

COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation
October 2, 2014

CAYUCOS PIER RENOVATION

Project No. 14-030-01
Project Manager: Timothy Duff

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorization to disburse up to \$750,000 to the County of San Luis Obispo to renovate the Cayucos pier in San Luis Obispo County.

LOCATION: Cayucos, northern San Luis Obispo County.

PROGRAM CATEGORY: Public Access

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1: [Project Location Map](#)

Exhibit 2: [Site Photos](#)

Exhibit 3: [Project Letters](#)

RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS:

Staff recommends that the State Coastal Conservancy adopt the following resolution pursuant to Sections 31400 *et seq.* of the Public Resources Code:

“The State Coastal Conservancy hereby authorizes the disbursement of an amount not to exceed seven hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$750,000) to the County of San Luis Obispo (County) to renovate the Cayucos pier, located as shown in Exhibit 1 to the accompanying staff recommendation, subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to the disbursement of funds the County shall submit for the review and approval of the Executive Officer of the Conservancy:
 - a. A work program, budget, schedule, and names and qualifications of any contractors to be employed for these tasks.
 - b. Evidence that the County has obtained all necessary permits and approvals, and all other funds necessary to complete the project.
 - c. A signing plan for the project acknowledging Conservancy participation and designation of the project as a segment of the California Coastal Trail. The plan shall also identify, and the County shall sign, all other real property interests controlled, maintained or

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managed by the County that are deemed by the Conservancy to be existing segments of the Coastal Trail.

2. The County shall ensure that the project improvements are consistent with the Conservancy's 'Standards and Recommendations for Accessway Location and Development' and with all applicable federal and state statutes, regulations and guidelines governing barrier-free access for persons with disabilities.
3. The County shall comply with all permit conditions associated with the renovation of the pier."

Staff further recommends that the Conservancy adopt the following findings:

"Based on the accompanying staff report and attached exhibits, the State Coastal Conservancy hereby finds that:

1. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of Chapter 9 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, regarding public access.
2. The proposed project is consistent with the current Conservancy Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines.
3. The proposed project serves greater than local needs."

PROJECT SUMMARY:

Conservancy staff recommends a \$750,000 grant to the County of San Luis Obispo (County) to renovate the Cayucos pier in San Luis Obispo County. As with many of the other piers in the state the Cayucos Pier serves as the hub of commercial and recreational activity, in this case in a small beach town with 2,600 residents (See Exhibit 2). The pier attracts an estimated 400,000 people annually, including over 55,000 visitors who fish off the pier. Renovating dilapidated and unsafe access facilities like the Cayucos pier will serve to increase and enhance coastal recreational opportunities as called for in the Conservancy's strategic plan.

Recent engineering evaluations confirmed the 982-foot long wood pier is not safe for public use due to severe deterioration of its timber piles, pile caps, and cross bracing. Some of these structural elements are estimated to be more than 60 years old while others appear to be from the period when the pier was originally built 130 years ago. While the pier has undergone emergency repairs for periodic storm damage over the past several decades, a comprehensive structural renovation has never been completed.

In addition to the piles, the support structure of the pier includes pile caps, stringers supporting the decking, and cross braces. The proposed project would include replacing 50 or more missing or severely damaged piles, replacing damaged pile caps and cross bracing, and installing additional structural support. Galvanized metal T-straps would be installed on all outboard piles to reinforce the connection between the piles and the pile cap. The project would be primarily constructed from above the deck. New piles would be installed through a combination of jetting, vibratory hammer, and pile hammer. A crane with pile-driving/hammer attachments would be driven out onto the pier deck. Portions of the existing deck and stringers would then be removed to allow access below deck from above. New piles would be driven into place. Once a new pile is in place, the new pile caps, T-straps and cross bracing would be installed by hand from below

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deck. Construction crews would access below deck generally by a ladder supported and hung from above the deck. Small watercraft may also be necessary to access portions of the project from below deck. Other smaller-scale construction equipment such as mechanical dollies and flatbed trucks may be used above-deck during project construction.

After the major rehabilitation is complete, the stringers, decking and railings would be repaired, as necessary, from above deck using conventional construction techniques. Any piles that no longer provide structural support to the pier would be pulled out to the extent feasible and disposed of properly in accordance with all local, state, and federal requirements. The piles have been tested for lead and asbestos and according to the County do not pose any hazards. If it is not feasible to remove any of the piles completely, they would be cut-off below water, approximately one foot above the seafloor so that they do not pose a hazard to the pier or the public.

