

**AGENDA ITEM**  
**PARKS, RECREATION & CEMETERY COMMISSION MEETING:**  
**OCTOBER 9, 2013**  
**OLD BUSINESS**

**DATE** : October 2, 2013

**TO** : Parks, Recreation & Cemetery Commission

**FROM** : Vic Randall, Management Analyst

**SUBJECT** : **Urban Waterfront Enhancement and Master Plan –  
Draft Preferred Site Alternative**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Review and comment on the draft site alternatives and elements of the draft preferred alternative. Give direction on elements yet to be determined.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Following public input at two Community Advisory Committee meetings and one Community Workshop that involved over 100 members of the public and the Community Advisory Committee, the project consultant team drafted three site alternatives for review at a series of four Review Meetings designed to progressively refine the draft site alternatives and identify a preferred site concept. The first two Review Meetings consisted of the second Community Workshop, held on September 18, and the third Community Advisory Committee meeting, held on September 26. This PRCC meeting is the third review meeting. A November City Council meeting is the fourth and final scheduled Review Meeting.

The Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Commission is being asked to review the draft site alternatives and the draft Preferred Alternative, and offer feedback and recommendations for City Council's consideration. The cumulative feedback of the four Review Meetings and City Council direction will guide development of the Draft Master Plan, which will be completed over a four month period.

**BUDGET INFORMATION:**

The project is being completed at a cost of \$160,000. The Coastal Conservancy is providing \$140,000 while the City of Benicia is providing \$20,000.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Coastal Conservancy approved a grant award of up to \$140,000 to fund the development of a site master plan in September 2011.

The interdisciplinary project consultant team selected to work with City staff to develop the Waterfront Master Plan consists of The Planning Center/DC&E, Balance Hydrologics, Environmental Collaborative, and TranSystems.

The Waterfront Plan will consist of a master plan, an engineer's estimate of costs (for final design, construction documents and bidding, construction, and installation), a schedule for phasing construction, an adaptive management plan for sea-level rise, and environmental documentation.

### **Existing Conditions Analysis**

In coordination with staff, the consultant team completed an Existing Conditions Analysis in May that documents site history and previous site plans, site use and design analysis, biological and hydrologic assessments, and preliminary wetland and sea level rise assessments.

### **Alternatives Development and Analysis**

The public process has included consideration of alternatives for:

- The mix and physical distribution of active and passive recreation areas.
- The type and level of urban improvements, such as plazas, parking, and landscape and streetscape improvements.
- Strategies for accommodating stormwater and drainage requirements.
- Delineation and protection of natural resources, including tidal marshland.
- Site circulation and connectivity to the adjacent commercial district and residential neighborhood.
- Responses to sea level rise and other climate adaptation strategies.

City staff and The Planning Center/DC&E met with the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) on April 18 to review the project goals, site history and existing conditions analysis, and to seek guidance from the CAC as to what alternatives they wanted to be considered in the alternatives development and analysis phase of the project.

The existing conditions analysis and the input received at the first CAC meeting was then presented at the first Community Workshop, held on June 5. Approximately 85 attendees were divided into small groups to work with a facilitator to develop alternatives and a design concept for the project area. A representative from each group then reported back to the larger group, and an end of meeting summary clarified common themes among the eight group designs. The workshop output was then summarized in a memo that reflected the alternatives developed by each of the groups, emphasizing the common themes that emerged in the workshop.

The Planning Center/DC&E then developed three alternative site plans that reflected the wishes expressed at the first Community Workshop, within the context of the project goals, CAC direction, and the existing regulatory framework.

The site alternatives were then shared with the Community Advisory Committee for review and comment at its second meeting, on July 25. The site alternatives were then refined based on CAC direction, leading to the alternatives being considered at the four Review Meetings.

The second Community Workshop was held on September 18. At this workshop, participants worked in small groups to review and comment on the alternative concept plans and develop

their own preferred alternatives for the study area. At the close of the workshop, a facilitated discussion resulted in a 'consensus report' on preferred options.

The third CAC meeting was held on September 26, to garner CAC input and further develop the preferred concept for presentation to the Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Commission and City Council.

Key project documents have been made available online on the Parks & Community Services pages of the City's website, and can be found by following the 'Urban Waterfront and Enhancement Master Plan' link on the PCS homepage, [www.ci.benicia.ca.us/Parks](http://www.ci.benicia.ca.us/Parks).

