

State of California

California Coastal Commission
San Diego District

MEMORANDUM

TO: Commissioners and
Interested Persons

DATE: September 22, 1999

FROM: Staff

FILE NO: 6-86-651-A12

SUBJECT: Staff Report and Preliminary Recommendation on Work Program for
Expenditure of Sludge Mitigation Monies

Project History

In 1981, the Coastal Commission approved an expansion of the existing sludge drying facility on Fiesta Island in Mission Bay Park. The facility itself predated the Commission, and was initially accepted by the State Lands Commission as a temporary use within an area of tidelands granted by the State Lands Commission to the City of San Diego. This occurred while Mission Bay Park was being constructed, since processed sludge materials provided a basis for part of the upland areas being created out of what was once marshland, there was some logic in temporarily locating the sludge drying operations in the park. Recognizing, however, that this was not an appropriate permanent use of public park lands, the Commission conditioned its approval of the expansion, requiring that the entire facility be relocated out of Mission Bay Park by January 1, 1987. The City agreed to this condition and began the lengthy task of locating a suitable replacement site. The City was ultimately unable to meet the January 1, 1987 deadline for removal. Thus a series of amendment requests were approved by the Commission to accommodate continuation of the municipal sludge-drying operation while a permanent location was sought and a new facility could be reviewed for environmental concerns, permitted and constructed.

On April 12, 1989, the Commission acted on a City of San Diego amendment request for a fifth extension of time on the above-referenced permit for the 1981 expansions of the sludge-drying beds on Fiesta Island. In the amendment action, which allowed an additional three years of time for relocation, a \$1,000,000 per year mitigation fund was established to offset the public's ongoing loss of recreational opportunities and restricted access during the remaining time the facilities must remain on Fiesta Island. Half of this fund was to be applied towards master planning for, and implementation of, future Fiesta Island improvements, and the other half was designated for public access and recreation projects throughout Mission Bay Park, which were not covered by other funding sources.

In March, 1992, the City requested a sixth time extension amendment for sludge removal. The Commission granted the request, but increased the mitigation fund to \$2,000,000 annually, in hopes of providing a greater incentive for speedy removal of the facilities

Sludge Mitigation Fund Work Program

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from the park. The terms of the funding were modified to require \$500,000 per year be retained for the Fiesta Island improvement efforts, \$1,000,000 be used for one or two major projects each year, and the remaining \$500,000 be allocated towards a number of smaller items. As before, these projects had to be directly related to resource protection, public access and recreation in Mission Bay Park, and could not be projects adequately funded by other sources. In addition, the special conditions required that the money be kept in an interest-bearing account, with all earned interest cycled back into the fund for future allocation. Based upon the City's demonstration of significant progress towards the sludge facility relocation efforts, the Commission, in May, 1995, approved a tenth amendment which reduced the annual mitigation amount from \$2,000,000 to \$1,500,000. All other aspects of the mitigation program remained in effect.

Since then, the City has constructed a replacement facility, which is located in the North City area outside the coastal zone. All operations have been successfully transferred to the new site, and the Fiesta Island facility has been demolished. The former sludge facility site has been hydroseeded and, in December of 1998, turned the site over to the City's Park and Recreation Department for park use and future park improvements. At this time, there is limited pedestrian access providing passive recreational uses along the shoreline areas of the site. With the removal of the sludge facilities and subsequent transfer of the site to the City's Park and Recreation Department, the obligation to pay the mitigation monies ended.

