


CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

South Coast Area Office
200 Oceangate, Suite 1000
Long Beach, CA 90802-4302
(562) 590-5071

Filed: 6/2/04
49th Day: 7/21/04
Staff: RT-LB
Staff Report: 3/24/05
Hearing Date: 4/13-4/15, 2005
Commission Action:


W 7a**RECORD PACKET COPY**

STAFF REPORT: APPEAL
DE NOVO COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT

APPEAL NUMBER: A-5-LOB-04-222

APPLICANT: City of Long Beach/Dept. of Parks, Recreation and Marine

AGENT: Dennis Eschen, Manager of Planning and Development

APPELLANTS: Commissioners Sara Wan & Toni Iseman

PROJECT LOCATION: Bixby Park (2000-2300 E. Ocean Blvd.), City of Long Beach.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Bixby Park Redevelopment Plan: grading and stabilization of the coastal bluff at Bixby Park, and improvements to the portion of the park situated on the bluff face and the public beach, including: a path and 3.5-foot high railing along the top edge of the bluff, landscaping the bluff face with native California vegetation, two stairways and one ramp on the bluff face to provide public access from the top of bluff to the beach, a skating plaza and 199-seat amphitheater at the bottom of the bluff, realignment of the beach bike path, a children's playground on the beach, and the replacement of a public bathroom on the beach.

SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends that the Commission, after public hearing, **approve with conditions** a de novo coastal development permit for the proposed development approved as local coastal development permit (No. 0306-32) with special conditions to protect public access, recreation, visual resources and water quality. **See Page Two for the motion and resolution** necessary to carry out the staff recommendation. Please note that related coastal development permit application 5-04-437 addresses those parts of the development located in the Commission's retained jurisdiction.

STAFF NOTE: After certification of Local Coastal Programs, the Coastal Act provides for limited appeals to the Coastal Commission of local government actions on coastal development permit applications. Locally issued coastal development permits may be appealed if the development is located within the appealable areas established in Coastal Act Section 30603. These include areas located between the sea and the first public road paralleling the sea or within three hundred feet of the mean high tide line or inland extent of any beach or top of the seaward face of a coastal bluff, or within 100 feet of wetlands. Developments approved by counties may be appealed if they are not designated "principal permitted use" under the certified LCP. Finally, local government action on applications for developments that constitute major public works or major energy facilities may be appealed, whether approved or denied by the local government [Coastal Act

Section 30603(a)]. The development approved in Coastal Permit No. 0306-32 is located in an appealable area because it is located within three hundred feet from the inland extent of the beach and between the first public road and the sea. When the Commission found the appeal of the local permit for this development to raise a substantial issue, the local coastal permit was nullified, and the Commission now acts on the matter de novo. The standard of review for the de novo permit is the access and recreation policies of the Coastal Act and the policies of the City of Long Beach's certified Local Coastal Program.

In this case, the entire City project is not in the appeal area; part is in the area of retained jurisdiction (i.e. the beach area seaward of the Chapter 138 Line). The Coastal Commission retains jurisdiction seaward of the adjudicated Mean high tide line. In downtown Long Beach, the "Chapter 138 line" marks the adjudicated mean high tide line of the Pacific Ocean, the result of an agreement between the State Lands Commission and the City. The physical median high tide line is significantly seaward of the adjudicated mean high tide line.

This appeal addresses only those parts of the project inland of the chapter 138 line, which involves grading and stabilization of the coastal bluff at Bixby Park, and improvements to the portion of the park situated on the bluff face and the public beach, including: a path and 3.5-foot high railing along the top edge of the bluff, landscaping the bluff face with native California vegetation, two stairways and one ramp to provide public access from the top of bluff to the beach, a skating plaza and 199-seat amphitheater at the bottom of the bluff, realignment of the beach bike path. Related coastal development permit application 5-04-437 addresses development seaward of the Chapter 138 line which includes portions of the skating plaza and beach bike path realignment, a children's playground on the beach, replacement of a public restroom on the beach and landscaping.

SUBSTANTIVE FILE DOCUMENTS:

1. City of Long Beach Certified Local Coastal Program (LCP), 7/22/80.
2. City of Long Beach Local Coastal Development Permit No. 0306-32.
3. Mitigated Negative Declaration for Bixby Park Redevelopment (ND-36-03).
4. Coastal Development Permit 5-00-484 (City of Los Angeles: Damson Oil Demolition, Beach Restoration and Skate Venue).
5. Coastal Development Permit 5-04-481 (County of Los Angeles: Venice Beach Refurbishment Project).

LIST OF EXHIBITS:

1. Vicinity Map
2. Location Map
3. Site Plan
4. Notice of Final Local Action – City of Long Beach
5. Letter from Dennis Eschen, Manager of Planning and Development, City of Long Beach
6. Letter from Byron Konstantinidis of Geotechnical Professionals Inc., Geotechnical Engineer
7. Letter from Steven Ormenyi of Steven Ormenyi & Associates, Landscape Architect

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The staff recommends that the Commission adopt the following resolution to **APPROVE** the coastal development permit application with special conditions:

MOTION: *"I move that the Commission approve Coastal Development Permit A-5-LOB-04-222 pursuant to the staff recommendation."*

Staff recommends a **YES** vote. Passage of this motion will result in approval of the permit as conditioned and adoption of the following resolution and findings. The motion passes only by affirmative vote of a majority of the Commissioners present.

I. **Resolution: Approval with Conditions of De Novo Permit A-5-LOB-04-222**

The Commission hereby **APPROVES**, subject to the conditions below, a coastal development permit on the grounds that the development as conditioned will be in conformity with the certified Long Beach Local Coastal Program and the public access and recreation policies of the Coastal Act, and will not have any significant adverse effects on the environment within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act.

II. **Standard Conditions**

1. **Notice of Receipt and Acknowledgment.** The permit is not valid and development shall not commence until a copy of the permit, signed by the permittee or authorized agent, acknowledging receipt of the permit and acceptance of the terms and conditions, is returned to the Commission office.
2. **Expiration.** If development has not commenced, the permit will expire two years from the date this permit is reported to the Commission. Development shall be pursued in a diligent manner and completed in a reasonable period of time. Application for extension of the permit must be made prior to the expiration date.
3. **Interpretation.** Any questions of intent or interpretation of any condition will be resolved by the Executive Director or the Commission.
4. **Assignment.** The permit may be assigned to any qualified person, provided assignee files with the Commission an affidavit accepting all terms and conditions of the permit.
5. **Terms and Conditions Run with the Land.** These terms and conditions shall be perpetual, and it is the intention of the Commission and the permittee to bind all future owners and possessors of the subject property to the terms and conditions.

III. **Special Conditions**

1. **Final Project Plans**

PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicant shall submit for the review and approval of the Executive Director, final plans for the approved development. The final plans shall conform to, and clearly demonstrate compliance with, the following requirements:

- A. Grading Plans: The final plans must conform to conceptual plans provided to the Commission. No fill above the level of the parking lot shall occur.

The permittee shall undertake the development in accordance with the final plans approved by the Executive Director pursuant to this condition. Any proposed changes to the approved plans shall be reported to the Executive Director in order to determine if the proposed change shall require a permit amendment pursuant to the requirements of the Coastal Act and the California Code of Regulations. No changes to the approved plan shall occur without a Commission amendment to this coastal development permit unless the Executive Director determines that no amendment is required.

2. **Landscape Plan**

A. PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicant shall submit, for the review and approval of the Executive Director, a final landscape plan consistent with the objectives described in page X of the application and in the letter dated August 24, 2004, from the landscape architect Mr. Ormenyi. The plan shall be prepared by a licensed landscape architect.

1. The plan shall demonstrate that:

- (a) All vegetation planted on site will be consistent with the conceptual plans and letter dated August 24, 2004, from the landscape architect, Mr. Ormenyi.
- (b) All required plantings will be maintained in good growing conditions throughout the life of the project, and whenever necessary, shall be replaced with new plant materials to ensure continued compliance with the landscape plan.
- (c) No plant species listed as problematic and/or invasive by the California Native Plant Society, the California Exotic Pest Plant Council, or as may be identified from time to time by the State of California shall be employed or allowed to naturalize or persist on the site. No plant species listed as a 'noxious weed' by the State of California or the U.S. Federal Government shall be utilized within the property.

2. The plan shall include, at a minimum, the following components:

- (a) A map showing the type, size, and location of all plant materials that will be on the developed site, the irrigation system, topography of the developed site, and all other landscape features, and
- (b) a schedule for installation of plants.

B. The permittee shall undertake development in accordance with the approved final plan. Any proposed changes to the approved final plan shall be reported to the Executive Director. No changes to the approved final plan shall occur without a Commission amendment to this coastal development permit unless the Executive Director determines that no amendment is legally required.

3. Location of Debris Disposal Site

The applicant shall dispose of all demolition and construction debris resulting from the proposed project at an appropriate location. If the offsite disposal site is located within the coastal zone, a coastal development permit or an amendment to this permit shall be required before disposal can take place.

4. Parking for Events at the Amphitheater

There shall be no exclusive use of parking spaces or reserved parking spaces within the existing parking lots for any of the facilities proposed in this permit.

5. Beach and Recreation Area Closures and Project Staging Areas

PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicant shall submit for the review and approval of the Executive Director, a final demolition and construction schedule, and detailed plans which identify the specific location of: demolition staging and equipment storage areas, areas where any demolished structures and excavated soils are proposed to be temporarily stockpiled, and the access corridors to the project sites. Said plans shall include the following criteria and limitations specified via written notes on the plans:

- A. In order to reduce adverse impacts to public access and recreation, all project staging, demolition and construction activities shall be restricted during the annual peak beach use period that commences at the start of Memorial Day weekend and ends on October 31 of each year. During the peak beach use period the following restrictions shall apply:
 - (i) No project staging, demolition or construction activities of any kind shall take place during weekends or holidays.
 - (ii) Sanitary chemical restrooms shall be provided for public use at all times and locations where the existing or new permanent restroom facilities are unavailable for public use.

- (iii) Whenever the permitted project staging, demolition or construction activities occur in a public beach parking lot, the activities and development shall be phased to ensure that at least one-half (1/2) capacity of each of the public beach parking lots is open for public use.
- B. Beach and recreation area closures during demolition and construction shall be minimized and limited to areas immediately adjacent to the project area. Closed areas shall not to exceed a 100-foot radius from the active work area. All beach areas and recreation facilities outside of the 100-foot radius shall remain open and available for public use during the normal operating hours (unless they are closed pursuant to a Commission approved coastal development permit or permit amendment).
- C. Public access to and along the beach bicycle route shall be maintained at all times, except for temporary interruptions (5 minutes or less) for truck crossing. When the current beach bicycle route is closed for demolition and reconstruction, the permittee shall provide a clearly marked beach bicycle route detour to bypass the project site. No sand areas may be paved for any detour, except within the specific areas where a Commission-approved permit or amendment allows the installation of pavement on the sand.
- D. The applicant shall not allow discharge of silt or debris into coastal waters as a result of this project. Pursuant to this requirement, staging areas, equipment and materials storage areas, and soil stockpiles shall be located at least 100 feet from the water at all times. These areas shall be fenced-off to prevent any encroachment of equipment or debris within 100 feet of water.
- E. Truck and heavy equipment access corridors to the project site shall be located in a manner that has the least impact on public access and public parking areas.

The permittee shall undertake development in accordance with the plans and construction schedule approved by the Executive Director pursuant to this condition. Any proposed changes to the approved plans or construction schedule shall be reported to the Executive Director in order to determine if the proposed change shall require a permit amendment pursuant to the requirements of the Coastal Act and the California Code of Regulations. No changes to the approved plan shall occur without a Commission amendment to this coastal development permit unless the Executive Director determines that no amendment is required.

6. Operation of Facilities Approved in this Permit

The applicant shall operate the facilities approved in this permit as part of a public park as proposed in its application. No fees shall be charged for admission to or for use of any of the facilities. If a temporary special event proposes to charge admission for any of the facilities, a coastal development permit must be obtained from the City of Long Beach.

7. Amphitheater Time Use Restrictions

Major events shall not be scheduled in the amphitheater during daytime hours on weekends between Labor Day and Memorial Day or on summer holidays, including Memorial Day, Labor Day and the Fourth of July.

8. Future Uses and Improvements

This approval is limited to the uses and development specifically described in the project description, approved plans and related findings contained in Coastal Development Permit A5-LOB-04-222. Any proposed additional development, including, but not limited to: new construction, intensification of use, addition of food services or dining areas, and the lease of beach or park areas, will require an amendment to the permit or a new coastal development permit unless the Executive Director determines that no amendment is required pursuant to the requirements of the Coastal Act and the California Code of Regulations.

9. Lease to Private Operators

Any lease of any development approved by Coastal Development Permit A5-LOB-04-222 to private operators shall maintain free public use of the facility and shall require an amendment of this permit.

10. Prohibited Construction Materials

Project related fences, benches, walls, bollards, or support structures shall not contain any of the following: petroleum, acid, coal or oil tar, lampblack, aniline, asphalt, bitumen, or residuary products of petroleum, including creosote, or carbonaceous materials or substances.

11. No Future Bluff or Shoreline Protective Device

A. BY ACCEPTANCE OF THIS COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicant agrees, on behalf of itself and all successors and assigns, that no bluff or shoreline protective device(s) shall ever be constructed to protect the development approved pursuant to Coastal Development Permit A5-LOB-04-222 including, but not limited to the amphitheatre, restrooms, playground, skate park, concession stand, storage facilities, bike and pedestrian paths, and any other future improvements in the event that the development is threatened with damage or destruction from waves, erosion, flooding, storm conditions, or other natural hazards in the future. By acceptance of this permit, the applicant hereby waives, on behalf of itself and all successors and assigns, any rights to construct such devices that may exist under Public Resources Code Section 30235.