### **Elements of the Draft Preferred Alternative**

The two prior Review Meetings (Community Workshop #2 and CAC #3) have led to the outlines of a draft preferred alternative that is a composite of the three draft site alternatives. Elements that have generated broad support include:

- ❑ An entry plaza at the corner of 1<sup>st</sup> Street and B Street with seat walls and public art
- ❑ Expanded, raised green area next to the entry plaza
- ❑ A bioswale in the northeast along B Street
- ❑ Secondary plaza at the eastern edge with seating and public art
- ❑ Perimeter walkway around the green and bioswale, possibly made of decomposed granite or boardwalk
- ❑ Boardwalks in alignment with the historic railroad with viewing platforms
- ❑ TrainWalk Boardwalk through the tidal marsh
- ❑ The Bay Trail alignment within the park parallel to B Street
- ❑ Stormwater rain gardens between B Street parking and the Bay Trail
- ❑ Widened sidewalk on the east side of 1<sup>st</sup> Street
- ❑ Diagonal or perpendicular parking within the park on the south side of B Street
- ❑ Paved parking lot along east end of B Street

### **Elements Yet to be Determined**

Several elements of the draft site alternatives drew inconclusive support, including:

- ❑ The inclusion/location of a restroom. It is shown in the eastern plaza in the Draft Preferred Alternative.
- ❑ Should palm trees be included on the east side of B Street? They are shown along the eastern side of B Street in the Draft Preferred Alternative.
- ❑ Location of the non-motorized boat launch. It is shown at the existing beach access in the Draft Preferred Alternative.

The attached Draft Preferred Alternative provides a graphic representation of the elements above.

Additionally, staff recognize the need to do further outreach to the non-motorized boating community and to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the strengths and challenges associated with the two sites identified as possible non-motorized boat launch sites. Possible locations include the beach at the foot of 1<sup>st</sup> Street or near the Marina at the eastern end of B Street. Key questions that should be clarified include issues associated with historic pier pilings and the force of the currents in the Strait near the 1<sup>st</sup> Street site, and the prospect for conflict with large boats in the harbor entry channel near the East B Street site. Though there has been broad support for one or both identified locations within the project area, there has also been some discussion at each meeting that the best locations for non-motorized launch sites might be

outside the project area. Staff would like to take any additional comments that the Commission would like to have considered, and report back to the Commission at a future meeting following additional research and outreach to the non-motorized boating community.

**NEXT STEPS:**

The alternative site plans and feedback and direction received at each of the first three Review Meetings will be taken to City Council in November for its consideration and final direction on a preferred site alternative, which may be a composite of the alternatives developed thus far.

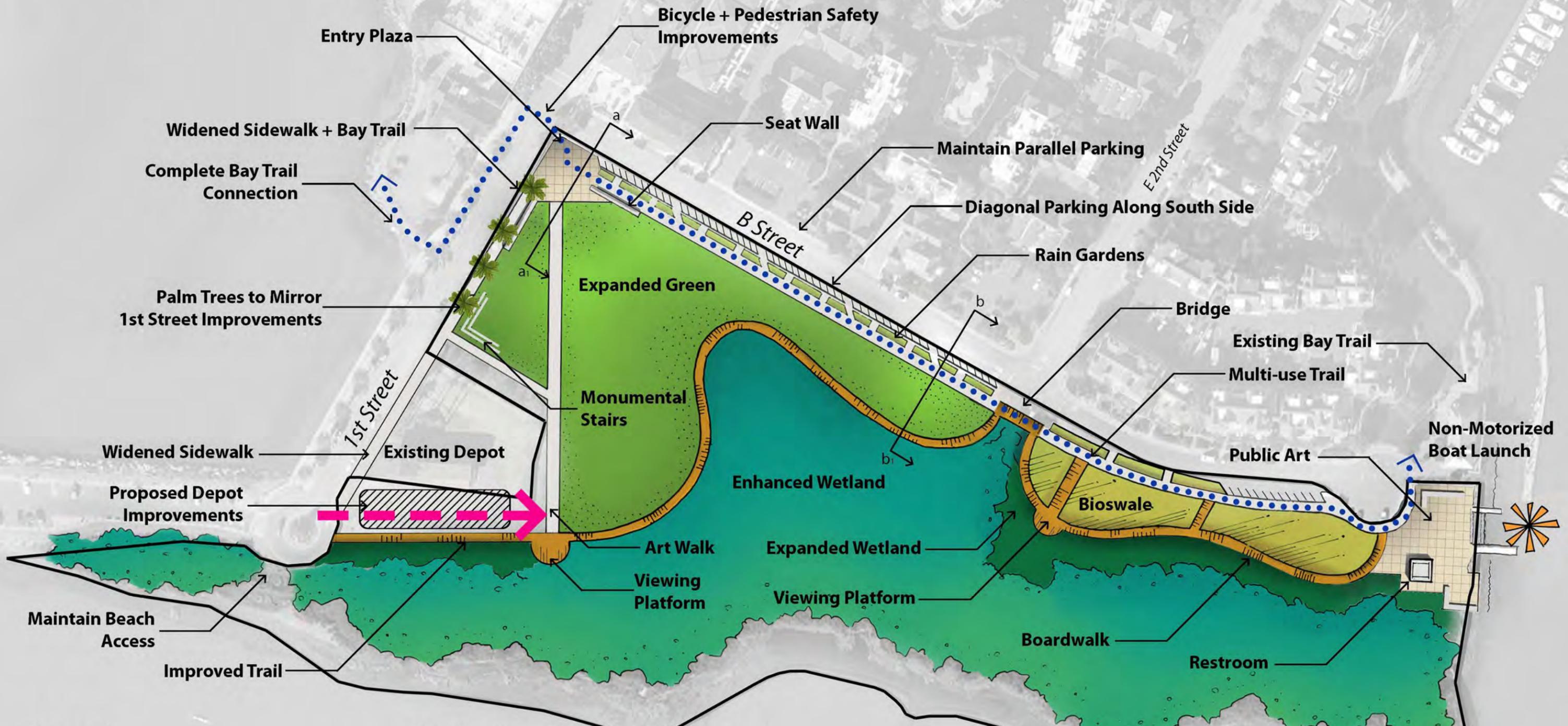
**Draft Master Plan and Environmental Analysis**

