



CITY HALL • 250 EAST L STREET • BENICIA, CA 94510 • (707) 746-4200 • FAX (707) 747-8120

I1-007

Public Works Department

July 23, 1997

Ms. Kate Hansel
CALFED Bay-Delta Program
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: **CALFED Bay-Delta Program**
Category III Funding

Dear Ms. Hansel:

In response to the Request for Proposals for Ecosystem Restoration Projects and Programs, enclosed are ten copies of our Inquiry Submittal for the city's Waterfront Marsh Restoration project. Your comments regarding the proposal will be most welcome as we are interested in formally submitting the project for consideration in the next funding cycle.

If you have any questions or need clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me at 707-746-4227.

Sincerely yours,

Chris Tomasik
Management Assistant II

Enclosures

cc: Public Works Director
Assistant Public Works Director

DWR WAREHOUSE

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JERRY HAYES, Mayor
Members of the City Council
L. STEPHEN GIZZI, Vice Mayor • CAREY CORBALEY • PEPE ARTEAGA • JAN COX-GOLOVICH

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CITY OF BENICIA



Waterfront Marsh Restoration Project

Inquiry Submittal

CALFED Bay-Delta Program Category III Funding

July 23, 1997

Contact: Chris Tomasik
Public Works Department
250 East L Street
Benicia, CA 94510
Telephone: 707-746-4227
Fax: 707-747-1637

Inquiry Submittal

Project Title: Waterfront Marsh Restoration

Applicant Name: City of Benicia

Project Description and Primary Biological/Ecological Objectives:

The proposed project is the ~~restoration of an approximately 400 linear feet~~ marsh located at the foot of First Street in downtown Benicia, extending from Point Benicia to the breakwater of the marina entry channel, and the construction of approximately 400 linear feet of pile-supported wooden walkway above the interior marsh for viewing. Restoration of this marshland will provide vital salt marsh habitat for plants and wildlife. The overlook will enhance opportunities for public education regarding a natural marsh environment and for passive recreation such as birding and walking.

The marsh is bounded to the south and west by the Carquinez Strait, to the north by high ground along First and B Streets, and to the east by the Benicia Marina. The shore along Carquinez Strait consists primarily of a narrow sand and peat beach, and a band of dunes protects most of the marsh from direct wave action. Although ground elevations within the marsh are generally in the range that would support healthy salt marsh vegetation, the existing vegetation is sparse with large barren spots. This is due to inadequate connections between the marsh and Carquinez Strait and the presence of compact fill material on the surface of the marshplain. The focus of the restoration plan is to improve tidal circulation within the marsh and return its vigor.

The marsh overlook is an integral part of the planned "train walk" which extends from the northwestern tip of Point Benicia to the marina. The "walk" recognizes the importance of the railroad in the history of Benicia by tracing the historic alignment of the tracks. The basic structure of the overlook will consist of wooden piles and beams upon which wooden planks will be placed to provide the primary walking surface. Wood handrails will provide protection for the pedestrian. "Rails" which will be embedded within the "train walk" for most of its length will be recessed into the wood deck of the marsh structure to provide continuity of the "train walk" concept.

Approach/Tasks/Schedule:

The main components of the restoration plan are: 1) expand the existing channel network to improve the connection to the Carquinez Strait; 2) grade and remove fill material to increase water circulation and the size of the habitat area; 3) construct stormwater basins to remove floating debris; and 4) perform enhancement plantings. Complicating excavation and removal of material within the marsh is the presence of random pockets of contaminants, primarily petroleum hydrocarbons. Special handling of the soils will be required, including chemical characterization for disposal purposes. A clay or other low permeability liner may be required within the proposed channels to prevent the migration of contaminants into the surface water.

Construction of the marsh overlook will be done using a protective mat on which equipment will travel to drive piles and erect the structure. The mat will spread the load of the equipment, protecting the underlying marsh.

Completion of the project is anticipated to take three years from design through construction due to the number of regulatory agencies which have discretionary approval or input. These include the Army Corps of Engineers, San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, EPA, and the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Justification for Project and Funding by CALFED:

Funding by CALFED for the project is justified because it restores ecological health to an identified priority habitat. The priority habitat listed in the Implementation Strategy which is the focus of this restoration effort is "saline emergent wetlands habitat (tidal)." As stated therein "this habitat type supports several listed plant and animal species and is important for nutrient cycling and food web support functions."

Restoration of the marsh and construction of the overlook are key components of the public improvements outlined in the city's Urban Waterfront Restoration Plan. The Plan was adopted by the city in 1991. A negative declaration was prepared pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act and a Notice of Determination was filed in the Office of the Solano County Clerk on June 6, 1991. Mitigation measures were made a condition of approval. The required measures include the proposed marsh restoration and habitat creation as mitigation for small amounts of fill associated with the Plan's proposed public improvements such as the overlook.

