

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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Th16c

6-22-1069

(San Diego Unified Port District and USS Midway Museum)

February 9, 2023

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter from the Applicant

Letters in Support

Letters in Opposition



Th16c – SD Port and USS Midway

CDP Application No. 6-22-1069

In favor of project

February 6, 2023

Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission
California Coastal Commission
San Diego Area
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103
San Diego, CA 92108-4421

SanDiegoCoast@coastal.ca.gov

Dear Honorable Chair Brownsey and members of the Commission,

Under usual circumstances I would send those of you whom receive ex parte a request simply to let you know that my client, the USS Midway, worked diligently in collaboration with the Port of San Diego and your staff to reach agreement on a solution for converting Navy Pier to a park (as described in the positive staff report and recommendation) and to make ourselves available if you have any questions or concerns. In this case, your legal staff has told us that their guidance to you is to not receive ex parte. Out of respect for that policy please accept the additional detail and background in this letter in lieu of ex parte.

We are proud to have broad support for the project before you and as of today 25 letters of support have already been sent in. The supporters of the project are diverse and range from Marco Gonzalez/Coastal Environmental Rights Foundation to Senator Steve Padilla, Congressman Scott Peters, Supervisors Fletcher and Vargas, Assemblymember Boerner Horvath and many others. As a former coastal activist, out of respect, I reach out not only to friends but potential opponents. To the extent it is desired, our team, as well as the Port team, will be available during the hearing to answer questions or respond to concerns the opposition letters may have raised for you. I have also provided some additional background here in response to some of what has been communicated in those letters.

2907 Shelter Island Drive, Ste 105, San Diego, CA 92106 // 619-786-3038 //

collaborativelanduse.com

I would like to offer brief context and background about how we got to where we are today. In 2001 the Port Master Plan Amendment that allowed the Midway to come to town and that called for a park on Navy Pier to be added as a planning goal to the Port Master Plan was approved. At that time there was no money to build a park, no clear understanding about the costs and who would pay for what, and no one knew what the Midway would become and what its operational needs would be.

It was also not feasible to build the park immediately after the Navy relinquished the pier in 2007 because the funding was not available and there were no adjacent/nearby spots to park. Despite that, the Midway worked in earnest to develop concepts for the park so that it could be built when nearby parking did come online. One of the plans the Midway put forward was the “park over parking” plan, which was submitted and failed to advance in part because it blocked views, so the Midway continued to examine options to build the park.

In 2016 a CDP was approved that would have allowed the headhouse to be taken down and an interim park/parking plan put in place but after completion of additional engineering work it was determined that the piles under the headhouse would cost many times more to repair and reinforce than originally estimated. The Port did not have the money to do the work.

Since then the Port and Midway have rolled up their sleeves to put together the solution in front of you now. The Port secured \$11.7 million in stimulus funding for the pile repair and reinforcement. The Midway has stepped up to pay for the rest of the pier repair as well as to build the park and amenities. The Midway’s commitment is approximately \$50 million.

In the last couple of years, the Midway has relocated all of its staff parking requirements off Navy Pier and into the new Lane Field parking (the Midway leases 150 spots from them). The spots that will remain on the pier will be made up of: 80 standard spaces reserved for the public including 6 EV stalls, 10 ADA spaces, and 10 motorcycles spaces; as well as 38 standard spaces including 3 EV stalls, and 7 ADA spaces for the Midway volunteers. The public parking will be located within the island created by the ingress and egress that is necessary for Midway operations and that cannot be relocated due to turning radii and structural issues. The Midway volunteer parking will be located in an area similarly constrained by operations and not available for general public use.ⁱ

The features and amenities currently proposed far exceed what was contemplated and discussed in the Coastal Commission decision from 2001 as well as the subsequent CDP. A project of this caliber could not have been achieved if the Midway had not had the time to

develop into a first-rate visitor serving attraction that can support this project financially. In retrospect it's fortuitous that the money didn't exist to build the park sooner or lack of hindsight would have resulted in a park design that would have significantly limited the Midway from becoming the major visitor serving attraction and community resource it has become.

It has been beyond an honor to work with your staff, Port staff and the Midway team to bring this solution forward. I have had the great pleasure of being reunited with Lesley Nishihira, the Port's Planning Director, who I and many others worked so hard with on the Chula Vista Bayfront Master Plan, another example of successful collaboration between the Port, Coastal Commission and a private entity. None of this would be possible without the Midway's leadership. Mac McLaughlin, the departing Midway CEO, deserves specific recognition for both his vision and his desire to do right by San Diego by leaving this huge public project as one of his parting gifts – he retires after this hearing. His involvement coupled with the leadership of Jack Ainsworth and Joe Stuyvesant, the Port's President, were the secret ingredients to getting this done.

We respectfully urge you to support item Th16c. We are available to answer any questions or concerns you may have.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Allison Rolfe". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Allison Rolfe

Collaborative Land Use Solutions

ⁱ The pier area adjacent to Midway that is leased to Midway by the Port is necessary to support Midway's operations as follows:

- The area is critical for craning repair equipment, supplies, and unique event equipment to the flight deck 60 feet above the pier or to the forward aircraft elevator 28 feet above the pier. No side ramps or ports exist in Midway's hull to traverse horizontally. All lifting is done vertically.
- This section of the pier structurally supports the use of a 200 Ton large crane with a 30-foot square footprint, 65-foot support semi trucks that carry crane counter weights and the 65-foot trucks that bring equipment and supplies. These vehicles need to be next to the ship. Crane operations take place night and day.
- Midway's emergency generator, main sewage lines and support services are in this area. This infrastructure needs routine maintenance. The maintenance is not compatible with food service or general public access.
- Over time, because of the shortage of parking nearby, the Midway has found the location very useful for docent parking. It is greatly appreciated by these older adults that run Midway daily. Discussion of relocation of the volunteer parking in this location (to be replaced offsite and a shuttle provided) is not received well by these older volunteers who are the heart and soul of Midway's success.
- Midway is a horizontal high-rise building (length exceeding any San Diego building, nearly 1,000 feet long) with 17 decks vertically and hundreds of rooms. This area next to Midway needs to be maintained as an operational area for fire support that can accommodate up to 18 fire trucks and emergency response vehicles. In addition, this portion of the pier is critical if a transfer line is needed to evacuate museum guests off the bow of the ship in the event of an emergency and if first responders need to access the standpipe also located on the bow of the ship. It is an inappropriate location to site public access amenities that might result in a congregation of people and cause safety issues in the event of an emergency.

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EL CENTRO, CA 92243
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SENATOR.PADILLA@SENATE.CA.GOV

California State Senate

SENATOR
STEPHEN C. PADILLA
EIGHTEENTH SENATE DISTRICT



COMMITTEES

BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE #4 ON
STATE ADMINISTRATION AND
GENERAL GOVERNMENT
CHAIR

MEMBER

AGRICULTURE

BUDGET

GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

HOUSING

NATURAL RESOURCES AND WATER

February 6, 2023

Melody Lasiter
Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission
California Coastal Commission
San Diego Area
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103
San Diego, CA 92108-4421
Melody.Lasiter@coastal.ca.gov

RE: Th16c – SD Port and USS Midway, In favor of project

Dear Ms. Lasiter and Honorable Commissioners,

I am writing in support of item Th16c on the upcoming February Commission agenda—the San Diego Unified Port District and USS Midway Museum pier conversion to park. The Coastal Development permit would allow the USS Midway to convert the pier currently being used for parking to a park with amenities and 100 public parking spaces, which includes 6 EV stalls, 10 ADA spaces, and 10 motorcycles spaces. The package also includes a rich list of programming commitments that would be in place for a minimum of 20 years. The Midway is committing over \$50 million dollars to build and add amenities to the park, and the Port will spend more than \$10 million in stimulus funds for structural pile improvements to support the new park. The Port and USS Midway have worked collaboratively and diligently with Coastal Commission staff to put forward this project and the staff has recommended approval.

The project constitutes a dramatic contribution to the public realm both physically in the form of the park, and programmatically with a long list of commitments that provide a wide range of opportunities for the public to enjoy the Midway Museum and the park.

I am particularly impressed with the Midway's 20-year commitment to provide scholarships for three new groups of students to attend the existing overnight "Snooze Cruise" program at a cost of an additional \$40,000 per year. I also appreciate their commitment to expand their outreach to children of color to ensure they benefit from this program.

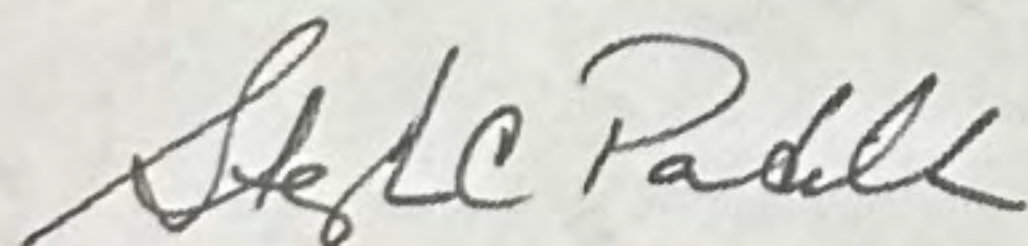
Midway has also committed to take over the Veterans Day Parade oversight and coordination for 20 years starting in 2023. This free event draws 50,000 to 60,000 attendees annually and access to the Midway will be free for the day. The cost over 20 years to the Midway to host and manage will total \$2 million not including lost revenue from ticket sales. The Veterans Museum at Balboa Park has managed the parade for over a decade, although they have struggled to provide the labor and funding. Midway has offered to take over this operation and the Veterans Museum has agreed.

I am thrilled that the project will include a provision that the park stay open to the public during park hours for at least 85 percent of the year. It is very thoughtful that the 15 percent allowance for large special events that limit public access to Freedom Park may only take place on one side of the park on a single day so that the other side of the park remains open to the public. And that during all programmed events, the promenade on the northern side of Freedom Park, the north park area, restrooms, low-cost concessioner, and parking lot shall be open and accessible to the public at all times: 6:00 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. daily.

The USS Midway Museum's contribution of an estimated \$50 million to this park in addition to its programming commitments is impressive and commendable. That, coupled with both the allocation of \$11.7 million of Port Economic Recovery Program funding for the pile repair, and the newly available public parking nearby make this the perfect set of circumstances to create a lasting legacy for San Diego by approving the creation of Freedom Park.

I urge your support of the Coastal Development Application. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen C. Padilla". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Stephen" being more prominent.

Senator Stephen C. Padilla
18th Senate District

STATE CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 942849
SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0077
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FAX (916) 319-2177



January 31, 2023

Chair Donne Brownsey
California Coastal Commission
455 Market Street, Suite 300
San Francisco, CA 94105
(415) 904-5202
Donne.Brownsey@coastal.ca.gov

RE: Support for the Coastal Development Permit (CDP) for "Freedom Park"/Navy Pier Park

Dear Chair Brownsey:

I respectfully write to express my support for the approval of the Coastal Development Permit (CDP) for the proposed "Freedom Park"/Navy Pier Park Project. Navy Pier Park is the culmination of a years-long collaboration with the Port, USS Midway Museum (Midway), and Coastal Commission staff, to convert Navy Pier to a new public park on the North Embarcadero waterfront.

This CDP would allow for continued progress on North Embarcadero's blossoming public gem including (1) demolition of the headhouse on Navy Pier, (2) structural repairs/rehabilitation on and under the pier in the vicinity of the demolished headhouse, and (3) construction of the Freedom Park on Navy Pier.

This project offers a unique recreational opportunity, and environmental and social benefits for years to come, by encouraging connection, access, and play on the waterfront. The park will include pedestrian pathways around and through the park, landscaping, enhanced paving, benches, play structures, memorials and monuments, coastal access and interpretive signage, restrooms, concessionaire, and parking.

Approval of this permit will help bring this world class park to fruition. As the Assemblymember of the 77th District, which includes the North Embarcadero area, I thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this permit and urge your support for the approval of this new waterfront park.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Tasha Boerner Horvath". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tasha" being the most prominent.

TASHA BOERNER HORVATH
CA State Assembly
77th District



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

TODD GLORIA

MAYOR

February 7, 2023

Chair Donne Brownsey and Members of the Commission
California Coastal Commission -- San Diego Area
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103
San Diego, CA 92108-4421
SanDiegoCoast@coastal.ca.gov

Dear Chair Brownsey and Honorable Commissioners,

On behalf of the City of San Diego, I am writing in support of item Th16c, the San Diego Unified Port District and USS Midway Museum's proposed Freedom Park. A park has long been envisioned on this site and I am in full support of the Midway and the Port finally making it a reality.

As Mayor, I strongly believe that parks are essential components for any thriving community. This 3.6-acre park will include a dynamic set of programming commitments to be enjoyed by San Diegans for many years to come. With the USS Midway committing over \$50 million to build the project, and the Port spending more than \$10 million in stimulus funds for structural improvements in support of the park, this is a valuable partnership that makes good sense. I am pleased to see that the Port and USS Midway have worked diligently with Coastal Commission staff to ensure that staff recommends approval of the item.