While State Parks continues to own the pier, under an operating agreement executed over 70 years ago, San Luis Obispo County has been and will continue to be responsible for operating and maintaining the pier. The County has invested substantial funds over the past four decades for emergency repairs needed to keep the pier open to the public. In 2013 the County authorized over \$600,000 for emergency repairs, structural engineering and permitting and will provide up to \$1.8 million in additional County funds to complete the proposed project. An endowment fund totaling \$270,000 to date has been established for future operation and maintenance of the pier, and County Parks has committed to utilize its operating budget and project reserves to augment the endowment fund in the future as necessary.

Site Description: Located on the coast four miles north of Morro Bay near the north end of Estero Bay, the community of Cayucos is a popular tourist destination due to its pleasant summer weather and four miles of wide sandy beaches that extend south of the pier to Morro Bay. Numerous beach and blufftop parking areas, stairways and a campground provide convenient access utilized by surfers, fishers and other visitors seeking to recreate on the coast, especially in the summer months when inland temperatures soar. North of the pier another four miles of accessible bluffs and shoreline is found at Estero Bluffs State Park. This eight mile stretch of publicly owned coastline is anchored by the town of Cayucos and its 982-foot long wood pier, a landmark and focal point for much of the commercial and recreational activity along this highly scenic stretch of the California coast.

Project History: The Cayucos pier was constructed in 1872 and rebuilt and lengthened into deeper water in 1876. It became State Park property in 1920 but through a written agreement signed in 1944, responsibility for pier operations and management was transferred to San Luis Obispo County. Over the decades the pier has been maintained by the County on a limited basis with emergency repairs done as needed. With the pier partially closed in July 2012 due to its severely deteriorated condition, the County authorized over \$600,000 for emergency repairs, structural engineering and permitting. In the summer of 2014, the County awarded additional funds for the proposed project and sought additional funding support from Conservancy staff. The Wildlife Conservation Board awarded matching funds in August of 2014.

PROJECT FINANCING

Coastal Conservancy

\$750,000

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Wildlife Conservation Board	\$750,000
San Luis Obispo County	\$1,700,000
Friends of the Cayucos Pier	<u>\$100,000</u>
Project Total	\$3,300,000

Conservancy funds for this project are expected to derive from appropriations to the Conservancy from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2000 (Proposition 12, Public Resources Code Section 5096.352), and from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006, Public Resources Code section 75001 *et seq.* (Proposition 84). Proposition 12 funds may only be used pursuant to Division 21 of the Public Resources Code for the acquisition from a willing seller, preservation, restoration, and enhancement of real property or an interest in real property in coastal areas and watersheds within its jurisdiction and the development of public use facilities. Proposition 12 directs that a portion of funds appropriated to the Conservancy be used specifically for Central Coast projects, including projects in Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Barbara Counties. The proposed project will restore and preserve a public access pier in San Luis Obispo County. Proposition 84 authorizes the Conservancy's use of these funds for the purposes of promoting access to and enjoyment of the coastal resources of the state and that are consistent with the Conservancy's enabling legislation, Division 21 of the Public Resources Code. The proposed project serves to assist in the development of land-based public access and, as discussed in the section found immediately below, the project is consistent with Chapter 9 of Division 21. In addition, there are non-state matching contributions toward the construction, operation and management costs.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S ENABLING LEGISLATION:

The proposed project is undertaken pursuant to Chapter 9 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code (Sections 31400 *et seq.*). Section 31400 states that it is the intent of the Legislature that the Conservancy have a principal role in the implementation of a system of public accessways to and along the state's coastline.

In order to carry out that mandate, the Conservancy is authorized by Section 31400.1 to provide grants to public entities or non-profits organizations to develop, operate and manage lands for access to and along the coast. Section 31400.1 restricts the Conservancy to providing grants to local agencies only for accessways that serve more than local public needs. The project goal is to provide public access to the Cayucos Pier, one of the most popular coastal accessways on California's central coast. The project would thus serve the recreational needs of visitors from throughout San Luis Obispo County, and from around the state and beyond.

Section 31400.2 authorizes the Conservancy to provide up to the total cost of the initial development of a public accessway by any public agency and requires that the amount of funding provided by the Conservancy be determined by the total amount of funding available for coastal public accessway projects, the fiscal resources of the applicant, the urgency of the project relative to other eligible projects, and the application of factors prescribed by the Conservancy. Consistent with this section, the proposed amount of the Conservancy contribution was determined based on the total amount of funding available to the Conservancy for public access projects, the matching funds provided by the County (see Project Financing), and consideration

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of the factors specified in the Conservancy's Project Selection Criteria (See Consistency with Conservancy's Project Selection Criteria & Guidelines). The proposed project would leverage matching funds totaling 77 percent of the costs for this project.

