAA Section 309 funds are intended to be used for "program improvements." For example, Bay Plan Amendments, creating guidance for applicants, making regulation changes or technical assistance work we do, we can use NOAA 309 funds to help support those things.

Every five years to remain eligible for NOAA funds and to remain active in this partnership we have to undertake this assessment and strategy process to help guide how we use these NOAA 309 funds. It is a little formulaic so bear with us.

The Assessment and Strategy has two main steps according to NOAA's process.

The first is an assessment of the program. This basically involves compiling a lot of information from many different sources, state, local, federal, outside science, to create a snapshot of the current state of the Bay and our program.

As I said, the process is formulaic. NOAA sets forth nine specific areas that NOAA wants us to look at, and we do a self-assessment of those areas.

So, for example, we have Wetlands as an enhancement area that NOAA wants us to look at. We look at how wetlands have changed in the Bay over the last five years, what kind of work we have done in that five years in terms of our program, what changes we have made.

Based on this assessment, BCDC identifies the priority enhancement areas. What are the most important things we need to address?

Using that assessment and prioritization we create a strategy. That strategy describes how BCDC will work over the next five years to improve its program to address the issues identified in the assessment. Specifically, NOAA wants to see those program improvements. They want to see Bay Plan Amendments, guidance, technical assistance, et cetera.

It is important to understand that these NOAA funds are about \$128,000 a year, which is not a lot for our agency. We cannot really do a full Bay Plan Amendment with those funds, for example.

So, what we have done is try to strategically use these funds to supplement existing efforts, which you will see when we talk about the strategy.

For example, we use NOAA 309 funds to support the Long-Range Planning Team to help on the Bay Plan Amendment to adopt the RSAP. The RSAP was funded by OPC, but there were gaps in that funding that we could use the NOAA 309 funds for to help with that Bay Plan Amendment process.

Now, Ujay is going to talk about the assessment itself.

Mr. Siddharth spoke: Hello, everybody. As Erik was discussing here, these are the Assessment and Strategy Enhancement Areas. There are nine of them that NOAA requires us to review in our assessment. Wetlands and Coastal Hazards are the enhancement areas of national importance so they would ask that we focus on those a lot of the time.

The assessment portion is a prioritization process. You need to designate each of the nine enhancement areas as high, medium or low, and the high priority enhancement areas will be addressed by a specific strategy.

And so, the first step in the process is stakeholder outreach. You all may remember we sent a survey out last year, September or October 2024. We sent the survey out to all of you on the Commission, the Commissioners. We sent it to various stakeholders. We sent it to local governments, BCDC staff. As part of the survey, some of the questions that we asked is, based on the enhancement areas we showed you on the previous slide, what are your highest priority enhancement areas that you are interested in that BCDC should work on? We also asked for your high priority enhancement areas, what are the most critical issues you think are important within that specific area?

Now I will go over some of the results from the survey. We sent the survey out to over 3,000 people, and we heard back from 156 total respondents. Here are some of the places in which people worked

who responded to the survey. We heard back from people who worked in state government, local government, members of the public, all across the board. We heard from a huge range of folks.

Here we asked the question basically on enhancement areas and coastal issue areas. What are your top three highest priorities, ranking the different enhancement areas. The top three here are Coastal Hazards, Wetlands and Public Access. We saw very few votes for Marine Debris and Energy and Government Facility Siting. That does not mean that BCDC is not working on those issues. We work across all these issues across the board. We work on them across the agency. This survey was the stakeholders' and survey respondents' opinions on what BCDC should focus on.

We asked the same question in 2020 and largely we saw similar results with Coastal Hazards and Wetlands being ranked number one and number two. The main difference was that Coastal and Estuarine Resources was ranked number three and Public Access was actually ranked number five. And so, we see a big change from 2020 to 2025 where Public Access actually gained a significant share of the votes over the past five years.

For each of the enhancement areas we also asked, what are the most critical issues affecting specific areas. These were the top critical issues for Wetlands. These were the top three issues out of twelve total issues.

Number one was sea level rise and increasing erosion.

Number two was the lack of sufficient transition area for migration of wetlands.

And third was the challenges with sediment management and beneficial reuse.

These were the critical issues for Coastal Hazards. This is three out of twelve critical issues.

Number one was the flooding of shoreline communities and disruption to critical infrastructure.

Number two was challenges with funding for planning and projects.

And then third was sustainability of natural Bay ecosystems.

And finally, for Public Access these were the top three critical issues out of eight total critical issues.

Number one is long-term maintenance of public access.

Number two is inclusive public access opportunities across the board.

And number three was the equal distribution of public access facilities around the Bay.

After stakeholder outreach we moved into Phase I of the assessment. Here we completed in-depth analysis where we summarized research in BCDC and also across the region. Some examples of the work that we did:

We analyzed trends in wetlands, marine debris and the coastal economy, amongst other interest areas.

We analyzed BCDC permits in order to see trends over time.

We also completed mapping analysis and land cover change analysis.

And through all this research and work that was done we were able to assess the region as a whole through the nine enhancement areas that NOAA requires.

I will talk a little bit about a few of the enhancement areas and the specific work that we did.

For the Wetlands enhancement area we looked at BCDC permit data. We looked at acres of restoration that were permitted from 2020 to 2025 and we were able to break down the acres of restoration permitted each year. Here you can see 1,018 total acres of restoration were permitted since 2020. And just a reminder here that we are looking at coastal wetlands and we are not looking at terrestrial wetlands which are outside of our jurisdiction. We saw the vast majority of acreage in restoration in Contra Costa and Solano Counties. We saw restoration across all the counties, really, also in Alameda County, Marin, San Mateo, Santa Clara.

On the right there you can see a map of the 18 wetlands habitat classes across the region. This map is from the Tidal Marsh Extent Memo published by SFEI from earlier this year.

We also looked at the Coastal Hazards Enhancement Area. We took information from the California Office of Emergency Services, essentially assessing the general level of risk for each of the types of hazards. And considering how serious the issue is along our shoreline, the ranking for the types of hazards was consistently high in terms of level of risk.