I urge your support of the Coastal Development Permit Application.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

TODD GLORIA
Mayor
City of San Diego

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0552

February 9, 2023

Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission
California Coastal Commission
San Diego Area
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103
San Diego, CA 92108-4421

Th16c – SD Port and USS Midway
CDP Application No. 6-22-1069
In favor of project

Honorable Commissioners:

I am writing as a former Port Chairman and member of the California Coastal Commission with regards to item Th16c on the upcoming February Commission agenda. The subject is the proposal by the San Diego Unified Port District (Port) and the USS Midway Museum (Midway) to convert a pier into Freedom Park. The Coastal Development permit would allow the Midway to convert the pier that is currently used for parking to a park with amenities. The proposal also includes an expansive list of programming commitments that would be in place for a minimum of 20 years.

Late last year, Congress passed, and the President signed into law, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023. This federal spending package included community project funding that allowed Members of Congress to target federal funds towards projects and programs in their congressional districts. After a rigorous selection process, fourteen of the projects that I fought to include made it into this funding package. One of the projects included was Freedom Park at Navy pier and it was funded at two million dollars. The project would be a valuable use of taxpayer funds because it will be used for the development of the largest public veteran's park on the West Coast, and the only park honoring veterans in the City of San Diego.

The Midway is committing over \$50 million dollars to build the park and the Port will spend more than \$10 million in stimulus funds for structural pile improvements to support the new park. The Port and Midway have worked collaboratively with Coastal Commission staff to put forward this project and the staff recommends its approval.

Thank you for your consideration of their proposal. If you have any questions, please contact me at my San Diego office at 858-455-5550.

Sincerely,



Scott Peters
Member of Congress



NATHAN FLETCHER

San Diego County Board of Supervisors

February 6, 2023

Melody Lasiter
Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission
California Coastal Commission
San Diego Area
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103
San Diego, CA 92108-4421

SUBJECT: San Diego Unified Port District/ USS Midway Museum Navy Pier Park Redevelopment, Item Th16c

Dear Ms. Lasiter and Honorable Commissioners,

As a San Diego County Supervisor and Marine veteran, I am writing to support item Th16c for the San Diego Unified Port District and USS Midway Museum parking pier conversion to park on the upcoming February Commission agenda. A park has long been envisioned on that pier, and I am in full support of the Midway and the Port finally bringing that vision to life.

Parks are spaces that bring people together. This park project has been years in the making, and the vision is finally here. I want to applaud the USS Midway and its Foundation for making the extraordinary commitment to not only design the park but also for its commitment to fund the construction and programming of the park, turning a pier parking lot into a beautiful space that locals and visitors alike can enjoy.

The project constitutes a dramatic contribution to the public realm both physically in the form of the park and programmatically with a long list of commitments that provide opportunities for the public to enjoy the Midway Museum and the park. The proposed park will bring a wide range of memorials, amenities, and educational opportunities to the site. I am particularly excited about the John Finn Memorial and the Family Homecoming site at the end of the pier.

In addition to places for sitting, picnicking, and active use, swings at the end of the pier, shade structures, and play elements for children, this park will be a true celebration and remembrance of the service and sacrifice that so many American men and women have made to ensure the freedoms that we all enjoy.

I am also thrilled that the Midway has graciously offered to continue to provide free daily admission to Active-Duty Services Members, First Responders, Goldstar families, MCRD Graduates and Families, CASA Advocates, and Accessible Caregivers.



NATHAN FLETCHER

San Diego County Board of Supervisors

The Midway is also committed to continuing funding the “No Child Left Ashore” program for 20 years. This program admits Title 1 schools for free with a reduced-cost lunch, free supplies, and free transportation.

The USS Midway Museum is our living symbol of freedom, and I urge your support of the Coastal Development Application. Please feel free to contact me at Nathan.Fletcher@sdcounty.ca.gov with any questions or comments.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Nathan Fletcher
Supervisor, Fourth District
County of San Diego



Nora Vargas

CHAIRWOMAN

San Diego County Board of Supervisors

February 3, 2023

Melody Lasiter
Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission
California Coastal Commission
San Diego Area
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103
San Diego, CA 92108-4421
SanDiegoCoast@coastal.ca.gov

RE: Port of San Diego Freedom Park - SUPPORT

Dear Ms. Lasiter and Honorable Commissioners,

As Chair of the San Diego County Board of Supervisors, I am writing this letter in support of item Th16c on the upcoming February Commission agenda. The subject is San Diego Unified Port District and USS Midway Museum parking pier conversion to a park.

Freedom Park as it is being called, will be a tremendous resource and gathering space for San Diegans and visitors alike. With our region's rich history of military service, and our continuing support of the hundreds of thousands of veterans and active-duty service members who call San Diego County home, this park will stand as a beacon of freedom and openness on what is now a parking lot.

This park project has been years in the making and I want to applaud the USS Midway and its Foundation for making the extraordinary commitment to not only design the park but also fund its construction; an estimated cost of more than \$50 million.

The project constitutes a contribution to the public realm both physically in the form of the park, and programmatically with a long list of commitments that provide a wide range of opportunities for the public to enjoy the Midway Museum and the park.

In addition to monuments, play structures, and memorial walking paths, the park will serve as a gathering space for picnics, family events, community events, or just a stroll along the water.

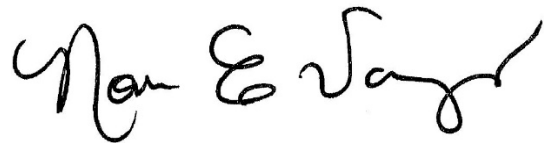
In addition to the park, I'm also pleased that the Midway is committed to continuing its education programs for 2nd-8th graders. Nearly 50,000 students board the Midway every year for educational programs ranging from STEM to Civics, to leadership. The "No Child Left Ashore" program admits Title 1 schools for free with a reduced cost lunch, free supplies, and free transportation. This is important to me as the nearby communities of Barrio Logan and National City lack access to waterfront parks like this for local families and I am glad that the Port of San Diego is providing more access for students and families that might otherwise be challenged to have access to visit such a historical and significant resource.

I am also happy to know that the Midway will continue to offer grants to other non-profits serving the military and first responders in the region. As one of the few non-profits in the country that actually grant funds to other non profits, the Midway is a valued community partner both on board and in the community.

The USS Midway Museum is our living symbol of freedom and I urge your support of the Coastal Development Application.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nora E. Vargas". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Nora" being the most prominent.

NORA VARGAS
Chairwoman, San Diego County Board of Supervisors
Supervisor, First District

GREG AND CHERYL COX
647 Windsor Circle, Chula Vista, CA 91910
Gregcox.ca@gmail.com Cherylcox.cv@gmail.com

February 3, 2023

Ms. Melody Lasiter
Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission
California Coastal Commission, San Diego Area
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103
San Diego, CA 92108-4421
SanDiegoCoast@coastal.ca.gov

Th16c – SD Port and USS Midway
CDP Application No. 6-22-1069
In favor of project

Dear Ms. Lasiter and Honorable Commissioners,

We encourage you to support the Coastal Development permit that would allow the San Diego Unified Port District and USS Midway Museum to convert its pier and vehicle parking lot to a publicly accessible park for residents and visitors. The Midway commits over \$50 million dollars to build Freedom Park and its amenities. The Port will spend more than \$10 million in stimulus funds for structural pile improvements to support the new park. Costs of park maintenance will be shared 50/50 in perpetuity with the Port of San Diego at a minimum of \$100,000 per year to the ship's operating budget.

As former elected officials, we admire and value Coastal Commission staff for its collaboration and diligence in working with Port and USS Midway to bring forward this project to achieve your staff's positive staff recommendation. As longtime local residents, we were here when the USS Midway made its arrival in San Diego, toured the ship, and talked with docents and visitors. As retirees, we look forward to continuing to enjoy the Midway Museum and to see Freedom Park become a reality.

The park will have traditional places for sitting, shade for picnicking and children's play structures. In demonstrating its commitment to the environment, the USS Midway will monitor and maintain the conservation of all 9.1 acres of tidal wetland as long as it owns the property. Plantings will feature California's native plants. The Midway will continue to provide free daily admission for a minimum of 20 years to Active-Duty Service Members, First Responders, Goldstar Families, adult volunteers and their foster children. It is open to promotion for Memorial, Veterans and Pearl Harbor Days and memorial services. Approximately 17,000 new visitors will be admitted free per year. Funding its No Child Left Ashore programs and its Midway Institute for Teachers reflects an emphasis on nurturing an appreciation of history.

The USS Midway Museum's contribution of an estimated \$50 million to this park, its programming commitments, the allocation of \$11.7 million of Port Economic Recovery Program funding for pile repair, and newly available public parking nearby will create an astounding and memorable legacy for San Diego, all of California and the Pacific coast.

We are proud that with your approval of the Coastal Development Application, the USS Midway's presence and the Midway Museum will celebrate our country's history through Freedom Park.

Respectfully,

Greg Cox
Former Member, San Diego County Board of Supervisors
Former Member of the California Coastal Commission
Former Mayor of Chula Vista

Cheryl Cox
Member, Board of Directors, USS Midway Museum
Former Mayor, Chula Vista
Former Member, Chula Vista Elementary
School District Board of Education

February 3, 2023

Melody Lasiter
Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission
California Coastal Commission
San Diego Area
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103
San Diego, CA 92108-4421
SanDiegoCoast@coastal.ca.gov

Dear Ms. Lasiter and Honorable Commissioners,

I am writing in support of item Th16c on the upcoming February Commission agenda. The subject is San Diego Unified Port District and USS Midway Museum pier conversion to park. The Coastal Development permit would allow the USS Midway to convert the pier that is currently used for parking to a park with amenities and 100 public parking spaces (80 standard including 6 EV stalls, 10 ADA spaces, and 10 motorcycles spaces). The package also includes a rich list of programming commitments that would be in place for a minimum of 20 years. The Midway is committing over \$50 million dollars to build and amenitize the park, and the Port will spend more than \$10 million in stimulus funds for structural pile improvements to support the new park. The Port and USS Midway have worked collaboratively and diligently with Coastal Commission staff to put forward this project and the staff recommendation is approval.

The project constitutes a dramatic contribution to the public realm both physically in the form of the park, and programmatically with a long list of commitments that provide a wide range of opportunities for the public to enjoy the Midway Museum and the park.

I am particularly impressed with the Midway's generous offer to:

- Spend an estimated additional \$22.8 million (over and above the \$30 million already committed to build the park) to amenitize the park as per recommendations from Coastal Commission staff. Examples of amenities include a minimum of ten benches, five swings, one large and two smaller shade structures, interactive play structures, and other themed elements similar to those at Tunnel Tops Park in San Francisco.
- Pay for 50% of park maintenance in perpetuity (this is a minimum of \$100,000 per year increase in Midway's operating budget in perpetuity), with the Port of San Diego to pay the other 50%.

- Recruit and train 3-5 additional museum volunteers/docents (AKA Park Ambassadors) who will be available to engage with park guests.
- Pay for construction of an approximately 1,000 square foot-pavilion for a snack concessionaire limited to low-cost offerings on the pier.
- Pay for construction of a public restroom on the pier.
- Commit to annually monitor and maintain all 9.1 acres of Lovett Marsh, resulting in the conservation of 9.1 acres of tidal wetland (even though it is only responsible for 5.8 acres) and to do so as long as it owns the property.

These efforts directly impact the success of this substantial effort.

I am thrilled that the project will include:

- A wide public promenade along the north side of the pier that will connect the east and west ends. I love the pathways and trails throughout the entire park with educational programming elements incorporated.
- Places for sitting, picnic and active use, particularly the five swings at the water-end of the pier, the shade structures and the play elements for children.
- Plantings that emphasize California natives or plant species indigenous to the region, allowing for non-native, non-invasive shade trees.

The USS Midway Museum's contribution of an estimated \$50 million to this park in addition to its programming commitments is nothing short of astounding. That, coupled with both the allocation of \$11.7 million of Port Economic Recovery Program funding for the pile repair, and the newly available public parking nearby make this the perfect set of circumstances to create a lasting legacy for San Diego by approving the creation of Freedom Park.

I urge your support of the Coastal Development Application.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Derek Abbey, Ph.D.
President and CEO
Project Recover



Th16c – SD Port and USS Midway
CDP Application No. 6-22-1069

In favor of project

February 3, 2023

Melody Lasiter
Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission
California Coastal Commission
San Diego Area
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103
San Diego, CA 92108-4421
SanDiegoCoast@coastal.ca.gov

Dear Honorable Commissioners,

I strongly support of item Th16c on the upcoming February Commission agenda. The Coastal Development permit would allow the USS Midway to covert the pier that is currently used for parking to a park with amenities. The package also includes a rich list of programming commitments that would be in place for a minimum of 20 years. The Midway is committing over \$50 million dollars to build and amenitize the park, and the Port will spend more than \$10 million in stimulus funds for structural pile improvements to support the new park. The Port and USS Midway have worked collaboratively and diligently with Coastal Commission staff to put forward this project and the staff recommendation is approval.