The City last appeared before the Commission with a work program in February, 1997, proposing expenditures for fiscal year 1998 monies. Although the mitigation program has now ended (i.e., no more money is being deposited) since the sludge facility has been removed from the park, there are monies remaining in the fund. These are derived from interest earned over the years, the cancellation of one or more previously-funded projects and some projects coming in under budget. The following proposed work program is for the expenditure of a portion of the previously-unallocated funds. The work program includes the following proposals:

1. Improved signage for information, rules and regulations	\$ 20,000
2. Concrete pathway from Robb Field to main parklands	\$200,000
3. Schematic design/cost estimate for Crown Point Park pathway lighting	\$ 31,000
4. Design work for Northern Wildlife Preserve Nature Center	\$ 25,000
5. Partial Bayside Walk replacement (Mission Bay Park portion only)	\$210,775
6. Modification of Bayside Walk node at Dawes Street	\$ 75,000
7. New restroom at Robb Field	<u>\$250,000</u>
TOTAL PROPOSED EXPENDITURES	\$811,775

In addition, \$380,000 is proposed to be retained in a contingency reserve for completion of previously approved general park projects. There is also approximately \$4,000,000 left in reserve for the planning and implementation of Fiesta Island improvements.

Items #1, #2, #5, #6 and #7 represent the type of routine access and recreational improvements the Commission has endorsed since the beginning of the mitigation program in 1989. They are fully consistent with the parameters of the special condition and will result in increased visitor-serving amenities in the Park. They are also consistent with the certified Mission Bay Park Master Plan. Staff thus recommends **authorization** of the use of sludge mitigation funds for these five items.

Item #4 is a request for an additional \$25,000 to complete preliminary design of the Northern Wildlife Preserve Nature Center. Staff had initially questioned the use of sludge funds for this purpose when the City first requested \$50,000 in February, 1997. It was explained that this effort would result in design and construction drawings for the center, which is identified as a needed improvement in the certified Mission Bay park Master Plan. Ultimately, staff recommended the Commission authorize use of \$50,000 of sludge mitigation funds for this purpose, and the Commission concurred. The City has explained that this project has not moved forward as quickly as had been hoped and it is still in the process of selecting a consultant. Current costs indicate that the \$50,000 originally reserved will be inadequate to complete the task, and the City now requests supplemental funding. Staff recommends **authorization** of the additional \$25,000 with the understanding that no additional sludge mitigation funds may be allocated for design purposes. Future requests to use any residual sludge monies towards actual construction of the nature center will receive a positive recommendation from staff as consistent with the intended use of the funds.

Item #3 is identified on the City's request as the "schematic design and cost estimate for Crown Point Park pathway lighting." The City has explained that they need a study performed to determine where, and how much, electrical infrastructure currently exists in the area where the pathway lighting would go. This study would result in schematic designs for the lighting and a cost estimate of how much funding the project would require. The study would allow the City to determine if the end result would be worth the required outlay of public funds. The proposal does not appear to meet the terms of the special condition, since it does not include any "on-the-ground improvements" to public access and recreation and since, if the City determines not to proceed with a lighting project at all based on this study, the proposal would not even lead to a future project. Therefore, staff recommends that the Commission **not authorize** the use of sludge mitigation funds for this proposal. If the City does determine to install lighting, staff would recommend approval of the use of sludge mitigation funds for the actual construction costs pursuant to a future request for same by the City.

In summary, staff recommends the Commission authorize the use of sludge mitigation funds for all proposed items except Item #3. It should be noted, however, that through

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this action, the Commission is only authorizing the use of sludge mitigation funds for the specific projects proposed; it is not approving the actual construction of any improvements. It would appear that Item #1 is exempt from coastal development permit requirements under the Interpretive Guideline on Exclusions from Permit Requirements (Section II.C. Parks), since the directional/informational signage is considered routine maintenance which does not alter the level or type of public use. Items #2, #5, #6 and #7 will require coastal development permits.

Attached to this recommendation is the City's proposal and a current status report of all sludge mitigation projects approved to date.

(6-86-651-A12 City of San Diego sludge fund work program.doc)



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

RECEIVED

JUN 23 1999

CALIFORNIA
COASTAL COMMISSION
SAN DIEGO COAST DISTRICT

June 21, 1999

California Coastal Commission
Attn: Laurinda Owens
3111 Camino Del Rio North, Suite 200
San Diego, CA 92108-1725

Subject: Proposed Sludge Mitigation Fund Expenditures

Dear Ms. Owens:

The Park and Recreation Department proposes the following list of projects for Sludge Mitigation funding. In addition to the list of proposed projects, an annual status report for previously approved Sludge Mitigation Fund projects is included in this report.