And then on the right there is a map of coastal hazard and its extent in the Bay and along the shoreline. It is broken down according to tidal inundation, storm surge and groundwater rise.

Then finally, for Public Access we really looked at BCDC permit data for this information. We looked online at resources, the Bay Trail and the Water Trail. And really we were looking at what has been added for public access since 2020. And so, we can see, we are able to really look at since 2020 how many public access sites were added, how many park and open space permits were added, how many acres and miles of shoreline public access, and how many water trail access sites.

On the right there is an image of the Bay Trail. It is an up-to-date image of the Bay Trail including a lot of the segments that were added more recently, especially since 2020.

Through this process we had to arrive at a ranking for the various enhancement areas and so we arrived at the highest priority enhancement areas as Wetlands, Coastal Hazards and Public Access.

For Wetlands we ranked this as a high priority because of the significant ecological loss of wetlands, the historic loss of wetlands that the Bay region has seen, and the strong effort to restore wetlands to 100,000 acres across the region.

For Coastal Hazards, we rank this as a high priority. Sea level rise is an incredibly serious issue that we are dealing with. We also see a lot of emerging research on groundwater rise and vertical land motion. Agencywide we are doing a lot of work on the RSAP and so Coastal Hazards was elevated to a high priority.

And then for Public Access. Public Access is a core mandate of BCDC. There is a lot of work that needs to be done as well with the update to the public access design guidelines as well as a regional assessment of public access. As a result, we arrived at Wetlands, Coastal Hazards and Public Access as a high prioritization.

And it is important to also note and recognize that these are consistent with the priorities we heard from survey respondents and stakeholders. They all consistently ranked Wetlands, Coastal Hazards and Public Access as high from the survey.

And then finally, Wetlands and Coastal Hazards have been designated issues of national importance by NOAA, thereby reinforcing the high prioritization level for those two enhancement areas.

After Assessment Phase I we moved to Assessment Phase II. Here was really an opportunity based on the results of Assessment Phase I to do a deep dive into those specific enhancement areas that were voted as high priority. Based on the survey results and BCDC's view of the direction that the agency will be going, we decided that Coastal Hazards and Wetlands were the two enhancement areas for which we would complete Phase II assessment.

This was a process through which we completed a Phase II assessment for Wetlands and Coastal Hazards. We focused on emerging issues of concern. We looked at significant management changes over the past five years. We really identified management priorities, priority needs and information gaps. We really looked at the work that BCDC has done over the past five years and also collaborated with teams all across BCDC, across regulatory and planning, in order to complete this deeper dive into the various enhancement areas. And so ultimately, we had to come to a decision, should we pursue strategy development for wetlands or coastal hazards?

And ding, ding, ding, Coastal Hazards is the lucky winner. It is the enhancement area for which we will be pursuing a strategy. Although we did not explicitly identify Wetlands Enhancement Area as the area for which we will develop a strategy, wetlands restoration and adaptation is extremely important to coastal hazards adaptation, and we really felt that we could incorporate wetlands as a priority as well as public access priorities in a strategy that we developed for adaptation for coastal hazards.

I will pass it back to Erik for the discussion on the strategy.

Mr. Buehmann continued: As Ujay described, based on that assessment, BCDC developed a strategy for the next five years for how BCDC uses those NOAA 309 funds. All tasks in the strategy will focus on Coastal Hazards but we are going to benefit other areas too.

The strategy includes a five-year work plan that shows a progression towards program improvements. Like I said before a couple of times, Bay Plan amendments, guidance, things like that.

So, to reiterate, there is not a lot of funding for tasks under NOAA 309, so it is not really enough to fund projects individually, but it can be used effectively to supplement or fund a piece of a larger effort. As a result, we drafted the strategy to focus on two main potential tracks. These won't be surprises.

We could use the funds to develop program improvements related to building the RSAP Program. So, for example, use it to help support refining the process for how we review and approve local governments' subregional shoreline adaptation plans under SB 272. It could fund guidance to local governments on the RSAP and SB 272 process, or some technical assistance that we have committed to developing to support local governments preparing those plans.

The second track is to support some of the discussion we have begun with the Rising Sea Level Working Group. The Commissioners on the Working Group have encouraged us to start a process to determine how we bridge the gap between the RSAP and BCDC's other authority. So, for example, BCDC cannot deny a permit for a project on the basis that the project is not consistent with the RSAP or an approved plan under SB 272. So, we could use these funds to explore this governance gap and identify solutions and just work on that process.

If you are interested in reviewing more of the strategy it is on page 68 of the report, which was sent in the mail and is on our website.

The Five-Year Work Plan has an itemized list with steps per year. It does not specify particular projects or tasks. One of the nice things about this funding is it is pretty flexible so we can develop those as we go through the five years of the grant.

So next year when the new funding cycle starts we can identify under these two tracks and determine what the project might be to help support and plug a gap that we see as we are building the RSAP Program or as we are going through this process of the RSAP and BCDC's other authority.

As part of the NOAA required process, which I said is pretty formulaic, we sent out the NOAA Assessment and Strategy for public comment. The public comment period closes on November 3, and instructions on how to provide public comment are found in the Staff Report and on our website.

No Commission action is required on this item. It is just a grant report. Any comments we receive by the public or by Commissioners, we welcome your thoughts and we will incorporate them into the Report. After we incorporate them into the Report and after the public comment period we submit it to NOAA for approval. They have been working very closely with us, so they know what the assessment strategy looks like already. And then we will be posting it on our website.

That concludes our presentation.

Commissioner Gioia chimed in: So, just a process to understand, a very thorough process to go through. A lot of these things overlap too. Really these issues, some of them there's overlapping so you can really achieve multiple objectives. I assume that is what you are going to do. Even though you have got some items at the top here, on Coastal Hazards we can achieve some of the other objectives, right? So, you will look for those multiple goals.