By acceptance of this permit, the applicant further agrees, on behalf of itself and all successors and assigns, that the permittee and/or whoever has authority over this site and the development authorized by this permit shall remove the development authorized by this permit, including, but not limited to the amphitheatre, restrooms,

playground, skate park, concession stand, storage facilities, bike and pedestrian paths, and any other future improvements, if any government agency has ordered that the development is not to be occupied due to any of the hazards identified above. In the event that portions of the development fall to the beach before they are removed, the permittee and/or whoever has authority over this site and the development authorized by this permit shall remove all recoverable debris associated with the development from the beach and ocean and lawfully dispose of the material in an approved disposal site. Such removal shall require a coastal development permit.

12. Assumption of Risk, Waiver of Liability and Indemnity Agreement

A. BY ACCEPTANCE OF THIS COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicant acknowledges and agrees: (i) that the site may be subject to hazards from seismic events, liquefaction, storms, waves, flooding and erosion; (ii) to assume the risks to the permittee and the property that is the subject of this permit of injury and damage from such hazards in connection with this permitted development; (iii) to unconditionally waive any claim of damage or liability against the Commission, its officers, agents, and employees for injury or damage from such hazards; and (iv) to indemnify and hold harmless the Commission, its officers, agents, and employees with respect to the Commission's approval of the project against any and all liability, claims, demands, damages, costs (including costs and fees incurred in defense of such claims), expenses, and amounts paid in settlement arising from any injury or damage due to such hazards.

B. PRIOR TO ANY CONVEYANCE OF THE PROPERTY THAT IS THE SUBJECT OF THIS COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicant shall execute and record a deed restriction, in a form and content acceptable to the Executive Director: (1) indicating that, pursuant to this permit, the California Coastal Commission has authorized development on the subject property, subject to terms and conditions that restrict the use and enjoyment of that property; and (2) imposing all Special Conditions of this permit as covenants, conditions and restrictions on the use and enjoyment of the Property. The restriction shall include a legal description of the applicant's entire parcel or parcels. It shall also indicate that, in the event of an extinguishment or termination of the deed restriction for any reason, the Standard and Special Conditions of this permit shall continue to restrict the use and enjoyment of the subject property so long as either this permit or the development it authorizes – or any part, modification, or amendment thereof – remains in existence on or with respect to the subject property.

C. PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicant shall submit a written agreement, in a form and content acceptable to the Executive Director, incorporating all of the above terms of this condition.

13. Local Government Approval

This action has no effect on conditions imposed by a local government pursuant to an authority other than the Coastal Act. In the event of conflict between the terms

and conditions imposed by the local government and those of this coastal development permit, the terms and conditions of Coastal Development Permit A5-LOB-04-222 shall prevail.

14. Permit Compliance

All development must occur in strict compliance with the proposal as set forth in the application, subject to any special conditions. Any deviation from the approved plans must be submitted for review by the Executive Director to determine whether an amendment to this coastal development permit is necessary pursuant to the requirements of the Coastal Act and the California Code of Regulations.

IV. Findings and Declarations

The Commission hereby finds and declares:

A. Project Description and History

The applicant proposes to implement the Bixby Park Redevelopment Plan, which involves grading and stabilizing the coastal bluff at Bixby Park, and improving the portion of the park situated on the bluff face and the public beach. The proposed park improvements include: a path and 3.5 foot-high railing along the top edge of the bluff, landscaping the bluff face with native California vegetation, two stairways and one wheelchair accessible ramp on the bluff face to provide public access from the top of bluff to the beach, a skating plaza and 199-seat amphitheater at the bottom of the bluff, realignment of the beach bike path, a children's playground on the beach, and the replacement of a public bathroom on the beach (Exhibit #3). The existing Junipero Avenue public beach parking lot, which provides some parking for Bixby Park, is not being altered by the proposed project.

Bixby Park, a dedicated City Park that extends four blocks inland from the beach to Broadway, is situated in the heart of the densely developed residential neighborhood east of downtown (Exhibit #1). The proposed project is situated only in the portion of the park located closest to the beach, between Ocean Boulevard and the sea (Exhibit #2). The most seaward portion of the proposed project is situated on State Tidelands within the Commission's area of retained jurisdiction (i.e. the beach area seaward of the Chapter 138 Line). The top of the bluff in Bixby Park provides an excellent shoreline viewing area where one can see RMS Queen Mary and the Port of Long Beach to the west, Santa Catalina Island to the south, and the rest of the beach and seascape to the east. The bluff face, which City staff asserts has been graded in the past, suffers from erosion and lack of vegetation. In its findings, the City found that the lack of a direct formal access path between the top and bottom of the bluff has contributed to erosion problems on the bluff because the pathways created by the pedestrians and bicycles become low spots on the edge of the bluff that increase erosion in winter rains, creating rutted channels for runoff. The existing beach bike path runs through the project site between the toe of the bluff and the Junipero Avenue public beach parking lot. This bike path would be realigned and moved closer to the parking lot in order to provide the space for the proposed

amphitheater and skating plaza, which would be located on a fill area at the toe of the bluff.

B. Public Access and Recreation

The proposed project, which is located between the first public road and the sea, must conform with the following public access and recreation policies of the Coastal Act:

Section 30210 of the Coastal Act states:

In carrying out the requirement of Section 4 of Article X of the California Constitution, maximum access, which shall be conspicuously posted, and recreational opportunities shall be provided for all the people consistent with public safety needs and the need to protect public rights, rights of private property owners, and natural resource areas from overuse.

Section 30211 of the Coastal Act states:

Development shall not interfere with the public's right of access to the sea where acquired through use or legislative authorization, including, but not limited to, the use of dry sand and rocky coastal beaches to the first line of terrestrial vegetation.

Section 30213 of the Coastal Act states:

Lower cost visitor and recreational facilities shall be protected, encouraged, and where feasible, provided. Developments providing public recreational opportunities are preferred.

Section 30220 of the Coastal Act states:

Coastal areas suited for water-oriented recreational activities that cannot readily be provided at inland water areas shall be protected for such uses.

Section 30221 of the Coastal Act states:

Oceanfront land suitable for recreational use shall be protected for recreational use and development unless present and foreseeable future demand for public or commercial recreational activities that could be accommodated on the property is already adequately provided for in the area.

The project is also governed by the LCP policies that address public access and development plans for this area. The LCP "General Strand Policies" related to Use and Access are as follows:

- 1. Only beach dependent recreational facilities, such as sand volleyball courts, should be located on the beach, i.e., no handball, basketball, or tennis courts except as provided for herein. No windbreaks should be constructed which would block or inhibit seaward views. No commercial establishments and no additional*

parking should be permitted on the beaches except as otherwise provided for in this LCP.

2. Combination restroom/concession facilities should be located near the landward side of the beach while restroom facilities alone should be located at variable distances on the landward side of the beach so as to best provide convenience to both beach users and users of such grassy areas and/or bike paths and walkways as may be developed.

3. Restroom/concession facilities should be constructed or improved first in the areas of highest beach usage.

5. A bike path should be constructed from Alamitos Avenue to 54th Place. Such path should be located on the beach in the vicinity of its landward boundary with bluffs, street or parking areas. Bike racks should be provided at reasonable intervals along the bike path.

6. A pedestrian walkway should be constructed adjacent to the above mentioned bike path from Alamitos Avenue to 54th Place. A sidewalk along Ocean Boulevard should connect with the boardwalk presently existing between 55th Place and 69th Place.

7. A landscaped combination grass and foliage area varying in width should be created adjacent to the bike and pedestrian pathway to provide visual attraction and grassy picnic areas. Adequate picnic tables and trash receptacles should be provided.

8. Free children's play modules should be provided in the general vicinity of 1st Place, Molino, Granada, and 72nd Place.

Maximum Access: The appellants contended that the extent of the uses at beach level could detract from active beach uses. According to the City, the primary objective of the proposed project is to attract more people to use the beaches in Long Beach. The beaches are lightly attended except on holiday weekends or times of special events, and they are the City's greatest underused recreational resource. In 1998, the Long Beach Marine Advisory Commission produced the report "Observations and Comments on Current City Beach Use," and after several trips to observe usage, concluded that there is a lack of use. This report indicated that without the surf typical of southern California beaches (due to the presence of the Long Beach Harbor breakwater), the beaches in Long Beach are best suited to attract family groups with younger children and older adults. To attract those groups, the beaches needed to provide shade, picnic areas, and additional recreational activities. The proposed project is designed to add those elements to the area adjoining an existing parking lot.

Extent and Intensity of Uses on the Beach: The proposal includes three playgrounds, a skate park, a 199-seat amphitheater, including a stage and a backdrop at sand level and seaward of the bluff. The Commission found that the extent of uses on the beach raised a substantial issue with Sections 30211 and 30220 of the Coastal Act, which require that

development should not interfere with existing public access and that oceanfront land suited for water oriented activities shall be protected for such uses. Although the uses are allowable uses in the zoning for a park in the LCP, and the 1980 LCP listed all these uses as potential uses for Bixby Park, the LCP did not indicate that all of the uses would be constructed on the beach, resulting in a greater coverage of beach area with development than may have been anticipated.

Dennis Eschen, (Manager of Planning and Development for the City of Long Beach) asserts that most of the proposed site is not on the beach proper but in the location between the beach access parking lot and the bluff. On a site visit Staff confirmed that between the parking lot and the toe of the bluff, sand has been mixed with clay and silt materials that have eroded from the bluff, creating a mix that is "dirtier" than the nearby, unmixed sand. Thus, few beachgoers ever use the area for sitting and placing their blankets. The site is also inland of a parking lot, so sitting in this location does not provide a view of the ocean or of swimmers, further discouraging typical beach uses. Finally, the only traditional active beach use that exists in the area is volleyball. The City indicates that volleyball will be relocated west of the project site.

City representatives state that the playgrounds and shaded picnic area are intended to attract more families to the beach area. The City does not view the playground user as separate from the beach user. Families coming to the area primarily for the playground have the option of playgrounds in many other parks in Long Beach, and Bixby Park has a larger playground in the section of the park between 1st and 2nd streets. It is fully intended that the playground, which is proposed in the LCP, will make this beach location more popular for families who want to engage in traditional beach activities, but also want the option of additional activities for their children.

The same is true of the limited picnic and shade area. It is intended that this amenity will make the nearby beach more popular, but the new users will not displace beach users, as they will still be beach users.

Public Access – Parking: In finding substantial issue on this case, the Commission found that the original approval raised substantial issue with the access policies of the coastal act because the construction of a non-beach related attraction on the beach could result in a parking demand for amphitheater related events. This growth in demand for parking to serve the amphitheater could reduce the number of parking spaces available to beach visitors. The Commission noted that the City's findings discussed the amount of public parking available to serve the amphitheater and noted the current occupancy of the beach parking lot. However, there was no analysis of the potential demand for parking of this amphitheater, nor did the City's findings identify the possible hours of operation or analyze whether the proposed hours of operation would conflict with public beach use.

In response to the Commission action, Mr. Eschen provided the Commission with a letter discussing the City's objectives, its plans to operate the facility, and among other topics, the parking situation. Mr. Eschen indicated that there is currently ample capacity in this lot. The parking lot, and the recently striped and metered access road, provides 451 parking spaces. For concert or stage performances, the standard of three persons per

vehicle is typically used to calculate parking demand for seating capacity. With a seating capacity of 180 persons, the amphitheater would generate a maximum of 60 vehicles.

Furthermore, according to Mr. Eschen, the amphitheater will not be used during summer weekends. This is not intended as an "event" site. Use will be generated from Parks, Recreation, and Marine programming and is totally controllable by the applicant. Thus, by conscious decisions, amphitheater use will be limited to non-peak times. The intended use is for weekday summer day-camp youth theater, weekday evening Long Beach Municipal Band (not exceeding once a week, six to eight weeks per year), and potentially weekday evening art museum concert series (not exceeding once a week).

Finally, Mr. Eschen stated that at present the site of the proposed project is lightly used. According to the City of Long Beach, based on a parking survey conducting in August, 2004, parking demand by new users will not displace existing beach use, because there is substantial available parking. On several weekday visits at various times of the day in August 2004, City staff observed that parking use ranged from 120 to 199 cars (27 to 44 percent of capacity). If 60 additional cars were attracted by a day-camp theater or music production, the lot would only be at 57 percent capacity. At worst case, if the 180 seats attracted 180 cars, the lot would still be at only 84 percent of capacity (Exhibit #5).

On weekend days, the range increased to 203 to 282 vehicles (45 to 63 percent). If the skate plaza attracted an anticipated maximum of 50 additional vehicles, the lot would only range up to 74 percent of capacity. In a worst case, that all 108 potential users drove separately, that would only increase up to 86 percent of capacity. On a typical August weekend, the typical peak of beach use, the skate plaza could attract up to 169 skaters, all driving separate cars, before parking capacity would be reached (Exhibit #5).

On special event weekends, City staff observed that occupancy increased to as much as 322 to 451 spaces (71-100 percent). The local lifeguards believe that overall usage is down from previous summers and that the parking lot capacity has only been reached on Memorial Day and 4th of July weekends. In previous summers, a full parking lot has occurred five weekends per summer (before the addition of 55 more spaces).

The City indicated that its plans for managing the facilities would reduce any conflict with beach use, and between the two attractions. The skate park and the amphitheater are designed as overlapping spaces that cannot be used at the same time, thus they cannot operate simultaneously. There is no defined capacity for the skate plaza. Observations at other facilities in Long Beach (primarily the El Dorado Park Skate Park) and discussions with the designer of the proposed skate plaza, indicate that one skater per 250 square feet is about the maximum use. Skaters will wait in line to be able to skate, but the combined factors of a long wait and too little room per skater seems to generate a capacity of approximately those proportions. The 27,000 square foot skate plaza would thus accommodate 108 skaters. As many skaters are below driving age, peak demand of 50 or fewer vehicles is probable. This demand is similar to the amphitheater parking demand and can be accommodated by the 396-space parking lot and the 55 new spaces added on the access ramp.