Based on the direction received during the four review meetings, the consultant team will work with staff to prepare a Draft Master Plan, scheduled for completion in early 2014. The Planning Center/DC&E will prepare an environmental analysis concurrently with the preparation of the Draft Master Plan.

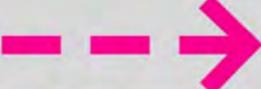
**Master Plan Adoption**

Initial Review meetings with the Community Advisory Committee and Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Commission are tentatively scheduled for early 2014. The Master Plan adoption hearing at City Council is tentatively scheduled for spring 2014.

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**Legend**

- Non-Motorized Boat Launch 
- Bay Trail 
- Vehicular Access 

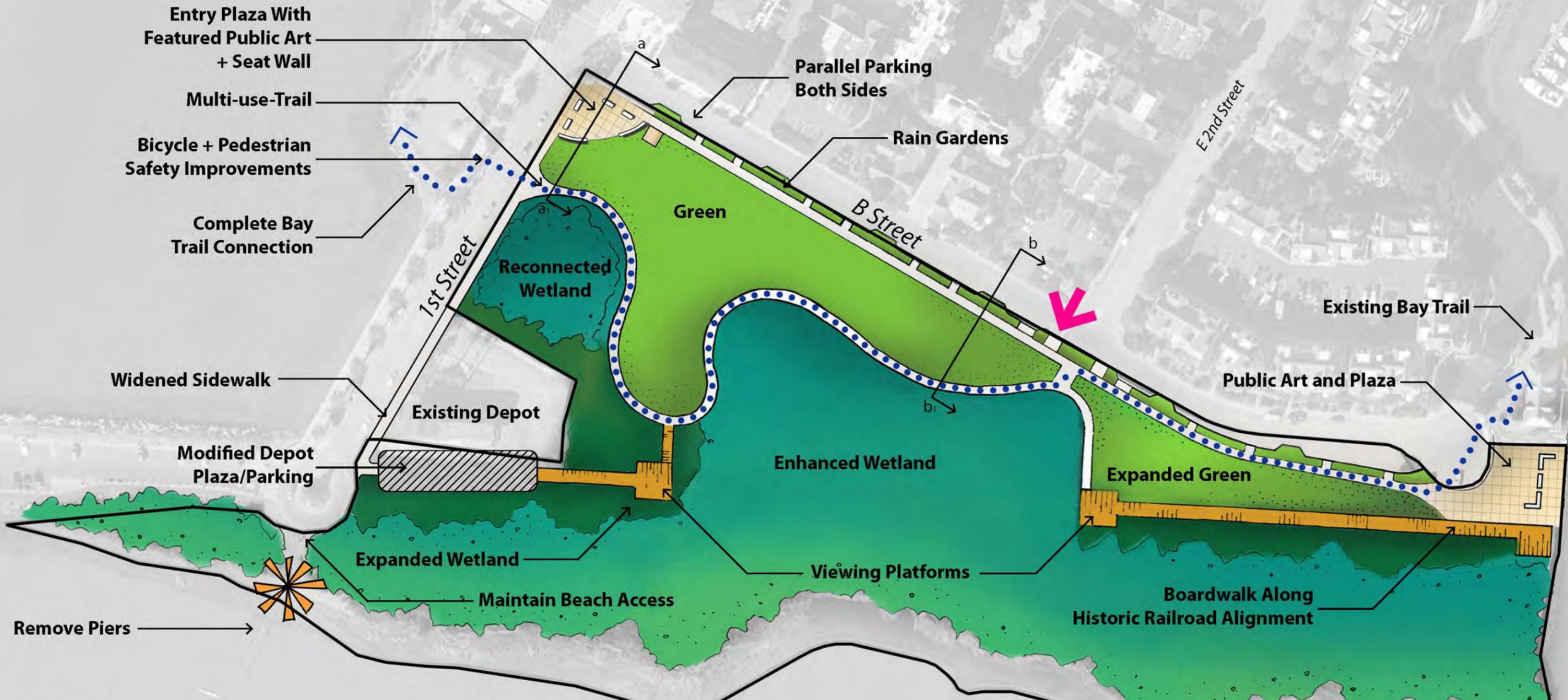
**Wetland Statistics**

Loss	16,000ft <sup>2</sup>
Gain	38,000ft <sup>2</sup>
<b>Net Gain</b>	<b>22,000ft<sup>2</sup></b>

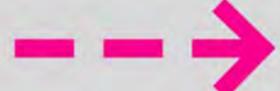
**Alternative A: Central Green**

9/10/13





**Legend**

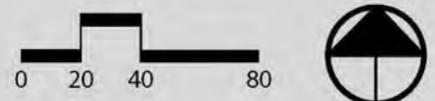
- Non-Motorized Boat Launch 
- Bay Trail 
- Vehicular Access 

**Wetland Statistics**

Loss	13,000ft <sup>2</sup>
Gain	28,000ft <sup>2</sup>
<b>Net Gain</b>	<b>15,000ft<sup>2</sup></b>