So really the purpose of this assessment and strategy is to really guide how we use the NOAA grant funds to develop program improvements. And then to review issues in the Bay Area that can be addressed through BCDC program improvements, talk about that.

Mr. Buehmann responded: So, a program improvement is like a specific thing. It is like a term of art for NOAA and it means changes to your Coastal Management Program. So, like amendments to the Bay Plan is a program change.

Commissioner Gioia agreed: Right.

Mr. Buehmann continued: But it could also be like if we create technical assistance for a local government how to do an RSAP plan. We can use the funds for that, and that is a program improvement. Materials that are guidance that are not necessarily policies or regulations, right? Those can also be program improvements. It is pretty flexible. I do not know if that answers your question.

Commissioner Gioia acknowledged: Yes, thanks. I appreciate that.

Commissioner Showalter commented: Yes, I am wondering also how important this is in terms of just maintaining our collaboration with NOAA staff. It is not a very big grant, but it does provide a formal connection. Do you see that as one of the most important parts of it?

Mr. Buehmann replied: I would definitely.

Commissioner Showalter added: Or how do you see that?

Mr. Buehmann answered: Yes, I would definitely agree with that. I think it is a tremendous benefit to have them as a resource and it allows us to retain. Every five years we can work together to see what has happened in the last five years, where do we want to work together in the future. They are always available and supportive of us. Yes, I think that is a critical part of this whole thing, even if it is not that much money. Which every nickel counts.

Commissioner Showalter acknowledged: Right.

Mr. Buehmann stated: Having that is really special and important.

Chair Wasserman chimed in: Erik, if I understand the presentation correctly, you are suggesting that there are two possible uses of the funds. And you may have said it, but it did not register with me clearly. What do you envision the process of deciding between those two, assuming we do not come up with any other brilliant idea?

Mr. Buehmann answered: Yes, right. Usually what happens is, the tests are actually 18-month tasks under the grant. And what we do is when it is time to identify what our task is, because we do not have to decide now, we can decide as we go. We will have a get-together as staff and decide where can we plug this money in to help support our existing work, right? So that we set it up so that as we are moving forward building this program or we are doing whatever in the two tracks, we can plug it in because we know.

And it is supposed to eventually build over the five years to a program change, so it is not like you have to do a program change every time. You can build and start supporting materials or start building a process to reach this level. So, we usually work together. It has to align with the strategy and the strategy is pretty specific in how in terms of how it is supposed to lead to a program change, and then implementation of a program change, or evaluation of a program change over five years. So that is how we do it.

And then we work with NOAA about it too. We work with NOAA to make sure it aligns with, they agree that it aligns with the strategy, that they can see the vision for how it is going to end up in a program improvement.

Chair Wasserman asked: How does that decision process come back to the Commission?

Mr. Buehmann explained: It depends on the project, I think. With the RSAP Program when we used the NOAA 309 funds for to support the RSAP BPA we did not come and say, hey, we are doing this. We just did it because we needed it, because we needed to get it done, right? But we could definitely give briefings about that as we go.

Chair Wasserman added: For what it is worth, it is only one voice on the Commission. Both of those are good uses and both are important. I think the 309 money would probably have more benefit and leverage on the second option.

Mr. Buehmann acknowledged: Thanks.

Chair Wasserman asked: Do we have any comments from the public?

(No members of the public addressed the Commission.)

Chair Wasserman continued: Any other comments from the Commission?

Seeing none. Thank you very much for the presentation.

10. Briefing on BCDC's Strategic Plan. Chair Wasserman stated: That brings us to item 10. This is our final agenda item today. Staff will present to the Commission and the public an analysis of the overall progress BCDC has made on its 2023-2025 Strategic Plan.

The presentation will be a bit longer than the ones we have heard before that have concentrated on one or two strategies under each goal. The purpose of the presentation is to fully brief the Commission on

each aspect of the Plan and ask the Chair and Commission to extend the Strategic Plan for an additional year. Executive Director Larry Goldzband will lead things off.

Executive Director Goldzband addressed the Commission: Thank you, Chair Wasserman. I want to apologize to the Commission for not being there in person. But I am very happy that Jessica consented to being Acting Executive Director for an additional week, and I will be back in the chair, at least virtually, starting On Monday.

We want to give you a full-on briefing on the progress we have made since the beginning of working on the Strategic Plan after its adoption by the Commission a few years ago. You will notice that the years are 2023 through 2025, essentially a three-year plan. We will end this, or I will end this presentation by asking essentially for another year, and we will let you know why we think that is important.

You have seen the great pictures. We have many, many more. I think that the thing that we want to really recognize here is that BCDC, and with that *and* in its name, really make sure that the Bay has multiple uses for multiple constituencies, and we will continue to make sure that is at the forefront of all that we do.

You know how the Bay is being affected today. Just so you know, I continue to use this picture, which I believe was taken by Schuyler Olsson of our staff, to introduce any presentation I make on the Bay to any audience, because I think it demonstrates the kinds of challenges that we are facing.

You remember our Mission, and I will read it.

“Protect and enhance San Francisco Bay and advance the Bay’s responsible, productive and equitable uses for this and future generations as we face a changing climate and rising sea levels.”

We do not really see a reason to change that Mission at this point.

Along with our Mission we have Core Values. Here are our Core Values:

We want to be equitable and inclusive.

We want to make sure that our decisions are science-based and data-driven.

We are agile and we are proactive.

We want to be collaborative, we want to provide good service.

And we want to be trusted and held accountable for our actions.

Of all the slides that you will see today I want you to keep these in mind because we want to make sure that you all recognize how we frame our decision-making process and this is one of the great ways in which we do so.

Our Goals, we have five of them.

We want to make sure that we lead the regional planning efforts. Gosh knows you have heard a gazillion times how we do that.

We have wanted to continue to and really greatly improve our regulatory and planning functions so that we can be more unified and consistent internally so that our external stakeholders recognize how we work better.

