



CITIZENS COMMITTEE TO COMPLETE THE REFUGE

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Glen Kramer, Chair
Planning Commission
City of Newark
37101 Newark Blvd.
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February 5, 2008

Dear Mr. Kramer and Members of the Planning Commission:

Tomorrow night the Newark planning commission will meet to develop a land use plan for Areas 3 and 4. The Fremont Argus recently published an article about the new Ohlone College "green" campus that has been completed within Area 3 (2/1/08, *Ohlone College dedicates Newark's new "green" building*). In that article state senator Ellen Corbett is quoted, "You're even going to teach the remediation of wetlands here," noting the plans to provide an environmental studies degree at the campus. The campus has been touted by lieutenant governor John Garamendi as being the leader in green building.

Prior to completion of the new green campus, the City of Newark had signed on to the U.S. Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement, and agreed to become a "Cool City," which means the city will "Strive to meet or beat the Kyoto Protocol targets in their own communities, through actions ranging from anti-sprawl land-use policies..." Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions will play a critical role in achieving the goals set forth in the Climate Protection Agreement. A major goal of the future planning for Areas 3 and 4 should be that the uses designated do not exacerbate greenhouse gas emission levels.

The City's actions are consistent with the leadership role the state of California has taken in dealing with the issue of climate change. Not only has the state focused its attention on the issue of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, it has also begun to take a hard look at land-use planning issues such as flood hazard and last year passed into law legislation that "encourages" local governments to consider flood risk before developing in a floodplain. Area 4 is located within the 100-year floodplain and the majority of the site would be inundated by a one-meter sea-level rise according the mapping released by the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC).

In determining the land-use plan for Areas 3 and 4, but in particular Area 4, the City of Newark has the opportunity to continue to distinguish itself as a leader in the arena of responsible planning. The issues raised above are not the only reasons the plans displayed at the last community workshop are inappropriate for Area 4. There are serious public safety issues including emergency response time and access, traffic ingress and egress, seismic and liquefaction issues, etc. The Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge has provided comments in response to the public scoping period for the Notice of Preparation of an environmental impact report. We also submitted comments subsequent to the last community workshop for the specific area plan. We are attaching these comments for your review.

Due to the very real constraints posed by the lands within Area 4, we hope the City of Newark will consider an alternative plan that will preserve and restore the lands within Area 4 rather than trying to force development that would be inconsistent with the new direction of reasoned and responsible planning being pursued by the state government, and could prove to be a financial liability for the city in the future.

Sincerely,

Carin High

CCCR Board Member