**Alternative B: Linear Green**

9/10/13





Bicycle + Pedestrian Safety Improvements

Entry Plaza With Featured Public Art + Seat Wall

Multi-use Trail

Complete Bay Trail Connection

Widened Sidewalk

Existing Depot

Modified Depot Plaza/Parking

Remove Piers

Expanded Wetland

Maintain Beach Access

Viewing Platforms

Boardwalk Along Historic Railroad Alignment

Public Restroom

Parallel Parking Both Sides

Rain Gardens

Bike Path on Street Class II

E 2nd Street

1st Street

B Street

Existing Bay Trail

Public Art + Plaza

Enhanced Wetland

Expanded Green

Green

Reconnected Wetland

**Legend**

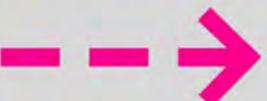
Non-Motorized Boat Launch



Bay Trail



Vehicular Access



**Wetland Statistics**

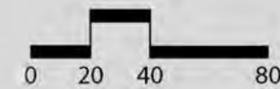
Loss 15,000ft<sup>2</sup>

Gain 28,000ft<sup>2</sup>

Net Gain 13,000ft<sup>2</sup>

**Alternative C: Linear Green with Extensive Boardwalks**

9/10/13



**CITY of BENICIA**  
**Urban Waterfront Enhancement Master Plan**  
**Draft Alternatives Matrix**

10/3/2013

	<b>Alternative A: Central Green</b>	<b>Alternative B: Linear Green</b>	<b>Alternative C: Linear Green with Extensive Boardwalks</b>	<b>Preferred Draft Alternative: Central Green with Extensive Boardwalks</b>
<b>Trails/Boardwalk</b>	Boardwalk around the outer perimeter of both the expanded green as well as bioswale area. A multi-use trail runs parallel to B Street.	Boardwalk situated along the majority of historic railroad alignment. A multi-use trail runs between the green area and the enhanced wetland area.	Boardwalk situated along the historic railroad alignment and through the existing wetland area. A pedestrian trail runs between the green area and the enhanced wetland area.	Boardwalk situated along the historic railroad alignment and as well as along the bioswale area. A multi-use trail runs parallel to B Street.
<b>Plaza Entrance</b>	Entry plaza with linear path extending out to viewing platform.	Entry plaza incorporates seat walls and public art.	Entry plaza incorporates seat walls and public art.	Entry plaza incorporates seat walls and public art.
<b>Community Green Space</b>	A large expanded green space provides the community with a recreational area. This space is divided by a concrete path, creating smaller and larger subareas within the green space.	The shape of the existing green space is relatively the same, while a new green space is located on the eastern edge of the site for community use.	The shape of the existing green space is relatively the same, while a new green space is situated on the eastern edge of the site for community use.	A large expanded green space provides the community with a recreational area.
<b>Restroom</b>	Located at plaza at eastern end.	No new public restroom.	Located near plaza entrance at 1st and B Street.	Located at plaza at eastern end.
<b>Vehicular Access (for special events)</b>	Through the Depot plaza.	Located at the end of E 2nd Street and B Street.	Located at the end of E 2nd Street and B Street.	Located at the end of E 2nd Street and B Street.
<b>Stormwater</b>	Rain gardens divide the diagonal parking area from the multi-use trail. A large bioswale area provides stormwater management.	A series of rain gardens separate the parking area from the sidewalk.	A series of rain gardens separate the parking area from the sidewalk.	Rain gardens divide the parking area from the multi-use trail. A large bioswale area provides stormwater management.