We want to make sure that we implement our equity initiatives and practices throughout what we do.

There is number 4. Back in 2023 we knew this was going to be a hard one to do but we wanted to make sure that we put it in there. We wanted to communicate more successfully externally with the folks we work with and internally among ourselves.

And finally, fifth, we wanted to actually grow internally so that we are adequately resourced. We can become more responsive and we can be a diverse organization that meets growing challenges.

And, you know, we have done pretty darn well. You will recognize or at least remember this kind of chart. I want to bring you back to where we have been. We have decreased the number that are On Track from 44 to 32. And so you say, Gosh, Larry, that's no good. Well, it actually is. It is because we have actually either completed 27 of those tasks, or we have completed them and they are still ongoing, and that has improved by 18. And we have decreased the number that we have not started by 10. And we have delayed, unfortunately, a few.

So, in other words, we have gone from a very heavy On Track to very much a mixed bag between the those that are On Track and those that have either been Completed or Completed and Ongoing. And as we work through the goals over the next few minutes, my bet is that you will see that we have anywhere from 8 to 12 that if we really wanted to stretch that definition of Completed and Ongoing we may well have been able to include them. But we are a little more conservative than that, and so you will see that going forward. So, I think this demonstrates how we have made a lot of progress over the past year or so, and we will continue to make even more progress over the next year.

So, what we are going to do now is we are going to have Jessica go over the planning process, and then we will go through each of the five goals, and then we will be more than happy to answer questions. So, Jessica, all yours.

Acting Executive Director Fain presented the following: Thanks, Larry. As you should remember, Goal 1 is all about regional planning and policy with a focus on sea level rise adaptation. As I go through a lot of accomplishments that have happened in this goal, I just want to start by acknowledging our incredible staff who have really made all of these accomplishments possible. I am not going to name everyone throughout this, but you know who you are.

Our first objective 1.1 is around successfully leading the Bay Adapt Program to build up frontline communities' ability to adapt. I am proud to say we have accomplished a lot in this area, successfully moving Bay Adapt from strategy to implementation on all fronts.

So, what does that mean? We convene and coordinate through regularly bringing together diverse leadership through our Bay Adapt Implementation Coordinating Group working with regional agency partners on things like the Interagency Sea Level Rise MOU and hosting events like the Rising Together Summit. We track what is happening on sea level rise in the region through things like our Bay Adapt Currents Dashboard and reports like the Bay Adapt Impact Report.

We are focused on funding. So, you all have heard that \$110 billion number a lot when we estimated our regional need. We are now developing a Funding and Investment Strategy with our colleagues at MTC/ABAG. This is going to be a living resource that organizes adaptation projects and funding information to sort, analyze and generate insights to support plan and project development. We are also working closely with partners developing strategies around both public and private funding and financing.

Finally, we educate. We do this through programs like the Shoreline Leadership Academy, which just completed its first academy, and through partnerships with organizations like the Exploratorium and Regional Sea Level Rise Education Program. Our Bay Adapt Program also links with our regulatory improvements efforts but more on that later.

So, a challenge here is just that this is an incredibly dynamic and evolving landscape. Science is changing, funding is changing. Things are always changing. So, our challenge really is how we stay relevant and continue to really push the region forward with all that dynamism.

In terms of what's next, you are going to be hearing from us more about that funding and investment strategy as we bring it forward over the next 6 to 10 months.

We are also poised to have a second Shoreline Leadership Academy in Contra Costa County, starting in January. Phoenix just shared that we have already received 101 applications for this program and are reviewing them now.

And we will continue to coordinate with our regional and state partners to implement the Sea Level Rise MOU.

Here is just a photo of our Rising Together Summit held at the Exploratorium last month where over 300 people attended.

And here is a screenshot of our Bay Adapt Currents Dashboard, where you can look up all sorts of cool facts about how we are doing with respect to a bunch of different metrics on sea level rise adaptation in the region.

We have been able to update a lot of those metrics ever since we launched it this past spring, so we can track the origin and destination of sediment used for beneficial reuse in the region with a new flow chart.

We also host the Bay Area's only regionwide metric tracking, Community Capacity Programs for climate justice and sea level rise education and leadership development.

Objective 1.2 is about the development of the Regional Shoreline Adaptation Plan and I am proud to say we did it.

The Commission adopted the plan last December.

And since then we have launched a regionwide local assistance program to support local governments to meet the requirements of SB 272. Our staff has met with nearly 100 percent of affected cities and counties. We hosted a summer road show of webinars and outreach. While no plans have been formally initiated to date with BCDC, we anticipate three or so plans being initiated this year.

One stat that I am really excited about has to do with our partnership with our sister agency at the Ocean Protection Council. OPC, has awarded, I think it is over \$18 million in planning grants for local jurisdictions in San Francisco Bay. That is 51 percent of the cities required to create SB 272 plans, and that is less than a year since this new framework has been in place.

We have also been focusing a lot on internal program development to meet these new mandates for BCDC. That is both something that has been an accomplishment, but I think our challenge as we move forward, we are bringing on a lot of new staff, you met some of them today. We are developing an entirely new program and process. We do not quite know how and when these plans are going to come in and how fast and when. So, these are all good challenges to have. So, we are trying to anticipate what is going to be coming but also be flexible as we adjust and learn and grow.

In terms of what's next, we are excited to be just working with local governments to review and approve the 51 plans for effective jurisdictions.

Here is a spotlight on one of the great TA tools that we launched this summer, the RSAP Atlas. It is an online mapping tool that is meant to help communities as they develop these plans. It is live now. It provides access to about 65 percent of the data required to complete a plan. We think this is a big help and a big lift for local governments, so they do not have to find all that data themselves and everyone is using the same data sources.

Objective 1.3 is around supporting efforts to restore the Bay's natural resources and increase public access. We advance this by providing research support to a range of efforts. This includes but is not limited to the Wetland Regional Monitoring Program, the Baylands Habitat Map and Resilience Metrics, partnerships and support for various academic proposals.

