



**METROPOLITAN  
TRANSPORTATION  
COMMISSION**

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## *Memorandum*

TO: Administration Committee

DATE: September 5, 2007

FR: Executive Director

W.I.:

RE: Resolution No. 3824 to Accept State Funds for Assessment of Sea-Level Rise on the San Francisco Bay

MTC staff requests the Committee approve Resolution No. 3824 to authorize the Executive Director or his designated representative to enter into a fund transfer agreement with the State of California to accept \$75,000 in state funding for an assessment of the economic impact of sea-level rise on the San Francisco Bay.

Climate-induced sea-level rise will put coastal areas such as the San Francisco Bay at significant risk of flooding. A 1990 study of economic impacts of a sea-level rise on the San Francisco Bay concluded a one-meter sea-level rise would threaten existing commercial, residential, industrial, and transportation structures valued at \$48 billion (in 1990 dollars) around the perimeter of the San Francisco Bay. Building or strengthening levees and sea walls to protect existing high-value development was estimated to require a capital investment of approximately \$1 billion (in 1990 dollars) and would require an additional \$100 million per year in ongoing maintenance. The report also noted that substantial areas of the Bay, especially wetlands and marshes, could not be protected with infrastructure and would likely be damaged or lost.

Several important conditions have changed since the early 1990s, spotlighting the need for a new assessment. Estimates of the speed and extent of sea-level rise have changed. The economic value of threatened areas around the San Francisco Bay has risen due to accelerated development and substantial increases in property values. The cost of building and maintaining protective structures may also have risen. In addition, new analytical tools allow a far more accurate assessment of both the vulnerable areas and the characteristics of development in those areas. And more public concern about the impacts of climate change has led to greater political interest in understanding climate vulnerabilities and in identifying possible legislative, market, and regulatory responses.

This updated assessment will help decision makers and the public understand and explore the potential risks of sea-level rise and possible policies for reducing those risks. The assessment will be a collaborative effort by the Bay Conservation and Development Commission, the Pacific Institute, Caltrans and MTC. Caltrans will provide \$75,000 toward the total cost of \$105,300; BCDC, the Pacific Institute and MTC will provide the remainder through cash match and in-kind services.

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Steve Heminger

SH/LK

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