The project constitutes a dramatic contribution to the public realm both physically in the form of the park, and programmatically with a long list of commitments that provide a wide range of opportunities for the public to enjoy the Midway Museum and the park.

I am particularly impressed with the Midway's offer to:

- Spend an estimated additional \$22.8 million (over and above the \$30 million already committed to build the park) to amenitize the park as per recommendations from Coastal Commission staff.
- Commit to grant an average of \$500,000 per year to San Diego non-profits for 20 years. The Midway is the only non-profit in the country that gives money to other non-profits.

I am also thrilled that the project will include:

- A wide public promenade along the north side of the pier that will connect the east and west ends. I love the pathways and trails throughout the entire park with educational programming elements incorporated.
- Places for sitting, picnic and active use, particularly the five swings at the water-end of the pier, the shade structures and the play elements for children.

The USS Midway Museum's contribution of an estimated \$50 million to this park in addition to its programming commitments is nothing short of astounding. That, coupled with both the allocation of \$11.7 million of Port Economic Recovery Program funding for the pile repair, and the newly available public parking nearby make this the perfect set of circumstances to create a lasting legacy for San Diego by approving the creation of Freedom Park.

I respectfully urge your support of the Coastal Development Application.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Brad Engel
President
Flagship Cruises & Events

bengel@flagshipsd.com
D: 619.522.6183
T: 619.234.4111 x 100



Miramar National Cemetery Support Foundation

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www.miramarcemetery.org

Th16c – SD Port and USS Midway
CDP Application No. 6-22-1069
In favor of project

February 3, 2023

Melody Lasiter
Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission
California Coastal Commission
San Diego Area
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103
San Diego, CA 92108-4421
Melody.Lasiter@coastal.ca.gov

Dear Ms. Lasiter and Honorable Commissioners,

I am writing in support of item Th16c on the upcoming February Commission agenda. The subject is San Diego Unified Port District and USS Midway Museum pier conversion to park. The Coastal Development permit would allow the USS Midway to convert the pier that is currently used for parking to a park with amenities and 100 public parking spaces (80 standard including 6 EV stalls, 10 ADA spaces, and 10 motorcycles spaces). The package also includes a rich list of programming commitments that would be in place for a minimum of 20 years. The Midway would commit over \$50 million dollars to this project and the Port would spend more than \$10 million in stimulus funds for structural pile improvements to support the new park. The Port and USS Midway have worked collaboratively and diligently with Coastal Commission staff to put forward this project and the staff recommendation is approval.

The project constitutes a dramatic contribution to the public realm both physically in the form of the park, and programmatically with a long list of commitments that provide a wide range of opportunities for the public to enjoy the Midway Museum and the park.

We are particularly impressed with the Midway's offer:

- To commit to continue to provide free daily admission for a minimum of 20 years to the following:
 - i. Active-Duty Service Members
 - ii. Active-Duty First Responders
 - iii. MCRD Graduates & Families [what is Marine Graduate?]

- iv. Goldstar Families
- v. Accessible Caregivers
- vi. CASA Advocates: Adult volunteers and their foster children
- vii. Annual Events offered with Free Admission to the museum for all event attendees (events are advertised through social media, newsletter, website, and paid advertising). The Midway is open to additional promotion via email and media buys around public events, allowing the Port to promote those days/opportunities/events, etc..
- viii. Memorial Day
- ix. Veteran's Day
- x. Pearl Harbor Day
- xi. 9/11 Annual Ceremony
- xii. POW/MIA Ceremony
- xiii. Multi-Cultural Celebration (Midway Birthday)
- xiv. Memorial services
- xv. Military ceremony guests
- xvi. Kids 12 & under in October
- xvii. Kids 5 & under (this one is in perpetuity, not for 20 years)

This equals approximately 17,000 new people per year.

- To pay for 50% of park maintenance in perpetuity (this is a minimum of \$100,000 per year increase in Midway's operating budget in perpetuity), with the Port of San Diego to pay the other 50%.
- To make a 20-year commitment to provide scholarships for three new groups of students to attend the existing overnight "Snooze Cruise" program at a cost of an additional \$40,000 per year. And to expand their outreach to Black, Indigenous, and children of color.
- To commit to take over the Veterans Day Parade oversight and coordination for 20 years starting in 2023. This free event draws 50-60K attendees annually and access to the Midway will be free for the day. The cost over 20 years to the Midway to host and manage will total \$2 million not including lost revenue from ticket sales. For 2023, \$100,000 is budgeted to host and manage the parade for the first year.

The Veterans Museum at Balboa Park has managed the parade for over a decade, although they have struggled due to manpower and funding. Midway has offered to take over this operation and the Veterans Museum has agreed.

- To commit to grant an average of \$500,000 per year to San Diego non-profits for 20 years. The Midway is the only non-profit in the country that gives money to other non-profits. The Midway is willing to commit to \$500,000 per year for the grant program regardless of board member contributions or fundraising efforts. This is a new and significant commitment from the Museum over the next 20 years and will result in \$10 million going directly into the San Diego community.

Additionally, a dedicated page will be added to the Midway's new website highlighting and promoting the opportunity.

We are also thrilled that the project will include:

- Monuments: John Finn Memorial (San Diego native, first Medal of Honor recipient in WWII), Family Homecoming at end of pier, Navy Supply Corp Foundation history of Navy Pier and a flagpole memorial at west end of pier.
- A wide public promenade along the north side of the pier that will connect the east and west ends. I love the pathways and trails throughout the entire park with educational programming elements incorporated.
- Places for sitting, picnic and active use, particularly the five swings at the water-end of the pier, the shade structures and the play elements for children.
- Plantings that emphasize California natives or plant species indigenous to the region, allowing for non-native, non-invasive shade trees.

The USS Midway Museum's commitment of over \$50 million to this park in addition to its programming commitments is nothing short of astounding. That, coupled with both the allocation of \$11.7 million of Port Economic Recovery Program funding for the pile repair, and the newly available public parking nearby make this the perfect set of circumstances to create a lasting legacy for San Diego by approving the creation of Freedom Park.

I urge your support of the Coastal Development Application.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sallay Kim

Sallay Kim
President / CEO
Miramar National Cemetery Support Foundation

cskim@serenityes.com
202.498.5218

February 1, 2023

Melody Lasiter
Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission
California Coastal Commission
San Diego Area
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103
San Diego, CA 92108-4421
SanDiegoCoast@coastal.ca.gov

Dear Honorable Commissioners,

I strongly support of item Th16c on the upcoming February Commission agenda. The Coastal Development permit would allow the USS Midway to convert the pier that is currently used for parking to a park with amenities. The package also includes a rich list of programming commitments that would be in place for a minimum of 20 years. The Midway is committing over \$50 million dollars to build and amenitize the park, and the Port will spend more than \$10 million in stimulus funds for structural pile improvements to support the new park. The Port and USS Midway have worked collaboratively and diligently with Coastal Commission staff to put forward this project and the staff recommendation is approval.

The project constitutes a dramatic contribution to the public realm both physically in the form of the park, and programmatically with a long list of commitments that provide a wide range of opportunities for the public to enjoy the Midway Museum and the park.

I am particularly impressed with the Midway's offer to:

- Spend an estimated additional \$22.8 million (over and above the \$30 million already committed to build the park) to amenitize the park as per recommendations from Coastal Commission staff.
- Commit to grant an average of \$500,000 per year to San Diego non-profits for 20 years. The Midway is the only non-profit in the country that gives money to other non-profits.

I am thrilled that the project will include:

- A wide public promenade along the north side of the pier that will connect the east and west ends. I love the pathways and trails throughout the entire park with educational programming elements incorporated.

- Places for sitting, picnic and active use, particularly the five swings at the water-end of the pier, the shade structures and the play elements for children.

The USS Midway Museum's contribution of an estimated \$50 million to this park in addition to its programming commitments is nothing short of astounding. That, coupled with both the allocation of \$11.7 million of Port Economic Recovery Program funding for the pile repair, and the newly available public parking nearby make this the perfect set of circumstances to create a lasting legacy for San Diego by approving the creation of Freedom Park.

I urge your support of the Coastal Development Application.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Russell McCarthy
V.P. Administration
Continental Maritime of San Diego



January 30, 2023

Melody Lasiter
Coastal Analyst
Melody.Lasiter@coastal.ca.gov

Kanani Leslie
Coastal Program Manager
Kanani.Leslie@coastal.ca.gov

RE: **San Diego Unified Port District/USS Midway Museum Navy Pier Park Redevelopment**
Item Th16c, February 9, 2023

Dear Coastal Commissioners:

Coastal Environmental Rights Foundation (CERF) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the protection of coastal natural resources throughout the State of California, and in particular San Diego County. CERF staff, attorneys, and activists have been engaged in San Diego Bay issues for approximately 25 years (including on behalf of other local environmental organizations).

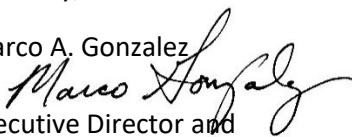
CERF strongly supports staff's recommendation to approve with conditions the application of the San Diego Unified Port District and USS Midway Museum to construct the public park promised to the public when relocation of the USS Midway was permitted more than 20 years ago. While CERF recognizes the planning and funding difficulties faced by the applicants over the past two decades, our perspective at this point is best characterized as "better late than never."

Having tracked the various efforts and considerations along the Embarcadero for some time, we believe the current plan for public amenities at Navy Pier is much better than any of the prior iterations proffered by the applicants. We are particularly encouraged by the following:

- Resolution of longstanding unpermitted development and uses on the pier;
- Enhanced non-vehicular, passive public amenities and access considerations with signage requirements;
- Appropriate sizing of parking facilities and implementation of cost controls;
- Limitations on private events within the bulk of public space on the pier;
- Enhanced mitigation to account for the delays in construction of the park; and,
- Environmental considerations during and after construction (particularly as to stormwater controls).

While a number of CERF activists opposed relocation of the USS Midway in 2001, we recognize the broad support for the museum in the community. At this time, we wholeheartedly support conversion of the Navy Pier into a public park that will effectively transition the public's use between other amenities in the Embarcadero and the USS Midway.

Sincerely,

Marco A. Gonzalez

Executive Director and
General Counsel





San Diego Air & Space Museum
2001 Pan American Plaza
San Diego, CA 92101
P 619.234.8291
F 619.233.4526
sandiegoairandspace.org

Th16c – SD Port and USS Midway
CDP Application No. 6-22-1069
In favor of project

February 2, 2023

Melody Lasiter
Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission
California Coastal Commission
San Diego Area
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103
San Diego, CA 92108-4421
Melody.Lasiter@coastal.ca.gov

Dear Ms. Lasiter and Honorable Commissioners,

I'm writing in support of item Th16c on the upcoming February Commission agenda. The subject is San Diego Unified Port District and USS Midway Museum pier conversion to park. The Coastal Development permit allows the USS Midway to convert the pier that is currently used for parking to a park with amenities and 100 public parking spaces (80 standard including 6 EV stalls, 10 ADA spaces, and 10 motorcycles spaces). The package also includes a rich list of programming commitments to be put in place for a minimum of 20 years. The Midway is committing over \$50 million dollars to this project and the Port would spend more than \$10 million in stimulus funds for structural pile improvements to support the new park. The Port and USS Midway have worked collaboratively and diligently with Coastal Commission staff to put forward this project and the staff recommendation is **approval**.

The project constitutes a dramatic contribution to the public realm both physically in the form of the park, and programmatically with a long list of commitments providing a wide range of opportunities for the public to enjoy the Midway Museum and the park.

I'm particularly impressed with the Midway's offer to spend an estimated additional \$22.8 million (over and above the \$30 million already committed to build the park) to amenitize the park as per recommendations from Coastal Commission staff.

We urge your immediate and unqualified support of the Coastal Development Application.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

James G. Kidrick
President & CEO, San Diego Air & Space Museum

February 2, 2023

Melody Lasiter
Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission
California Coastal Commission
San Diego Area
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103
San Diego, CA 92108-4421
SanDiegoCoast@coastal.ca.gov

Dear Honorable Commissioners,

I respectfully urge you to support item Th16c. Please follow the staff recommendation to approve this transformative project for San Diego's Embarcadero. This Coastal Development Permit would allow Navy Pier to be converted to a park with public parking.