We support MTC/ABAG in developing a Resilience Project list, which for the first time is part of Plan Bay Area 2050+.

We are also participating in a new Science Consortium being piloted by SFSU EOS Center with a focus on nature-based solutions.

A challenge is always figuring out how you take all of this amazing data and research that is happening out there and operationalize it into decision-making and day-to-day operations.

And in terms of what's next, our data science staff are contributing authors to the state's Fifth California Climate Assessment.

Objective 1.4 is on regional sediment management and increasing beneficial reuse.

For the past three years our Sediment Management Team and Long-Range Planning Team have been working on an EPA grant-funded project called the Sediment for Wetland Adaptation Project, or SWAP. The SWAP has three phases.

We finished the first phase in April with the release of the San Francisco Bay Sediment and Soil Beneficial Reuse Action Plan for wetland restoration adaptation. This was created through a stakeholder collaborative process and is really an action plan that guides agencies, dredgers, flood control managers, restoration practitioners and others on the steps to improve and increase beneficial reuse.

We have had some slight delays in the projects due to some staffing turnover and some contracting, but I think we are well positioned to bring recommendations to the Commission for a potential Bay Plan Amendment on this topic and develop a funding and financing strategy with the help of the Commission's Beneficial Reuse Working Group.

And lastly on planning, 1.5 is to keep the Bay Plan up to date to reflect the changing policy needs of the Bay. Since 2023 you have approved three major Bay Plan Amendments, the Seaport Plan, the Regional Shoreline Adaptation Plan, and the San Francisco Waterfront Special Area Plan this summer.

Some challenges include some things taking a little longer to accomplish than anticipated, but I think they were overcome.

And in terms of what's next, we will bring to you a recommendation later this year or early next year on cartographic updates to the Bay Plan maps, which you initiated last meeting.

We are also working with the State Lands Commission on a study to develop guiding principles around sea level rise, public trust, and how private development that provides adaptation benefits fit into this framework.

And finally, we are coming out of a series of policy issues that we identified many years ago and so we need to think about what are those new policy priorities. Our Long-Range Planning Team is going to be reviewing the Bay Plan and talking to stakeholders and starting to think about what's next. So, with that I will turn it over to Harriet.

Regulatory Director Ross commented: Good afternoon. I have the pleasure of reporting on Goal 2, which is really about doing our work here at BCDC in a more unified way between permitting and planning.

Strategic Objective 2.1 really is about exploring whether we want to expand our regulatory and planning authority and jurisdiction to foster large-scale adaptation projects. Now that SB 272 and the RSAP have been approved we can begin to tackle this question.

We have held two Commissioner Working Group meetings earlier this year to seek guidance on whether we should change our regulatory and planning authority and jurisdiction.

And of course, the challenge with this is really getting to consensus on how to address this issue with the Commission as well as our stakeholders.

We will be putting forward some ideas for a public process in how we can possibly move forward on the topic at the December Rising Sea Level Working Group meeting.

For the next objective, 2.2, we have made great progress in updating our operations to implement our laws and policies more consistently, transparently and efficiently.

We brought forward our first regulation update package to the Commission earlier this summer. We are currently in the public review phase of those proposed regulation changes. Those include streamlining and improving the regionwide permit program, reducing permitting burdens for straightforward and routine activities, and really making other targeted updates to clarify and improve our permitting rules.

We also finalized an internal jurisdiction screening map so we can see whether a proposed project is within our jurisdiction.

We also have updated our Climate Change Policy Guidance to reflect the Ocean Protection Council's revised sea level rise projections, just to name a few of the accomplishments.

And of course, some of the challenges we are facing include a lot of pressure at the state and federal level for legislative reform on permitting, so we will be working hard to balance efficiency and transparency while protecting the Bay's resources.

Over the next year we are looking at creating a public-facing jurisdiction screening map so that others can see and do a first review of whether their project is within our authority and jurisdiction.

We will also be performing research and digitizing public access requirements required by BCDC.

And we will also be updating our Shoreline Plants Guide to address sea level rise and to reflect a traditional ecological knowledge among many other things.

For the next slide here, I just wanted to highlight our formalized pre-application process that was done this summer we shared with the Commission. This replaced an ad hoc approach we have always had for pre-application meetings. Now it is really a formalized framework.

These big changes include where staff work very closely with applicants to outline milestones and the project schedule. We work really early to identify potential issues with the project and come up with a

plan to systematically work to solve as many of these issues as early as possible in the process. The goal of the formalized process is to really come to consensus on many of the issues before an application is even submitted to BCDC.

Here I wanted to highlight that we completed a comprehensive overhaul of our website last year. As part of this effort we entirely rewrote and repackaged the guidance that helps the public, applicants, local governments and decision-makers navigate BCDC's programs.

These resources are written in plain language with an eye to the user experience.

Here on the next slide, Strategic Objective 2.3, I am excited to talk about the accomplishments for increasing the capacity of the Regulatory Division.

First, we were authorized to use our Bay Fill and Abatement funds for an online management system that will not only help regulatory managers or regulatory staff manage permits digitally, but also allow our compliance and enforcement staff in their daily work and the public to eventually access our data more easily.

We completed a training series that enhanced staff capacity to evaluate and support nature-based solutions such as habitat restoration projects within the permitting process.

We were also able to increase permitting staff due to additional budgets to implement SB 272, so that was very exciting.

We also continued our involvement in the BRRIT or the Bay Area Restoration Regulatory Integration Team, which allows for closer interagency coordination between the federal and the state to get permits issued.

One challenge that we have had to deal with really includes the continuing and increasing development pressures on the shoreline. One of our main priorities this coming year will be to select and implement a regulatory management database. And that is it for me.

Enforcement and Compliance Manager Chamberlain continued: Hi, I am Isabel Chamberlain, the Enforcement and Compliance Manager here at BCDC, and I will take you guys through Strategic Objective 2.4.

The accomplishments: BCDC has put together its first Compliance Procedure.

