

San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission

455 Golden Gate Avenue, Suite 10600, San Francisco, California 94102 tel 415 352 3600 fax 415 352 3606

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TO: Commissioners and Alternates

FROM: Lawrence J. Goldzband, Executive Director (415/352-3653; larry.goldzband@bcdc.ca.gov)
Christine Nutile, Information Manager (415/352-3604; christine.nutile@bcdc.ca.gov)

SUBJECT: Staff Report and Recommendation on a Contract to Hire a Consultant to Assess Modernizing the Commission's Databases
(For Commission consideration on September 15, 2016)

Staff Recommendation

The staff recommends that the Commission authorize the Executive Director to enter into a contract for an amount of up to \$30,000 for services to evaluate BCDC's current electronic systems, particularly those used to track and store permit information, and potential ways to update and improve them. The staff further recommends that the Commission authorize the Executive Director to: (1) amend the contract as necessary, including revising the amount or duration of the agreement, so long as the amendment does not involve substantial changes in the services provided; and (2) enter into similar contracts in the future, subject to availability of funds.

Staff Report

Many of the Commission's administrative processes, particularly the permit application and tracking processes, are inefficient and outdated. The staff currently maintains multiple electronic systems that function independently of each other, requiring excessive staff resources to manually enter the data into each system. Furthermore, the agency's permit tracking system is an Excel spreadsheet that demonstrates repeated data loss and corruption because it was not designed to handle the dynamic reporting functions required by the Commission.

The Commission has received a grant under the federal Coastal Impact Assistance Program to help establish a robust permit tracking system that will improve information retrieval on shoreline development; thus, improving decision-making capabilities regarding climate change adaptation. Data from the BCDC permit digitization project that began in 2013 and further digitization efforts funded by CIAP and other sources will be used to populate the database. The grant funds must be spent by December 31, 2016. Staff proposes to enter into a contract with a consultant to help us prepare a strategy to modernize and integrate the Commission's multiple databases to make information more easily accessible for staff, commissioners, permit applicants, and the general public. This contract will be funded with \$25,000 from CIAP funds to evaluate permitting processes, plus an additional \$5,000 from the General Fund to assess office-wide integration of the system.

The approved consultant will: evaluate BCDC's current processes by meeting with key staff in the Commission's various departments, assess potential software tools designed to handle these processes, and propose a suite of products that is reasonably-priced and in accordance with California state government regulations. The consultant will also outline the steps and costs involved in implementing the proposed products. The goal of the work is to make it easier for permittees to apply for permits, provide staff with the ability to efficiently track the permit application process, and allow rapid queries of permit metadata to identify and analyze specified classes of data. While this small contract will not allow for implementation, it will help the staff formulate a path forward and provide information required by the state for approval of a new electronic database system.

Staff recommends that the Commission authorize the Executive Director to enter into a contract with a state-approved vendor for an amount of up to \$30,000 for the purpose of preparing a strategy to modernize and integrate the Commission's multiple outdated databases. The staff further recommends that the Commission authorize the Executive Director to: (1) amend the contract as necessary, including revising the amount or duration of the agreement, so long as the amendment does not involve substantial changes in the services provided; and (2) enter into similar contracts in the future, subject to availability of funds.