



December 17, 2013

Matthew H. Hymel
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Honorable Board of Supervisors
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San Rafael, CA 94903

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Re: 2014 LEGISLATIVE PLAN AND GUIDELINES

Dear Supervisors:

RECOMMENDATION: Approve, with modifications as may be deemed appropriate by your Board, the proposed:

- 2014 Federal Legislative Plan as contained herein;
- 2014 State Legislative Plan as contained herein; and
- 2014 Legislative Policy Guidelines contained in Attachment A

OVERVIEW

We bring to your Board the proposed legislative plan for the 2014 calendar year. As always, your Board retains the opportunity to amend the plan as warranted during the year to reflect new or emerging legislative priorities. There are several priority items within our proposed 2014 plan, including:

- **Affordable housing**, requiring the State Department of Housing and Community Development to develop criteria to clarify under what conditions it will approve an affordable housing density lower than a community's required default density when considering a housing element;
- **Flood protection and watershed management**, particularly by supporting and influencing potential State water bond legislation for the 2014 Statewide ballot;
- **Improved access to health care**, including efforts to preserve the Federal Affordable Care Act;
- **Protecting existing revenue sources**, particularly in light of ongoing Federal budget challenges, as well as any new State realignment proposals; and
- **Climate change**, supporting Federal and State action to assist the County and the Bay Area in meeting its climate change goals.

STATE PLATFORM

The State's financial position is improving. In its FY 2014-15 Fiscal Outlook, the Legislative Analyst's Office projected that, under current policies, the State budget will end with surpluses for the next five years. The State's temporary personal income tax rate increases as a result of Proposition 30, approved by voters in 2012, are partly responsible for this relative budget stability, along with recovery in the housing market and economy statewide.

The Governor has been restrained with respect to new program spending proposals, which we expect may continue into his January budget proposal next month. The State may also propose another phase of realigned programs to counties for FY 2014-15. As a result, we will need a continuing focus of the County's legislative efforts on ensuring sufficient funding is provided for any newly realigned programs, and/or to minimize the local impacts of any potential State or Federal budget reductions.

We are proposing three Marin-sponsored bills for the coming year, including bills to address:

- **Affordable housing**, specifically to require the State Department of Housing and Community Development, as mentioned above, to clarify for cities and counties under what conditions it will approve an affordable housing density lower than a community's required default density when considering a housing element;
- **The previous State Property Tax Postponement Program**, which had allowed, until the State eliminated the program several years ago, eligible seniors, blind and disabled owners to postpone the payment of property taxes until death or upon sale of their property; and
- **Administrative Contracting for the Open Space District**, requesting amendments to raise contract amounts from \$10,000 to \$25,000 for professional services contracts for which the general manager may administratively bind the Marin County Open Space District (as has been done already for several other park or open space districts statewide to streamline administrative procedures).

FEDERAL PLATFORM

In acknowledgement of continued fiscal challenges, Congress instituted a ban on earmarks in Federal Fiscal Year 2011, which has since severely constrained the ability of local agencies to receive Federal funding for local projects. However, the draft legislative plan continues to indicate our top priorities in case any opportunities should arise over the course of the year, in particular with regard to grant funding opportunities. Highlights of these priority Federal funding requests include:

- Seeking additional funding for watershed management and ecosystem restoration projects, including for example the **Corte Madera Creek** and **Santa Venetia Levee/Las Gallinas Creek Flood Control** projects, to address flood control and levee repair issues;
- Seeking **offsets to local impacts from Federal lands**, including portions of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard within the Point Reyes National Seashore, for example;
- Seeking continued funding to support research into the above-average rates of **Breast Cancer** in Marin County; and
- Supporting efforts to identify funding for the **Marin Emergency Radio Authority** next generation communications system.

Staff will also continue efforts to work with The Transportation Authority of Marin, Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit, and the Marin County Transit District regarding legislative advocacy for countywide transportation issues to better ensure local coordination of priorities among our Federal delegation. As always, the County's

Federal and State legislative advocacy resources will also remain available to assist in the implementation of your Board's most critical countywide projects and issues.

Given fiscal challenges faced at both the State and Federal level, our plan includes initiatives that may not be achievable in the short-term. As opportunities arise, however, the plan provides policy direction to guide our legislative program in a manner consistent with your Board's long-term vision for the County.

Please feel free to contact us should you have any questions or concerns.

Submitted by:

Reviewed by:

Daniel Eilerman
Deputy County Administrator

Matthew H. Hymel
County Administrator