<b>Parking</b>	Diagonal parking is provided along B Street and near the boat launch area, while parallel parking is provided near the bioswale area.	Parallel parking is provided on both sides of B Street.	Parallel parking is provided on both sides of B Street.	Perpendicular or diagonal parking is provided on both sides of B Street.
<b>Non-motorized Boat Launch</b>	On the eastern side of the site with a series of large steps and boat ramp.	On the existing beach at the terminus end of 1st Street.	On the existing beach at the terminus end of 1st Street.	On the existing beach at the terminus end of 1st Street.
<b>Public Art</b>	Integrated throughout the site but emphasized more along the Art Walk that cuts through the central green.	Integrated throughout the site but emphasized more in the western and eastern plazas.	Integrated throughout the site but emphasized more in the western and eastern plazas.	Integrated throughout the site but emphasized more in the western and eastern plazas.
<b>Enhanced/Expanded Wetland Area</b>	The wetland area is enhanced by removing non-native plant species and is expanded on the eastern portion of the site adjacent to the bioswale boardwalk.	The existing wetland area north of the depot is reconnected through an expanded wetland area. The wetland site is enhanced by removing non-native plant species.	The existing wetland area north of the depot is reconnected through an expanded wetland area. The wetland site is enhanced by removing non-native species of plants.	The wetland area is enhanced by removing non-native plant species and is expanded on the eastern portion of the site adjacent to the bioswale boardwalk.
<b>Historic Depot</b>	Improved parking area to the south of the Historic Depot	Improved parking area to the south of the Historic Depot with Boardwalk connection.	Improved parking area to the south of the Historic Depot with Boardwalk connection.	Improved parking area to the south of the Historic Depot with Boardwalk connection.
<b>1st Street Promenade</b>	New palm trees mirror existing palms along 1st Street. Widened sidewalk on the east side of 1st Street.	Widened sidewalk on the east side of 1st Street.	Widened sidewalk on the east side of 1st Street.	New palm trees mirror existing palms along 1st Street. Widened sidewalk on the east side of 1st Street.
<b>Bay Trail</b>	Bay Trail connection along separated multi-use trail that runs parallel to B Street. Pedestrians and cyclist will be able to cross 1st Street by means of a new crosswalk and safety improvements before connecting with the existing Bay Trail to the west.	Bay Trail connection through the site along separated multi-use path which is parallel to B Street in the eastern portion, and along the wetland edge in the western portion of the site. A mid-block crossing and safety improvements complete the trail.	Cyclists share the road with vehicular traffic along B Street, connecting into the existing Bay Trail to both the east and west.	Bay Trail connection along separated multi-use trail that runs parallel to B Street. Pedestrians and cyclist will be able to cross 1st Street by means of a new crosswalk and safety improvements before connecting with the existing Bay Trail to the west.

CITY of BENICIA  
Urban Waterfront Enhancement Master Plan  
Draft Alternatives Evaluation

**CRITERIA**  
**Responsiveness to identified recreation needs**

**Alternative A: Central Green**

A large expanded green space provides the community with a recreational area as well as gathering space for community events. Separate trails/boardwalk in some areas but not all. Non-motorized boat launch area conveniently located with available parking.