In order to conform with Sections 30210 and 30211 of the Coastal Act and the related policies of the LCP, staff has incorporated Special Condition 7, which includes time use restrictions for the amphitheater, and Special Condition 5, which ensures that construction impacts on access are not significant. The project as proposed is consistent with the General Strand LCP policies.

Based on the level of use anticipated in the City's parking survey, and the City's stated plans for managing facilities as incorporated into Special Condition 7, which includes time use restrictions for the amphitheater, the proposed project will be consistent with the public access and recreation policies of the Coastal Act and the General Strand LCP Policies.

Public Access – Admission Fees: The Commission determined that the potential creation for a for-fee skate park could reduce previously available beach access, and raise issues with both Section 30211 and Section 30213 of the Coastal Act. It was not clear whether the skate park would be free to the general public or would require a fee for entrance.

According to the City, no charge is intended for any of the facilities associated with the proposed project. If the facilities are operated as free facilities, and if performances are not scheduled in the amphitheater of peak beach days, the development will not interfere with existing beach use and will provide lower cost recreation facilities. Special Condition 6 requires that all the proposed facilities, including the skate park, be free to the general public. As conditioned, the proposed project will conform to the LCP and Sections 30211, 30213 and 30220 of the Coastal Act.

C. Visual Resources

The visual resources of Bixby Park are preserved in the LCP, which states that:

"the visual resources of Bixby and Bluff parks are preserved intact by this LCP"
and;

"No changes are proposed to either park which could impair or reduce existing views and open space character."

The primary visual resources issue raised by the appeal is the project's potential to adversely affect coastal views and scenic vistas. The LCP provides for protection of views to the beach from the bluff top in this area and maintenance of the parks' open space character.

According to the City, no changes are proposed to either park, which would impair or reduce existing views and open space character. The only change in the views from the park will be the result of the installation of a railing and benches proposed for the edge of Bixby Park along the top of the bluff. Currently Bixby Park does not have either railing or benches along the top of the bluff. Representatives of the City of Long Beach assert that the proposed railing and benches in Bixby Park are consistent with these LCP policies and staff is in agreement with this statement. They also assert that the regrading and planting of the bluff face will approve its appearance as viewed from the beach.

The railing would prevent the climbing of the bluff at unimproved locations by pedestrians and bicycle riders, which wear paths in the bluff that lead to increased erosion in the form of ruts that cut into the bluff. It is also necessary for public safety as climbing or descending the bluff at unimproved locations and at steep angles is not safe. Furthermore, the railing and controlled access is necessary to protect the proposed native landscaping for the bluff restoration from being trampled. The railing will also help keep soccer balls from going over from the bluff top during the frequent games in Bixby Park.

The proposed design of the railing to conform to historical features, is a result of substantial discussions during the community meetings at which this project was presented. The proposed design is to reflect the design of the railing in Bluff Park with the two horizontal poles, supported every 20 feet with vertical poles terminated above the top rail with a bulb. To conform with current building code requirements, additional wire cables will be strung horizontally between the vertical poles.

The City of Long Beach believes, and staff agrees, that the proposed railing and benches for Bixby Park will not create a view impairment, as the current railing and benches in Bluff Park are not considered structures that impair or reduce views.

The proposed structures that will intrude into the viewsheds looking towards Bixby Park from the beach are the two towers on the stage, which are open frame structures, constructed of metal tubing, which each measure approximately 32 ½ feet high and 12 feet wide. They are round and look like wire Victorian gazebos without a solid roof.

The towers' function is to hold the lights and speakers for the stage, to support a backdrop curtain to be placed behind the stage when needed, and to allow a shade canopy to be pulled over the stage and audience when needed. Neither the backdrop nor the shade canopy will be permanently affixed to the towers. Visually, the towers are intended to be thematic landmarks, identifying the site, and to be visually attractive complements to the early 20th century amusement park theme for the area, which is primarily expressed through the painted concrete surface of the amphitheater and skate plaza. The period of design is consistent with the period of the local historical landmark of the Lifeguard Headquarters building that is adjacent to the project site.

The Long Beach LCP does not include any language relative to structures being viewed against the backdrop of the bluffs, so the stage towers do not conflict with the Long Beach LCP in that regard. Each tower amounts to roughly 3 percent of the total view of the bluff, so it's a minor intrusion in regards to the amount of bluff it blocks.

The view of the beach from Bixby Park will be intruded upon by the towers, but only at select locations. As mentioned, the towers are approximately 32 ½ feet high, but are lower than the height of the bluff, so they are not visible from the park, except from the very edge of the bluff. It will be possible to view around the towers, as each is only 12 feet wide and 150 feet from the shoulder of the bluff, while the beach sand is approximately 340 feet away. As an open frame structure, anyone can see through the towers - they would create a visual silhouette in the view. Furthermore, the beach is relatively narrow in front of the parking lot and screened by a three-foot high wall along the edge of the

parking lot, and the beach falls away at a fairly steep angle, so that relatively little of the beach is currently visible, without the proposed structures.

The bluff is made of poorly consolidated terrace material, presently the eroded areas have displaced landscaping. The bluff face, lacking a rocky substrate, does not erode into picturesque forms. Instead, it erodes into crumbling gullies. The City representatives assert that grading the bluff back to a more regular shape and landscaping it will prevent further gullying and erosion. This is consistent with the LCP policy that requires the City to preserve the visual resources of Bixby and Bluff parks.

The proposed railing and benches are consistent with existing railing and benches in Bluff Park. The towers are not visible from above the bluff at Bixby Park, except from the very edge of the bluff. Neither the backdrop nor shade canopy will be permanently affixed to the towers, so the majority of the time, people can see through the towers. Therefore, the proposed project is consistent with the visual resources policies of the LCP.

D. Open Space

The LCP open space policies require that development:

“protect and improve the community’s natural resources, amenities and scenic values including nature centers, beaches, bluffs, wetlands and water bodies” and;

“keep parklands open and green by limiting the amount of parking lot and building coverage areas within parks.”

The key open space issue is that the proposed project appeared to conflict with the City’s general open space policies, which are part of the certified LCP. The only standard adopted to implement this was restricted to building coverage. As the beach is considered a regional park, the building coverage is two percent. The total building improvement on the site is approximately 2,700 square feet (a 320 square foot increase over the current building area). That building area meets the two percent coverage limit. However, this is calculated on the basis of an arbitrary line defining the project site, with the lifeguard building just outside the site limits. Considering the whole 258 acres of beach, there is only approximately 0.3 percent building coverage, including all restroom, concession, lifeguard, and maintenance buildings.

The concern for over-developing the beach involves more than constructing buildings. The total impervious improvements to the site will cover 26 percent of the site including the amphitheater, skate plaza, playground surfacing, stairways and increased area in both the restroom and bicycle path. This retains 70 percent of the site as landscaped open space. Placed in the context that the entire site is only 1.2 percent of Long Beach’s ocean front beach, the impervious improvements are only 0.3 percent of the ocean front beach. Including all the beach parking lots and the bicycle path, 10.9 percent of the Long Beach ocean front beach is covered with impervious surfacing.

The City contends that in making the subjective determination of whether the project is consistent with the policy of “...protecting and improving...the beach...” the “naturalness”

and scenic qualities of the existing area also need to be considered. The existing site is "open" but is neither natural nor scenic. It is an area located between the existing Junipero Avenue beach parking lot and a partially landscaped, eroding bluff. The area is maintained by beach cleaning equipment on a regular basis, so that any plant life, which begins to establish itself, is removed. Furthermore, the ground surface between the bike path and the bluff is a blend of beach sand and eroded clay from the bluff, so it doesn't have the appearance of sand. The City believes that the landscaping, combined with visually interesting recreational facilities, will be an attractive park setting inland of the beach parking lot, which is fully consistent with the City's open space policy.

As was described above, the existing site is neither natural nor scenic. The proposed project adheres to the building coverage requirements set forth in the LCP. No new parking lots are proposed as part of this project. Furthermore, 70 percent of the proposed project is landscaped open space. Therefore, the proposed project is consistent with the above-mentioned open space policies of the LCP.

E. Development on the Bluff Face and Beach

The LCP policies relating to development on the bluff face and beach in the "Strand" section state that:

"Recreational facilities, including basketball, should be permitted in any area north of the parking lot, where parking space development is not feasible."

It also states that:

"Basketball Courts shall be permitted between the eastern arm of the parking lot and the bluff."

The appellants contended that although an amphitheater may be an allowable use in a City park, it is not clear that the LCP would allow an amphitheater on the bluff face and beach in Bixby Park. In finding substantial issue, the Commission found that neither the amphitheater nor the skate park, are mentioned in the LCP, referencing Area B. In the Strand section, the language is slightly different, with Segment 2, relating to this site and stating in recommendation #3 that *"Recreational facilities, including basketball, should be permitted in any area north of the parking lot, where parking space development is not feasible."*

In finding substantial issue with the appeal, the Commission also noted that a basketball court is mentioned for the site in the LCP, but is not included in this proposed project. The City staff's interpretation of this language is that it does not limit recreational facilities to basketball only, but is permissive of other unnamed recreational facilities, which could include an amphitheater, playgrounds and a skate park, etc. The City believes this concern is derived from the corresponding policy, mentioned above, which states that *"Basketball Courts shall be permitted between the eastern arm of the parking lot and the bluff."* Most of the proposed project site is between the west arm of the parking lot and the bluff. Improvement plans for the area behind the east arm are being developed, but have not yet been finalized nor proposed.

Thus, there is no conflict between this policy and the proposed project, as the proposed improvements do not preclude the desired basketball courts, which were proposed for a different location. The proposed project is consistent with the LCP policies relating to development on the bluffs and beach.

F. Grading the Bluff

The LCP policies relating to the treatment of the bluff are found in several sections of the LCP. In "the Strand" section, the recommendations are that:

"Bluff stabilization measures should be designed to cause minimum encroachment on existing sand areas."

It also states that:

"Between Cherry Avenue and Belmont Pier, it is recommended that only those measures absolutely required to protect and promote bluff stability be taken in order that the absolute minimum amount of encroachment on either the upland bluff areas or the beach will occur. It is also recommended that appropriate planting be placed on the bluff both for aesthetic purpose and to contribute to bluff stability."

Also included In Area B, the policy states that:

"Bluff erosion and slumping, which may be hazardous, should be stabilized by planting and diversion of runoff waters away from the face of the bluff. As long as this feature is left in its natural state, however, no maintenance program can guarantee a complete elimination of hazardous conditions."

Finally, under the list of "Public Works" projects to be carried out to implement the LCP, "Bluff Erosion Control" is one of the construction projects recommended, while "stairway improvements down bluffs" is another listed project.

The LCP provides for protection of bluffs from erosion. The project includes re-grading and terracing the bluff face. However the Department of Parks Recreation and Marine did not submit either a grading plan, geologic studies or a landscaping plan to the Planning Department as part of the application.

From these policies mentioned above, it is clear that the LCP does not recommend that the bluff be left in an undisturbed state. The Strand policy does refer to minimizing encroachment on the beach, possibly in relation to a plan from years before the LCP to extend a gently sloping bluff several hundred feet out onto the beach. However, in the overall bluff erosion study completed in 2001, and not incorporated into the LCP, the clear preference was to minimize the change to the look and character of the bluff. This was demonstrated in three projects constructed that year at Junipero, Molino and Coronado Avenues. These three projects "micro-terraced" or "rilled" the face of the bluff to slow any possible sheet flow of water and provide room for plantings.

The current project will increase the amount of grading in order to meet the slope requirements for the proposed access stairs and ramp. The ramp is designed to be

wheelchair accessible and complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Construction plans for the grading have not been completed, but sufficient design work has been done to indicate that the 55-foot contour, representing the shoulder of the bluff, will retreat 16 feet. There is an approximately two-foot deep depression between the toe of the bluff and the Junipero Avenue parking lot. The City intends to use some of the excavated soil to fill this depression to the level of the parking lot. The remainder will be trucked off-site.

Previous stairway designs floated the stairways over the bluff, obtaining the necessary slope by encroaching on the beach. This current plan of cutting into the bluff was proposed as more consistent with the LCP policy, which states "*Bluff stabilization measures should be designed to cause minimum encroachment on existing sand areas*" because it preserves more beach area.

Special Condition 1 requires that prior to construction, the applicant must submit a grading plan for the review and approval of the Executive Director that is consistent with the conceptual plans provided to the staff, and that no fill in excess of the level of the parking lot shall be allowed. The applicant has provided a copy of a letter from the proposed project's geotechnical engineer (Exhibit #6), which asserts that the proposed project will improve slope stability and help reduce erosion. The plants chosen for the conceptual landscape plan submitted to staff will require minimal irrigation once the plants are established. Special Condition 2 requires that prior to construction, the applicant must submit a detailed landscape plan for the review and approval of the Executive Director. Criteria for the landscape plan are discussed above.

As long as the fill adjacent to the parking lot is at the level of the parking lot, the Commission finds that this is consistent with the above-mentioned policies of the LCP. Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed development, as conditioned, is consistent with the LCP policies regarding bluff development.

G. Landscaping

The LCP policy addressing bluff face landscaping for the Strand states:

"It is also recommended that appropriate planting be placed on the bluff both for aesthetic purpose and to contribute to bluff stability."

A second general strand policy addressing landscaping states:

"A landscaped combination grass and foliage area varying in width should be created adjacent to the bike and pedestrian pathway to provide visual attraction and grassy picnic areas."

The LCP does not define "appropriate." In this context, "appropriate" can mean either compatible with nearby habitat areas, visually compatible with nearby landscaped areas or designed to reduce percolation of irrigation water into the bluff. Bixby Park is not a natural area, nor is it adjacent to a habitat area. The City's coastal development permit findings indicate that the proposed project will use "native vegetation" for landscaping. However, the application did not include a plant list and, seemingly in contradiction, proposed to

plant palm trees in certain areas. Palm trees are not native to the Southern California coastline. If the purpose of using "native plants" for landscaping is to reduce percolation of water into the bluff, details and reasoning were not discussed.

