



March 29, 2024

James Corless, Executive Director
Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG)
1415 L Street, Suite 300
Sacramento, CA. 95814

Subject: 2025 Discussion Scenario/Improving Access to Beale Air Force Base

Dear Mr. Corless:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the 2025 Discussion Scenario as it pertains to the update of the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Plan (MTIP) and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)/Blueprint. Yuba County, the City of Wheatland, and Beale Air Force Base have been working jointly to improve access to Beale Air Force Base and protect the Base's mission and role in the Sacramento Region. We appreciate SACOG Staff and members of the SACOG Board's willingness to conduct a site tour of the base on April 29th and have a presentation by Base command staff at the SACOG Board meeting on May 16th.

Beale Air Force base is very important in terms of international and national security as it hosts both the US Air Force and the US Space Command. The Base's role in most recent world conflicts has been pivotal and is planned to grow over the coming years.

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission has worked closely with the City of Fairfield and Solano County to ensure Travis Air Force base has unimpeded access from Interstate 80 and Highway 12. The Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada has worked closely with Clark County to ensure unimpeded access to Nellis Air Force Base from Interstate 15. Both MPO's acknowledge the important mission of these bases and understand they are very large employers for those regions.

Beale Air Force Base is located immediately adjacent to designated disadvantaged communities in Yuba County. SACOG's emphasis on the triple bottom line of equity, environment, and economy are all present at Beale in its racially diverse staff, its variety of living wage jobs, the Base's sustainable development, and its protection of its environmentally sensitive areas. The base is a large driver of the economies of Yuba, Sutter, Placer, and Sacramento counties who enjoy the

multiplier economic impact of the Base's presence in the region since it was established in 1942. A recent IMPLAN study of the economic impact of Beale Air Force Base documents the fact that the base had a \$1.004 Billion impact on the regional economy in 2022. Beale Air Force Base is a proud member of the Air Force's Project Quesada, an Air Combat Command wide initiative, to reach Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI) and Minority Serving Institutions (MSI) in the local areas surrounding Beale.

Beale Air Force Base is one of the largest employers in the Sacramento Region and currently employs over 7,000 military and civilian personnel in Yuba County. These personnel reside on-base, but the majority of the personnel live in Yuba, Sutter, Placer, and Sacramento Counties. Beale's important national security mission continues to evolve and over the next 10 years additional staff and personnel will be assigned to the Base.

The Base is accessed via State Highway 65 which is very congested. This causes thousands of staff members who currently arrive and depart from the base to be negatively impacted on a daily basis. Important deliveries of goods and services are also made daily to the Base and are negatively impacted by the existing conditions.

The South Beale Road Interchange and East Wheatland Expressway projects are on your list of projects dated March 26, 2024. Both projects provide for safe access to relieve congestion and if improved, could both provide viable means to access the Base. Both projects are needed for Beale Air Force Base to fulfill its current mission and for future expansion. Without these projects, congestion will continue to result in increased emissions as staff members and deliveries wait in the existing congestion to access the Base or navigate around the congestion to get to their homes and workplaces near the Base.

In the recent past, SACOG played a large role in the efforts to prevent the closure of McClellan Air Force Base and Mather Air Force Base, both of which closed under the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process in the 1980's. Unlike those bases which closed due to many factors including poor access, there is an opportunity to keep the current base viable by ensuring that it has adequate access. This could save thousands of jobs for the Sacramento Region, reduce emissions from congestion at the Base, and provide two safe access points preventing additional fatalities and additional traffic accidents in the area. Studies by our traffic consultant, Fehr & Peers, for the project study reports for both the South Beale Road and East Wheatland Expressway projects confirms the projects will be essentially VMT neutral as the access points are for an existing employer and serve the existing area covered by the Wheatland General Plan and Yuba County General Plan.

We look forward to our upcoming meetings and site visit to further demonstrate the extremely positive impacts the Base has on the Sacramento Region, as well as the great importance of the Base operations in critical aspects of the nation and the world. Until our visit, we respectfully request that the Project Approval and Environmental Document (PA/ED) phase of both projects be included in the "Preferred Scenario" for the MTP, Blueprint, and the MTIP to ensure that the critical Base missions can be carried out without impact from lack of appropriate transportation

Mr. James Corless – SACOG

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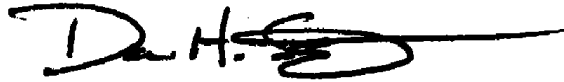
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improvements. We have a meeting with SACOG staff scheduled for April 10, 2024 to discuss these projects in further detail.

Regards,



Sam Bunton, Director of Public Works
County of Yuba



Dane Schilling, City Engineer
City of Wheatland

CC: Commander Church, Beale Air Force Base
Congressman Doug LaMalfa
Congressman Kevin Kiley
Assemblyman James Gallagher
Yuba County Supervisor Gary Bradford (SACOG Board Member)
Wheatland Councilperson Angela Teter (SACOG Board Member)
Placer County Supervisor Shanti Landon
Placer County Supervisor Suzanne Jones (SACOG Board Member)
Placerville Mayor Michael Saragosa (SACOG Board Chair)
Yuba City Mayor Shon Harris (SACOG Board Member)
Marysville Mayor Chris Branscum (SACOG Board Member)
Lincoln Councilman Paul Joiner (SACOG Board Member)
Kevin Mallen, County Administrator, County of Yuba
Bill Zenoni, City Manager, City of Wheatland
Daniel Chatigny, County Executive Officer, County of Placer
Matt Click, Executive Director, Placer County Transportation Planning Agency