I am thrilled that the project will include:

- A wide public promenade along the north side of the pier that will connect the east and west ends. I love the pathways and trails throughout the entire park with educational programming elements incorporated.
- Places for sitting, picnic and active use, particularly the five swings at the water-end of the pier, the shade structures and the play elements for children.
- Plantings that emphasize California natives or plant species indigenous to the region, allowing for non-native, non-invasive shade trees.
- Signage to invite and welcome public to access the public park.
- Monuments: John Finn Memorial (San Diego native, first Medal of Honor recipient in WWII), Family Homecoming at end of pier, Navy Supply Corp Foundation history of Navy Pier and a flagpole memorial at west end of pier.
- Creation of a mobile phone microsite dedicated to the history of the pier, the Midway, and San Diego Bay. It's great that it will complement the interpretive signage that is being incorporated into the park on the pier and the existing park space in the surrounding area.
- A provision that the park stay open to the general public during park hours for at least 85 percent of the year and that permitted temporary large special

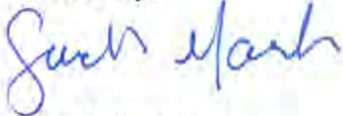
events that limit public access (i.e., exclude the public or require admission for entry) to Freedom Park shall not exceed 15 percent of the year. It's extremely thoughtful that the 15 percent allowance shall be distributed throughout the year and special events may only take place on one side of the park on a single day such that the other side of the park remains open to the public. And that during all programmed events, the promenade on the northern side of Freedom Park, the north park area, restrooms, low-cost concessioner, and parking lot shall be open and accessible to the public at all times (6 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. daily).

The USS Midway Museum's contribution of an estimated \$50 million to this park in addition to its programming commitments is nothing short of astounding. That, coupled with both the allocation of \$11.7 million of Port Economic Recovery Program funding for the pile repair, and the newly available public parking nearby make this the perfect set of circumstances to create a lasting legacy for San Diego by approving the creation of Freedom Park.

I urge your support of the Coastal Development Application.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Sarah Marsh
Dole Fresh Fruit



1050 ROSECRANS ST, # B
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E aslasd@sbcglobal.net
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Programs/Education
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ELISSA URBINA, ASLA

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PHIL ARMSTRONG, ASLA

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
TRACY MORGAN HOLLINGWORTH, CAE

Th16c – SD Port and USS Midway
CDP Application No. 6-22-1069

February 3, 2023

Ms. Melody Lasiter (Melody.Lasiter@coastal.ca.gov, SanDiegoCoast@coastal.ca.gov)
Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission
California Coastal Commission
San Diego Area
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103
San Diego, CA 92108-4421

RE: Support for Coastal Commission February Agenda Item Th 16c – Freedom Park

Dear Ms. Lasiter and Honorable Commissioners:

On behalf of the San Diego Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects, we are writing in support of item Th16c on the upcoming February Coastal Commission agenda.

The subject is San Diego Unified Port District and USS Midway Museum pier conversion to park. The Coastal Development permit would allow the USS Midway to convert the pier that is currently used for parking to a park with amenities and 100 public parking spaces (80 standard including 6 EV stalls, 10 ADA spaces, and 10 motorcycles spaces).

The project package also includes a rich list of programming commitments that would be in place for a minimum of 20 years. The Midway would commit over \$50 million dollars to this project and the Port would spend more than \$10 million in stimulus funds for structural pile improvements to support the new park.

The Port and USS Midway have worked collaboratively and diligently with Coastal Commission staff to put forward this project and the staff recommendation is approval.

The project constitutes a dramatic contribution to the public realm both physically in the form of the park, and programmatically with an extensive list of commitments that provide a wide range of opportunities for the public to enjoy the Midway Museum and the park.

We are impressed with the Midway's offer to:

- Spend an estimated additional \$22.8 million (over and above the \$30 million already committed to build the park) to add amenities to the park as per recommendations from Coastal Commission staff. Examples of amenities include a minimum of ten benches, five swings, one large and two smaller shade structures, interactive play structures, and other themed elements similar to those at Tunnel Tops Park in San Francisco.
- Provide for the creation of a new mobile phone microsite (or similar) dedicated to the history of the pier, the Midway, and San Diego Bay.
- Pay for 50% of park maintenance in perpetuity (this is a minimum of \$100,000 per year increase in Midway's operating budget in perpetuity), with the Port of San Diego to pay the other 50%.
- Recruit and train 3-5 additional museum volunteers/docents (AKA Park Ambassadors) who will be available to engage with park guests.
- Pay for construction of an approximately 1,000 square foot-pavilion for a snack concessionaire limited to low-cost offerings on the pier.
- Pay for construction of a public restroom on the pier.

- Make a 20-year commitment to provide scholarships for three new groups of students to attend the existing overnight “Snooze Cruise” program at a cost of an additional \$40,000 per year. And to expand their outreach to Black, Indigenous, and children of color.
- Commit to continue to provide free daily admission for a minimum of 20 years to the following:
 - i. Active-Duty Service Members
 - ii. Active-Duty First Responders
 - iii. Marine Corps Recruit Depot Graduates & Families
 - iv. Goldstar Families
 - v. Accessible Caregivers
 - vi. CASA Advocates: Adult volunteers and their foster children
 - vii. Annual Events offered with Free Admission to the museum for all event attendees (events are advertised through social media, newsletter, website, and paid advertising). The Midway is open to additional promotion via email and media buys around public events, allowing the Port to promote those days/opportunities/events, etc..
 - viii. Memorial Day
 - ix. Veteran’s Day
 - x. Pearl Harbor Day
 - xi. 9/11 Annual Ceremony
 - xii. POW/MIA Ceremony
 - xiii. Multi-Cultural Celebration (Midway Birthday)
 - xiv. Memorial services
 - xv. Military ceremony guests
 - xvi. Kids 12 & under in October
 - xvii. Kids 5 & under (this one is in perpetuity, not for 20 years)

This equals approximately 17,000 new people per year.

- Commit to fund the “No Child Left Ashore” program for 20 years at an additional cost of approximately \$20,000/year. This program admits Title 1 schools for free with a reduced cost lunch, free supplies, and free transportation.
- Commit to fund and expand Midway Institute for Teachers for 20 years. This will result in approximately 2500 teachers being trained and given classroom materials at a total cost of more than \$10 million to the Midway. 500 of these teachers will be new and included as a result of the commitment to expand the program.
- Commit to provide a new virtual component to field trips that include free access to pre and post “visit” curriculum for teachers for 20 years. The program will reach an additional 10,000 students per year by adding another 350 classrooms.
- Commit to take over the Veterans Day Parade oversight and coordination for 20 years starting in 2023. This free event draws 50-60K attendees annually and access to the Midway will be free for the day. The cost over 20 years to the Midway to host and manage will total \$2 million not including lost revenue from ticket sales. For 2023, \$100,000 is budgeted to host and manage the parade for the first year.

The Veterans Museum at Balboa Park has managed the parade for over a decade, although they have struggled due to manpower and funding. Midway has offered to take over this operation and the Veterans Museum has agreed.

- Commit to grant an average of \$500,000 per year to San Diego non-profits for 20 years. The Midway is the only non-profit in the country that gives money to other non-profits. The Midway is willing to commit to \$500,000 per year for the grant program regardless of board member contributions or fundraising efforts. This is a new and significant commitment from the Museum over the next 20 years and will result in \$10 million going directly into the San Diego community.

Additionally, a dedicated page will be added to the Midway's new website highlighting and promoting the opportunity.

- Commit to annually monitor and maintain all 9.1 acres of Lovett Marsh, resulting in the conservation of 9.1 acres of tidal wetland (even though it is only responsible for 5.8 acres) and to do so as long as it owns the property.

We are also thrilled that the project will include:

- A wide public promenade along the north side of the pier that will connect the east and west ends. We love the pathways and trails throughout the entire park with educational programming elements incorporated.
- Places for sitting, picnic and active use, particularly the five swings at the water-end of the pier, the shade structures and the play elements for children.
- Plantings that emphasize California natives or plant species indigenous to the region, allowing for non-native, non-invasive shade trees.
- Signage to invite and welcome public to access the public park.
- Monuments: John Finn Memorial (San Diego native, first Medal of Honor recipient in WWII), Family Homecoming at end of pier, Navy Supply Corp Foundation history of Navy Pier and a flagpole memorial at west end of pier.
- Creation of a mobile phone microsite (or similar) dedicated to the history of the pier, the Midway, and San Diego Bay. It's great that it will complement the interpretive signage that is being incorporated into the park on the pier and the existing park space in the surrounding area.
- A provision that the park stay open to the general public during park hours for at least 85 percent of the year and that permitted temporary large special events that limit public access (i.e., exclude the public or require admission for entry) to Freedom Park shall not exceed 15 percent of the year. It's extremely thoughtful that the 15 percent allowance shall be distributed throughout the year and special events may only take place on one side of the park on a single day such that the other side of the park remains open to the public. And that during all programmed events, the promenade on the northern side of Freedom Park, the north park area, restrooms, low-cost concessioner, and parking lot shall be open and accessible to the public at all times (6 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. daily).

The USS Midway Museum's commitment of over \$50 million to this park in addition to its programming commitments is nothing short of astounding. That, coupled with both the allocation of \$11.7 million of Port Economic Recovery Program funding for the pile repair, and the newly available public parking nearby make this the perfect set of circumstances to create a lasting legacy for San Diego by approving the creation of Freedom Park.

We urge your support of the Coastal Development Application.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Martin Armstrong

Martin Armstrong, ASLA, President
San Diego Chapter of the American
Landscape Architects

Patricia Ferman

Patricia Ferman, ASLA, Past President
San Diego Chapter of the American Society of
Society of Landscape Architects

CDP

Bob Lawrence <blawrence36@cox.net>

Fri 2/3/2023 2:49 PM

To: SanDiegoCoast@Coastal <SanDiegoCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Melody Lasiter

Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission

California Coastal Commission

San Diego Area

7575 Metropolitan Drive Suite 103

San Diego, CA 92108

Ms. Lasiter and Honorable Commissioners,

I am writing in support of item Th16c on your upcoming meeting agenda. Approval of a coastal development permit would allow the San Diego Unified Port District and the USS Midway Museum to convert what currently is a non usable building and parking lot into a transformative public park with access to views of the bay.

The USS Midway Museum has committed over \$50 million dollars to create what I believe will be the crown jewel on the Embarcadero for the public. The Port has also committed spending more than \$10 million in structural improvements beneath the pier to support the park.

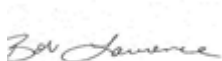
This endeavor has taken years of negotiations between Midway, the Port and Coastal Commission staff to get to this point. Among the agreements between parties is a 50-50 commitment between Midway and the Port District to maintain the new park in perpetuity.

Public amenities will include wide promenades, a concessionaire, a restroom, and park benches enhanced by shade structures and native plants and trees for additional shade. There will also be a statue of John Finn, a San Diego resident awarded the first Medal of Honor in World War Two as well as a flag pole and signage at the west end of the project commemorating the history of the former Navy pier and USS Midway.

I certainly encourage your support for a coastal development permit so that this transformative project for the public can get underway.

Sincerely,

Bob Lawrence



Fmr: SSGT USAF

Fmr: Military reporter ABC 10 San Diego

Current: Midway Board member

Port of San Diego
Big Bay Boom
An Independence Day Spectacular



February 3, 2023

Melody Lasiter

Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission

California Coastal Commission

San Diego Area

7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103

San Diego, CA 92108-4421

SanDiegoCoast@coastal.ca.gov

Dear Honorable Commissioners,

The MIDWAY AIRCRAFT MUSEUM is a very valuable partner of the Port of San Diego Big Bay Boom July 4th Fireworks Show. With over 300,000 people viewing this event around the bay, the Midway holds some 2-3,000 viewers on its flight deck. They enjoy a perfect view of the show which attracts over 100,000 people from outside San Diego who stay an average of 4.8 days. They need to park in the area so enjoying the park is important but parking is also key.

I respectfully urge you to support item Th16c. Please follow the staff recommendation to approve this transformative project for San Diego's Embarcadero. This Coastal Development Permit would allow Navy Pier to be converted to a park with public parking.

I am thrilled that the project will include:

- A wide public promenade along the north side of the pier that will connect the east and west ends. I love the pathways and trails throughout the entire park with educational programming elements incorporated.
- Places for sitting, picnic and active use, particularly the five swings at the water-end of the pier, the shade structures and the play elements for children.
- Plantings that emphasize California natives or plant species indigenous to the region, allowing for non-native, non-invasive shade trees.