According to the proposed project's landscape architect, the existing bluff slopes at Bixby Park are predominantly covered with a non-native ice plant called (*Carpobrotus edulis*). The adjacent beach areas feature numerous mature *Washingtonia robusta* palms and non-native evergreen tree plantings.

The landscaping goal is to integrate the landscaped improvements with adjacent beach property and to re-introduce plants representative of Southern California's unique coastal sage scrub plant community, a goal which is based upon experiences of coastal projects completed by the City in recent years.

As proposed, irrigated lawn areas will be limited to the high-traffic areas (picnic areas, bike path, skate park, and public restroom). *Washingtonia* palms and *Metrosideros tomentosa* (New Zealand Christmas trees) are proposed in the improved area to "knit" together with the existing palms and non-native tree plantings along the existing beach strand and bluff areas. To provide transition from the beach and shelter from prevailing winds, the City proposes to landscape the children's playground area with low-growing native plants endemic to the coastal strand. In addition, interpretive signs will identify these plants and describe how they are used by Native Americans. All of this is consistent with the LCP policy which states that *"A landscaped combination grass and foliage area varying in width should be created adjacent to the bike and pedestrian pathway to provide visual attraction and grassy picnic areas."*

The applicant proposes to use trees and shrubs endemic to the Channel Islands which are proposed to provide shade and serve as an acoustic buffer to the adjacent bike path and skate park. The slopes between the bluffs and beach strand will be hydroseeded with a coastal sage scrub seed mix designed to naturally stabilize the bluffs and reflect the native coastal sage scrub community, which is consistent with the LCP policy which states that *"It is also recommended that appropriate planting be placed on the bluff both for aesthetic purpose and to contribute to bluff stability."*

The proposed project is not in a natural area, nor adjacent to a habitat area, and is consistent with the above-mentioned LCP policies. The applicant has since provided a letter from the proposed project's landscape architect (Exhibit #7), which indicates the plants to be used and the design concepts behind those selections. The applicant proposes to plant palms, but only in select areas, with the goal of "knitting" together with the existing palms, which are quite prevalent along the beach strand of Long Beach. Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed development's landscaping is consistent with the LCP.

H. Water Quality

The LCP does not include policies addressing water quality for this area. The proposed development involves significant grading in order to reconfigure the bluff face to allow construction of the stairs and trails. It includes a new concession stand at the base of the

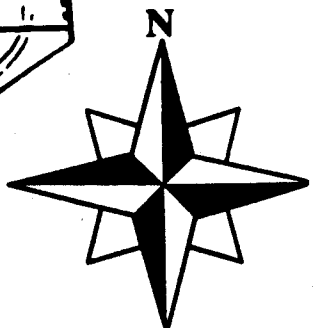
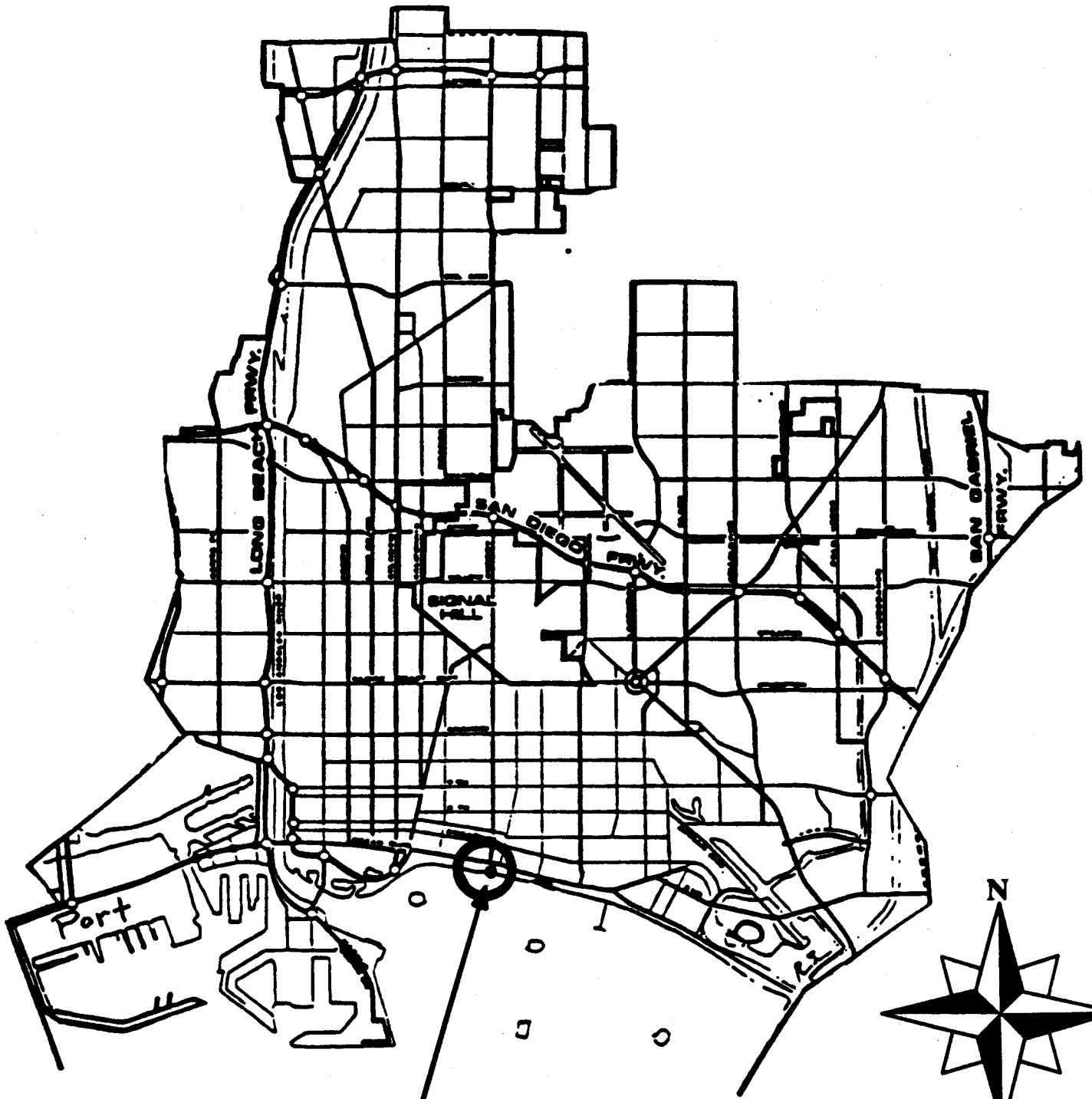
bluff. Therefore the proposed project has a potential for a discharge of sediment and trash into coastal waters. The parking lot, a potential source of polluted runoff, exists already, and will not be expanded as part of this project. The development, as proposed and as conditioned by the city incorporates design features to minimize the effect of construction and post-construction activities on the marine environment. These design features include, but are not limited to, the appropriate management of equipment and construction materials, reducing runoff through the use of permeable surfaces, the use of non-invasive drought tolerant vegetation to reduce and treat the runoff discharged from the site, and for the use of post-construction best management practices to minimize the project's adverse impact on coastal waters. Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed development, as conditioned, conforms to the LCP and the public access and recreation policies of the Coastal Act.

I. **California Environmental Quality Act**

Section 13096 Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations requires Commission approval of a coastal development permit application to be supported by a finding showing the application, as conditioned by any conditions of approval, to be consistent with any applicable requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Section 21080.5(d)(2)(A) of CEQA prohibits a proposed development from being approved if there are feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen any significant adverse effect which the activity may have on the environment.

The proposed project, as conditioned, has been found consistent with the City of Long Beach's certified LCP and the public access and recreation policies of the Coastal Act. All adverse impacts have been minimized by the recommended conditions of approval and there are no feasible alternatives or additional feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen any significant adverse impact which the activity may have on the environment. Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed project can be found consistent with the requirements of the Coastal Act and certified LCP to conform to CEQA.

City of Long Beach



Site

COASTAL COMMISSION
A5-LOB-04-222

EXHIBIT # 1

PAGE 1 OF 1



Site: Bixby Park

COASTAL COMMISSION
A5-LOB-04-222

EXHIBIT # 2
PAGE 1 OF 1

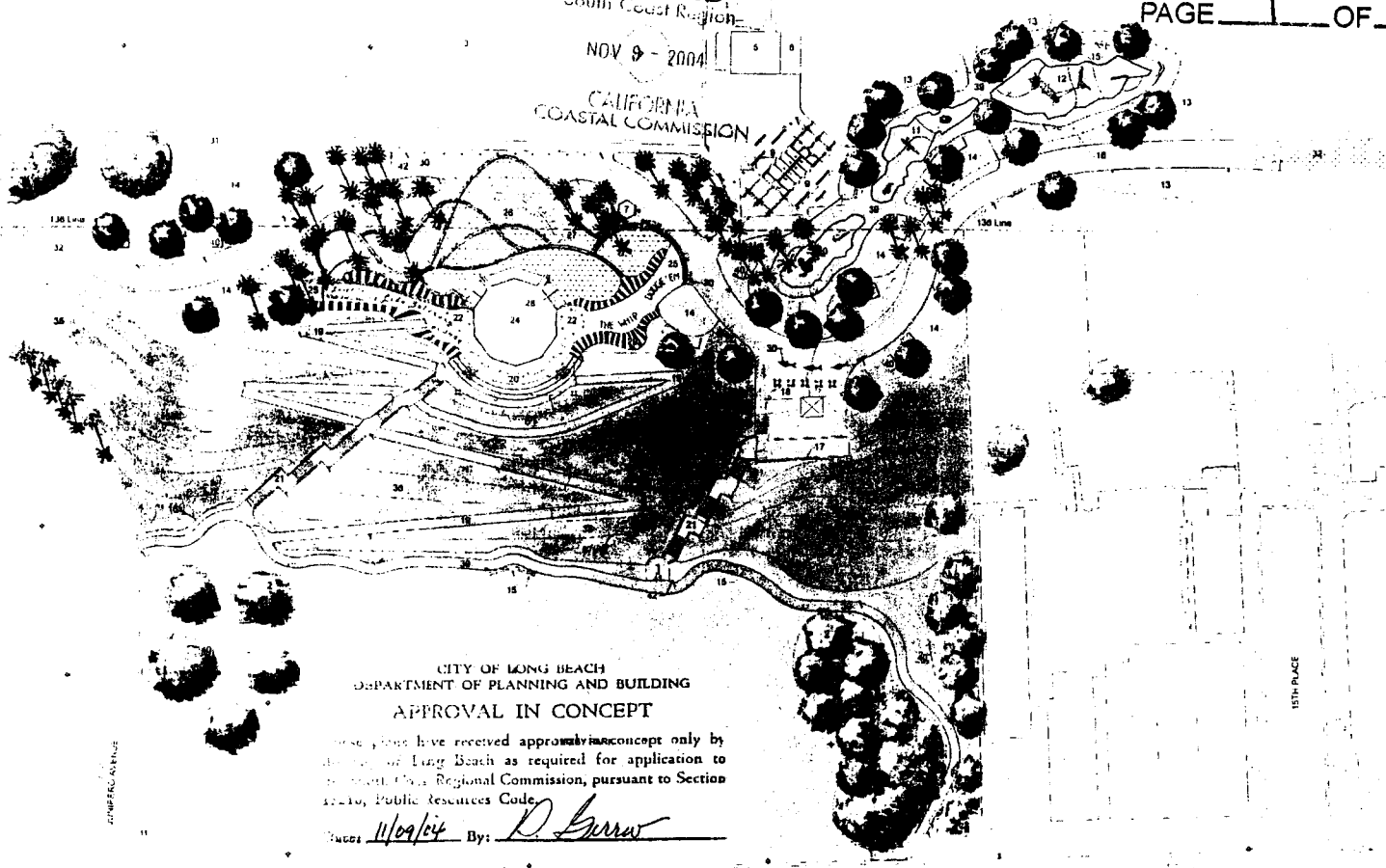
AS-LOB-04-222

EXHIBIT # 3
PAGE 1 OF 1

RECEIVED
South Coast Region

NOV 9 - 2004

CALIFORNIA
COASTAL COMMISSION



CITY OF LONG BEACH
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING
APPROVAL IN CONCEPT



You have received approval in concept only by the City of Long Beach as required for application to the South Coast Regional Commission, pursuant to Section 12210, Public Resources Code.

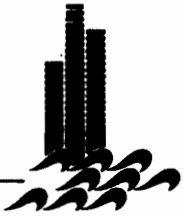
By: D. Gurr

- 1 Existing beach
- 2 Existing trees
- 3 Existing parking lot
- 4 Existing historic lifeguard building
- 5 Existing boat storage
- 6 New additional events storage
- 7 Information kiosk & public telephone
- 8 Existing toilet building
- 9 New toilet building & showers
- 10 Toddler Anacapa playground
- 11 3 to 5-year-old Anacapa playground
- 12 5 to 12-year-old Anacapa playground
- 13 California native dune vegetation
- 14 Irrigated lawn
- 15 Seating
- 16 3-6" high fencing
- 17 Existing mural
- 18 Future concession area
- 19 Stabilized decomposed granite
1:20 sloped ramps
- 20 Concrete seating w/ elevation image of
Municipal Auditorium
- 21 New stair access
- 22 Towers modeled after Bixby Spiral
Airship to support the shade canopy, Stage
Curtain & lights
- 23 Shade canopy w/ pattern of the old Bath
House roof
- 24 Stage
- 25 Concrete path W/ stained images of Walk of
1000 Lights
- 26 Skating plaza w/ stained image of Cyclone
Racer
- 27 Concrete Cyclone Racer carts
- 28 Steps w/ rails
- 29 Battered walls
- 30 Bollards
- 31 Existing sidewalk
- 32 Existing bike path
- 33 New palm trees
- 34 New shade trees
- 35 Existing slope planting
- 36 Existing top of slope
- 37 Re-graded top of slope
- 38 Low profile, California native groundcover
- 39 Stabilized decomposed granite walks
- 40 Picnic tables & benches
- 41 Historic cannon pad
- 42 Light standards

OCEAN BOULEVARD

NORTH

	<p>CITY OF LONG BEACH Department of Parks, Rec. & Marine Department of Public Works JANUARY 2004</p>	
	<p>BIXBY PARK RE-DEVELOPMENT Amphitheater/Skate Park/Recreation Areas</p>	
<p>Consultants</p>		
<p>• Tetra Tech, Inc. - Lead Consultant</p>	<p>• Steven Omerny & Assoc. - Landscape Arch</p>	<p>• Purkiss-Ross, Inc. - Sign Mark Consultant</p>
	<p>• Braunstein & Stone - Art Consultant</p>	



CITY OF LONG BEACH

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & BUILDING

333 WEST OCEAN BOULEVARD • LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA 90802 • FAX (562)570-6068

NOTICE OF FINAL LOCAL ACTION

Case No.: 0306-32

Project Location: 2300 E. Ocean Boulevard

Applicant: City of Long Beach
Dennis Eschen, Dept. of Parks, Recreation and Marine
2760 Studebaker Road
Long Beach, CA 90815

Permit(s) Requested: Local Coastal Development Permit
Site Plan Review

Project Description: Bluff stabilization and improvement of parkland located at the bluff and the beach area at the bottom of the bluff for the following public amenities: a 199-seat amphitheater and accompanying shade structure at the bottom of the bluff; skating plaza at the bottom of the bluff; children's playground on the beach; two stairways and one sloped ramp to provide access to the beach area from the bluff; 3'6" high railing along the bluff; and the replacement of a public bathroom on the beach.

