COUNTY OF MARIN

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OPEN SPACE DISTRICT
REGIONAL PARKS & PATHWAYS
COMMUNITY PARKS
LANDSCAPE SERVICES

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May 09, 2017

Board of Supervisors
3501 Civic Center Drive
San Rafael, CA 94903

SUBJECT: REQUEST TO ADOPT AND EXECUTE A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR THE MCNEARS BEACH PARK MASTER PLAN AND TO APPROVE THE MCNEARS BEACH PARK MASTER PLAN

Dear Supervisors,

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Approve Resolution Adopting a Mitigated Negative Declaration of Environmental Impact for the McNears Beach Park Master Plan.
2. Authorize President to execute the Negative Declaration.
3. Approve the McNears Beach Park Master Plan.

SUMMARY:

In June 2014, your Board identified the need to engage in a master planning process to examine community needs in relation to McNears Beach Park. A contract with the Office of Cheryl Barton for the master plan was approved at that time. As part of the process, the consultant team conducted a community workshop, an open house at the park, which included a visitor survey, as well as many stakeholder meetings, all of which provided valuable insight and input for the plan's development.

Feedback from these outreach efforts, along with designer and county staff input, helped to create the attached draft master plan for the 60-acre park. The following principles guided the design process:

- Protecting the existing park character.
- Promoting universal experience and accessibility.
- Fostering public engagement;
- Improving park connectivity and circulation.
- Ensuring resource protection.
- Providing diversified opportunities in a variety of activity zones.

As a result of this process, the new park master plan design features include:

- A pedestrian spine and promenade along the waterfront creating better connectivity between the northern and southern portions of the park.
- Large zero entry swimming pool with splash pad area.
- Improved beach access with swimming pier.
- Café and conference/multi-purpose building facilities.
- A children's nature play area.
- A special events venue area at underutilized Starvation Gulch.
- A kayak launch area with opportunities for storage.
- Upgraded picnic facilities with new site furnishings.

When completed, the re-visioned McNears Beach Park will include opportunities for water adventures, family picnics, kayaking, weddings and a wide range of events. It will be a true amenity and beloved destination for the regional community.

On February 06, 2017, Marin County Parks released a draft mitigated negative declaration and initial study for the new park master plan. After a 30-day comment period, the department received one comment letter from the National Marine Fisheries Service. The letter expressed concern over an increase in overwater structure as a result of the kayak launch proposed in the master plan, and provided suggestions for the detailed design of the kayak launch that would reduce shading of the water column. In addition, the comment letter encouraged the use of softer solutions for shoreline stabilization than those proposed in the master plan. These comments are noted. Upon implementation of the master plan features, all local, state and federal environmental regulations will be followed. The National Marine Fisheries Service letter is attached for your reference (Attachment A).

The initial study identified several mitigation measures specifically related to biologic, cultural, and geologic resources that would reduce the project's potential environmental impacts to a level that is less than significant. These include:

- Providing surveys and monitoring of potential rare plants and special status wildlife.
- Performing work at certain times to avoid adverse effects within critical habitat and to special status species.
- Providing surveys, timed construction, special methods and monitoring for birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA).
- Performing a bat roost assessment and monitoring.
- Adherence to in-water work restrictions and implementation of best management practices for storm water pollution prevention.
- Coordinating authorization with permitting agencies for any work within the 100-foot shoreline band jurisdiction.
- Performing archaeological presence/absence investigation prior to construction.
- Excluding prehistoric archaeological site from future development.
- Conducting geotechnical survey for future design work.

By adopting the mitigated negative declaration, your Board will be incorporating these mitigation measures into the proposed master plan.

Upon approval of this item by your board, the draft master plan will become the final master plan. Construction of the projects identified in the master plan has a

preliminary estimate totaling $35,000,000 which is not funded at this time. However, this long-term planning document will establish the framework for future decisions. Complete documentation is available for review in the Clerk of the Board office.

FISCAL/STAFFING IMPACT:

Approval of the recommended actions will have no direct fiscal impact.

REVIEWED BY:

[ ] Department of Finance	[x] N/A
[ ] County Counsel	[x] N/A
[ ] Human Resources	[x] N/A

Senior Landscape Architect Tara McIntire is the principal author of this report.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Chamberlain
Assistant Director

MK:TM/kbl

Attachment: National Marine Fisheries Service comment letter