

APPROVED
MAY 07 2014
BOARD OF RECREATION
+ PARK COMMISSIONERS

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

NO. 14-113

DATE May 7, 2014

C.D. 15

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: CABRILLO MARINE AQUARIUM – INTERPRETIVE MASTER PLAN;
APPROVAL AND EXEMPTION FROM THE CALIFORNIA
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

R. Adams	_____	V. Israel	_____
*R. Barajas	<u><i>mf</i></u>	K. Regan	_____
H. Fujita	_____	N. Williams	_____

[Signature]
General Manager

Approved _____

Disapproved _____

Withdrawn _____

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Board:

1. Approve the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium Interpretive Master Plan, substantially in the form on file in the Board Office, dated October 2013; and
2. Find that the actions taken by the Board herein are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

SUMMARY:

The Cabrillo Marine Aquarium Interpretive Master Plan (Master Plan) was prepared by Split Rock Studios of Saint Paul, Minnesota, with input from the staff of the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium (CMA). The Friends of CMA (FCMA) funded the preparation of the Master Plan in the amount of \$75,000.00. FCMA is the 501(3)c non-profit support group of CMA and has a current Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Los Angeles. The FCMA Board of Directors has supported the development of a new Master Plan for CMA. The Master Plan was completed in October 2013 and the FCMA Board of Directors reviewed and approved the Master Plan.

An informational report was presented to the Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners (Board) on November 20, 2013. The Master Plan proposes to guide the strategic planning, development and fundraising for CMA for the next ten (10) to fifteen (15) years.

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The Master Plan contains the following sections: History of CMA, Cabrillo Site Resources, Audiences, Interpretive Exhibit Analysis and Recommendations, with Appendices on Phasing and Budget, Susanne Lawrenz-Miller Hall Concept Design, and Historical Timeline.

The last CMA Master Plan was approved by the Board in 1995. That plan resulted in a \$10,000,000.00 expansion to CMA that opened to the public in 2004. Since that time, the exhibits and programs in the expansion have received four (4) national recognition awards for excellence from the Association of Zoos and Aquariums.

An approved and up-to-date Master Plan is required for an institution to be accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. The 1995 Master Plan is essentially complete so it is time to put an updated Master Plan in place.

A driving force for the components of this Interpretive Master Plan (Master Plan) is to improve the visitor experience at CMA by renovating and upgrading current exhibits, incorporating new relevant topics into exhibit galleries, adding visitor amenities and building capacity to work with collaborators like local university scientists and AltaSea, the new marine science research center which is under construction in the Port of Los Angeles.

The Master Plan proposes to improve the visitor experience by:

1. Developing an Experience Hub as a dramatic and welcoming public entrance to the facility.
2. Redesigning and remodeling the Susanne Lawrenz-Miller Exhibit Hall.
3. Developing a strong presence in the Cabrillo Beach Coastal Park and on the Los Angeles waterfront.
4. Developing a presence at AltaSea in the Port of Los Angeles.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

Staff has determined that the proposed improvements called for in the subject Master Plan will consist of interior and exterior alterations or modifications to an existing recreational facility involving a negligible expansion of use and the construction of minor accessory structures. Therefore, approval and implementation of the CMA Master Plan is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Article III, Section 1, Classes 1 (1, 13) and 11 (1, 7) of the City CEQA Guidelines. However, as each aspect or component of the project is funded and moves forward, staff will reevaluate the specific scope of work for compliance to CEQA.

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FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

The preliminary estimate for the full implementation of the Master Plan is \$20,000,000.00 over the next ten (10) to fifteen (15) year period. The FCMA Board of Directors is beginning the process of developing a plan for a capital campaign working with the staff of CMA.

At this time, approval of the Master Plan has no fiscal impact to the RAP's General Fund. RAP currently operates this facility with existing resources and maintenance funding may be requested in future budget requests once the Master Plan improvements are implemented.

This Report was prepared by Mike Schaadt, Aquarium Director, Pacific Region and Cathie Santo-Domingo, Superintendent, Planning, Construction and Maintenance Branch.