Budget Costs and Third Party Impacts:

Costs for the project are estimated at \$1.5 million. This estimate is conservative because the extent of costs associated with the random pockets of contaminants are unknown. The project's impacts will be extremely positive. Public access, passive and active open space, protection of sensitive habitat areas, and environmental education experiences are primary objectives of the Benicia community. The overlook will be typical of marsh structures which have been constructed throughout the bay in public parks and preserves to facilitate public viewing.

Applicant Qualifications:

The City of Benicia owns the property proposed for restoration and all adjoining property. Its staff includes planners, engineers, and project managers with extensive background and experience in project implementation. Project design and construction will be handled by well qualified consultants and contractors engaged by the city through formal agreement.

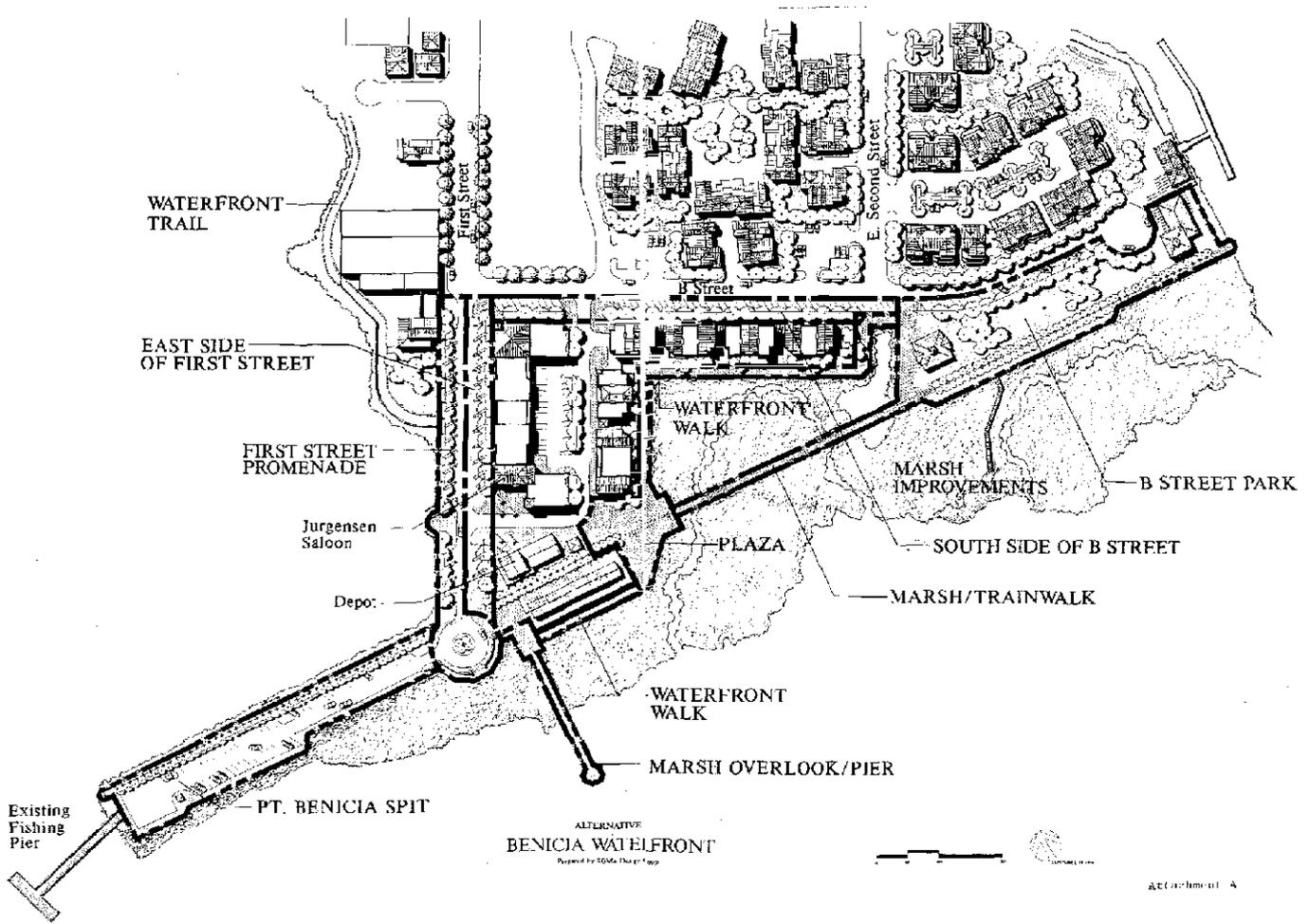
Monitoring and Data Evaluation:

As is the standard for all capital improvement projects completed by the city, a one year warranty and maintenance period will be incorporated as part of the project requirements to ensure that the health of the marsh ecosystem is restored as envisioned. Monitoring inspections and reporting will be coordinated with the California Department of Fish and Game and other regulatory agencies, as appropriate.