Page Two
Coastal Commission/Midway Letter
February 3, 2023

- Signage to invite and welcome public to access the public park.
- Monuments: John Finn Memorial (San Diego native, first Medal of Honor recipient in WWII), Family Homecoming at end of pier, Navy Supply Corp Foundation history of Navy Pier and a flagpole memorial at west end of pier.
- Creation of a mobile phone microsite dedicated to the history of the pier, the Midway, and San Diego Bay. It's great that it will complement the interpretive signage that is being incorporated into the park on the pier and the existing park space in the surrounding area.
- A provision that the park stay open to the general public during park hours for at least 85 percent of the year and that permitted temporary large special events that limit public access (i.e., exclude the public or require admission for entry) to Freedom Park shall not exceed 15 percent of the year. It's extremely thoughtful that the 15 percent allowance shall be distributed throughout the year and special events may only take place on one side of the park on a single day such that the other side of the park remains open to the public. And that during all programmed events, the promenade on the northern side of Freedom Park, the north park area, restrooms, low-cost concessioner, and parking lot shall be open and accessible to the public at all times (6 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. daily).

The USS Midway Museum's contribution of an estimated \$50 million to this park in addition to its programming commitments is nothing short of astounding. That, coupled with both the allocation of \$11.7 million of Port Economic Recovery Program funding for the pile repair, and the newly available public parking nearby make this the perfect set of circumstances to create a lasting legacy for San Diego by approving the creation of Freedom Park.

I urge your support of the Coastal Development Application.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sandy Purdon

H.P. "Sandy" Purdon, Executive Producer

Th16c – SD Port and USS Midway
CDP Application No. 6-22-1069
In favor of project

February 2, 2023

Melody Lasiter
Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission
California Coastal Commission
San Diego Area
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103
San Diego, CA 92108-4421
Melody.Lasiter@coastal.ca.gov

Dear Ms. Lasiter and Honorable Commissioners,

I am writing in support of item Th16c on the upcoming February Commission agenda. The subject is San Diego Unified Port District and USS Midway Museum pier conversion to park.

Urban parks represent a critical asset for cities and regions as they seek to address climate change, equity of opportunity, and public health crises. As the [City Parks Alliance](#) states, “parks are now recognized as powerful tools for urban communities and local economies” by promoting physical and mental health, providing jobs and fueling the local economy, creating ecosystem services and carbon sequestration, and most importantly, providing a means for cities to advance their commitment to equity.

The Coastal Development permit would allow the USS Midway to covert the pier that is currently used for parking to a park with amenities and 100 public parking spaces (80 standard including 6 EV stalls, 10 ADA spaces, and 10 motorcycles spaces). The package also includes a rich list of programming commitments that would be in place for a minimum of 20 years. The Midway would commit over \$50 million dollars to this project and the Port would spend more than \$10 million in stimulus funds for structural pile improvements to support the new park. The Port and USS Midway have worked collaboratively and diligently with Coastal Commission staff to put forward this project and the staff recommendation is approval.

**FOREVER
BALBOA
PARK**

1549 El Prado, Suite 1
San Diego, CA 92101
619.331.1920
info@balboapark.org

The project constitutes a dramatic contribution to the public realm both physically in the form of the park, and programmatically with a long list of commitments that provide a wide range of opportunities for the public to enjoy the Midway Museum and the park.

I am particularly impressed with the Midway's offer to commit to grant an average of \$500,000 per year to San Diego non-profits for 20 years. The Midway is the only non-profit in the country that gives money to other non-profits. The Midway is willing to commit to \$500,000 per year for the grant program regardless of board member contributions or fundraising efforts. This is a new and significant commitment from the Museum over the next 20 years and will result in \$10 million going directly into the San Diego community.

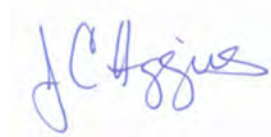
I am delighted that the project will include a provision that the park stay open to the general public during park hours for at least 85 percent of the year and that permitted temporary large special events that limit public access (i.e., exclude the public or require admission for entry) to Freedom Park shall not exceed 15 percent of the year. It's extremely thoughtful that the 15 percent allowance shall be distributed throughout the year and special events may only take place on one side of the park on a single day such that the other side of the park remains open to the public. And that during all programmed events, the promenade on the northern side of Freedom Park, the north park area, restrooms, low-cost concessioner, and parking lot shall be open and accessible to the public at all times (6 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. daily).

The USS Midway Museum's commitment of over \$50 million to this park in addition to its programming commitments is honorable. That, coupled with both the allocation of \$11.7 million of Port Economic Recovery Program funding for the pile repair, and the newly available public parking nearby make this the perfect set of circumstances to create a lasting legacy for San Diego by approving the creation of Freedom Park.

I urge your support of the Coastal Development Application.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Jacqueline C. Higgins, Vice President of Planning
Forever Balboa Park

February 3, 2023

Melody Lasiter
Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission
California Coastal Commission
San Diego Area
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103
San Diego, CA 92108-4421
SanDiegoCoast@coastal.ca.gov

Dear Ms. Lasiter and Honorable Commissioners,

I am writing to wholeheartedly support item Th16c on the upcoming February Commission agenda. The subject is San Diego Unified Port District and USS Midway Museum pier conversion to park.

It is imperative to ensure the Coastal Development permit is approved allowing the USS Midway Museum to convert the pier that is currently used for parking to a park with amenities and 100 public parking spaces (80 standard including 6 EV stalls, 10 ADA spaces, and 10 motorcycles spaces). The overall package provides such an immense list of improvements and programming commitments and opportunities that would be in place for a minimum of 20 years.

The Midway has always been generous in supporting the San Diego and surrounding communities. For this project, it is a generous \$50 million dollars to build and amenitize the park from the Midway coupled by the Port's willingness to spend more than \$10 million in stimulus funds for structural pile improvements to support the new park. The Port and USS Midway have worked collaboratively and diligently with Coastal Commission staff to put forward this project and the staff recommendation is approval. This is a noble effort on civic and community collaboration which will improve our downtown landscape and amenities for locals and visitors.

I am grateful for the USS Midway Museum's comprehensive offer to provide generous financial support a variety of amenities to the park including a pavilion, restrooms, assist in funding park maintenance, and the ambiance of the area. The provision of trained volunteers/docents to interact with visitors, generous scholarships, ongoing commitment to our military community, veterans and dependants demonstrates the depth of the ongoing commitment of the Midway to our region. The continuous support of high quality education programs for K-12 virtually and onsite and professional development of teachers further illustrates the dedication to this project.

I am excited that the project will include a wonderful public promenade, inviting family-focused areas for gathering, and prominent memorials to those who have served in a natural landscape in a beautiful and memorable setting.

As mentioned, the USS Midway Museum's contribution of an estimated \$50 million to this park in addition to its programming commitments is nothing short of an astounding commitment by the Midways, its boards and hundreds of thousands of supporters. That, coupled with both the allocation of \$11.7 million of Port Economic Recovery Program funding for the pile repair, and the newly available public parking nearby make this the perfect set of circumstances to create a lasting legacy for San Diego by approving the creation of Freedom Park.

As a local educational leader and an active community volunteer, I have supported the USS Midway Museum for more than a decade. I have seen the valuable contributions the Midways has provided to our schools, our teachers, the military community, our citizens, and our visitors. The Midway is a hallmark in the San Diego area and I urge your support of the Coastal Development Application.

I appreciate your consideration and show of support.

Sincerely,

Dr. Nancy Rohland-Heinrich

EVP, National University
San Diego Community Leader
760-484-146
nrohland@nu.edu

Th16c – SD Port and USS Midway
CDP Application No. 6-22-1069
In favor of project

February 3, 2023

Melody Lasiter
Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission
California Coastal Commission
San Diego Area
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103
San Diego, CA 92108-4421
SanDiegoCoast@coastal.ca.gov

Dear Ms. Lasiter and Honorable Commissioners,

I am writing in support of item Th16c on the upcoming February Commission agenda. The subject is San Diego Unified Port District and USS Midway Museum pier conversion to park. The Coastal Development permit would allow the USS Midway to convert the pier that is currently used for parking to a park with amenities and 100 public parking spaces (80 standard including 6 EV stalls, 10 ADA spaces, and 10 motorcycles spaces). The package also includes a rich list of programming commitments that would be in place for a minimum of 20 years. The Midway is committing over \$50 million dollars to build and amenitize the park, and the Port will spend more than \$10 million in stimulus funds for structural pile improvements to support the new park. The Port and USS Midway have worked collaboratively and diligently with Coastal Commission staff to put forward this project and the staff recommendation is approval.

As a Marine who spent 22 years on active duty, my network extends around the world- I hear the awe when hearing or speaking about this wonderful project. This project constitutes a dramatic contribution to the public and honors those who serve and have served our county. This project provides a wide range of opportunities for the public to enjoy the Midway Museum, the park, and San Diego's waterfront.

What often fails to be accounted for in these types of projects is the maintenance and upkeep. I am particularly impressed with the Midway's offer to support the maintenance and future operation for the park. Not only will the USS Midway spend an estimated additional \$22.8 million (over and above the \$30 million already committed to build the park), it will pay for 50% of park maintenance in perpetuity (this is a minimum of \$100,000 per year increase in Midway's operating budget in perpetuity), with the Port of San Diego to pay the other 50%. This ensures that this park will be enjoyed by generations to come.

As a retired Marine, I look for details to honor those I have served with and those that continue to serve. I am especially impressed that the project has paid attention

to today's concerns and desires to include a wide public promenade along the north side of the pier that will connect the east and west ends with educational programming elements incorporated and places for sitting, picnic and active use. These areas are highlighted by plantings that emphasize California natives or plant species indigenous to the region.

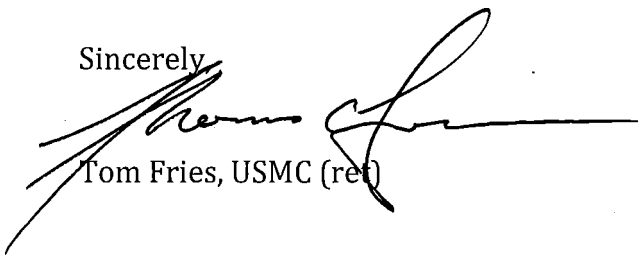
The USS Midway Museum's contribution of an estimated \$50 million to this park in addition to its programming commitments is nothing short of astounding. That, coupled with both the allocation of \$11.7 million of Port Economic Recovery Program funding for the pile repair, and the newly available public parking nearby make this the perfect set of circumstances to create a lasting legacy for San Diego by approving the creation of Freedom Park.

San Diego will be proud of its Freedom Park!

I urge your support of the Coastal Development Application.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely



Tom Fries, USMC (ret)

February 3, 2023

Melody Lasiter
Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission
California Coastal Commission
San Diego Area
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103
San Diego, CA 92108-4421
Melody.Lasiter@coastal.ca.gov

Dear Ms. Lasiter and Honorable Commissioners,

We are writing in support of item Th16c on the upcoming February Commission agenda. The subject is San Diego Unified Port District and USS Midway Museum pier conversion to park. The Coastal Development permit would allow the USS Midway to convert the pier that is currently used for parking to a park with amenities and 100 public parking spaces (80 standard including 6 EV stalls, 10 ADA spaces, and 10 motorcycles spaces). The package also includes a rich list of programming commitments that would be in place for a minimum of 20 years. The Midway would commit over \$50 million dollars to this project and the Port would spend more than \$10 million in stimulus funds for structural pile improvements to support the new park. The Port and USS Midway have worked collaboratively and diligently with Coastal Commission staff to put forward this project and the staff recommendation is approval.

The project constitutes a dramatic contribution to the public realm both physically in the form of the park, and programmatically with a long list of commitments that provide a wide range of opportunities for the public to enjoy the Midway Museum and the park.

We are particularly impressed with the Midway's offer to:

Commit to continue to provide free daily admission for a minimum of 20 years to the following:

1. Active-Duty Service Members
2. Active-Duty First Responders
3. MCRD Graduates & Families
4. Goldstar Families
5. Accessible Caregivers
6. CASA Advocates: Adult volunteers and their foster children
7. Annual Events offered with Free Admission to the museum for all event attendees (events are advertised through social media, newsletter, website, and paid advertising). The Midway is open to additional promotion via email and

media buys around public events, allowing the Port to promote those days/opportunities/events, etc..

8. Memorial Day
9. Veteran's Day
10. Pearl Harbor Day
11. 9/11 Annual Ceremony
12. POW/MIA Ceremony
13. Multi-Cultural Celebration (Midway Birthday)
14. Memorial services
15. Military ceremony guests
16. Kids 12 & under in October
17. Kids 5 & under (this one is in perpetuity, not for 20 years)

This equals approximately 17,000 new people per year.

We are thrilled that the project will include:

- A wide public promenade along the north side of the pier that will connect the east and west ends. I love the pathways and trails throughout the entire park with educational programming elements incorporated.
- Monuments: John Finn Memorial (San Diego native, first Medal of Honor recipient in WWII), Family Homecoming at end of pier, Navy Supply Corp Foundation history of Navy Pier and a flagpole memorial at west end of pier.
- A provision that the park stay open to the general public during park hours for at least 85 percent of the year and that permitted temporary large special events that limit public access (i.e., exclude the public or require admission for entry) to Freedom Park shall not exceed 15 percent of the year. It's extremely thoughtful that the 15 percent allowance shall be distributed throughout the year and special events may only take place on one side of the park on a single day such that the other side of the park remains open to the public. And that during all programmed events, the promenade on the northern side of Freedom Park, the north park area, restrooms, low-cost concessioner, and parking lot shall be open and accessible to the public at all times (6 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. daily).