Local action was taken by the: Planning Commission on:
May 6, 2004


Decision: Conditionally Approved


Local action is final on: May 16, 2004

This project is in the Coastal Zone and IS appealable to the Coastal Commission.

"If you challenge the action in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or issues raised via written correspondence delivered to the (public entity conducting the hearing) at or prior to the public hearing."

See other side for City of Long Beach and California Coastal Commission appeal procedures and time limits.


Greg Carpenter
Zoning Administrator


Joe Recker, Planner I
Phone No.: (562)570-6004

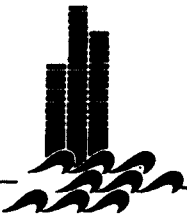
COASTAL COMMISSION
A5-LOB-04-222

EXHIBIT # 4

PAGE 1 OF 12

Attachments

Council District: 2



CITY OF LONG BEACH

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & BUILDING

333 West Ocean Boulevard, 7th Floor

Long Beach, CA 90802

(562) 570-6194

FAX (562) 570-6068

ZONING DIVISION

May 6, 2004

CHAIRMAN AND PLANNING COMMISSIONERS
City of Long Beach
California

SUBJECT: Bluff Stabilization and Park Improvements, Including a Skating Plaza, 199-Seat Amphitheater, Playground Equipment, and New Restroom Building (Council District 2)

LOCATION: 2300 East Ocean Boulevard (Located at the Bluff and at the Bottom of the Bluff South of Bixby Park)

APPLICANT: City of Long Beach
Dennis Eschen, Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine
2760 Studebaker Road
Long Beach, CA 90815

RECOMMENDATION

Approve Site Plan Review and Local Coastal Development Permit, subject to conditions of approval.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

1. The proposed project facilitates the continuance of skateboarding activities in the area while removing disturbance from residential areas and removing destruction to the Bixby Park historical band shell;
2. The proposed project satisfies the Local Coastal Plan recommendation of providing additional recreational facilities in this location;
3. The proposed project satisfies the suggestions of the community for this section of the bluff; and
4. The proposed improvements will improve the connection between Bixby Park and the beach by improving public access.

BACKGROUND

The project site consists of two sections, an unimproved section of bluff located south of Bixby Park, between Junipero and Cherry Avenues, and a low flat area located between the toe of the bluff and the public parking lot. The unimproved portion of parkland is showing several signs of neglect, including erosion on the bluff, underutilization of the low flat area below the bluff, and the lack of a meaningful connection between Bixby Park and the beach.

EXHIBIT # 4

PAGE 2 OF 12

The original bluff was cut back and regraded to the current slope of 2 ½ :1 during the 1970's as the result of an accident. Since then, the bluff face has been vegetated with light growth of exotic annual grasses and iceplant. The Cherry Avenue Tunnel previously provided a connection between Bixby Park and the beach, but was closed several years ago for public safety reasons, which has resulted in an increased use of the bluff slope for beach access. The paths made by pedestrian traffic have greatly accelerated the erosion of the bluff slope. The intent of the project is to stabilize the bluff and improve public safety, provide additional public amenities in an appropriate location, and improve connectivity between Bixby Park and the beach.

The project is guided by the Local Coastal Program for the City of Long Beach and the November 2000 *Plan of Development, Bluff Erosion and Enhancement Project*. Both the Parks and Recreation Commission, which meets monthly to advise the City Manager and the City Council on park development issues and to decide park use issues, and the Marine Advisory Commission, which advises the City Manager and City Council on marina and beach related issues, recommended in favor of the project on April 17, 2003 and May 8, 2003, respectively. Representatives of the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine have also met with local community groups, including the Bluff Park Neighborhood Association, the Alamitos Beach Preservation Association, and the Bixby Park Coalition to present plans and solicit comments. The current plan addresses the concerns of local residents which included the lack of a meaningful connection between Bixby Park and the beach, design of railing along the bluff, erosion of bluff, and noise caused by skateboarding in Bixby Park.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The concept for the park design is to reference elements of the old Long Beach Pike, such as amusement ride signage, theater marquees, restaurant graphics, and architectural allusions. The proposed project involves the stabilization of the bluff and the improvement of parkland on the bluff and between the toe of the bluff and the parking lot with the following improvements:

- Introduction of a railing and pathway along the edge of the bluff, similar to that which exists in Bluff Park;
- Reintroduction of beach access from Bixby Park near the Cherry Avenue Tunnel, which was closed for safety reasons;
- Introduction of an additional stairway and low sloping ramp at Junipero Avenue to accommodate access to the beach from Ocean Boulevard grade for persons with disabilities;
- Regrade and stabilize the bluff;
- Introduction of a 199-seat amphitheater, including two 30-foot towers to hold stage lighting, support backdrop screen, and support a shade screen that can be extended over the seating;
- Introduction of a skating plaza;
- Introduction of playground facilities;
- Replacement of an existing bathroom building on the beach;
- Introduction of additional picnic tables and landscaping on the beach between the existing parking lot and the bluff;
- Realign the beach bike path through the project site;
- Introduction of an information kiosk and public telephone; and
- Addition of bicycle racks within the project area.

COASTAL COMMISSION

EXHIBIT # 4
PAGE 3 OF 12

The applicant states that there is no specific use in mind for the amphitheater, however possible uses could include the Municipal Band, band concerts associated with the Art Museum as fundraisers, and miscellaneous uses by the City's recreation programs, such as volunteer awards programs, children's theater productions and day camp. Most of these uses would occur on weekdays to avoid congestion in the area during summer weekends.

Visitors to the project site are not anticipated to negatively impact public parking facilities, including on-street parking and the beach parking lot, which contains 395 metered parking spaces. However, 52 metered parking spaces have been added to the beach parking lot along the access road from Junipero Avenue in anticipation of this project. In addition, revenue collected between June 26, 2002 and September 30, 2002, representative of peak summer activity, indicated that the average occupancy of each parking space was approximately 1.5 hours per day. A physical count of parking spaces on the weekend of July 11, 2003 at 1:00 PM found only 122 of the 447 parking spaces in the parking lot in use.

A summary of the surrounding land use is as follows:

	ZONING	GENERAL PLAN	LAND USE
PROJECT SITE	PD-30 (WEST END RESIDENTIAL)	LUD#11 (OPEN SPACE AND PARK)	UNIMPROVED PARKLAND
NORTH	PD-30 (DOWNTOWN MIXED USE)	LUD#11 (OPEN SPACE AND PARK)	BIXBY PARK
SOUTH	I (INSTITUTIONAL)	LUD#11 (OPEN SPACE AND PARK)	PUBLIC BEACH
EAST	R-2-L (TWO-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL)	LUD#11 (OPEN SPACE AND PARK)	MULTIFAMILY HOUSING
WEST	PD-5 (OCEAN BOULEVARD PLANNED DEVELOPMENT)	LUD#4 (HIGH-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL)	MOTEL

CURRENT ACTION REQUESTED

The project site includes land located within the California Coastal Commission jurisdiction. However, the Planning Commission must review and approve the entitlements required by the City of Long Beach Municipal Code for the proposal prior to review by the Coastal Commission.

The applicant has requested the Planning Commission approve the Site Plan Review for the project design and the Local Coastal Development Permit for development within the coastal zone. In order to approve this request, the following findings must be analyzed, made and adopted before any action is taken to approve or deny the subject permit and must be incorporated into the record of proceedings relating to such approval or denial:

SITE PLAN REVIEW FINDINGS

A. THE DESIGN IS HARMONIOUS, CONSISTENT AND COMPLETE WITHIN ITSELF AND IS COMPATIBLE IN DESIGN, CHARACTER AND SCALE, WITH NEIGHBORING STRUCTURES AND THE COMMUNITY IN WHICH IT IS LOCATED;

The concept for the park design is to reference elements of the old Long Beach Pike, such as amusement ride signage, theater marquees, restaurant graphics, and architectural allusions. The design, as proposed, is consistent in implementation, and appropriate for the location.

The amphitheater and skating plaza will both be made of stained and integral-colored concrete to display images of the "Cyclone" roller coaster and the old "Municipal Auditorium." The structural supports for the stage curtain will be based on "Bixby's Spiral Airship." The bike path that traverses the project area may also feature references to the old downtown Long Beach waterfront, while the playgrounds will include catalogue-available equipment reminiscent of historic elements of the Pike. The height of the structural supports has been designed so as to not impact views of the ocean from Ocean Boulevard, a designated scenic route in the Transportation Element of the General Plan.

The project site is identified in the Local Coastal Program and the November 2000 *Plan of Development, Bluff Erosion and Enhancement Project* as an activity center along the beach. The location is appropriate as an activity center because of its proximity to the beach parking lot and Bixby Park, while also halfway between the downtown waterfront and Belmont Pier, two other intended activity centers. The project design provides attention-getting devices such as roller coaster images and other historic references in order to provide stimuli and associate a higher level of importance to this portion of the beach area.

B. THE DESIGN CONFORMS TO ANY APPLICABLE SPECIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES OR SPECIFIC PLAN REQUIREMENTS, SUCH AS THE DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR R-3 AND R-4 MULTI-FAMILY DEVELOPMENT, THE DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES, PD GUIDELINES OR THE GENERAL PLAN;

The Local Coastal Program and the November 2000 *Plan of Development, Bluff Erosion and Enhancement Project* both suggest improvements to the project site.

The proposed project will implement the following policy statements of the Local Coastal Program in the Detailed Policy Statement under "Recreation and Visitor Serving Facilities":

- Bixby Park, south of Ocean Boulevard, should remain as an open park area.
- Bike racks should be provided at reasonable intervals along the bike path.
- Ramps should replace steps down bluffs in certain suitable locations.
- Recreational facilities, including basketball, should be permitted in any area north of the parking lot, where parking space development is not feasible.
- Free children's play module should be provided in the general vicinity of Molino Avenue.

The proposed project will implement the following proposed improvements suggested in the November 2000 *Plan of Development, Bluff Erosion and Enhancement Project*:

- Integrate amphitheater type seating into a ramp down the slope to provide a meaningful connection between Bixby Park and the beach.
- Improve the existing restrooms and develop the area as an "oasis" with shaded picnic areas and children's playground, in order to extend park use towards the beach.
- Develop underutilized area between the toe of the slope and parking lot to field sports.
- Provide more trees for shade and picnic areas.
- Develop the bluff top with an edge walk, railing, ocean viewing and sitting areas.
- Revegetate the bluff areas with native coastal species to prevent further erosion and provide an aesthetic transition between the upper grassy park and lower beach area.
- Provide pedestrian access to the beach through either diagonal pathways and/or through the Amphitheater concepts.

C. THE DESIGN WILL NOT REMOVE SIGNIFICANT MATURE TREES OR STREET TREES, UNLESS NO ALTERNATIVE DESIGN IS POSSIBLE;

Existing mature trees exist within a narrow grassy parkway located between the parking lot and the bike path immediately east of the site and at the top of the bluff. No mature trees will be removed as a result of the proposal.

D. THERE IS AN ESSENTIAL NEXUS BETWEEN THE PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT REQUIREMENTS ESTABLISHED BY THIS ORDINANCE AND THE LIKELY IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT; AND

The proposed project consists of a series of public improvements funded by the City of Long Beach. This finding is not applicable.

E. THE PROJECT CONFORMS WITH ALL REQUIREMENTS SET FORTH IN CHAPTER 21.64 (TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT).

This project does not meet the threshold established in Chapter 21.64 for transportation demand management requirements.

LOCAL COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT FINDINGS

A. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT CONFORMS TO THE CERTIFIED LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO ALL REQUIREMENTS FOR REPLACEMENT OF LOW AND MODERATE-INCOME HOUSING; AND

The proposed project does not affect housing supply of any kind. As stated above in "B" of the Site Plan Review Findings, the project conforms and implements the portions of the "Detailed Policy Statement" that pertain to the project site that are found in the Local Coastal Program.

B. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT CONFORMS TO THE PUBLIC ACCESS AND RECREATION POLICIES OF CHAPTER 3 OF THE COASTAL ACT. THIS SECOND FINDING APPLIES ONLY TO DEVELOPMENT LOCATED SEAWARD OF THE NEAREST PUBLIC HIGHWAY TO THE SHORELINE.