I. NEW PROJECT PROPOSALS

<u>A. Proposed General Park Projects for Approval</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>
1. Improved park signage to significantly improve park visitor's ability to find park information, park rules, and regulations.	\$ 20,000
2. Construction of a concrete pathway connecting southeast Robb Field to Mission Bay Park.	200,000
3. Schematic design and cost estimate for Crown Point Park pathway lighting.	31,000
4. Northern Wildlife Preserve Nature Center (at north Crown Point Shores), supplemental funding to complete preliminary design.	25,000
5. Partial Bayside Walk replacement (San Rafael Court to West Mission Bay Drive). Note: Figure represents cost for replacement of portion of sidewalk located in Mission Bay Park. Other funds will be sought for completion of the portion located in street right-of-way.	210,775

Coastal Parks Division



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| 6. | Modification of the Bayside Walk node located at the foot of Dawes Street to include removal of seating walls and some concrete pavement, and additional concrete to realign the walkway to provide improved crossing for adjacent ZLAC Rowing Club. | 75,000 |
| 7. | Construction of new restroom at Robb Field, Mission Bay Park, to serve the new skateboard park and athletic field. | 250,000 |

The citizen advisory Mission Bay Park Committee met on March 2, 1999 to consider projects proposed for expenditure from the Sludge Mitigation Fund. The Committee voted to forward Projects #1-6, above, to the Coastal Commission for funding consideration. Project #7 was not recommended by the advisory committee for funding by a vote of 6-5. However the Park and Recreation Department strongly urges your support. Robb Field is on dedicated Mission Bay Park parkland, the Mission Bay Park Committee vote was closely split, and there is a significant need for restroom facilities to serve the recreation venues which will be completed in August, 1999: a new skateboard park and multi-purpose athletic field. A Robb Field map showing the location of the proposed and nearest existing restroom is attached, as well as a map showing the boundaries of Mission Bay Park including Robb Field and Dusty Rhodes Park.

A contingency reserve of approximately \$380,000 will be retained for completion of previously approved general park projects.

II. ANNUAL STATUS REPORT FOR PREVIOUSLY APPROVED SLUDGE MITIGATION FUND PROJECTS

A. <u>Completed Projects</u>	<u>Appropriated</u>	<u>Completed</u>
Natural Resource Signage	\$ 2,500	Nov. 1990
Santa Clara Point Parking Lot Study	10,000	Jan. 1991
Bonita Cove Playground Equipment	29,775	Sep. 1991
Sea World Drive Tree Planting Phase I	14,216	Apr. 1992
Tecolote Shores Parking Lot Construction	172,517	Jul. 1992
Fiesta Island Water Supply Line	12,000	Aug. 1992
Acquisition of Frost Property	1,610,000	Mar. 1993
West Mission Bay Drive Walkway Phase I	78,357	Jun. 1993
S.W. Vacation Isle Parking Lot Safety Lights and Bonita Cove Parking Lot Safety Lights	169,711	Dec. 1993
Northern Wildlife Preserve Sidewalk and Platform	85,074	Apr. 1994
Sail Bay Briarfield Cove Bridge (Phase IV)	200,000	Apr. 1994
Hospitality Point Picnic Shelter	64,192	Jun. 1994