The USS Midway Museum's commitment of over \$50 million to this park in addition to its programming commitments is nothing short of astounding. That, coupled with both the allocation of \$11.7 million of Port Economic Recovery Program funding for the pile repair, and the newly available public parking nearby make this the perfect set of circumstances to create a lasting legacy for San Diego by approving the creation of Freedom Park.

We urge your support of the Coastal Development Application.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Charles Pretto
District Governor 2022-23
Rotary District 5340

Donald R Fipps, LTC (Ret) USA
Rotary District Governor 2023-24
Rotary District 5340

February 3, 2023

Melody Lasiter
Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission
California Coastal Commission
San Diego Area
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103
San Diego, CA 92108-4421
SanDiegoCoast@coastal.ca.gov

Dear Ms. Lasiter and Honorable Commissioners,

I am writing in support of item Th16c on the upcoming February Commission agenda. As Chair of the USS Midway's Education Committee and member of the Board, I couldn't be more excited about Freedom Park.

This park has been years in the making and the vision has only grown over the past few years that I've been on the Board. When complete, Freedom Park will embody San Diego and be a dedication to the brave men and women from across our country who have sacrificed so much for the freedoms we hold so dear.

I'm thrilled that we at the Midway have committed to build this park and share in the maintenance of it. While it is an enormous financial lift to build a park that is more than just green space, I am excited for the monuments and play structures and most excited about the built in educational opportunities for the thousands of school children that we bring aboard every year.

School children from around the country will be able to learn not just the Midway's rich history but that of our neighbors, family, and friends who bravely served. And, in addition to being able to soak in the depth and breadth of the USS Midway, visitors to the park will be treated with incredible views of the bay, current naval ships, and our beautiful downtown skyline.

The project will forever change the landscape of the embarcadero and the public realm. In addition to the park, I'm pleased that we are continuing our commitment to offer free admission to Active-Duty Services Members, First Responders, Goldstar families, MCRD Graduates and Families, CASA Advocates, and Accessible Caregivers.

I'm particularly proud that we are continuing funding for the "No Child Left Ashore" program for 20 years. This program admits Title 1 schools for free with a reduced cost lunch, free supplies, and free transportation, and is just one piece of our incredible education department that educates teachers and students alike onboard and online.

The Midway was actually one of the first places locally to quickly move to online education during Covid. We did this despite not being able to open the museum and sell tickets because we knew that parents, students, and teachers were struggling for meaningful content while schools were shut down. Education has always been at the forefront of what we do at the Midway and I'm thrilled that we are adding the dynamic features of the park to our educational offerings.

The USS Midway Museum is our country's living symbol of freedom and I urge your support of the Coastal Development Application.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Maddy Kilkenny

February 3, 2023
Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission
California Coastal Commission
San Diego Area
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103
San Diego, CA 92108-4421
SanDiegoCoast@coastal.ca.gov

Dear Honorable Commissioners,

I strongly support of item Th16c on the upcoming February Commission agenda. The Coastal Development permit would allow the USS Midway to convert the pier that is currently used for parking to a park with amenities. The package also includes a rich list of programming commitments that would be in place for a minimum of 20 years. The Midway is committing over \$50 million dollars to build and amenitize the park, and the Port will spend more than \$10 million in stimulus funds for structural pile improvements to support the new park. The Port and USS Midway have worked collaboratively and diligently with Coastal Commission staff to put forward this project and the staff recommendation is approval.

The project constitutes a dramatic contribution to the public realm both physically in the form of the park, and programmatically with a long list of commitments that provide a wide range of opportunities for the public to enjoy the Midway Museum and the park.

I am particularly impressed with the Midway's offer to:

- Spend an estimated additional \$22.8 million (over and above the \$30 million already committed to build the park) to amenitize the park as per recommendations from Coastal Commission staff.
- Commit to grant an average of \$500,000 per year to San Diego non-profits for 20 years. The Midway is the only non-profit in the country that gives money to other non-profits.

I am thrilled that the project will include:

- A wide public promenade along the north side of the pier that will connect the east and west ends. I love the pathways and trails throughout the entire park with educational programming elements incorporated.

- Places for sitting, picnic and active use, particularly the five swings at the water-end of the pier, the shade structures and the play elements for children.

The USS Midway Museum's contribution of an estimated \$50 million to this park in addition to its programming commitments is nothing short of astounding. That, coupled with both the allocation of \$11.7 million of Port Economic Recovery Program funding for the pile repair, and the newly available public parking nearby make this the perfect set of circumstances to create a lasting legacy for San Diego by approving the creation of Freedom Park.

I urge your support of the Coastal Development Application.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Nicole Madcour-Masri

Dual General Manager

Bayfront Marriott

Residence Inn and Springhill Suites

619-831-0227

Nicole.masri@marriott.com



February 2, 2023

Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission
California Coastal Commission
San Diego Area
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103
San Diego, CA 92108-4421
SanDiegoCoast@coastal.ca.gov

Chair Brownsey and Honorable Members of the Commission,

I am writing to urge you to support item Th16c on Thursday's Commission agenda. The project will result in the conversion of Navy Pier to a park. I represent the Maritime Museum of San Diego and support this project for its significant benefits to the waterfront and the region and on behalf of my institution, which is both a close neighbor to the USS Midway on the San Diego waterfront and as an allied cultural institution shares a similar mission to present our rich maritime and naval heritage for public benefit.

The project constitutes a dramatic contribution to the public realm both physically in the form of the park, and programmatically with a long list of commitments that provide a wide range of opportunities for the public to enjoy the Midway Museum and the new park.

The Midway is committing over \$50 million dollars to build and amenetize the park, and the Port will spend more than \$10 million in stimulus funds for structural pile improvements to support the new park. The Port and USS Midway have worked collaboratively and diligently with Coastal Commission staff to put forward this project and the staff recommendation is approval.

Please vote yes and create a lasting legacy for San Diego by approving the creation of Freedom Park. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Raymond Ashley, PhD, KCI
President and CEO, Maritime Museum of San Diego

OFFICERS

John Laun, Chairman
SAN DIEGO YACHT CLUB
Sarah Marsh, Vice Chairwoman
DOLE FRESH FRUIT CO.
Sharon Bernie-Cloward, President
SAN DIEGO WORKING WATERFRONT
Sophie Silvestri, Secretary
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STAFF

Chelsea Bernie
SPECIAL PROJECTS DIRECTOR
Corchelle E. Worsham
DIRECTOR, OPERATIONS



Th16c – SD Port and USS Midway
CDP Application No. 6-22-1069

In favor of project

February 3, 2023

Melody Lasiter
Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission
California Coastal Commission
San Diego Area
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103
San Diego, CA 92108-4421
SanDiegoCoast@coastal.ca.gov

SUBJ: San Diego Working Waterfront Letter in support of USS Midway Item
Th16c

Honorable Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission,

The San Diego Working Waterfront are the waterfront businesses and workers dedicated to the economic and environmental vitality of the Port Tidelands. We are writing to respectfully urge you to support Item Th16c, the joint application by the San Diego Unified Port District and the USS Midway Museum to convert Navy Pier to a park. The Port and USS Midway have worked collaboratively and diligently with Coastal Commission staff to put forward this project and the staff recommendation is approval.

Although converting Navy Pier to a park was established as a planning goal in 2001, how a park was going to get built and who was going to pay for it was never clear. Furthermore, if parking was going to be relocated off the pier to accommodate a park, nearby parking had to be created because none existed. To further complicate things, it was determined that the structural piles below the pier had to be repaired as a prerequisite to tearing down the head house and building the park and the cost estimate was approximately \$15 million. All of these factors and others stood between the idea of building a park and making it a reality.

Thankfully, and much to the delight of San Diegans and visitors, the USS Midway has become a recognized visitor-serving destination and beloved community resource. This has allowed it to save money from ticket sales and attract philanthropic donors. Now, an ideal set of circumstances has arisen: the Port has received stimulus funds to pay for a majority of the pile repair work; new development happening in the area has resulted in the construction of adequate nearby public parking; and the USS Midway has agreed to commit to spend approximately \$50 million of its own money to build the park. In addition, the USS Midway has also agreed to commit to pay for and implement a long list of public programs for a minimum of 20 years.

It's really remarkable and due in no small part to the leadership of the current President of the USS Midway, Mac McLaughlin who will retire next month. It is also due to the commitment of your staff and Executive Director (who although recently retired helped to shepherd this along), and the leadership of the Port President, Joe Stuyvesant.

Let's make this remarkable gift to San Diego part of Mac and Jack's legacy. Please approve this transformative project for San Diego's Embarcadero. Please support this Coastal Development Application.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



John Laun
Chairman



Sharon Cloward
President

3 February 2023

Melody Lasiter
Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission
California Coastal Commission
San Diego Area
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103
San Diego, CA 92108-4421

Dear Ms. Lasiter and Honorable Commissioners,

Greetings from San Diego State University. I am writing on behalf of the SDSU Center for War and Society, which I direct, and offer my wholehearted support for the USS Midway Museum's proposal to build Freedom Park. As a military veteran with over two decades of service in the US Army, I am confident this park would be a fitting testament to those who have served in our nation's armed forces.

I also have the distinct honor of holding the USS Midway Chair in Modern U.S. Military History San Diego State University and I currently direct a major center at SDSU that concentrates on the relationships between war and society. Our center not only examines how societies go to war and are shaped by war, but also how they remember and consider war through history, memorialization, and memory.

Thus, from my perspective Freedom Park would not only demonstrate this fine city's gratitude to those who have served, but also can function as an exceptional site for teaching future generations about the sacrifices offered to maintain our nation's freedom and security. Our center has a close and important educational relationship with the USS Midway Museum and I am confident the creation of this park would only enhance the learning experience of our students.

In many ways, this park is an investment in our collective future. Not only have I held public events on the USS Midway that inform citizens on our nation's martial past, but I have participated in teacher workshops aboard that are some of the most professionally rewarding seminars I have had the privilege in which to participate. I am certain that Freedom Park would only reinforce and improve upon these developmental experiences in an incredibly positive way.

Moreover, since arriving to SDSU in 2020, I have had the pleasure of working closely with the Midway team. They are, to a person, a phenomenally gifted group of seasoned professionals whose dedication to excellence is unmatched. This organization embraces the ideals of selfless service and a commitment to our nation's finest ideals

like few others with which I have worked. I am confident they would help steward this project in the most responsible manner possible and provide the leadership necessary to ensure its success.

To me, Freedom Park has the capacity to strike a sound balance between the responsibilities to honoring our past and to our collective roles in the intellectual development of our nation's future generations.

Finally, having taught history at the United States Military Academy at West Point, I understand the immense value of creating public spaces which become national treasures. Freedom Park has the potential to become such a space. I know of few other cities in our nation better suited to house this community-based grounds.

I unhesitatingly offer my support of item Th16c on the upcoming February Commission agenda.

Freedom Park has all the requisite qualities and more, so much more, to be an extremely valuable addition to America's Finest City.

If you have any questions or if I can offer any additional support, please do not hesitate to contact me at the below address or at gdaddis@sdsu.edu.

Sincerely,

Gregory A. Daddis
Professor of History
USS Midway Chair in Modern U.S. Military History
San Diego State University
5500 Campanile Drive, AL528
San Diego, CA 92182-6050

February 3, 2023

Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission
California Coastal Commission
San Diego Area
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103
San Diego, CA 92108-4421
SanDiegoCoast@coastal.ca.gov

Chair Brownsey and Honorable Members of the Commission,

I am a founding Board member of the San Diego Working Waterfront Association and have been actively involved with Port projects for over 40 years.

I am writing in support of item Th16c. The subject is San Diego Unified Port District and USS Midway Museum pier conversion to park. The Coastal Development permit would allow the USS Midway to convert the pier that is currently used for parking to a park with amenities and 100 public parking spaces. The package also includes a rich list of programming commitments that would be in place for a minimum of 20 years.

I am particularly impressed with the Midway's offer to:

- Commit to grant an average of \$500,000 per year to San Diego non-profits for 20 years. The Midway is one of the few non-profits in the country that actually grants funds to other non-profits. The Midway is willing to commit to \$500,000 per year for the grant program regardless of board member contributions or fundraising efforts. This is a new and significant commitment from the Museum over the next 20 years and will result in \$10 million going directly into the San Diego community.

Additionally, a dedicated page will be added to the Midway's new website highlighting and promoting the opportunity.

- Commit to annually monitor and maintain all 9.1 acres of Lovett Marsh, resulting in the conservation of 9.1 acres of tidal wetland (even though it is only responsible for 5.8 acres) and to do so as long as it owns the property.