As some of you know, the Compliance Program at BCDC is less than three years old. We have spent the last three years creating the foundations of this Compliance Program.

We have launched a Permit Deliverables Tracker for systemic monitoring. We have a very comprehensive spreadsheet that tracks all deliverables for every permit since July of last year.

And we have strengthened coordination with Regulatory to align compliance and plan review. We meet regularly with the Technical Team to stay on top of plan reviews and ensure deliverables are met within the required timeframe.

Some of the challenges we have had:

We need to integrate Enforcement, Compliance and Permitting data within the new database. As Harriet mentioned, they are working on this database right now. The Enforcement, Compliance and Permitting Teams use three different systems, and so having one will integrate a lot more and hopefully streamline efforts.

And what's next for the Compliance Team here at BCDC. Again, better integration with Compliance and Enforcement roles within Regulatory and brief Enforcement Committee on progress and next steps to keep them more informed with the day-to-day of the Enforcement and Compliance Teams. Thank you.

Ms. Armenta presented the following: Hi. Good afternoon. I am Phoenix Armenta, Senior Manager for Climate Equity and Community Engagement. Next, I am going to talk about the equity portions of the Strategic Plan.

Strategic Objective 3.1 calls for us to prioritize BCDC's Environmental Justice Program by identifying BCDC's specific policies, programs and practices that have led, or currently lead, to inequitable outcomes, and work to solve them.

To that end, the EJ Advisors Program, which after completing two years, engaged in an Organizational Development Assessment by consultants MIG, which resulted in the completion of an 18-month work plan that we are currently carrying out.

Part of that work plan was to do a set of toxic tours.

Our first toxic tour happened at the Campus/Zeneca site in Richmond and included 18 staff members and two Commissioners.

We also hosted a toxic tour for staff this September at Cooley Landing.

With support from our NOAA fellow we began development of a Meaningful Community Engagement Guidance document for permit analysts to help them to understand the implementation of our EJ policies.

The EJ Team also provided support for numerous permits, including Cargill, the Oakland Turning Basin and Eagle Rock.

We have experienced some challenges with high staff turnover and our assistant EJ Manager out on maternity leave, leading to low staffing on the EJ Team.

But next we are planning to do another toxic tour for the early spring in South San Francisco. We are hoping to record the tour so that more people can enjoy it.

And we are bringing our Meaningful Community Engagement Document to the EJ Working Group in the winter.

Strategic Objective 3.2 is to complete, adopt and implement BCDC's Equity Plan.

I am excited to say that from our Equity Plan, one action item, to develop a comprehensive outreach list for recruiting diverse candidates, has been completed, and 19 action items are in progress. They include things like implementing the Shoreline Leadership Academies and developing a Tribal Engagement Plan.

We face some challenges due to the current political sensitivities around DEI, but are looking forward to fully implementing our Equity Plan with the help of our Equity Team.

For Strategic Objective 3.3 staff have engaged in a variety of equity-based trainings, including a Beyond Land Acknowledgement training with the Redbud Resource Group, plain language training, trainings on facilitation skills and explaining science to the public, as well as several in-person EJ Advisors meetings.

Some of the challenges we face is that the focus on federal funding has shifted, causing us to pivot from environmental justice training to focus on tribal and other trainings.

Coming up in February, all staff will be engaged in an all-day tribal training as well as a training on CNRA's Tribal Consultation Plan.

We also have compiled a list of a variety of trainings that staff will be able to choose from in the upcoming months.

For Strategic Objective 3.4 we collaborated with a variety of government organizations to identify what needs to be changed on a policy level.

We worked with the Coastal States Organization on their EJ policy, which they ultimately chose not to adopt, unfortunately.

We also worked with the California Natural Resources Agency on a Tribal Consultation Policy.

The changing political environment has offered some challenges in navigating this objective, but next we are planning on collaborating with the EJ leads and the California Coastal Partners Group to do an evaluation of environmental justice at the state level.

Strategic Objective 3.5 tasks us with developing long- term relationships between BCDC and the Bay Area's tribal communities. We have engaged in numerous tribal outreach efforts and have set up monthly meetings with the Confederated Villages of Lisjan to keep them updated on any issues related to their tribe.

We have also posted an interim Tribal Engagement Policy on our website and are working on the final policy now.

We have seen some challenges in expanding our network of tribal relationships and plan to put more efforts toward that in the coming years.

Next up, we are aligning our Tribal Engagement Policy with the recently released policy from the California Natural Resources Agency, and we plan to pay tribal members to be part of a focus group to evaluate our policy. That's it for me. Thank you.

Director of Legislative and External Affairs Gervase addressed Commissioners: Thank you, Phoenix. Welcome to Goal 4, Commissioners. Goal four is my personal favorite because it is all about improving our communications and public reach.

Strategic Objective 4.1 is about doing the hard work communicating with and listening to stakeholders in the Bay, Sacramento, as well as our nation's capital.

Outreach materials. We have produced key materials for subjects including permitting reform, the RSAP, as well as BCDC's jurisdiction.

Outreach materials are only effective if they are delivered, so Larry and I have worked this year to establish relationships with legislative members and staff. We also attended the Coastal States Organization Conference in Washington, DC in March, and did the same with the Bay Area congressional delegation.

We have also published and delivered our annual reports for 2023 and 2024 to the Governor's Office, the California Natural Resources Agency and the Legislature.

Finally, as Harriet mentioned, we successfully obtained legislation and funding to authorize a digital database for BCDC, which was a capitalization of the relationships we established earlier in the year.

Our key next steps and challenges include starting a regional conversation around governance gaps in the Bay Area, as Harriet also mentioned; and continuing our conversations with the Legislature on steps we are taking to improve our permitting processes.

Objective 4.2 is about expanding capacity and improving processes for communications. Last year we hired our first full-time communications professional, which would be myself, and we are currently working to add another, a Public Affairs Specialist, later this year.