Tecolote Shores ADA Playground and Park	577,119	Jun.	1994
Sea World Drive Tree Planting Phases II and III	60,784	Jul.	1994
Mission Bay Park Master Plan Update	500,000	Aug.	1994
South Crown Point Walkway	140,924	Feb.	1995
East Shore Parking Lot Safety Lights	132,433	Jun.	1995
North Crown Point Access Improvements	10,098	Nov.	1995
West Mission Bay Drive Sidewalk Phase II	105,000	Nov.	1995
North Ski Beach Picnic Shelter	101,604	Nov.	1995
Vacation Isle Playground	94,616	Dec.	1995
Mariner's Point Picnic Shelter	92,988	Dec.	1995
Mission Point Playground ADA Improvements	53,934	Dec.	1995
Bonita Cove Playground ADA Improvements	109,354	Apr.	1996
Ski Beach Restroom	242,243	May	1996
South Shores Phase III	2,350,000	May	1996
Fiesta Island Youth Camping Facilities	35,000	Jul.	1996
Water Quality Testing Program	150,000	Dec.	1996
Crown Point Salt Marsh Restoration	40,000	Mar.	1997
De Anza Cove Parking Lot Safety Lighting	100,000	Jun.	1997
Information Center Playground ADA Improvements	100,000	Jun.	1998
Storm Drain Education Program	100,000	Feb.	1999
Santa Clara Point Playground ADA Improvements	100,000	Mar.	1999

B. Projects in Process of Development or Under Construction

Picnic Shelters - \$700,000. Shelters approved for Sunset Point, De Anza Cove, La Playa, South Shores Lagoon, Southwest Vacation Isle and Tecolote Shores are in contract processing for construction in 1999.

Crown Point Shores Parking Lot Safety Lights - \$100,000. Project canceled due to opposition from Crown Point residents.

Sail Bay Lighting and Landscaping - \$150,000. Completion of pathway lighting and drinking fountain water service was completed in May, 1998. Landscaping has been designed and approved. Landscape installation will take place Fall, 1999.

Crown Point Playground ADA Improvements - \$75,000. Under construction. Scheduled for completion prior to Memorial Day, 1999.

Fanuel Park Playground ADA Improvements - \$100,000. Under construction. Scheduled for completion prior to Memorial Day, 1999.

De Anza Cove Playground ADA Improvements - \$50,000. Construction will begin Fall, 1999.

La Playa Playground ADA Improvements - \$50,000. Construction will begin Fall, 1999.

South Shores Phase IV - \$75,000. On hold pending resolution of the feasibility of the amphitheater as described in the Master Plan.

Nature Center - \$50,000. Consultant selection in process. Additional \$25,000 Sludge Mitigation funding is being requested to complete design.

Fiesta Island Causeway Parking Lot - \$25,000. Design of this project will be incorporated in the infrastructure design for which Sludge Mitigation funding is being requested.

Fiesta Island Group Camping Phase II - \$150,000. Construction scheduled to begin May, 1999. Additional funding is being provided through Transient Occupancy Tax.

C. Fiesta Island Improvement Reserve

Current balance in this reserve is \$3,998,000. The Metropolitan Wastewater District completed removal of the Fiesta Island Sludge Processing Facility in December 1998. The property has been returned to the Park and Recreation Department and is open to the public for pedestrian traffic.