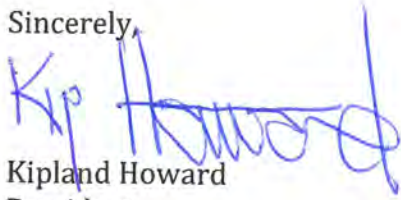
The USS Midway Museum's contribution of an estimated \$50 million to this park in addition to its programming commitments is nothing short of astounding. That, coupled with both the allocation of \$11.7 million of Port Economic Recovery Program funding for the pile repair, and the newly available public parking nearby

make this the perfect set of circumstances to create a lasting legacy for San Diego by approving the creation of Freedom Park.

I urge your support of the Coastal Development Application item Th16c.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,



Kipland Howard
President

Kipland Howard
Allegis Development Services, Inc.
427 C Street, Suite #316
San Diego, CA 92101
619-238-5466 t
619-232-0703 f
kiplandh@allegisdevelopment.com
www.allegisdevelopment.com

Coastal Development Application No. 6-22-1069

Ted Martinez Jr <tmartinezjr@sdsu.edu>

Fri 2/3/2023 12:21 PM

To: SanDiegoCoast@Coastal <SanDiegoCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Cc: Mac McLaughlin <mmclaughlin@midway.org>; Maddy Kilkenny <maddy@intesacom.com>

February 3, 2023

Melody Lasiter

Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission

California Coastal Commission

San Diego Area

7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103

San Diego, CA 92108-4421

SanDiegoCoast@coastal.ca.gov

Dear Ms. Lasiter and Honorable Commissioners,

As a member of the USS Midway Museum Board of Directors and a resident in the San Diego marina area, I am writing in support of item Th16c on the upcoming February Commission agenda. The subject is San Diego Unified Port District and USS Midway Museum pier conversion to park. The Coastal Development permit would allow the USS Midway to convert the pier that is currently used for parking to a park with amenities and 100 public parking spaces (80 standard including 6 EV stalls, 10 ADA spaces, and 10 motorcycles spaces). The package also includes a rich list of programming commitments that would be in place for a minimum of 20 years. The Midway is committing over \$50 million dollars to build and amenitize the park, and the Port will spend more than \$10 million in stimulus funds for structural pile improvements to support the new park. The Port and USS Midway have worked collaboratively and diligently with Coastal Commission staff to put forward this project and the staff recommendation is approval.

The project constitutes a dramatic contribution to the public realm both physically in the form of the park, and programmatically with a long list of commitments that provide a wide range of opportunities for the public to enjoy the Midway Museum and the park.

I am particularly impressed with the Midway's offer to:

- Spend an estimated additional \$22.8 million (over and above the \$30 million already committed to build the park) to amenitize the park as per recommendations from Coastal Commission staff. Examples of amenities include a minimum of ten benches, five swings, one large and two smaller shade structures, interactive play structures, and other themed elements similar to those at Tunnel Tops Park in San Francisco.
- Pay for construction of an approximately 1,000 square foot-pavilion for a snack concessionaire limited to low-cost offerings on the pier.
- Make a 20-year commitment to provide scholarships for three new groups of students to attend the existing overnight "Snooze Cruise" program at a cost of an additional \$40,000 per year. And to expand their outreach to Black, Indigenous, and children of color.

- Commit to continue to provide free daily admission for a minimum of 20 years to the following:
 - i. Active-Duty Service Members
 - ii. Active-Duty First Responders
 - iii. MCRD Graduates & Families [what is Marine Graduate?]
 - iv. Goldstar Families
 - v. Accessible Caregivers
 - vi. CASA Advocates: Adult volunteers and their foster children
 - vii. Annual Events offered with Free Admission to the museum for all event attendees (events are advertised through social media, newsletter, website, and paid advertising). The Midway is open to additional promotion via email and media buys around public events, allowing the Port to promote those days/opportunities/events, etc..
 - viii. Memorial Day
 - ix. Veteran's Day
 - x. Pearl Harbor Day
 - xi. 9/11 Annual Ceremony
 - xii. POW/MIA Ceremony
 - xiii. Multi-Cultural Celebration (Midway Birthday)
 - xiv. Memorial services
 - xv. Military ceremony guests
 - xvi. Kids 12 & under in October
 - xvii. Kids 5 & under (this one is in perpetuity, not for 20 years)

As a result of new days, this includes approximately 17,000 new people being admitted free per year.

- Commit to fund the "No Child Left Ashore" program for 20 years at an additional cost of approximately \$20,000/year. This program admits Title 1 schools for free with a reduced cost lunch, free supplies, and free transportation.
- Commit to fund and expand Midway Institute for Teachers for 20 years. This will result in approximately 2500 teachers being trained and given classroom materials at a total cost of more than \$10 million to the Midway. 500 of these teachers will be new and included as a result of the commitment to expand the program.
- Commit to provide a new virtual component to field trips that include free access to pre and post "visit" curriculum for teachers for 20 years. The program will reach an additional 10,000 students per year by adding another 350 classrooms.
- Commit to grant an average of \$500,000 per year to San Diego non-profits for 20 years. The Midway is one of the few non-profits in the country that actually grants funds to other non-profits. The Midway is willing to commit to \$500,000 per year for the grant program regardless of board member contributions or fundraising efforts. This is a new and significant commitment from the Museum over the next 20 years and will result in \$10 million going directly into the San Diego community.

Additionally, a dedicated page will be added to the Midway's new website highlighting and promoting the opportunity.

I am thrilled that the project will include:

- A wide public promenade along the north side of the pier that will connect the east and west ends. I love the pathways and trails throughout the entire park with educational programming elements incorporated.
- Places for sitting, picnic and active use, particularly the five swings at the water-end of the pier, the shade structures and the play elements for children.
- Plantings that emphasize California natives or plant species indigenous to the region, allowing for non-native, non-invasive shade trees.
- A provision that the park stay open to the general public during park hours for at least 85 percent of the year and that permitted temporary large special events that limit public access (i.e., exclude the public or require admission for entry) to Freedom Park shall not exceed 15 percent of the year. It's extremely thoughtful that the 15 percent allowance shall be distributed throughout the year and special events may only take place on one side of the park on a single day such that the other side of the park remains open to the public. And that during all programmed events, the promenade on the northern side of Freedom Park, the north park area, restrooms, low-cost concessioner, and parking lot shall be open and accessible to the public at all times (6 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. daily).

The USS Midway Museum's contribution of an estimated \$50 million to this park in addition to its programming commitments is nothing short of astounding. That, coupled with both the allocation of \$11.7 million of Port Economic Recovery Program funding for the pile repair, and the newly available public parking nearby make this the perfect set of circumstances to create a lasting legacy for San Diego by approving the creation of Freedom Park.

I urge your support of the Coastal Development Application.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ted Martinez, Jr., PhD

The Dr. Ted Martinez, Jr. NCCHC Leadership Fellows Program

San Diego State University

San Diego, CA 92182-1127

tmartinezjr@sdsu.edu

Cell: 562.665.8053

From: Margaret Riggs <margaretsmithriggs@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 7, 2023 3:02 PM
To: SanDiegoCoast@Coastal <SanDiegoCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on February 2023 Agenda Item Thursday 16c - Application No. 6-22-1069 (San Diego Port

Dear Honorable Commissioners,

I respectfully urge you to support item Th16c. Please follow the staff recommendation to approve this transformative project for San Diego's Embarcadero. This Coastal Development Permit would allow Navy Pier to be converted to a park with public parking.

This project is the result many hours of work and is a true collaboration between the USS Midway Museum, The Port, and Coastal Commission staff. Too often the community most affected doesn't seem to have a say in the way things are done. But here I know that isn't the case. I'm a Midway volunteer and a longtime resident of San Diego. I've been hearing about the many negations around this stretch of the bay front for years, and have myself contributed to surveys and had my say. This project didn't happen overnight, many people were consulted, many voices heard. The Midway is committing over \$50 million dollars to build the park, and the Port will spend more than \$10 million in stimulus funds for structural pile improvements to support the new park. I believe this park will be a significant, well utilized and lasting contribution to the embarcadero.

I am told that the project will include several items that I think will make it especially unique:

- A wide public that will connect the east and west ends and trails throughout the entire park with educational programming elements incorporated.
- Places for sitting, picnic and active use, particularly the five swings at the water-end of the pier, the shade structures and the play elements for children.
- Plantings that emphasize California natives or plant species indigenous to the region, allowing for non-native, non-invasive shade trees.
- Signage to invite and welcome public to access the public park.
- Monuments: John Finn Memorial (San Diego native, first Medal of Honor recipient in WWII), Family Homecoming at end of pier, Navy Supply Corp Foundation history of Navy Pier and a flagpole memorial at west end of pier.

- Midway's commitment to recruit and train 3-5 additional museum volunteers/docents (AKA Park Ambassadors) who will be available to engage with park guests, as well as Midway's continued support of a variety of community and military groups. The park should encourage increased interactions of the public with museum programs and staff.
- A provision that the park stay open to the general public during park hours for at least 85 percent of the year and that permitted temporary large special events that limit public access (i.e., exclude the public or require admission for entry) to Freedom Park shall not exceed 15 percent of the year.

The USS Midway Museum's contribution of an estimated \$50 million to this park in addition to its programming commitments is outstanding and not done lightly. That, coupled with both the allocation of \$11.7 million of Port Economic Recovery Program funding for the pile repair, and the newly available public parking nearby make this the perfect set of circumstances to create a lasting legacy for San Diego by approving the creation of Freedom Park.

I urge your support of the Coastal Development Application.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Margaret Smith Riggs
5715 Lodi St, San Diego, CA 92117



BARTELL HOTELS

San Diego's Premier Properties

Th16c – SD Port and USS Midway

CDP Application No. 6-22-1069

In favor of project

February 7, 2023

Melody Lasiter
Chair Brownsey and Members of the Commission
California Coastal Commission
San Diego Area
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 103
San Diego, CA 92108-4421
SanDiegoCoast@coastal.ca.gov

Dear Honorable Commissioners,

I am the President of Bartell Hotels, with four hotels on the Port Tidelands, and have been a Tenant of the Port for 40 years. Our business is tourism, and I am very excited about prospect of the beautiful Freedom Park at our doorstep for our hotel guests and locals to enjoy.

I respectfully urge you to support item Th16c. Please follow the staff recommendation to approve this transformative project for San Diego's Embarcadero. This Coastal Development Permit would allow Navy Pier to be converted to a park with public parking.

I am thrilled that the project will include:

- A wide public promenade along the north side of the pier that will connect the east and west ends. I love the pathways and trails throughout the entire park with educational programming elements incorporated.
- Places for sitting, picnic and active use, particularly the five swings at the water-end of the pier, the shade structures and the play elements for children.
- Plantings that emphasize California natives or plant species indigenous to the region, allowing for non-native, non-invasive shade trees.
- Signage to invite and welcome public to access the public park.
- Monuments: John Finn Memorial (San Diego native, first Medal of Honor recipient in WWII), Family Homecoming at end of pier, Navy Supply Corp Foundation history of Navy Pier and a flagpole memorial at west end of pier.
- Creation of a mobile phone microsite dedicated to the history of the pier, the Midway, and San Diego Bay. It's great that it will complement the interpretive signage that is being incorporated into the park on the pier and the existing park space in the surrounding area.



BARTELL HOTELS

San Diego's Premier Properties

- A provision that the park stay open to the general public during park hours for at least 85 percent of the year and that permitted temporary large special events that limit public access (i.e., exclude the public or require admission for entry) to Freedom Park shall not exceed 15 percent of the year. It's extremely thoughtful that the 15 percent allowance shall be distributed throughout the year and special events may only take place on one side of the park on a single day such that the other side of the park remains open to the public. And that during all programmed events, the promenade on the northern side of Freedom Park, the north park area, restrooms, low-cost concessioner, and parking lot shall be open and accessible to the public at all times (6 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. daily).

The USS Midway Museum's contribution of an estimated \$50 million to this park in addition to its programming commitments is nothing short of astounding. That, coupled with both the allocation of \$11.7 million of Port Economic Recovery Program funding for the pile repair, and the newly available public parking nearby make this the perfect set of circumstances to create a lasting legacy for San Diego by approving the creation of Freedom Park.

I urge you to support the Coastal Development Application.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Richard Bartell



Save Our Access
2801 B Street #32
San Diego, CA 92102

EIN: 85-1604347
Tax Donation Receipt

February 27, 2023

Re NAVY PIER MEMORIAL PARK - Application No. 6-22-1069

The San Diego port trustees have for decades ignored the Port Master Plan's designations of extensive North Embarcadero green space, refusing to implement Broadway Landing Park, "two major parks", and a public pier facility designated "Navy Pier Memorial Park".

