

COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation

March 25, 2021

HERMOSA BEACH PARKING LOT GREENING PROJECT

Project No. 19-034-01

Project Manager: Rodrigo Garcia

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorization to disburse up to \$433,650 to the City of Hermosa Beach in Los Angeles County to renovate an impervious and deteriorated beach parking lot into a green, multi-benefit parking lot and to prepare final design plans to renovate a second parking lot in the City of Hermosa Beach.

LOCATION: City of Hermosa Beach, Los Angeles County

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1: [Project Location Map](#)

Exhibit 2: [Project Photos](#)

Exhibit 3: [Project Letters](#)

RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS

Staff recommends that the State Coastal Conservancy adopt the following resolution and findings.

Resolution:

The State Coastal Conservancy hereby authorizes a grant of an amount not to exceed four hundred thirty-three thousand, six hundred fifty dollars (\$433,650) to the City of Hermosa Beach (“the grantee”) to renovate an impervious and deteriorated beach parking lot into a green, multi-benefit parking lot and to prepare final design plans to renovate a second parking lot in the City of Hermosa Beach.

Prior to commencement of the project, the grantee shall submit for the review and written approval of the Executive Officer of the Conservancy (Executive Officer) the following:

1. A detailed work program, schedule, and budget.
2. Names and qualifications of any contractors to be retained in carrying out the project.

3. A plan for acknowledgement of Conservancy funding and Proposition 1 as the source of that funding.
4. Evidence that all permits and approvals required to implement the project have been obtained.
5. In addition, to the extent appropriate, the City of Hermosa Beach shall incorporate the guidelines of the Conservancy's "Standards and Recommendations for Accessway Location and Development".

Findings:

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

1. The proposed authorization is consistent with Chapter 9 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, regarding the System of Public Accessways.
2. The proposed project is consistent with the current Conservancy Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

PROJECT SUMMARY:

Staff recommends the Conservancy authorize a \$433,650 grant to the City of Hermosa Beach to renovate an impervious and deteriorated beach parking lot into a green, multi-benefit parking lot and to prepare final design plans to renovate a second parking lot.

The proposed project is divided into two components: the renovation of Parking Lot D and the design of Parking Lot A (see Exhibit 1). Both parking lots are located within 2 blocks of the beach in the incredibly popular beach town of Hermosa Beach ("City"). The parking lots are heavily used by tourists looking to enjoy the different outdoor coastal activities that the City has to offer including spending the day enjoying the beach, and jogging, skating or biking along the Strand, a section of the California Coastal Trail.

The parking lots are heavily used throughout the year, but their current condition needs improvement for both water quality and public enjoyment. The lots are currently paved with impervious asphalt with no planters or areas for stormwater to infiltrate, so rainwater flows off into the ocean carrying pollutants into the Santa Monica Bay. ADA accessibility and safety are concerns that the proposed project will address as well. The lack of urban greening of the parking lots also makes them an unpleasant experience for the people who visit the City. Multiple surveys conducted over the years have shown that many visitors come from a surrounding radius of five to ten miles. Within this distance there are nearly 500,000 residents living in disadvantaged communities including the City of Lawndale and the City of Hawthorne for whose residents Hermosa Beach is a popular recreation destination.

The renovation of Parking Lot D addresses water quality issues by capturing stormwater through a suite of water quality technologies. The technologies that will be used to achieve this

goal include stormwater capture via a permeable paver system, and stormwater infiltration via drywells located in a bioswale demonstration planter that promotes infiltration of site run off.

Additional onsite infrastructure improvements to Parking Lot D that will enhance public use include: ADA accessibility upgrades, solar panels, two EV charging stations for full-size vehicles, a charging outlet for neighborhood electric vehicles, and a bike corral. Photocell-controlled lighting for the parking lot and new trash enclosure will also be provided to improve lighting and safety. Neighborhood streetscape enhancements will include parkway-facing landscaping, gathering spaces, and street furnishings. Landscape plans include a total of eight trees and a host of drought-tolerant native plants that will be installed within the project site and along the streetscape. The site will also include interpretive signage explaining its multi-benefit design elements. The project will serve as a demonstration site for public and private redevelopment projects illustrating how to utilize urban greening techniques and design ideas.