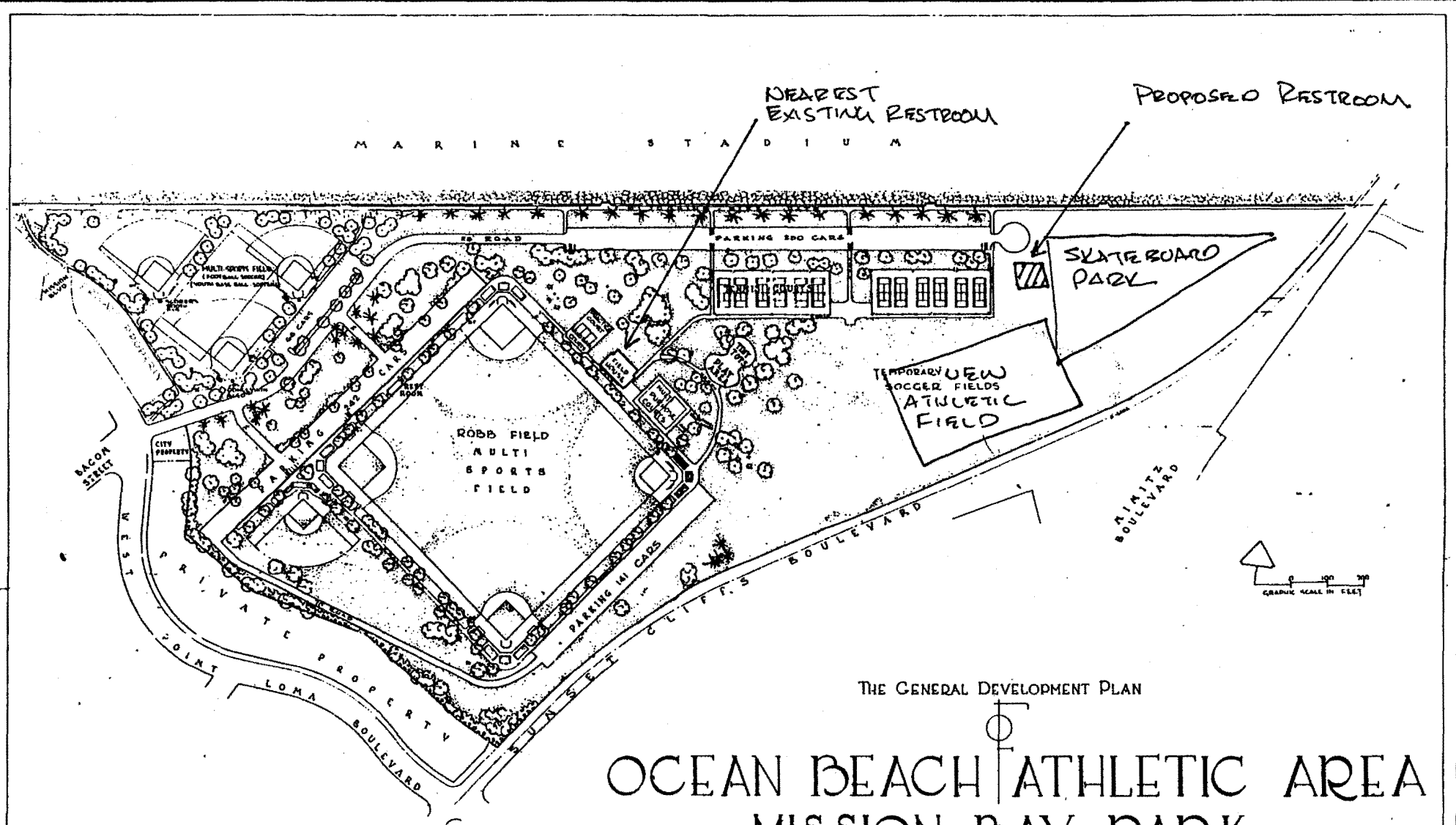
D. Sludge Mitigation Fund Audit Report

The most recent Sludge Mitigation Fund program status report (for Period 8, 02/05/99) is attached.


GARY STROMBERG
Mission Bay Park Manager

Attachment: Status of Mission Bay Sludge Mitigation Programs
General Development Plan, Robb Field
Mission Bay Park Map

cc: Marcia C. McLatchy, Park and Recreation Director
Frank Belock, Engineering and Capital Projects Director
Dave Schlesinger, Metropolitan Wastewater Director
Terri Williams, Deputy Director, Coastal Parks Division
Tim Rothans, Management Assistant for Balboa Park, Mission Bay Park and North Torrey Pines Development Area