**Alternative B: Linear Green**

Linear recreational area provides multiple staging areas for different recreational purposes. However, the linear green lacks a large central area for hosting larger events. Non-motorized boat launch has limited parking. Consistent with preferences for Bay Trail separate from new vehicular traffic.

**Alternative C: Linear Green with Extensive Boardwalks**

Linear recreational area provides multiple staging areas for different recreational purposes. However, the linear green lacks a large central area for hosting larger events. Non-motorized boat launch has limited parking. Consistent with preferences for Bay Trail separate from new vehicular traffic.

**Preferred Draft Alternative: Central Green with Extensive Boardwalks**

A large expanded green space provides the community with a recreational area as well as gathering space for community events. Separate trails/boardwalk in some areas but not all. Non-motorized boat launch has limited parking. Consistent with preferences for Bay Trail separate from new vehicular traffic.

**Responsiveness to environmental issues, particularly wetland preservation and sea level rise**

Plans call for added green spaces to be built over existing wetland area. A bioswale provides remedial stormwater treatment for existing off-site areas, habitat and mitigation of sea level rise. The elevation of the renovated green protects it and inland areas from projected intermediate sea level rise.

An expanded wetland area north of the depot is reconnected to the enhanced wetland area, providing mitigation from sea level rise as well as better connecting existing plant and animal species with the larger wetland area. The elevation of the renovated green protects it and inland areas from projected intermediate sea level rise. The elevation of the renovated green protects it and inland areas from projected intermediate sea level rise.

An expanded wetland area north of the Depot is reconnected to the enhanced wetland area, providing mitigation from sea level rise as well as better connecting existing plant and animal species with the larger wetland area. However, continuous boardwalk bisects the wetland, creating negative impacts on hydrology and habitat functions. The elevation of the renovated green protects it and inland areas from projected intermediate sea level rise.

Plans call for added green space to be built over existing wetland area. A bioswale provides remedial stormwater treatment for existing off-site areas, habitat and mitigation of sea level rise. The elevation of the renovated green protects it and inland areas from projected intermediate sea level rise. However, continuous boardwalk bisects the wetland, creating negative impacts on hydrology and habitat functions.

**Potential Funding Sources**

Consistent with numerous grant funding sources: urban greening, resource and habitat protection, non-motorized boating facilities, SF Bay Trail, sea-level rise adaptation, stormwater and flood management. Good potential for nature interpretation and education funding.

Consistent with numerous grant funding sources: urban greening, resource and habitat protection, non-motorized boating facilities, SF Bay Trail, stormwater and flood management. Good potential for funding reconnection of wetlands. Good potential for nature interpretation and education funding.

Similar to Alt B. However, on-street alignment less desirable for development of Bay Trail and resource protection; habitat funding may be more limited for boardwalk through wetlands.

Consistent with numerous grant funding sources: urban greening, resource and habitat protection, non-motorized boating facilities, SF Bay Trail, stormwater and flood management. Good potential for nature interpretation and education funding. Habitat funding may be more limited for boardwalk through wetlands.

**RELATIVE COST CONSIDERATIONS**

**Capital Cost**

Relative cost of this alternative is high due to large amount of new maintained green and new wetland and bioswale features (large amount of earthwork), as well as a new boat launch facility. This alternative also has the greatest amount of newly constructed boardwalk. New restroom adds to overall cost. Stormwater pump station for storm drain outfalls at end of 2nd Street add to cost.

Relative cost of this alternative is moderate-high. It has less earthwork and fewer constructed features than Alt A. Location of the boat launch at the existing beach also results in lower costs when compared to Alt A.

Costs are same as for Alternative B, with addition of cost for approximately 250 linear feet of boardwalk. New restroom adds to overall cost.

Relative cost of this alternative is high due to large amount of new maintained green and new wetland and bioswale features (large amount of earthwork). Lower costs are required to improve and formalize informal boat launch facility at the existing beach. Stormwater pump station for storm drain outfalls at end of 2nd Street add to cost. This alternative also has the greatest amount of newly constructed boardwalk (approximately 250 linear feet). New restroom adds to overall cost.

**Maintenance Affordability**

Maintenance required for green space, plaza spaces. Potential additional maintenance costs for bioswale area and larger green, as well as restroom.

Maintenance required for green space, two plaza spaces.

Maintenance required for green space, two plaza spaces, as well as restroom.

Maintenance required for green space, plaza spaces. Potential additional maintenance costs for bioswale area and larger green, as well as restroom.



# Draft Preferred Alternative: Central Green with Extensive Boardwalks

10/3/13