The proposed project conforms to the Local Coastal Program, as adopted by the City of Long Beach and approved by the California Coastal Commission. The proposal will improve beach access and increase recreational facilities in an appropriate location. As a condition of approval, the beach bicycle path shall be required to stay open during construction to avoid impact to this important recreational resource.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

As per the requirements of Division III – Noticing Requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, a legal notice was sent to all owners of real property as shown on the latest equalized assessment roll within three-hundred feet of the subject site on April 20, 2004. Notices were also sent to the Second District Councilperson, City libraries, and local community groups that have requested such notice. Notices were also posted at City Hall.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

In accordance with the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a Mitigated Negative Declaration (36-03) was prepared for the proposed project. The Mitigated Negative Declaration identified the following three environmental factors that may be negatively affected by the proposal without mitigation:

- Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.
- Create a significant discharge of pollutants into the storm drain or water way.
- Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies.

Mitigation measures require all light sources to include light and glare shields to avoid light intrusion onto adjacent residential properties, approval of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) prior to release of a grading permit, and restrict construction activities to 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM on weekdays and 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM on Saturdays. The mitigation prohibits construction activities on Sundays and holidays.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Approve Site Plan Review and Local Coastal Development Permit, subject to conditions of approval.

Respectfully submitted,


FADY MATTAR
ACTING DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND BUILDING

COASTAL COMMISSION

EXHIBIT # 4
PAGE 7 OF 12

By: 

JOE RECKER
PLANNER I

Approved: 

GREG CARPENTER
ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

Attachments

1. Proposed Conditions of Approval
2. ND 36-03
3. Location Map
4. Plans and Photographs

COASTAL COMMISSION

EXHIBIT # 4
PAGE 8 OF 12

**SITE PLAN REVIEW/LOCAL COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT
CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**

Case No. 0306-32

Date: May 6, 2004

1. This permit and all development rights hereunder shall **terminate two years** from the effective date (21 days after the local final action date) of this permit, or one year from the effective date of the Coastal Commission action, whichever is greater, unless construction is commenced, a business license establishing the use is obtained or a time extension is granted, based on a written and approved request submitted prior to the expiration of the two year period as provided in Section 21.21.406 of the Long Beach Municipal Code.
2. This permit shall be invalid if the owner(s) and applicant(s) have failed to return **written acknowledgment** of their acceptance of the conditions of approval on the *Conditions of Approval Acknowledgment Form* supplied by the Planning Bureau. This acknowledgment must be submitted **within 30 days** from the effective date of approval (final action date or, if in the appealable area of the Coastal Zone, 21 days after the local final action date). Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall submit a revised set of plans reflecting all of the design changes set forth in the conditions of approval to the satisfaction of the Zoning Administrator.
3. This approval is required to comply with these conditions of approval as long as the use is on the subject site. As such, the site shall allow **periodic re-inspections**, at the discretion of city officials, to verify compliance.
4. All conditions of approval **must be printed** verbatim on all plans submitted for plan review to the Planning and Building Department. These conditions must be printed on the site plan or a subsequent reference page.
5. The Director of Planning and Building is authorized to make **minor modifications** to the approved design plans or to any of the conditions of approval if such modifications shall not significantly change/alter the approved design/project and if no detrimental effects to neighboring properties are caused by said modifications. Any major modifications shall be reviewed by the Zoning Administrator or Planning Commission, respectively.
6. Site development, including landscaping, shall conform to the approved plans on file in the Department of Planning and Building. At least **one set of approved plans** containing Planning, Building, Fire, and, if applicable, Redevelopment and Health Department stamps **shall be maintained at the job site**, at all times for reference purposes during construction and final inspection.
7. Any graffiti found on site must be removed within 24 hours of its appearance.
8. All structures shall conform to the Long Beach Building Code requirements. Notwithstanding this subject permit, all other required permits from the Building Bureau must be secured.

9. Separate building permits are required for signs, fences, retaining walls, trash enclosures, flagpoles, pole-mounted yard lighting foundations and planters.
10. The developer shall comply with the following requirements to the satisfaction of the Chief of Police:
 - a. The types and styles of benches, overhangs, trash cans and other park furniture shall discourage loitering.
 - b. Lighting should be a minimum of 3' candle with metal halide lights to keep the area free of illegal activity.
 - c. Low fencing shall be designed for the perimeter of the playground area.
 - d. An emergency phone shall be located within the project site.
 - e. Rules related to skateboard area, park hours, loitering, curfew, graffiti abatement, and other safety programs shall be clearly posted so as to aid in the enforcement and prosecution of violations.
11. The developer shall comply with the following requirements to the satisfaction of the Director of Planning and Building:
 - a. This historic gun cannon pad located at the top of the bluff shall remain in place, undisturbed.
 - b. Railing along the top of the bluff shall be consistent with the railing used along Bluff Park.
 - c. Railing for ramps and stairways shall be chosen with care to avoid overwhelming the low landscaping and natural look of the bluff.
 - d. The beach bike path shall remain open during periods of construction.
 - e. Adequate bicycle racks shall be located within the project site, clearly visible from the beach bike path.
 - f. Proposed events at the amphitheater shall comply with the City's Noise Ordinance, Chapter 8.80 of the Municipal Code.
 - g. The project landscaping shall use native, drought-tolerant vegetation, with the exception of turf in locations suitable for pedestrian traffic.
 - h. The new restroom facilities shall include high-quality materials. Colors shall complement the design of the project site.
12. The developer shall comply with the following requirements to the satisfaction of the Director of the Department of Public Works:
 - a. Any off-site improvements found damaged as a result of construction shall be reconstructed by the developer.
 - b. The public sidewalk adjacent to the site must meet ADA minimum standards. Developer shall verify that the existing curb ramp and surrounding public sidewalk meets those standards, and make any modification and dedications necessary.

COASTAL COMMISSION

EXHIBIT # 4
PAGE 10 OF 12

13. The developer shall comply with all of the following mitigation measures of the applicable Environmental Review (ND 36-03) prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy. These mitigation measure must be printed on all plans submitted for plan review:

- a. All parking areas shall provide appropriate security lighting with light and glare shields so as to avoid any light intrusion onto adjacent or abutting residential buildings or neighborhoods pursuant to Section 21.41.259.
- b. Prior to release of the grading permit, the applicant shall prepare and submit for approval a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that covers all activity during grading and construction of the project. The SWPPP shall include all appropriate construction site Best Management Practices (BMPs) as listed on the project plans.
- c. Any person(s) associated with the proposed project shall only operate or permit the operation of any tools or equipment used for site preparation, construction or any other related building activity which produce loud or unusual noise which annoys or disturbs a reasonable person of normal sensitivity between the following hours:

Weekdays	7:00 AM to 7:00 PM
Saturdays	9:00 AM to 6:00 PM
Sundays	No work permitted.
Holidays	No work permitted.

COASTAL COMMISSION

EXHIBIT # 4
PAGE 11 OF 12

CITY OF LONG BEACH PLANNING PERMIT APPLICATION

Legal Description:

18.74 more or less ACS com SE on SW line of Ocean Blvd 41ft from NW cor of lot 3 blk 17 eastern half of Alamitos Townsite TH SE on SD SW line thru block 18 lots 1 – 4, block 19 lots 1 – 4.

Project Description: Bixby Park Redevelopment: Amphitheater/Skate Plaza/Recreation Area

Improvements Top Of The Bluff

Include a railing along the top, similar to that which exists in Bluff Park; overlook areas with park benches; and stairs and an accessible ramp to the bottom of the bluff. Three stairways are shown on the site plan, but will be reduced to two to control the construction costs. A new walkway will also connect the bluff top to Ocean Boulevard

Improvements Bottom Of The Bluff

A small amphitheater with an 1800-square foot stage and three rows of seating set in a gently sloping bluff face. Seating will be limited to the 199 seats permitted by the zoning regulations without a conditional use permit. The stage will be flanked by two 30-foot towers to hold stage lighting, support backdrop screens, and support a shade screen that can be extended over the seating.

The stage and the ramps to the stage will serve the second function of being part of an 18,000-square foot skate plaza located directly south of the stage. The skate plaza will contain rails, ramp, and bench-like riding elements. This dual use of the "stage" also minimizes the concrete area below the bluff.

East of the skate plaza will be a half-court basketball court. West of the skate plaza will be a pre-school aged playground (1,400 square feet) and a school-aged playground (3,000 square feet). Along the southern edge of the skate plaza will be the relocated beach bicycle path. Several additional trees and 3,000-square feet of planter beds with native landscaping are also included to soften and beautify the area.

Reasons why project should be approved:

This plan satisfies the LCP recommendation of additional recreational activities in the area between the parking lot on the beach at Junipero Avenue and the bluff, including basketball, and additional pedestrian ramps to the beach.

This plan follows the 2000 plan to address bluff erosion (Plan of Development, Bluff Erosion and Enhancement Project), which included the policy that whenever possible bluff erosion improvements should be designed so that the capital investment in erosion protection could also facilitate additional recreational activities.

This plan satisfies the suggestions of the community for this section of bluff and the area below the park between the bluff and the parking lot to incorporate an amphitheater with the bluff stabilization measures, an accessible ramp in the access to the amphitheater, a playground, additional picnic areas, and shade trees.

This plan also facilitates the continuance of the skateboarding activity while removing the disturbance from residential areas and removing destruction to the Bixby Park historical band shell.



CITY OF LONG BEACH

5-04-437

Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine

2760 N. Studebaker Road, Long Beach, CA 90815-1697

(562) 570-3100 • FAX (562) 570-3109

www.lbparks.org

RECEIVED
South Coast Region

November 8, 2004

NOV 9 - 2004

Charles R. Posner
Coastal Program Analyst
California Coastal Commission
South Coast Area Office
200 Oceangate, Suite 1000
Long Beach, CA 90802-4302

COASTAL COMMISSION

AS-LOB-04-222

EXHIBIT # 5

PAGE 1 OF 13

COASTAL COMMISSION

Subject: Local Coastal Development Permit Appeal [REDACTED] and Coastal Development Permit (Bixby Park Redevelopment Plan).

Dear Mr. Posner:

Enclosed is an application for an amendment for a Coastal Development Permit to be considered with appeal A-5-LOB-04-222. I will describe the total project and then describe the portion in the California Coastal Commission's permit jurisdiction, as the appeal jurisdiction boundary line cuts through several of the proposed improvements. On the application form, I am including only those elements within the Commission's permit jurisdiction.

Project Objective. The primary objective of the project is to attract more people to use the beaches in Long Beach. The beaches are lightly attended except on holiday weekends or times of special events, and they are the City's greatest underused recreational resource. In 1998, the Long Beach Marine Advisory Commission produced the report "Observations and Comments on Current City Beach Use," and after several trips to observe usage, concluded that there is a lack of use. This report indicated that without the surf typical of southern California beaches, the beaches in Long Beach are best suited to attract family groups with younger children and older adults. To attract those groups, the beaches needed to provide shade, picnic areas, and additional recreational activities. The proposed project is designed to add those elements to the area adjoining an existing parking lot.

Although the specific design proposed resulted from community input received during a study of bluff erosion, and the project would solve a localized erosion problem, this project is not primarily intended to address erosion issues.

Existing Site. The site consists of the area between the Junipero Avenue Beach Parking Lot and the bluff. The bluff is about 40 feet high, and on the top of the bluff is one section of Bixby Park. The beach is south, or seaward, and east and west of the

"We create and enhance the quality of life through people, places, programs and partnerships"

parking lot. The site between the parking lot and the bluff is about 140 feet deep and 450 feet long (63,300 square feet or 1.44 acres), while the bluff face is 120 feet from toe to shoulder and 390 feet long (46,800 or 1.09 acres). The site also includes a restroom (2,380 square feet) and beach area west of the restroom (22,650) for a total of 135,130 square feet or 3.10 acres.

The 15-foot wide concrete beach bicycle and pedestrian path runs through this area (11,100 square feet), and the remainder of the site is an unimproved mix of erosion debris soils from the bluff, which is primarily silt and clay with sand. Poles for volleyball nets are often on the site but are not fixed in place. At the west end of the area, next to the parking lot, is a lifeguard building that is also a historic landmark, a storage container for the Lifeguards' boats, and a public restroom. Also at the west end, but next to the bluff, are a sewer lift station and a terraced area where the tunnel from Bixby Park formerly exited to the beach. The bluff is covered with a mix of grasses, shrubs and ice plant, with large bare sections.

Bluff Stability. The attached supplemental letter and geo-technical report on the entire bluff indicate that this section of bluff is geo-technically stable due to the relative low degree of slope. This gentle slope allows the public, enjoying the beach or park above the bluff, to transverse the slope instead of taking the sidewalk on the Junipero Avenue access road. The bluff is also used to simulate a "mountain biking" trail. The pathways thus created by pedestrians and bicycles become low spots on the edge of the bluff that increase erosion in winter rains, creating rutted channels for runoff and depositing the eroded soil at the bottom.

Total Project Description. The project is to construct a small amphitheater with three rows of concrete seats seating approximately 180 persons (1,200 square feet); a concrete skate plaza including the amphitheater stage as a dual use facility (27,000 square feet); a children's playground in three modules shaped like islands (4,450 square feet); a shade, rest, and picnic area with lawn (9,600 square feet); two beach access stairways (1,760 square feet); a beach access ramp (5,490 square feet); a new restroom (2,700 square feet); a storage building (288 square feet); a terraced concession area (2,750 square feet); bluff area landscaping with coastal sage scrub plant community (38,350 square feet); a beach dune plant community landscaping (17,242 square feet); the relocated and more curvilinear bicycle path (11,400 square feet); miscellaneous non-native landscaping (9,060 square feet); and stabilized decomposed granite (3,840 square feet). In order to do this, the existing pedestrian and bicycle path must be relocated from the edge of the bluff to locations closer to the parking lot, and the existing restroom must be replaced.

Coastal Commission Permit Jurisdiction. The majority of the project site is in the Local Coastal Development Permit (LCDP) area with a part of the site in the Commission's permit jurisdiction. The LCDP portions of the project have been

appealed to the Commission. The items in the Commission's permit jurisdiction are the replacement restrooms (2,700 square feet), portions of the bicycle path after relocation (4,650 square feet), a storage building (288 square feet), two of the three playground modules (3,400 square feet), portions of the skate plaza (3,600 square feet), the beach dune landscaping (11,000 square feet), and portions of the non-native lawn landscaping (4,875 square feet).

