

San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission

375 Beale Street, Suite 510, San Francisco, California 94105 tel 415 352 3600
State of California | Gavin Newsom – Governor | info@bcdc.ca.gov | www.bcdc.ca.gov

May 31, 2024

TO: Commissioners and Alternates

FROM: Lawrence J. Goldzband, Executive Director (415/352-3653; larry.goldzband@bcdc.ca.gov)
Dana Brechwald, Assistant Planning Director for Climate Adaptation (415/352-3656;
dana.brechwald@bcdc.ca.gov)

SUBJECT: Staff Report and Recommendation on a Contract for Technical and Policy Assistance Program
(For Commission consideration on June 6, 2024)

Summary

The staff recommends that the Commission authorize its Executive Director to enter into an *up to* \$200,000 contract with Arup to provide the Commission support for the development of a Regional Shoreline Adaptation Plan technical and policy assistance program over a period from June 17, 2024 (or upon approval) through January 31, 2025. The staff further recommends that the Commission authorize the Executive Director to amend the contract as necessary, including revising the amount or duration of the agreement, so long as the amendment does not involve substantial changes to the services provided.

Staff Report

Background

Coastal adaptation to rising sea level is a state priority to avoid devastating impacts to people, the economy, and natural habitats. Despite having only one-third of the state's coastline, two-thirds of California's economic losses due to rising sea level are forecast to occur in the nine-county Bay Area, absent adaptation actions. The San Francisco Bay is a state-protected resource that is the largest estuary on the West Coast of North and South America, a key part of the Pacific Flyway for migrating waterfowl, and a critical economic driver of the State's economy.

With the assistance and leadership of BCDC, significant progress has been made in the Bay Area by cities and counties to plan for a changing shoreline and establish shoreline ecosystem restoration and other flood protection projects. Yet many of the adaptation plans and projects already occurring within the Bay Area are disconnected and disjointed. Absent regional collaboration and a shared vision, we risk: disproportionate impacts to less affluent, disadvantaged communities; a patchwork of protective actions with varying levels of protection; inconsistent interpretation and application of the best statewide science; competition, not collaboration, for limited funding; near-term loss of wetlands; and, no way to measure collective progress.



To protect people, property, and habitat and prevent this “tragedy of the commons,” BCDC created and has dedicated the last three years to leading Bay Adapt — a voluntary, diverse, and collaborative regional initiative to develop a consensus-driven strategy to protect people and the built and natural environments from a rising Bay. The Bay Adapt Joint Platform lays out guiding principles, nine priority actions, and 21 tasks whose implementation will enable the region to adapt faster, better, and more equitably to a rising Bay.

On October 20, 2022, the Commission approved two resolutions to authorize up to \$2,084,427 to BCDC via grants from the Ocean Protection Council and the State Coastal Conservancy to advance key actions of the Bay Adapt Joint Platform. BCDC sought the services of two consultants or consultant teams to 1) support the development of a collaboratively and equitably driven Regional Shoreline Adaptation Plan and 2) support BCDC in its role as Bay Adapt’s “backbone agency” to provide the Bay Area region with ongoing strategic leadership, communication, tracking, convening, metrics, and organizing around regional sea level rise adaptation.

The Regional Shoreline Plan consists of a) a region-wide vision of how, when, and where adaptation should occur along the shoreline to ensure long-term equity, protection, and prosperity (One Bay Vision), b) guidelines that lay out regionally consistent standards and practices for Subregional Implementation Plans and projects (guidelines), and c) an Online Mapping Platform that provides data, guidance, and region-wide analysis to help support local jurisdictions in creating Subregional Implementation Plans (Mapping Platform). The guidelines will be used by local jurisdictions for developing Subregional Implementation Plans that effectively address local and regional climate risks. The Regional Shoreline Adaptation Plan will advance the Bay Adapt Joint Platform — a consensus-driven strategy to adapt faster, better, and more equitably to a rising San Francisco Bay.

Senate Bill (SB) 272 (Laird 2023): Sea level Rise Planning and Adaptation now requires all local governments in the State’s coastal zone to address sea level rise (SLR) through Local Coastal Programs or San Francisco Bay Shoreline Resiliency Plans by January 1, 2034. Jurisdictions that complete this requirement will be prioritized for state funding. Vulnerability assessments and adaptation plans will be based on best available science, cover specified priorities, and will get updated on a timeline agreed upon by the local governments and the Coastal Commission or BCDC. The measure also requires the Commission and BCDC to collaborate with the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) and the Sea Level Rise State and Regional Support Collaborative on the establishment of guidelines to assist local governments in this work by December 31, 2024.

The Regional Shoreline Adaptation Plan is BCDC’s answer to fulfill the requirements of SB 272. Staff is on track to complete guidelines and seek Commission approval by the end of 2024. However, the creation of guidelines for Subregional Shoreline Resiliency Plans is just the beginning; significant BCDC staff time, and local government staff time, will need to be devoted to developing these plans over the next decade. Since these plans are new and have never been done by local governments, BCDC staff anticipates that staff will need to work closely with local governments to ensure that guidelines are applied consistently and that local governments have the capacity, data, and resources they need to interpret the guidelines and create the plans. Staff also anticipate learning from local governments how effective the guidelines are, which can inform how guidelines are updated in the future.

Regional Shoreline Adaptation Plan Technical and Policy Assistance Contract

This contract includes tasks to develop a work plan that BCDC staff will execute to provide technical and policy (TA) assistance to local governments to develop Subregional Shoreline Resiliency Plans. Services in this contract include learning from and building on background information from other successful TA programs regionally and nationally, engaging in outreach to ensure that the program is responsive to the audience's needs, developing a staff work plan for BCDC, and developing a limited number of "job aids" or other key resources to deploy in early 2025.

The services in this contract will take place over a seven-month period, beginning in June 2024. BCDC's Planning Division will oversee the consultant services. The tasks details may need to be adjusted based on progress, need and resources available.

Arup is a firm of designers, advisors, and experts dedicated to sustainable development and has been working across 34 countries for more than 75 years. Arup's expertise combines business and technical acumen to actively invest in shaping new best practices and knowledge sharing in the world of sustainable and resilient planning, engineering, equity, and project implementation.

Arup will sub-contract with Atlas Planning Solutions to provide additional expertise in resilience planning. The combined team brings decades of relevant experience in strategic program planning for resilience and the policy and technical expertise necessary to support BCDC in developing this new TA program. Staff will provide organizational design, strategic planning, and climate resiliency planning and implementation grounded in social equity and environmental justice.

Staff Recommendation

The staff recommends that the Commission authorize its Executive Director to enter into an *up to* \$200,000 contract with Arup to provide the Commission support for the development of a Regional Shoreline Adaptation Plan technical and policy assistance program over a period from June 17, 2024 (or upon approval) through January 31, 2025. The staff further recommends that the Commission authorize the Executive Director to amend the contract as necessary, including revising the amount or duration of the agreement, so long as the amendment does not involve substantial changes to the services provided.

To ensure that the contract fully complies with all the state's legal and procedural requirements, it would not go into effect until it has been approved by the Department of General Services.