The design of Parking Lot A will engage stakeholders and community groups to create a collaborative design process. Lessons learned through the design and construction of Parking Lot D will inform and optimize the design of this lot. Streetscape enhancements are anticipated to include a bioretention planter, trees, and landscaping. Because Parking Lot A is near a reclaimed water supply line, the design will consider a connection to this line for irrigation. Additional key design elements will include ADA upgrades, electric vehicle charging stations, golf cart parking, improved safety lighting, solar panels, and electrical service upgrades. Centralized multi-space meters will provide convenience for visitors as well as help reduce revenue loss for the City's General Fund which will be used for maintenance of the site. Signage at Parking Lot A will direct visitors to the immediately adjacent California Coastal Trail.

Site Description: Both Parking Lot A and Parking Lot D are public parking lots owned and operated by the City of Hermosa Beach. Both sites currently consist of impervious asphalt with little to no vegetation.

Parking Lot D is a 0.21 acres site located approximately 750 feet from the beach in the downtown business district at the corner of Manhattan Avenue and 14th Street. Parking Lot D consists of an upper and lower section. Currently, there are 19 regular parking spaces, of which one is an ADA parking space located in the lower section of the parking lot. Parking Lot D receives no stormwater runoff from offsite areas. Stormwater runoff generated by Parking Lot D discharges via sheet flow to Palm Drive and runs southward into the Pier Avenue storm drain system.

Parking Lot A is a 0.71 acres site located approximately 150 feet from the beach at 1101 Hermosa Avenue. Parking Lot A is the City's most heavily used parking lot and serves as a public venue during large events such as Fiesta Hermosa that attracts 200,000 people to Hermosa Beach over Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends. Currently, Parking Lot A consists of 143 spaces, with three ADA accessible spaces. This lot is open 24 hours daily and is the primary lot used by tourists to access the public beach, Hermosa Beach Pier, and the downtown Pier Plaza area. Stormwater runoff from Parking Lot A discharges via sheet flow to concrete drainage swales where it flows southwest before entering the Pier Avenue storm drain system.

Grant Applicant Qualifications: The City of Hermosa Beach engineering and planning staff has experience with similar projects and have successfully constructed such projects in the past. One example is The Pier Avenue Improvement Project, which captures and treats stormwater and urban runoff in the City's downtown corridor to reduce pollutant loading at the beach and to reduce flooding. Another example is The Hermosa Strand Infiltration Trench Project, which captures runoff from a 76.2 acres area and directs dry-weather flows, and wet-weather low flows from the storm drain into a 1,000-foot subsurface infiltration trench on the beach. Both projects have been managed by City staff.

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 October 2, 2014, 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 below.
2. **Consistency with purposes of the funding source:** See the "Project Financing" section below.
3. **Promotion and implementation of state plans and policies:** The proposed project will help to implement or promote the goals of the following State Plans:
 - **California @ 50 Million: The Environmental Goals and Policy Report**
The proposed project supports the goal to build a resilient and sustainable water system as it maximizes the use of recycled water and stormwater harvested for irrigation resulting in potable water conservation.
 - **CA Climate Adaptation Strategy/Safeguarding California: Reducing Climate Risk Plan**
The proposed project supports Action 6 under Safeguarding Ocean and Coastal Ecosystems and Resources by utilizing nature-based infrastructure to reduce flood risk and stormwater runoff and to maximize associated co-benefits such as greenhouse gas reductions and improved air quality.
 - **Beach Cities Enhanced Watershed Management Program**
The proposed project supports the goal of reducing stormwater pollutants by capturing all the site's potential stormwater discharge and infiltrating it to help filter any pollutants. The proposed project also supports the program's goal of increased education and outreach by providing interpretive signage explaining the multi-benefit design elements of the project.
4. **Support of the public:** The proposed project is supported by many local and regional entities, including the South Coast chapter of the Surfrider Foundation, the Beach Cities