For the detailed project, including accessory items, consisting of the following elements referenced by the numbers on the site plan, see the attached list. The following will try to address the points where the Commission found a substantial issue existed in reviewing the appeal.

Beach Access – New Uses Displacing Active Beach Use. The first substantial issue was that the new uses could displace active beach uses, which are by their nature limited to relatively few locations. The City of Long Beach does not believe that is a substantial issue in the context of this project for several reasons.

1. The site is not an active beach use site. The proposed site is not on the beach proper but in the location between the beach access parking lot and the bluff. Beach sand has been mixed with clay and silt materials that have eroded from the bluff, creating a mix that is "dirtier" than the nearby, unmixed sand. Thus, few beachgoers ever use the area for sitting and placing their blankets. The site is also inland of a parking lot, so sitting in this location does not provide a view of the ocean or of swimmers, further discouraging typical beach uses. Finally, the only traditional active beach use that exists in the area is volleyball. This can and will be relocated west of the project site.
2. The new uses will not generate additional use sufficient to displace existing uses. First, as mentioned above, the site of the project is lightly used. The occasional volleyball game held there can be moved nearby, and other use is infrequent.

Second, the parking lot, and the recently striped and metered access road, provides 451 parking spaces. For concert or stage performances, the standard of three persons per vehicle is typically used to calculate parking demand for seating capacity. With a seating capacity of 180 persons, the amphitheater would generate a maximum of 60 vehicles. This is a small impact compared to the parking lot size, which is lightly used at the current time (see item 3 below).

Further, the amphitheater will not be used during summer weekends. This is not intended as an "event" site. Use will be generated from Parks, Recreation and Marine programming and is totally controllable by the applicant. Thus, by conscious decisions, amphitheater use will be limited to non-peak times. The intended use is for weekday summer day-camp youth theater, weekday evening Long Beach Municipal Band (not exceeding once a week, six to eight weeks per year), and

potentially weekday evening art museum concert series (not exceeding once a week).

The playgrounds and shaded picnic area intended to attract more families to the beach. The City does not view the playground user as separate from the beach user. Families coming to the area primarily for the playground have the option of playgrounds in many other parks in Long Beach, and Bixby Park has a larger playground in the section of the park between 1st and 2nd streets. It is fully intended that the playground will make this beach location more popular for families who want to engage in traditional beach activities but also want the option of additional activities for their children.

The same is true of the limited picnic and shade area. It is intended that this amenity will make this beach more popular, but the new users will not displace beach users, they will still be beach users.

There is no defined capacity for the skate plaza. Observations at other facilities in Long Beach (primarily the El Dorado Park Skate Park) and discussions with the designer of the proposed skate plaza, indicate that one skater per 250 square feet is about the maximum use. Skaters will wait in line to be able to skate, but the combined factors of a long wait and too little room per skater seems to generate a capacity of approximately those proportions. The 27,000 square foot skate plaza would thus accommodate 108 skaters. As many skaters are below driving age, peak demand of 50 or fewer vehicles is probable. This demand is similar to the amphitheater parking demand and can be accommodated by the 396-space parking lot and the 55 new spaces added on the access ramp.

Finally, the amphitheater and skate plaza cannot operate simultaneously. The skate plaza and the amphitheater are designed as overlapping spaces that cannot be used at the same time.

3. Substantial unused parking capacity exists. Parking demand by new users will not displace existing beach use, as there is substantial available parking. On several weekday visits at various times of the day in August 2004, parking use ranged from 120 to 199 cars (27 to 44 percent of capacity). If 60 additional cars were attracted by a day-camp theater or music production, the lot would only be at 57 percent capacity. At worst case, if the 180 seats attracted 180 cars, the lot would still be at only 84 percent of capacity.

On weekend days, the range increased to 203 to 282 vehicles (45 to 63 percent). If the skate plaza attracted an anticipated maximum of 50 additional vehicles, the lot would only range up to 74 percent of capacity. In a worst case, that all 108 potential users drove separately, that would only increase up to 86 percent of capacity. On a

A5-LOB-04-222

EXHIBIT # 5
PAGE 4 OF 13

typical August weekend, the typical peak of beach use, the skate plaza could attract up to 169 skaters, all driving separate cars, before parking capacity would be reached.

On special event weekends, usage did increase to 322 to 451 spaces (71-100 percent). The local lifeguards believe that overall usage is down from previous summers and that the parking lot capacity has only been reached on Memorial Day and 4th of July weekends. In previous summers, a full parking lot has occurred five weekends per summer (before the addition of 55 more spaces).

4. Free Public Access. No charge is intended for any of the facilities proposed in this application.

Conformance with the certified Local Coastal Program (LCP). A second issue raised in the staff report on the appeal is that the proposal does not conform to the Long Beach Local Coastal Program (LCP). The report summarizes several topics in the LCP taken from the "Community Plans" section of the LCP. However, the Long Beach LCP has two sections that deal with the area of the proposed project. The first is the Section II, beginning on page 25, the General Strand Policies, Use and Access (Strand), and the second is in the Section III, the Community Plans, Area B, Bixby Park/Bluff Park Neighborhood (Area B). Although the sections are close to being identical, there are some subtle differences. I will review the identified inconsistencies against both relevant sections.

1. Use-Proposed facilities not included in the LCP. It is true that the proposed facilities are specifically mentioned in the LCP. In the staff report on Appeal A-5-LOB-04-222, conformance issues are raised regarding the fact that neither the amphitheater nor the skate plaza, are not mentioned in the LCP, referencing the Area B. The referenced section seemed to indicate that only the items listed were permitted. However, in the Strand section, the language is slightly different, with the Segment 2, relating to this site and stating in recommendation #3:

Recreational facilities, including basketball, should be permitted in any area north of the parking lot, where parking space development is not feasible.

This does not limit recreational facilities to basketball, but is permissive of other unnamed recreational facilities, which could include an amphitheater, playgrounds and a skate plaza.

There is also concern that a basketball court is mentioned for the site in the LCP, but is not included in the project. The City believes this concern is derived from the corresponding policy from the Area B, under "The Beach" states:

A5-LOB-04-222

EXHIBIT # 5
PAGE 5 OF 13

Basketball Courts shall be permitted between the eastern arm of the parking lot and the bluff.

The proposed project site is between the west arm of the parking lot and the bluff. Improvement plans for the area behind the east arm are being developed but have not been finalized and proposed for approval. Thus, there is no conflict between this policy and the current project, as the proposed improvements do not preclude the desired basketball courts, which were proposed for a different location.

2. Open Space Policy. In the staff report on the appeal, the staff correctly characterizes some of the policies of the Open Space and Recreation Element of the General Plan adopted by the Long Beach City Council in October of 2002, and more recently amended into the LCP, as stressing the need to protect open space and park areas from over development. These policies state:

Protect and improve the community's natural resources, amenities and scenic values including nature centers, beaches, bluffs, wetlands and water bodies (policy 1.2), and

Keep parklands open and green by limiting the amount of parking lot and building coverage areas within parks (policy 4.3).

The only standard adopted to implement this was limited to building coverage. As the beach is considered a regional park, the building coverage is two percent. The total building improvement on the site is 2,700 square feet, a 320 square foot increase over the current building area. That building area does meet the two percent coverage limit. However, this is calculated on the basis of an arbitrary line defining the project site, with the lifeguard building just outside the site boundary. Considering the whole 258 acres of beach, there is only approximately 0.3 percent building coverage including all restroom, concession, lifeguard, and maintenance buildings.

The concern for over developing the beach involves more than constructing buildings. The total impervious improvements to the site will cover 26 percent of the site including the amphitheater, skate plaza, playground surfacing, stairways and increased area in restroom and bicycle path. This retains 70 percent of the site as landscaped open space. Placed in the context that the entire site is only 1.2 percent of Long Beach's ocean front beach, the impervious improvements are only 0.3 percent of the ocean front beach. Including all the beach parking lots and the bicycle path 10.9 percent of the Long Beach ocean front beach is covered with impervious surfacing.

AS-LOB-04-222

EXHIBIT # 5
PAGE 6 OF 13

In making the subjective determination of whether the project is consistent with the policy of "...protecting and improving...the beach..." the "naturalness" and scenic qualities of the existing area also need to be considered. The existing site is "open" but is neither natural nor scenic. It is an area sandwiched between the beach parking lot and a partially landscaped, partially eroding bluff. It is scraped by beach cleaning equipment on a regular basis, so that any plant life that begins to establish is removed. Finally, the surface is a mix of beach sand and eroded clay from the bluff, so it appears as "dirty" sand. The City believes the native and non-native landscaping combined with visually interesting recreational facilities will be an attractive park setting inland of the beach parking lot that is fully consistent with the City's open space policy.

3. View Protection - Railing. The staff report on the appeal correctly identifies the LCP policies that protect the visual character of Bixby and Bluff Parks. These are that the LCP "...preserved intact..." the visual character of the two parks, and "...No changes are proposed to either park which would impair or reduce existing views and open space character...." However, the improvements proposed in this project are not in either park, except for the railing and benches proposed for the edge of Bixby Park. The staff report unfortunately projects the strict language relative to the surface of the parks, above the bluffs, to include views from the parks and toward the bluffs from the beach or the sea. Although these are appropriate visual quality issues, they are not addressed in the LCP, and should be evaluated on their own merits without reference to the LCP policies for the two parks.

The City of Long Beach believes the railing in Bixby Park and benches are consistent with these LCP policies. The railing is necessary to prevent the climbing of the bluff at unimproved locations by pedestrians and bicycle riders. Stopping this climbing is necessary because it wears paths in the bluff that become channels that direct rain or irrigation water down the face of the bluff instead of away from the bluff, leading to erosion in the form of ruts that cut into the bluff.

It is also necessary for public safety as climbing or descending the bluff at unimproved locations and at steep angles is not safe. Further, the railing and controlled access is necessary to protect the proposed native landscaping for the bluff restoration from being trampled. Finally, the railing will help keep soccer balls from going over from the bluff top during the frequent games in Bixby Park.

During the community meetings at which this project was presented, there has been substantial discussion of the looks of the railing. The proposed design is to reflect the design of the railing in Bluff Park with the two horizontal poles, supported every 20 feet with vertical poles terminated above the top rail with a bulb. This historical design will not meet current building code requirements, so additional wire cables will be strung horizontally to meet those requirements.

The current railing and benches in Bluff Park are not considered structures that impair or reduce views. Thus, the City of Long Beach believes that the proposed railing and benches for Bixby Park will also not create a view impairment.

4. View Protection – Stage Towers. The structures that are proposed that would intrude into these view sheds from and toward Bixby Park are the two towers on the stage. These are open frame structures to be constructed of metal tubing. They are round and look like wire Victorian gazebos, except without a solid roof. The design is taken from an amusement ride in Long Beach in the early 20th century. The period of design is consistent with the period of the local historical landmark of the Lifeguard Headquarters building that is adjacent to the project site.

The function of the towers is to hold the lights and speakers for the stage, to support a backdrop curtain to be placed behind the stage when desired, and to allow a shade canopy to be pulled over the stage and audience when desired. Neither backdrop nor shade canopy would be permanently affixed to the towers. Visually, the towers are intended to be thematic landmarks, identifying the site, and to be visually attractive complements to the early 20th century amusement park theme for the area, which is primarily expressed through the painted concrete surface of the amphitheater and skate plaza.

The Long Beach LCP does not include any language relative to structures being viewed against the backdrop of the bluffs, so the stage towers do not conflict with the Long Beach LCP.

The other concern that was raised concerning views was for the view of the beach from the Bixby Park. As noted above, the view of the park should be "...preserved intact..." and "...no changes are proposed that impair or reduce the existing views or open space character..." of the parks. The analysis cited in the staff report indicated that the views of the water are not impacted, but the towers intrude into the views of the beach sand and that could be considered a conflict with the LCP. The view of the beach sand will be intruded upon by the towers only at selected locations. First, the towers are lower than the height of the bluff, so they are not visible until someone approaches the shoulder of the bluff. Then, it is possible to view around the towers as each is only 12 feet wide and 150 feet from the shoulder of the bluff while the beach sand is 340 feet away. Next, as an open frame structure, anyone can see through the towers - they would create a visual silhouette in the view. Finally, the beach is relatively narrow in front of the parking lot and screened by a three-foot high block wall along the edge of the parking lot, and the beach falls away at a relatively steep angle, so that relatively little of the beach is visible now without the structures.

AS-LOB-04-222

EXHIBIT # 5
PAGE 8 OF 13

Grading the Bluff. The LCP policies relating to the treatment of the bluff are found in several sections. In "the Strand" the recommendations are that:

Bluff stabilization measures should be designed to cause minimum encroachment on existing sand areas."

Further, it states:

Between Cherry Avenue and Belmont Pier, it is recommended that only those measures absolutely required to protect and promote bluff stability be taken in order that the absolute minimum amount of encroachment on either the upland bluff areas or the beach will occur. It is also recommended that appropriate planting be placed on the bluff both for aesthetic purpose and to contribute to bluff stability.

Also included In Area B, the policy statement is:

Bluff erosion and slumping, which may be hazardous, should be stabilized by planting and diversion of runoff waters away from the face of the bluff. As long as this feature is left in its natural state, however, no maintenance program can guarantee a complete elimination of hazardous conditions.

Finally, under the list of "Public Works" projects to be carried out to implement the LCP, "Bluff Erosion Control" is one of the construction projects recommended, while "stairway improvements down bluffs" is another listed project.

