We were privileged to hear from Deputy Director Maureen Toms, AICP, of the Contra Costa Department of Conservation and Development, with John Kopchik, Director of the Policy Planning Division. Currently the Department is undertaking a major task - updating the County General Plan, something that happens very seldom. This includes updating zoning maps and land use maps. As part of Envision Contra Costa 2040, they have presented their outreach to about 30 of an anticipated 80 communities and invite comments from residents. Issues of greenhouse gas emissions, rising sea levels (particularly in Martinez, the Delta, and West County), and a “climate action plan” sparked some lively debate with our members.

Despite controversy over climate change being man-made or natural, the focus is on adapting to changing weather conditions.

To express your viewpoint and follow the process go to: https://envisioncontracosta2040.org

You can get more information, sign up for notifications from this page, or click on “share your opinion”. You are encouraged to attend one or more meetings at any of the locations.

For information on the study regarding rising sea levels, go to: https://explorer.adaptingtorisingtides.org/learn

CoCoTax needs people to work with Membership Chair Bill Baker. Without better funding sources and involved membership, CoCoTax could not continue to serve the residents of this County. It’s a matter of some phone calls, networking, and outreach. This will work well as a team. We need YOU. Call the CoCoTax office at 925-289-6900.
Business Issues from our September 27 Meeting

The business portion of our meeting addressed several serious issues, such as upcoming ballot measures.

**El Cerrito Measure H for the November 5 Special Election**, proposes to extend a $58.46 parcel tax for parks & pools and other city program spaces (virtually identical to some of the items in their Measure V, which passed last November) and makes the tax PERMANENT. With the trending language like “until voters decide otherwise” assaults the spirit of Prop 13. CoCoTax policy is that we will not support any parcel tax without a sunset clause. The Board upheld that policy.

**Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) is seeking support for a March 2020 ballot measure** to increase our sales tax by 1/2 cent. CoCoTax has previously lauded CCTA for its responsible record of reasonable budgeting and on-time completion record, but buried in the language of their proposal is a section indicating that all apprentices must hired under a labor-management agreement for union labor training programs. This effectively eliminates private contractors who provide training in merit programs. Does this give taxpayers the opportunity to get the best bids for contracts? By reducing/eliminating competition, CoCoTax believes that it is not in the best interests of taxpayers. CoCoTax opposes Project Labor Agreements for that reason. The Board again upheld that policy. Therefore, the motion was passed to oppose the CCTA Ballot Measure for the March 2020 election as it is currently written. Unless the language is changed, the opposition is our official position.

**West Contra Costa Unified School District** is maneuvering for a parcel tax (March 2020) and/or school bond (November 2020). We are expecting both.

Be aware of “FASTER Bay Area” (an arm of the unelected Metropolitan Transportation Commission) which intends to submit a November ballot measure for an additional 1-cent sales tax in the 9 Bay Area counties.

Executive Director Jack Weir announced that we are seeking members for a committee to monitor proposed 2020 ballot measures. Contact the CoCoTax office to be included.