Health District, the Hermosa Beach Chamber of Commerce, and downtown businesses. During the design of Parking Lot D, the City held a community education and outreach event to educate residents, and businesses regarding the multiple benefits of the project and to receive feedback. Community education and outreach tools included on-site meetings, mailers, a dedicated project page on the City's website, information booths at City events, notices and articles in local newspapers, updates at City Council meetings and through social media platforms. The Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians-Kizh Nation provided input through a government-to-government consultation on mitigation guidelines for Tribal cultural resources. Access Hermosa, a local stakeholder group addressing ADA accessibility issues through the City, along with the South Bay Bicycle Coalition provided input on preferred bicycle options. The Surfrider Foundation provided input on the stormwater elements. The Police Department and Downtown Subcommittee, comprised of elected official and City staff, provided input on lighting and site amenities. The Chamber of Commerce assisted in informing and educating businesses regarding the project. The same public participation process will be utilized during the design of Parking Lot A.

5. **Location:** See the "Project Summary".
6. **Need:** The Conservancy is providing a significant contribution to the proposed project and the grantee does not have sufficient funding to complete the proposed project without the Conservancy funds.
7. **Greater-than-local interest:** While the proposed project is physically located within Hermosa Beach, lessons learned will be used to inform future project designs both within the City of Hermosa Beach as well as regionally. The City participates in the Beach Cities Enhanced Watershed Management Program which has been incorporated into the Los Angeles Integrated Regional Water Management Plan to achieve regional water quality and water supply goals. The proposed project will help achieve identified regional water quality and water supply goals. The proposed project also promotes regional access to recreational opportunities provided by the City's beach and downtown commercial core which is frequented by visitors from the Los Angeles Region as well as other parts of California and the United States by accommodating multiple modes of transportation and including many pedestrian facilities such as increased green space, seating areas, and safety lighting as well as ADA accessibility improvements. Results from multiple surveys done over the years have shown that many visitors of Hermosa Beach come from a surrounding radius of five to ten miles, including The City of Lawndale and the City of Hawthorne which are both disadvantaged communities (DACs). Within a 10-mile radius there are close to 500,000 residents living in DACs for who Hermosa Beach is a popular recreation destination. Parking Lot D is 500 meters from public bus stops and Parking Lot A is 35 meters from public bus stops.
8. **Sea level rise vulnerability:** According to the Hermosa Beach Storm Drain Master Plan (2018), portions of the Hermosa Beach storm drain system are susceptible to sea level rise due to their proximity to the ocean and generally low ground elevations. Although elevations throughout the City vary, much of the beach area at the western edge of the City is lower than the projected high tides when considering 39 inches of sea level rise, which

was the projected sea level rise by 2100 based on the Coastal Storm Modeling System for Southern California (CoSMoS 3.0). Increased water levels at the outfalls will contribute to interior flooding during storm events and increased precipitation intensity due to climate change will contribute to higher peak runoff through direct overland flow during high tides. While the proposed project will help to improve localized flooding through capture of stormwater runoff onsite, both sites could be affected by localized flooding due to sea level rise because of infrastructure vulnerability of the Pier Avenue storm drain. Risks from the effects of sea level rise are considered in the City's recent update of its Storm Drain Master Plan which was informed by the Hermosa Beach Assessment of Infrastructure Vulnerability to Sea Level Rise (2016). The City's Hazard Mitigation Planning process will assess risks to project elements and recommend actions to mitigate these risks.

Additional Criteria

- 9. **Resolution of more than one issue:** The improvements on the Parking Lot D portion of the proposed project will address water quality issues, the need for carbon sequestration through the planting of trees, public health concerns due to dust originated from the unvegetated areas, safety concerns due to insufficient lighting, and ADA issues due to non-compliant ADA parking stalls.
- 10. **Leverage:** See the "Project Financing" section below.
- 11. **Readiness:** The proposed project is ready to implement.
- 12. **Cooperation:** The proposed project involves cooperation from stakeholders, and members of the community. See the "Support of the Public" section above.
- 13. **Minimization of greenhouse gas emissions:** Many elements of the proposed project will reduce and sequester greenhouse gases over the life of the project. Solar panels will offset energy needs for lighting, thus reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with operation of the site. The installation of charging stations for plug-in electric vehicles will encourage the expansion of non-emission vehicles in place of fossil-fueled vehicles. Lastly, tree and vegetation planting will further result in sequestration of greenhouse gasses at the project site.