From these items, it is clear that the LCP does not recommend that the bluff be left in an undisturbed state. The Strand policy does refer to minimizing encroachment on the beach, possibly in relation to a plan from years before the LCP to extended a gently sloping bluff several hundred feet out onto the beach. However, in the overall bluff erosion study done in 2001, and not incorporated in the LCP, the clear preference was to minimize the change to the look and character of the bluff. This was demonstrated in three projects constructed that year at Junipero, Molino and Coronado Avenues. These three projects "micro-terraced" or "rilled" the face of the bluff to slow any possible sheet flow and provide room for planting.

The current project will increase the amount of grading in order to meet the slope requirements for the access stairs and ramps. Construction plans for the grading have not been done as regulatory permits can have substantial impact on final design, but sufficient design work has been done to indicate that the 55 foot contour, representing the shoulder of the bluff, will retreat 16 feet. Excavated soil will be placed between the east arm of the parking lot and the bluff. This material will then be utilized in the improvements to be proposed later for that location. Previous stairway designs floated the stairways over the bluff obtaining the necessary slope by encroaching on the beach.

This approach of cutting into the bluff was proposed as more consistent with the LCP policy.

Landscaping. The final issue in the staff report on the appeal was that the plans did not specify plant materials. That is correct. The attached letter from the landscape architect for the project, Steven A. Ormenyi, indicates the plants to be used and the design concepts behind those selections. As the planting for the natives will be by hydro-seeding a typical landscape plan layout would not add to the information presented.

I hope this information is sufficient to complete this application. I will call and arrange an appointment after you have had time to review this submittal and hope that I can answer any additional questions at that time.

Sincerely,



Dennis Eschen,
Manager of Planning and Development

DLE:lr
C:\DOCS\MEMO<R\CCC\BixbyBluff.doc

Attachment:

- c: Phil T. Hester, Director of Parks, Recreation and Marine
- Christine F. Andersen, Director of Public Works
- Mark Christoffels, City Engineer
- Mark Sandoval, Manager of the Marine Bureau
- Tom Shippey, Manager of Maintenance Operations Bureau
- Ramon Arevalo, Superintendent, Maintenance Operations Bureau
- Barbara Muñoz, Division Engineer, Project Development
- Paterno Castro, Chief Construction Inspector
- Anthony Arevalo, Public Works Engineering

AS-LOB-04-222

EXHIBIT # 5
PAGE 10 OF 13

Detailed Project Description

1. Existing beach.
2. Existing trees.
3. Existing parking lot (451 spaces, 55 of which were added to the access road down to the parking lot in 2003 in anticipation of this project).
4. Existing historic lifeguard building.
5. Existing lifeguard boat storage.
6. New storage. Additional 288 square foot, ten-foot tall storage building to be placed next to the existing Lifeguards boat storage container. The architecture is to match the existing lifeguard building.
7. Information kiosk and emergency telephone.
8. New public restroom. The existing public restroom is difficult to maintain and in need of renovation. Its existing location crowds the area for the proposed playground, and due to age, condition, and location, will be replaced by a new restroom facility. The new facility would be designed as individual direct entry family toilet stalls, with exterior sinks.
9. Pre-school aged children's playground. One of three playground sets to be designed like the Anacapa Islands.
10. Playground swings and spring toys in island shape.
11. School-aged children's playground in island shape.
12. Dune vegetation restoration area. This area will be planted with coastal strand planting, mostly endemic to the Channel Islands. Proposed are:
 - Calystegia marcostegia (Island morning glory),
 - Comarostaphylis diversifolia (Summer Holly),
 - Coreopsis gigantea (Giant coreopsis)
 - Eriogonum grande (Giant buckwheat),
 - Grindelia stricta (Gumplant)
 - Lotus dendroideus (Island deerweed)
13. Irrigated lawn area.
14. Park benches.
15. Bluff top railings and playground fencing. Railings are proposed that will replicate the look of the historical Bluff Park railings. The railings are necessary to prevent pedestrian and bicycle travel down the bluff face at locations other than designated stairs and ramps. This number is also used to indicate the location of a fence around the playgrounds to keep children from leaving the playground area.
16. Existing mural. The mural is painted on the covering that prevents entrance into the former beach access tunnel.
17. Future concession area. Location for potential concessionaire kiosks or vendor carts. Use will be limited to food, beverages, beach support items (sun screen, hats, umbrellas), and skate equipment.
18. Access ramp. Access ramp from Bixby Park to the beach meeting Americans with Disabilities Act standards. Ramp will be built with a decomposed gravel surface held in place with an organic binder.

COASTAL COMMISSION

AS-LOB-04-222

EXHIBIT # 5

PAGE 11 OF 13

19. Three rows of concrete seating, 100 feet in length, accommodating approximate 180 persons (at 20 inches per person). This is to stabilize the toe of the bluff and provide seating for what has been referred to as the amphitheater.
20. Access stairs. Two sets of access stairs are proposed. One leads from the eastern edge of Bixby Park near Junipero Avenue to the beach at the eastern edge of the amphitheater, and one leads from the center of Bixby Park, just west of the center of the park, to the tunnel terrace and the playground.
21. Stage towers. Two 32'-6" tall towers, one on either side of the stage. The towers will be open trellis-like structures to hold stage lights, speakers, and stage back drop screens or curtains. Towers would also anchor removable canopy for spectator shade.
22. Canopy support poles. Two poles anchoring the inland extent of the shade canopy.
23. Decagon shaped stage, approximately 8,000 square feet in area. The stage will be six inches below the walkway on the north side and 42 inches above skate plaza on the south side. When not in use as part of the amphitheater, the stage will be part of the skate plaza. The amphitheater use has not been programmed, but it is expected that it will be used for such things as the Long Beach Municipal Band concerts, children's theater productions, and community presentations,
24. Walkway. Walkway between stage and seating. Also used for skating when not in use for amphitheater.
25. Skate plaza. 200' x 60' concrete surface for skating and skateboarding. Shaped like profile of the Cyclone Racer roller coaster at the Pike in Long Beach, the image of the roller coaster would be painted on the surface. "Bench" skate elements would be shaped like roller coaster cars and areas of the "tracks" would be "rail" skating elements.
26. Cyclone racer carts. The bench skate elements in roller coaster theme design.
27. Steps and hand rail. The steps and handrails down from the stage to the skating surface would be part of the skate elements.
28. Battered wall. The edge between the bluff and the walkway would be designed as a sloping concrete surface for skating while anchoring the toe of the bluff.
29. Bollards. The bollards form a barrier between the bicycle path and the parking lot, skating surface, and concession area. Bollards will also provide majority of area security and activity lighting.
30. Existing sidewalk adjoining parking lot.
31. Existing pedestrian and bicycle path.
32. New palm trees.
33. New shade trees.
34. Existing slope planting. The slope was replanted with a mix of California native grasses and shrubs in 2001 after the erosion ruts were filled and the sloped shaped with micro terraces. Over pruning due to July 4th fire concerns and pedestrian encroachments have damaged an otherwise successful native plant demonstration planting and slope protection.
35. Existing top of slope.
36. New top of slope. Re-grading will move top of slope from 6 feet to 26 feet inland.

37. New native groundcover. A Coastal scrub mix similar to that used in the bluff landscaping demonstration projects will be used, although the mix will be reviewed to reduce the amount of fuel that has been a concern of neighbors and fire prevention personnel. Proposed are:
- Achillea millefolium (Common yarrow),
 - Bromus carinatus (California brome),
 - Eriogonum parvifolium (Coastal buckwheat),
 - Encelia californica, Haplopappus ventus (Coastal golden brush), and
 - Lotus scoparius (Deerweed).
38. Decomposed granite walkway. Walkway along top of bluff connecting stairways, access ramp and overlook benches to Ocean Boulevard sidewalk.
39. Picnic benches and tables.
40. Historic cannon pad. Location of World War II anti-aircraft gun emplacement.
41. Overhead Light Standards.

COASTAL COMMISSION
AS-LOB-01-222

EXHIBIT # 5
PAGE 13 OF 13

August 6, 2004

Tetra Tech, Inc.
401 E. Ocean Boulevard, Suite 810
Long Beach, California 90802

Attention: Mr. Fernando Pages

Subject: Geotechnical Evaluation of Conceptual Plans
Bixby Park Re-development
Amphitheater/Skate Park/Recreation Areas
Long Beach, California
GPI Project No. 1652.50

COASTAL COMMISSION

EXHIBIT # 6
PAGE 1 OF 2
A5-LOB-04-222

References: "Preliminary Geotechnical Investigation,
Proposed Belmont Shore, Bluff Restoration,
Long Beach, California," Project No. 1652.1
dated May 20, 2000 (Revised September 3, 2003).

Dear Mr. Pages:

At your request, we have reviewed the conceptual plans for the proposed improvements at the south end of Bixby Park, from a geotechnical point of view.

The proposed improvements, to be located mostly in the lower parts of the slope from Bixby Park to the beach, include a small amphitheater, a skate park, children's playground areas, restroom buildings, a kiosk, access ramps and staircases, as well as hardscaping and landscaping improvements.

Our feasibility level geotechnical evaluation, presented herein, is based on the results of a referenced geotechnical investigation, that we had performed in 2000, and conceptual plans of the proposed improvements, that you provided.

Our original geotechnical investigation was primarily aimed at evaluating the stability of public property bluffs and slopes between Downtown Long Beach and Belmont Shore. At the location of the proposed improvements, the existing slope has an average inclination flatter than 2:1 (horizontal:vertical). Our slope stability analyses indicate that slopes flatter than 2:1 have adequate factors of safety under both static and seismic conditions. The proposed improvements, as shown on the conceptual plans, that you provided, will actually result in even flatter overall slope inclinations, resulting in further improvement in the factor of safety against slope failures. Our original evaluations indicated that foot traffic on the unimproved slope surface and poor drainage had resulted in localized erosion gullies, which will be repaired as part of the project. The proposed staircases and ramps will eliminate the erosive action of foot traffic over the slope.

1652-50-01LR (8/04)

Our original geotechnical investigation did not include foundation evaluations for the proposed improvements. Supplemental investigations will be needed with respect to the design of the proposed improvements. However, based on subsurface information from our original geotechnical investigation, it is our opinion that the proposed improvements at the base of the slope are feasible from a geotechnical point of view. In general, relatively dense terrace deposits were encountered in the lower parts of the slope. Some routine grading will be required for structures supported on shallow foundations to recompact loose surficial soils.

We trust that this letter will provide the feasibility level geotechnical evaluation you requested. Please call the undersigned if you have any questions on the contents of this letter.

Respectfully submitted,
Geotechnical Professionals Inc.



Byron Konstantinidis, G.E.
Principal



AUG - 6 2004

BK:sph

cc: Mr. Dennis Eschen, City of Long Beach (Park Planning and Development)

COASTAL COMMISSION

EXHIBIT # 6
PAGE 2 OF 2
AS-LOB-04-222

Steven A. Ormenyi & Associates

Landscape Architects

22554 Ventura Boulevard, Suite 201
Woodland Hills, California 91364

24 August 2004

Telephone: 818.224.4770
Fax: 818.224.4784

CALIFORNIA LICENSE 1733

Dennis Eschen
Planning and Development
Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine
2760 Studebaker Road
Long Beach, CA 90815

COASTAL COMMISSION

Re: Proposed Bixby Park Plant List, Long Beach, CA

EXHIBIT # 7
PAGE 1 OF 2
AS-LOB-04-222

Dear Dennis:

Per your request, here is a brief description of the rationale for the proposed planting palette and plan for the Bixby Park project.

Existing Conditions:

The existing Bluff slopes are predominantly covered with a non-native ice plant called Hottentot Fig (*Carpobrotus edulis*). The adjacent beach areas feature numerous mature *Washingtonia robusta* palms and non-native evergreen tree plantings.

Landscape Strategy:

The landscaping goal is to integrate the landscaped improvements with adjacent beach property and to re-introduce plants representative of Southern California's unique coastal sagescrub plant community. The strategy is based upon the experiences of coastal projects completed by the city of Long Beach in recent years. These projects include: The Bluff Demonstration project featuring the surficial stabilization of eroding bluffs with native coastal scrub vegetation. Rainbow Harbor is another project featuring coastal dune plantings. These landscaped plantings were developed in cooperation with the Long Beach Fire Department and the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine maintenance personnel to be low growing, low fuel and low maintenance.

Proposed Plantings:

Irrigated lawn areas will be limited to the high traffic areas, notably the picnic areas, bike path, the skate park and toilet building where lounging, people-watching and other recreational activities are expected. *Washingtonia* palms and *Metrosideros tomentosa* – New Zealand Christmas trees are proposed in the improved area to "knit" together with the existing palms and non-native tree plantings evident along the existing beach strand and existing bluff properties.

To provide transition from the beach and shelter from prevailing winds, the children's playground area will feature low growing native plants endemic to the coastal strand. Interpretive signs will identify the plants and how they are used by native Americans. Trees and shrubs endemic to the Channel Islands are

proposed to provide shade and serve as an acoustic buffer to the adjacent bike path and skatepark. Representative plant selections in the playground area may include:

Grindelia stricta – Gumplant
Coreopsis gigantea – Giant coreopsis
Calystegia macrostegia – Island morning glory
Eriogonum grande – Giant buckwheat
Lotus dendroideus – Island deerweed
Comarostaphylis diversifolia- Summer Holly

The slopes between the bluffs and the beach strand will be hydroseeded with a coastal scrub seed mix designed to naturally stabilize the bluffs and reflect the native coastal sagescrub community. Proposed plantings may include the following:

Encelia californica – California encelia
Haplopappus venetus –Coastal golden bush
Lotus scoparius – Deerweed
Eriogonum parvifolium – Coastal buckwheat
Bromus carinatus – California brome
Achillea millefolium – Common yarrow

We hope this information clarifies the California Coastal Commission's questions. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 818.224.4770, if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,
STEVEN A. ORMENYI & ASSOCIATES

Scott Shimatsu
Project Manager

Cc: Tony Arevalo, CLB-DPW
Fernando Pagés, Tetra Tech, Inc.
Steven A. Ormenyi, SAO & Associates

COASTAL COMMISSION

EXHIBIT # 7
PAGE 2 OF 2
AS-LOB-04-222