Local Support/Coordination with other Programs/Compatibility with CALFED objectives:

The Benicia Urban Waterfront Restoration Plan, of which the subject proposal is an identified element, is the result of the work of a planning team guided by an eighteen member Council-appointed advisory group. This group, known as the Waterfront Task Force, was comprised of representatives from the City Council, Planning Commission, community boards, public agencies such as the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission and the Coastal Conservancy, specific constituencies from throughout the city, and the community at large. The task force members were involved in four distinct planning phases which offered ample opportunity for public input through workshops and public hearings. As a result, the Plan reflects the desire of the Benicia community and enjoys its enthusiastic support. It is specifically compatible with the CALFED objective to "improve and increase aquatic and terrestrial habitats and improve ecological functions in the Bay-Delta to support sustainable populations of diverse and valuable plant and animal species" as its focus is the restoration of an 8 acre saltwater marsh.

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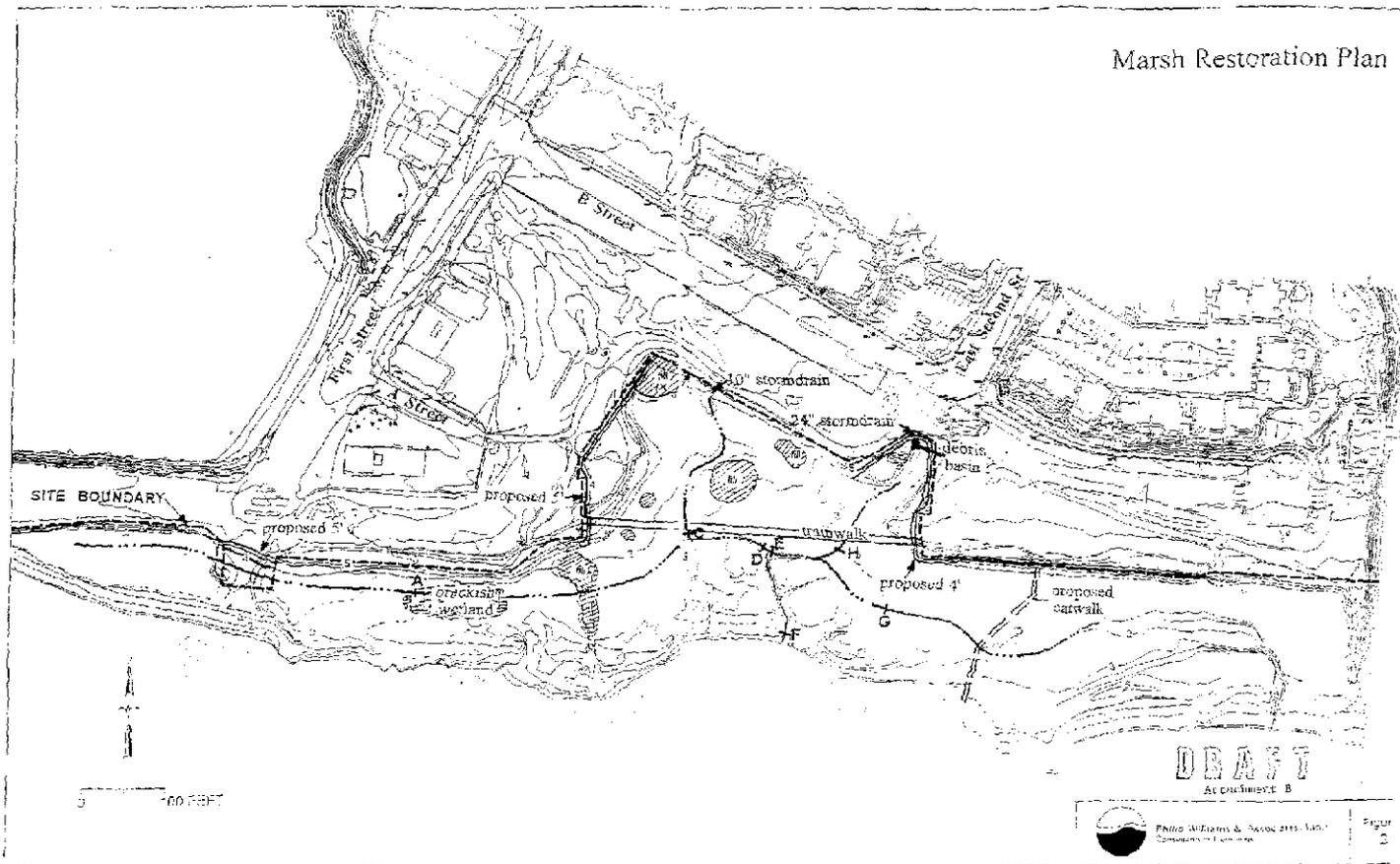
ALTERNATIVE
BENICIA WATERFRONT
Prepared by SOMA Planning Group



Attachment A

1-007194

Marsh Restoration Plan



1-007195

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