The proposed project is consistent with Section 31400.3 which authorizes the Conservancy to "provide such assistance as is required to aid public agencies ... in establishing a system of public coastal accessways". Conservancy funds will be used to reconstruct a coastal access facility.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S ACCESS PROGRAM STANDARDS:

The project is consistent with the Conservancy's Standards and Recommendations for Accessway Location and Development as follows:

Standard No. 2, Correct Hazards: The renovation and management of the pier will serve to correct potential hazards. The pier will be closed as needed to ensure public safety.

Standard No. 12, Support Facilities: The project will provide essential amenities for visitors to the pier.

Standard No. 13, Barrier-Free Access: Consistent with this standard, the project design is consistent with all applicable federal and state statutes, regulations and guidelines governing barrier-free access for persons with disabilities.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S 2013 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S):

Consistent with **Goal 1, Objective B**, the proposed project will result in the placement of California Coastal Trail signs on existing trails.

Consistent with **Goal 1, Objective F**, the project will serve to improve support facilities at an existing coastal accessway, and improve accessibility for people with disabilities.

Consistent with **Goal 2, Objective A**, the project will expand opportunities for barrier-free access to and along the coast.

Consistent with **Goal 2, Objective D**, the project entails the reconstruction of dilapidated and unsafe facility to increase and enhance coastal recreational opportunities.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA & GUIDELINES:

The proposed project is consistent with the Conservancy's Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines, last updated on November 10, 2011, in the following respects:

Required Criteria

1. **Promotion of the Conservancy's statutory programs and purposes:** See the "Consistency with Conservancy's Enabling Legislation" section above.

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2. **Consistency with purposes of the funding source:** See the “Project Financing” section above.
3. **Support of the public:** The project has received support from local and state agencies, nonprofit organizations, elected officials, and individuals. The local community has raised over \$100,000 in private donations for the project plus additional funds for future maintenance. See Exhibit 3.
4. **Location:** The proposed project is located within the coastal zone of San Luis Obispo County.
5. **Need:** Due to severe deterioration and safety risks, portions of the pier are currently closed. If funds are not secured from the Conservancy the project would be delayed until other funding is secured. This delay would risk further deterioration and possible collapse of the pier.
6. **Greater-than-local interest:** The pier attracts an estimated 400,000 visitors annually, including over 55,000 visitors who use the pier for fishing.
7. **Sea level rise vulnerability:** The project entails installing additional structural support to meet current building standards and reduce climate vulnerabilities. It is anticipated that the life of the rehabilitated and upgraded pier will be 75-plus years. Routine maintenance including structural inspections and repairs will be completed, including repairs resulting from significant storm events.

Additional Criteria

8. **Urgency:** If Conservancy funds are not secured, the project would be delayed resulting in further deterioration and possible collapse of the pier.
9. **Leverage:** See the “Project Financing” section above.
10. **Readiness:** The County intends to initiate the project in October of 2014.
11. **Return to Conservancy:** See the “Project Financing” section above.
12. **Cooperation:** The project has been reviewed and coordinated with various agencies including the United States Army Corps of Engineers, California Environmental Protection Agency, California Department of Parks and Recreation, California State Lands Commission, Regional Water Quality Control Board, Air Pollution Control District, and the California Coastal Commission.

CONSISTENCY WITH LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM POLICIES:

The project is consistent with the County of San Luis Obispo Coastal Plan Policies (adopted on March 1, 1988 by the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors and revised June 2004). The Estero Area Local Coastal Plan (LCP) references the Coastal Act’s priority of coastal-dependent recreation including pier fishing, and cites Cayucos beach, including the pier, as a major recreational facility providing coastal access to both tourists and local residents. LCP Chapter Two, Shoreline Access, Policy 4 states that “Facilities necessary for public access shall be provided. This may include parking areas, restroom facilities, picnic tables or other such improvements.” LCP Chapter Three, Recreation and Visitor-Serving Facilities, Policy 1 states that “Coastal recreational and visitor-serving facilities, especially lower-cost facilities, shall be

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protected, encouraged and where feasible provided by both public and private means.” LCP Chapter Six, Environmentally Sensitive Habitats, Policy 39 states that ”Shoreline structures, including piers, groins, breakwaters, seawalls and pipelines, shall be designed or sited to avoid and minimize impacts on marine habitats. Renovating the Cayucos Pier will serve to provide free recreational access consistent with these policies.

COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA:

The proposed project is categorically exempt from review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15301(d) of 14 Cal. Code of Regulations as the project entails the rehabilitation of a deteriorated or damaged structure to meet current standards of public health and safety and will not result in expansion of an existing use.

Upon Conservancy approval of the proposed authorization, staff will file a Notice of Exemption for the project.