THE GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

OCEAN BEACH ATHLETIC AREA MISSION BAY PARK

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

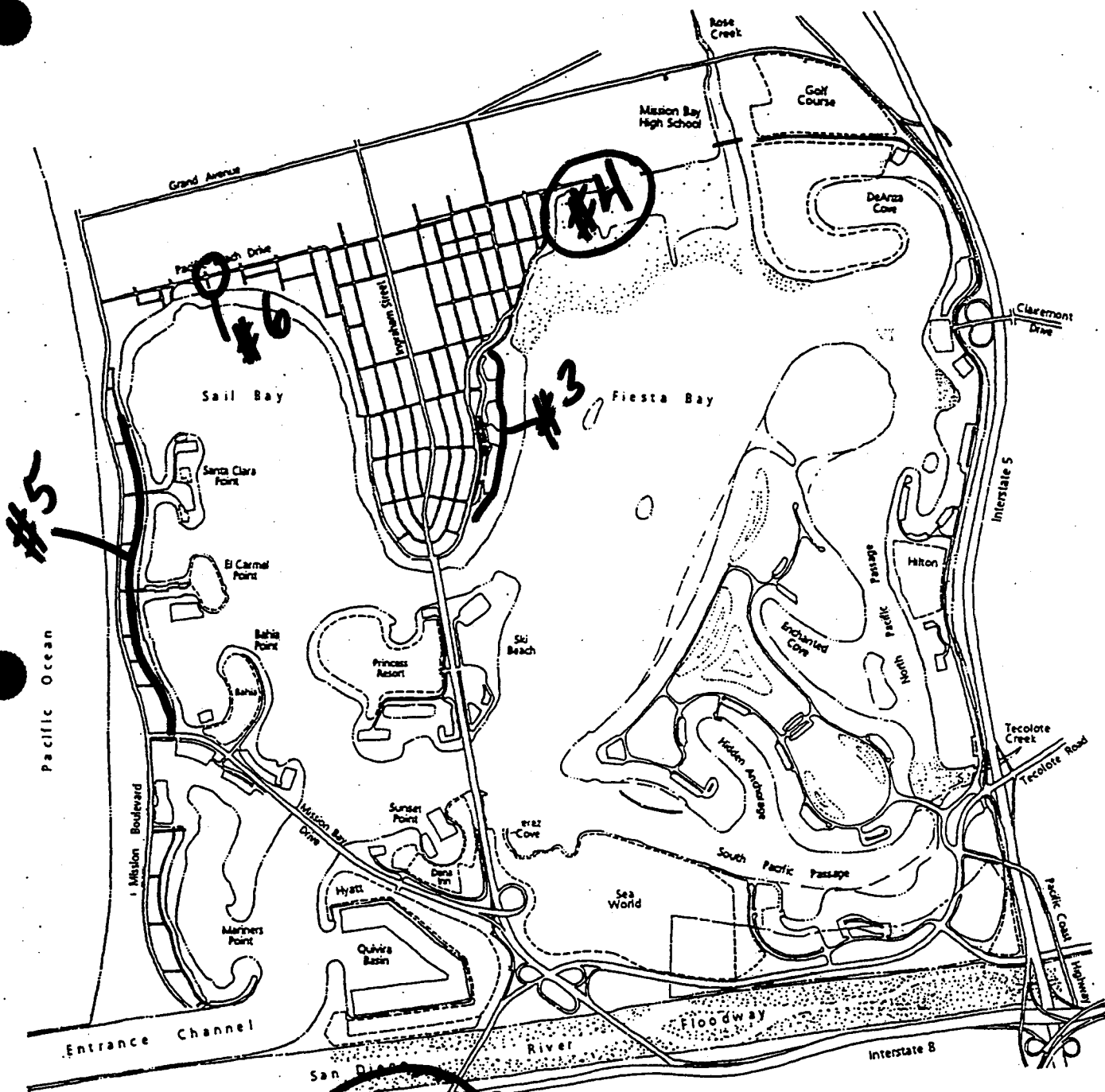
ROBB FIELD

APPROVED BY PARK AND RECREATION BOARD 2/70

PARK CONTAINS 62 ACRES
PREPARED BY THE PARK DESIGN SECTION 5-70 RLG.

MB-113

ATTACHMENT 2



#5

#3

Items #2 + #7

DUSTY RHODES PARK

MISSION BAY PARK