PROJECT FINANCING

Coastal Conservancy	\$433,650
Hermosa Beach General Fund	\$499,650
Project Total	\$933,300

The expected source of funding for this authorization is the 2019/20 FY appropriation to the Conservancy from the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 ("Proposition 1", Division 26.7 of the Water Code Sections 79700 et seq.). Funds appropriated

to the Conservancy derive from Chapter 6 of Proposition 1 and may be used for ecosystem and watershed protection and restoration (Section 79731).

Section 79732 identifies specific purposes that these funds may be used for, including: protecting and restoring rural and urban watershed health through improved storm water resource management; protecting and restoring coastal watersheds; and reducing pollution or contamination of coastal waters (Section 79732(a)(9), (10) and (11)).

The proposed project was reviewed and subsequently recommended for funding through a competitive grant process under the Conservancy's Proposition 1 Grant Program Guidelines adopted in June 2015 ("Prop 1 Guidelines"). (See § 79706(a)). The proposed Project meets each of the evaluation criteria in the Prop 1 Guidelines as described in further detail in the following sections of this staff recommendation: "Project Financing", "Project Summary" and "Consistency with Conservancy's Project Selection Criteria & Guidelines" (sections above).

The proposed project is supported with funds from the Hermosa Beach General Fund. The City of Hermosa Beach will also provide in-kind services (staff time for project management) estimated to be \$50,000.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S ENABLING LEGISLATION:

The proposed project would be carried out pursuant to Chapter 9 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code (Sections 31400-31409), regarding the implementation of public coastal accessways. Public Resources Code Section 31400 directs the Conservancy to have a principal role in the implementation of public accessways to and along the State's coastline. To this end, Public Resources Code Section 31400.3 authorizes the Conservancy to "provide such assistance as is required to aid public agencies and nonprofit organizations in establishing a system of public coastal accessways, and related functions necessary to meet the objectives of this division." Granting funds to the City of Hermosa Beach for the purpose of renovating, and designing improvements to, two heavily used, beach-access parking lots in Hermosa Beach so that the parking lots can better serve the public while also protecting water quality, is consistent with this section.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S [2018-2022 STRATEGIC PLAN](#) GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S):

Consistent with **Goal 1, Objective A** of the Conservancy's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, the proposed project will implement and support projects to promote awareness and use of the California Coastal Trail by including signage directing visitors to the immediately adjacent California Coastal Trail (Hermosa Strand).

Consistent with **Goal 2, Objective A** of the Conservancy's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, the proposed project will expand and enhance opportunities for access for people with disabilities to and along the coast.

Consistent with **Goal 2, Objective C** of the Conservancy's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, the proposed project will design a parking lot facility to increase and enhance coastal recreational opportunities and enable people to enjoy natural, cultural, and historical resources.

Consistent with **Goal 2, Objective D** of the Conservancy's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, the proposed project will fund the renovation of a dilapidated and unsafe parking lot to increase and enhance coastal recreational opportunities and enable people to enjoy natural, cultural, and historical resources.

Consistent with **Goal 4, Objective B** of the Conservancy's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, the proposed project will support the design and installation of interpretive or educational displays and exhibits related to coastal, watershed, and ocean-resource education by installing interpretive signage at Parking Lot D on stormwater capture and reuse, and native plants.

Consistent with **Goal 6, Objective F** of the Conservancy's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, the proposed project will complete plans to improve water quality to benefit coastal and ocean resources by designing a plan to capture stormwater runoff and reduce pollutant loading to Santa Monica Bay.

CEQA COMPLIANCE:

The proposed project is exempt under CEQA Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) because the construction of the proposed improvements involves only minor alteration to the existing parking lots and will involve negligible or no expansion beyond their current use.

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