This new capacity has allowed us to expand our reach on social media. For example, our Instagram followers are up by 40 percent. And we are going to keep working to accelerate this trend and continue to improve our social media reach.

We have conducted several helpful trainings for staff working on the website, and we have also hired a new webmaster to continue to improve our online presence.

We are continuing to be challenged by the amount of communications work exceeding our current capacity to perform it. And we definitely still need to put in more work to refine and maintain our digital brand.

Objective 4.3, this one is about creating a comprehensive training program for staff, Commissioners as well as our Advisory Board Members.

As we have seen from some of the other goals, BCDC is offering training, but not necessarily in a systematized way yet. This is going to change in the future, with HR working on such a training program for our staff. And on this, as in many respects, we do have challenges to staff capacity as we do have a small HR Team available to work on this. We are currently working on hiring an HR Specialist among other positions to focus on training staff.

That's it for Goal 4 and I believe I will turn it back over to Larry to wrap us up with Goal 5.

Executive Director Goldzband addressed participants: Thanks, Rylan. I am going to handle Goal 5, which is very much an internal one, because, and you have already met Susie Ledesma a few times; Susie has been with us for I think six weeks now as our Director of Operations and Technology. And I am afraid that if I had asked her to do all of this she might not have returned for the seventh week because learning all of this has been a great challenge for her but she is doing great, so let me do Goal 5.

Strategic Objective 5.1, we have to increase our capacity so that we can actually serve the folks we need to serve, and we have done that pretty well. BCDC is hiring, as you have noticed, due to SB 272. And we have a great budget guru, Sean Williamson, who has been able to figure out how we can actually use our dollars more efficiently.

In addition, just as important as we talk about our planning and our legal and our regulatory work, our IT and Pperations staff is growing by a bit finally and that is incredibly important.

But our challenges remain, which is how do we actually create an institutional way to continue to improve our organization and continue to improve our processes and workflow. And that is not easy to do when you have a small staff who have to literally put out the wash every day whether they are dealing with permits or plans. So, we have to figure out how to reward staff for taking on these very difficult challenges while they are also doing the stuff that they have to do.

What's next? Well, we are very fortunate that the Climate Bond passed, because it has the potential to directly and indirectly support additional planning and regulatory initiatives. I want you to put a little bookmark right around this one. At some point next year you will start hearing about how senior staff and managers have started talking about whether and how to reorganize BCDC internally to create greater efficiency among and within our staff.

One of the things we have to do is recruit, hire and retain staff that reflect the Bay Area's diverse population.

Well, we have done a really, really good job of expanding and institutionalizing our outreach for our open positions. For example, our Senior Engineer position, we were able to actually work with something like four or five engineering associations to get the word out, in addition to using a couple of our Commissioners to do so as well.

And I am really, really happy to say that out of our Undergraduate Internship Program we had our first hire, albeit by the Coastal Commission, but we will take it.

The challenges, however, are pretty enormous. We have a lot of growth; and you are seeing even more growth. And that requires that successful institutional training system and that has to be done in a hybrid work environment. And you have heard me say this before, I will say it again. I think we will always be hybrid, but hybrid has both its advantages and its limitations.

So, what are we doing next? Well, you have heard about the fact that our HR folks are going to start creating a more formal and institutional training program. And that will also include EJ outreach in terms of making sure that we go toward making sure that our staff very much is diverse.

We have always said, and we will continue to say, that we need to work within the administration, within the executive branch, to level up staff-based salaries. And that is because, candidly, the state does not pay well compared to local and regional governments.

Well, we have had some accomplishments. Over the past couple of years we have actually been able to increase, because the state has put its weight behind it, our CPA salaries by about 15 percent. We have advocated with the Coastal Conservancy and the Coastal Commission for geographic base pay and disparity pay. And we have been able to reclassify a number of positions which both better reflect their job duties and, coincidentally, offer higher salaries. And so that has all benefited our staff.

That being said, we have churn, and we will continue to have churn because the state pays less and our jobs are more stressful than many of the jobs in local and regional government, with all due respect.

And of course, the unsettled economy and the federal government workforce issues, well, they actually offer BCDC more job applicants, which is great. But whoever would have thought that 150 people would actually apply for a BCDC position, which is what happened actually earlier this year. And having our managers go through 150 different applications, that takes an awful lot of time. I am not complaining, but it does make it more stressful.

So, what's next? Well, I do not know what is going to happen next year. It is the last year of the Newsom Administration, combined with upcoming collective bargaining processes. Something is going to change, and we are simply going to have to roll with the punches and make it as best as we can.

Our last strategic objective is, I think, an incredibly important one. It has always been our great desire to increase our IT capacity to improve work processes, and we finally figured out, I think, a way to do it.

First of all, over the past few years, Andrew Chin and Elsa Gomez and the entire admin staff have worked really, really well, and our IT security has improved by leaps and bounds. And that is incredibly important because that is something that BCDC along with every other organization in the state is graded on.

And you have seen our new website. It is heads and tails better than the former one. But it is too much work for two people. And when you are growing like we are growing, about 30 percent over three years, it is even harder.

And when you talk about creating or at least buying and helping to create a new database, that is going to stretch IT even more thin. And we need, because we are hybrid and because we are growing, we need to better be able to communicate with each other at all times.

So how are we going to do that? Well, we have, like I said, Susie is our new Director of Ops and Tech. She is learning about us, and she has already made some changes and she is doing a great job. We are hiring a third IT staff member, which I think is important.

I am hoping that next year we will be able to show off BCDC's first comprehensive database, which I think is really, really important and could very well be work altering. It should be work altering and we are looking forward to that.

So where do we go from here? Jessica stole my thunder right off the bat. This cannot be done without staff. We have a staff that has grown over the past four or five years. It is, with all due respect to all other staffs before it, the best we have ever had. They are committed to their jobs. I think they really like working for BCDC, and we really want to make sure that we do not burn them out.

We should say the same thing for our Commissioners. We could not do this without your help, whether it be in the working groups, whether it be in the phone calls and emails that I get, or that senior staff or that managers have discussions with you all. You are a tremendously important part of making this work and we do not want to forget that.

