

AGENDA ITEM 9: Local Food Assessment for Yolo and Sacramento Delta Communities

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Presented by: David Shabazian, Sacramento Area Council of Governments

Requested Action: Receive report on Local Food Assessment for Yolo and Sacramento Delta Communities

Background: The Delta Protection Commission’s Vision 2030 strategic plan seeks to stimulate agricultural-based economic development in a manner that protects and enhances the Delta’s cultural, ecological and agricultural values. As part of this effort, the Commission funded a Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) case study on potential strategies to preserve and enhance the long-term viability of agriculture in the Delta portion of Sacramento and Yolo counties. SACOG utilized tools developed from the Rural-Urban Connections Strategy program, which is SACOG’s effort to provide information and analysis for more comprehensive regional planning by illuminating the economic and environmental value of the Central Valley’s rural lands.

The case study assessed current agricultural conditions by developing a field-level model of the study area and investigated emerging market opportunities to stimulate further economic development. A finding was that Delta agriculture is well positioned to capitalize on the rapidly expanding demand for locally-grown food in the Sacramento and Bay Area regions.

Infrastructure barriers, particularly the lack of mid-scale processing facilities, could impede the expansion of a Delta local food system. The case study conducted an in-depth financial analysis of expanding and creating new agricultural infrastructure through a food hub facility, which would offer aggregation, packing, processing, storage, marketing, and distribution capacity. The project team found the food hub model to be financially feasible for the hub operator and supplying farmer.

The case study conducted a range of agricultural scenarios to detail the magnitude of economic, environmental, and other impacts from potential cropping pattern changes. The three scenarios—continuing recent trends, advancing a food hub investment, and supporting agritourism – demonstrate possible strategies that Delta stakeholders may explore to accelerate growth in the local food system.

David Shabazian will present the results of the *Local Food Assessment for Yolo and Sacramento Delta Communities*. Mr. Shabazian has been in the land use planning and economic development field since 1990. He has been with SACOG for 16 years, currently as the Program

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Manager for the Rural-Urban Connections Strategy. He has been SACOG's lead on floodplain management and water resource issues and is a former member of the Delta Vision Stakeholders Coordination Group. He received both a bachelor's degree (Agricultural Economics) and a master's degree (Transportation Technology and Policy) from UC Davis.