City of Sausalito Secures $614,400 EDA FY2023 Disaster Supplemental Grant to Address the Marinship Infrastructure Challenges

The City of Sausalito has been awarded $614,400 through the Economic Development Administration (EDA) FY2023 Disaster Supplemental Grant, a crucial step toward addressing the infrastructure vulnerabilities of the Marinship—the city's historic working waterfront. Originally developed during World War II to serve as a shipbuilding hub, the Marinship has faced significant challenges due to poor infill construction, erosion, and sea-level rise over the decades. These factors have led to subsidence, frequent flooding during high tides and storms, and the deterioration of critical infrastructure such as storm drains, waterlines, gas lines, and sewer systems.

The History and Challenges of the Marinship
The Marinship was once a naturally sloping hill that gently rolled into the San Francisco Bay. In the early 1940s, the area was dynamited and filled to create a large shipyard that produced cargo vessels and oil tankers for the U.S. Navy. The shipyard set records for producing ships faster than any other facility in the United States, playing a crucial role in the war effort.

However, due to the rushed nature of its development, the land has subsided by an average of 12 inches per decade since 1968. This ongoing issue, coupled with rising sea levels, has left the Marinship vulnerable to frequent flooding, which now poses a serious threat to both public and private property. Key infrastructure systems, such as storm drains and sewer lines, are failing, further exacerbating the problem.

Grant Focus: Feasibility Studies and Resilient Design
The Disaster Supplemental Grant will allow the City of Sausalito to undertake comprehensive studies to address these challenges. A feasibility study, storm drain study, vulnerability assessment, and resilient design will be conducted to determine how best to remedy the infrastructure failures and mitigate the flooding risks in the Marinship area. Additionally, a feasibility study will focus on the adjacent, unused 2.6-acre Marinship Park to explore its potential for development, with an eye toward economic benefits for both the city and local businesses.

The Project aims to stabilize the Marinship area, secure existing jobs, and create opportunities for new employment, particularly in the green and blue economies. It will also address the area's inclusion in the Presidential declaration of a major disaster area following the severe 2022/2023 atmospheric river events across California. Ultimately, the final project design will reflect the needs of local businesses and community groups, ensuring that the Marinship remains an innovative hub while improving infrastructure and reducing flood risks.

"This funding from the EDA Disaster Supplemental Grant is a critical step in addressing the long-standing infrastructure challenges in the Marinship area. It will provide essential support for safeguarding our community against future flooding and environmental risks. We are grateful for the collaborative effort with the Economic Development Administration, community groups and California Consulting in securing this grant, which will allow us to proactively improve Sausalito's infrastructure and protect both public and private properties in the area."– Catie Thow Garcia, City of Sausalito Sustainability Manager.

Looking Ahead

This grant represents an important milestone for Sausalito, enabling the city to address the long-standing vulnerabilities of the Marinship area. With this funding, the city can enhance its infrastructure, protect local businesses, and create a more resilient future. Congratulations to the City of Sausalito and California Consulting Project Manager Shari Edghill for their dedication and collaboration in securing this vital funding.

This award will allow Sausalito to further plan and obtain project funding to secure for the future of our historic waterfront.