I want to go back to the values that we talked about, and the one that I really want to talk about is being responsive. BCDC, for years was this little insular place that only the cognoscenti knew about. We are not like that anymore. And so, the fact that we have to be more and more responsive because we are getting more and more things to do. We are having more and more conversations about regionalism. And the Bay shoreline is under more and more pressure. It is not going away. And so, with this dynamic landscape politically that we are in we need to figure out over the next six months how that is going to continue to play out.

We need to learn from how we are working with the Regional Shoreline Adaptation Plan. A brand new thing created from whole cloth by our staff with your help. We need to learn over the next six months or nine months how we actually move that forward. And we need to continue to learn about our - the way we are improving our Regulatory Program and our regulatory processes.

And I think if we can do that over the next nine months, say through June, I think we will be in much, much better shape to come to you and say, okay, now is the time to start learning about and figuring out our next Strategic Plan. I think by then when we go through this you will see that we will have increased our Completed and Ongoing/Completed tasks by at least another dozen. I think we will be in great shape to look at you and say, this has been a very successful plan and now we need to grow from that.

So, with that, Chair Wasserman, I think we are all happy to answer any questions.

Chair Wasserman acknowledged: Thank you, Larry.

Kat, do we have any comments from the public?

(No members of the public addressed the Commission.)

Chair Wasserman continued: Thank you. Commissioner comments?

Commissioner Ahn commented: I am glad, Larry, you addressed a lot, as did staff, about outreach and making BCDC a better known agency. I think one of the keys is the EJ Working Group, which I will be calling Commissioners personally, just to make sure that we are activating that group upcoming and brainstorming ways in which we can engage the public better.

My question is actually for Isabel around, I think it was the section on integrating processes. And I noticed going even to the supplementary document there is a bit about outreach to local planning departments that seemed to be in the yellow zone a little held up. Can you speak a little bit more about that and how we are engaging local governments?

Ms. Chamberlain replied: Sure. Was there a section? Yes, I think Harriet's team is actually taking this one on. Yes. We are supporting but it is her team that is leading the charge.

Ms. Ross spoke: Yes. So, that is upcoming. I did not highlight that. We are still in the beginning stages of planning it. We are looking at combining with Compliance, Enforcement and with the support of our Public Information Officer. Our plan is to do some type of either open house to share BCDC's policies and laws with our constituents. That is one idea.

We would eventually like to be able to hit every single city and county within our jurisdiction and to leave materials behind. We are basically just trying to get ahead of the curve. Many others just do not know our full process and so then that puts more and more pressure on Permitting, Enforcement and Compliance.

Executive Director Goldzband chimed in: May I add to that in just one way? One of the great benefits of the RSAP, and Jessica talked about this, is our outreach to local governments through the Regional Shoreline Adaptation Plan. So, it is almost like I think we are going to be able to use the RSAP Outreach Program as sort of a vanguard or sort of a wedge that we can use to follow on with the ideas that Harriet

and Isabel and Rylan and everyone have. I think you will see an awful lot more of that next year. We are starting to plan it now.

We could not have done it, candidly, without Rylan, without a PIO and without things to actually share. I think we are going to be in pretty good shape next year to really begin this process.

Commissioner Showalter inquired: I wanted to ask something about the science-based and data-driven part of the Strategic Plan. And by the way, this was a great presentation. We have been waiting for it for several meetings, and it was worth waiting for, good job.

Anyway, as we move forward with sea level rise protections and the RSAP we want to make sure that all the projects people put forward work together. That the project that we put in one place does not induce flooding in another place.

So, to do that you really need to have a Bay model. I know UC Berkeley several years ago under Mark Stacey did some modeling that showed that. But I just want to bring that up again as something that we need to do, maybe not do this year, but in the next few years we need to think about how that can be done.

In addition to doing modeling to test whether or not proposed projects will induce flooding somewhere else or how well they will work, it could also be a very powerful tool for testing the distribution of different kinds of projects.

For instance, if we were to put in marshes around 80 percent of the Bay, would that work? Could we do that? What would it cost? What else would be left? I think that there are a number of planning questions that really could be asked.

So, I just want to bring this up as something we should be working on. And because it will need to be ongoing it is not really appropriate to be done by a college professor as sort of a part of helping someone get a PhD, it is a more ongoing thing. So, I think we need to really think about how can we make that work long time and I just want to bring that up as a food for thought. But I would be glad for any comments any staff has to make.

Ms. Fain chimed in: I think that is a great point, Commissioner Showalter. I think we are still at BCDC a little bit in the early days of what exactly that, I am not a modeler, but what that model would be. We have been engaging with some really interesting conversations with folks at Deltares who are developing an open-source Bay-wide model. I do not want to put anything out there before it is ready to be put out there, but I think there's some interesting conversations that we are having and feeling around to kind of see where that type of solution might exist.

Chair Wasserman noted: I do not see any other hands. I want to make a couple comments. One following up on Commissioner Ahn's comment. I think, and I am happy to participate offline, that we need to explore what organizations are out there that bring planning departments together. That either do so already or are in a position to do so. That may be a way to amplify our own efforts.

One example would be East Bay EDA, that I believe has a group of planning directors from Alameda and Contra Costa counties, and I cannot remember if they meet jointly or separately, that we can just more efficiently get out.

Because as much as we would like to get to each planning department individually, we do not have the resources to do that in an efficient way, so I think we just need to explore that.

I want to join in thanking staff for an excellent presentation. I think that Larry's suggestion that we do not attempt to update this Strategic Plan at least until next June so that we get the additional information from the efforts that are out there right now makes a lot of sense. I do not think we need to take action on that, although if there are disagreements, I am certainly happy to hear from anybody. And if I do not hear from anybody, I think we are going to proceed on that basis. I think that concludes this item.

11. Adjournment. There being no further business the Commission meeting was adjourned at 3:20 p.m.