The board is instead bundling all N. Embarcadero parcels from Liberty Station to the Hilton for international hotel speculators who are being permitted to wall off the N. Embarcadero by constructing likely ten new bayfront highrise hotels and canceling Port Master Plan-designated parks.

Clearly the board is intent on accomplishing an unbalanced total N. Embarcadero tideland resource privatization, all to be sanctioned after the fact by some unrecognizable revision of the LCP/Port Master Plan.

Save Our Access (SOA) comments here assume the Coastal Commission intends to enforce the current Port Master Plan's (PMP) legal park designations rather than allow a public resource trustee board to gut a Local Coastal Program's public access elements.

Re The Midway' application No. 6-22-1069 (San Diego Port & USS Midway Museum / Navy Pier Memorial Park):

— There is no reference to the Port Master Plan's designated "Navy Pier Memorial Park", or the PMP's pier park language.

— During this sudden fast tracking, the Midway Museum and port board have issued a funding ultimatum that denies the public the vaunted port workshop review process that has marked decades of "revisioning".

Save Our Access urges Coastal Staff to require pier park workshops in order to benefit from public input, including from all the local groups and architects that submitted concepts during the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC).

— The Midway Museums's position, the majority of it is an ill-disguised public relations "amenity ploy" attempt to revision a park into a parking lot, favors design features as illegal as they are troubling:

1. Navy Pier Memorial Park's design has been ceded to a revenue generating lessee rather than a park architect designer. This is the board's revisioning m.o. over time and should not be repeated here.

2. Much of the attachment is self serving pr to obscure the fact the N. Embarcadero public pier is being configured to serve the Midway, not the public at large.

3. It is notable this board, in abrogating their public element responsibilities, has refused public requests to reinstitute standard workshops, the Joint Powers Authority, and the CAC to facilitate negotiating public elements.

The board has decided to go it alone with their lessee partners, excluding the public and other agencies.

The port, although their mass commercialization scheme will double their revenue, persists in funding dense highrise bundled development infrastructure, unlike Los Angeles and other coast cities.

The above managerial and financial decisions are board trustee responsibilities. If the board charges developers and acknowledges receipt of new revenue sourcing from ten new hotels and a new convention center complex, clearly they have achieved the capacity to join the Midway in purchasing/negotiating requisite off-site park-

ing for both the museum and new pier park. Any board refusal to do so must be challenged as trustee malfeasance.

4. The Midway is arbitrarily rejecting the “bathtub” underground parking design now concept-proven at the County Administration Building parking garage. The pier and Midway should both be major resident and coast tourist attractions. Clearly both will want to schedule special events. These crowds merit adequate parking access even though the board has devoted none on the N.Embarcadero for that purpose.

Adequate parking for deliveries, bus and shuttle drop off, and blue parking spaces is required at pier level. But public parking in general should be allowed both under-pier on-site and shuttle-served off-site.

5. The Midway would replace a view and access-blocking building at the base of the pier with two more structures - a snack building and restroom.

These facilities should be designed compactly and narrowly so any structural view and access blockage is not repeated.

The snack facility should have underground storage and have only exterior tables to limit its obstruction potential. The restroom can be narrow in design.

Both structures can be located adjacent to the bulk of the carrier to preserve openness.

John McNab
President, Save Our Access
619 531-0773

Navy Pier Memorial Park EIR

Scott <scott300@earthlink.net>

Mon 1/30/2023 7:20 PM

To: Lasiter, Melody@Coastal <Melody.Lasiter@coastal.ca.gov>

Re: Application No. 6-22-1069 (San Diego Port & USS Midway Museum Navy Pier Memorial Park)

Dear Commissioners,

Will Navy Pier, denied for decades a designated park to honor those who served and sacrificed, be that park, or remain largely a complex of roads and parking spaces?

Please postpone this matter and require an EIR to examine park and parking options to comply with the area Coastal Act Local Coastal Program (LCP).

Leasing new highrise hotels and commercial to wall off San Diego Bay's North Embarcadero bayfront tidelands, the port has ignored Coastal Act/LCP/Port Master Plan (PMP)

legally-designated public elements like the PMP's "Navy Pier Memorial Park" and "two major parks" for decades.

If you permit the port trustee to ignore San Diego Bay's downtown LCP, sets a "need not comply" precedent for all California LCPs as well as to deny lacking waterside parks for a major city.

PORT MASTER PLAN compliance re "Navy Pier Memorial Park" p.27 & p.28:

Parking for visitors to the Midway and its museum will be provided, on an interim basis, at the Navy Pier, pursuant to the museum's lease with the United States Navy. When and if the Navy determines that its use of the Navy Pier is no longer

27

6-22-1069

San Diego Unified Port District and USS Midway Museum

necessary, the Port will accept the proposal by the San Diego Aircraft Carrier Museum to convert the Navy Pier into a "public park" use, thereby allowing the pier to be converted into a memorial park complementing the Midway and its museum, while affording additional public open space and bay vistas. Vehicle parking for museum visitors will then be shifted to nearby offsite locations. However, since the Navy Pier's future is uncertain and will be determined by decisions of the federal

Scott Andrews

February 3, 2023

To: California Coastal Commission

From: San Diego Waterfront Coalition

Subject: 2/9/2023 Coastal Commission Meeting Agenda item Th16c

San Diego Unified Port District and USS Midway Museum Proposal for the Construction of a new Veteran's Memorial Park on Navy Pier

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the December 16th, 2022 Navy Pier Park Proposal and your staff's report. As far as we know, these documents were not made available for public review and input until your February 8-10 meeting agenda was posted on January 28th, 2023. That only gave the public six calendar days to read and analyze these lengthy documents and prepare comments to your Commission. Given the ports and your Commissions public commitments to transparency, you might consider deferring any action on this agenda item until there has been additional time allowed for public review and comment on this proposal and you staff's response to it. We hope that your Commission will take the time needed to ensure that the public knows what is going on before you consider approving this proposal.

The San Diego Waterfront Coalition (previously known as the Navy Broadway Complex Coalition) was created around 2010, in order to provide public review and input on downtown waterfront planning efforts, including the redevelopment of the Navy Broadway Complex at the foot of Broadway, ongoing updates to the Port Master Plan and other projects around San Diego Bay. Members of the coalition have historically included Citizens Coordinate for Century 3, the San Diego League of Women Voters, Sierra Club San Diego, and other planning organizations. Given the very limited time to review this new proposal, all members of the coalition have not had time to participate in this review, but these initial comments have been reviewed and approved by the coalition president and executive committee.

Background

On June 28, 2001, the California Coastal Commission (Commission or Coastal) approved The San Diego Unified Port District (port district or port)'s proposed Port Master Plan Amendment ("PMPA") No. 27, which among other things authorized the berthing of the USS Midway at Navy Pier. Originally, the Coastal staff opposed locating the ship, intended to become a museum, on the North Embarcadero, noting that

"Docking of the 1,000 foot long and 190 foot tall Midway would 'block existing public views, contribute to the walling off of San Diego Bay, block a potential view corridor down F Street, and create a 'tunnel' effect on Harbor Drive at the subject site.'".

The current staff report goes on to say that

“Not only were visual impacts of the Midway a concern, but also the visual and public access impacts that would occur if parking were to remain on Navy Pier long-term. As discussed in the PMPA staff report, Navy Pier was ‘not an appropriate place for a permanent parking lot, due to adverse visual impacts a parking lot will have on the surrounding waterfront and the loss of the prime waterfront location for public access and recreational purposes.’”

The current Coastal staff also report notes that

“To mitigate for the visual impacts of the Midway, the proponents of the museum proposed to create a 5.7-acre memorial park on Navy Pier once it was relinquished to the Port by the Navy, as well as free public access to the Midway viewing deck. *The proposal included a conceptual plan to demolish the existing Head House and redevelop the pier as a pedestrian-oriented memorial park with plazas, grassy lawns, benches, promenades, design features, and a Navy spouses club and chapel for small social functions. (Italics added)*

These commitments by the Port and Midway were accepted by the Commission and later included by the Port as conditions of the Port-issued coastal development permit and lease agreement with the Midway.

As a result of the proposal, the following language was incorporated into the PMP:

Parking for visitors to the “Midway and its museum will be provided, on an interim basis, at the Navy Pier, pursuant to the museum's lease with the United States Navy. When and if the Navy determines that its use of the Navy Pier is no longer necessary, the Port will accept the proposal by the San Diego Aircraft Carrier Museum to convert the Navy Pier into a public park use, thereby allowing the pier to be converted into a memorial park complementing the Midway and its museum, while affording additional public open space and bay vistas. Vehicle parking for museum visitors will then be shifted to nearby offsite locations. However, since the Navy Pier's future is uncertain and will be determined by decisions of the federal government, *the conversion of the pier to a 5.7-acre memorial park is a specific planning goal of the Port, and environmental analysis for the park conversion will be conducted prior to the Navy relinquishing ownership and/or control of the Navy Pier such that construction of the park can occur as soon as feasible thereafter.*”

“In 2002, the Secretary of the Navy was given the authority to transfer title of Navy Pier to the Midway. Midway had the option to accept ownership of the pier or transfer title to another agency and chose to transfer ownership to the Port in 2003. *Since the Port acquired ownership of Navy Pier from the Navy, however, progress towards converting the pier to a park has been delayed.*”)

Navy Pier was formerly owned by the U.S. Navy, which transferred ownership to the Port in 2003. However, the Port has yet to incorporate Navy Pier into the San Diego Unified Port District's certified Port Master Plan (PMP).

As noted in the current staff report:

"In 2012, the Midway submitted conceptual park designs to the Port and the Port responded via letter in 2014 that the conceptual designs were sufficient for the Port to process a PMPA; however, a PMPA was not pursued by the Port."

As shown above, for the last twenty years, the Midway Museum (Midway) and the Port have dragged their feet, renegeing on their promise to build a 5.7-acre memorial park on the pier soon after the Navy gave the pier to the port. Thus, the public, has been denied the use and enjoyment of the promised park for two decades. There has been little or no evidence that your staff ever developed or followed any concrete monitoring, evaluation or enforcement plans during that time.

Each time the issue of the promised pier was brought up, the port (which profits by operating a parking lot on the northern portion of the pier) and the Midway (which leases space for 45 parking spaces on the pier), concocted one reason or another to justify ignoring their written commitments to build the promised park.

Over that period, the Commissions apparent lack of oversight and failure to enforce the port master plan or its own CDP in this matter severely undermined your Commission's credibility among many organizations who observe the peculiarities of local waterfront planning and state regulation. This lack of monitoring and enforcement also sent a clear message to the port and other waterfront developers that your Commission would not follow up or enforce commitments they made regarding other waterfront redevelopment project proposals you approved.

More recently, as noted in the current staff report:

"In 2016, the Commission approved CDP No. 6-16-0258 which authorized the Port to temporarily maintain parking on the pier for four years and provide interim public access improvements; however, that permit later expired before being effectuated for financial reasons, and never became effective. In 2019, the Port submitted CDP Application No. 6-19-1035, which also proposed to temporarily maintain parking for four years and provide interim public access improvements. However, following extensive coordination with Commission staff over several years, the Port and Midway submitted the subject project application for construction of a permanent park."

What that means to us is that after almost twenty years of the Midway and the Port playing Rope-a-Dope with your district staff, staff finally got serious about enforcement of the Port Master Plan adopted by your Commission in 2001.

It appears that for the first time, the port and Midway were pressured into taking a more serious look at what it would take to build a memorial park on Navy Pier. Up until now, it looks like neither organization took implementation of their 2001 proposal seriously, since they obviously never planned to actually carry it out.

Likelihood that this latest proposal will be implemented

Under pressure, or as staff puts it “following extensive coordination with Commission staff over several years,” the port and the Midway have brought forward this revised proposal to build a new memorial park on only 3.6 acres, or about 64% of Navy Pier. The remainder of the pier would continue to be devoted to parking and parking lot access roads, instead of the 5.7 acres of the pier surface being converted to a park, as promised twenty years ago. While the number of parking spaces on the pier would be reduced from 422 to 145 and the justifications for keeping 145 parking spaces in the staff report seem somewhat reasonable, the new proposal does not come close to implementing the park that was promised in the 2001 PMPA.

And based on this staff report, there seems to be no way to guarantee that the new proposal is anymore likely to be built than the 2001 one was. The fact that the port and Midway only came forward with their latest proposal after intense pressure was applied by your staff, and their refusal to seriously consider the idea of building a park until now, gives us no certainty that they actually plan to actually do anything, regardless of what actions your Commission might take at your February 9. After all, they provided you with a “plan” in 2012, which you approved, but never moved to implement that proposal.

CEQA Review

Coastal staff proposes to add a number of conditions and mitigation requirements to this proposal, and based on those, suggest that your Commission should exempt this project from providing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) required under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

While the proposed mitigation plans proposed by staff, intended to ensure that more disadvantaged persons who live in disadvantaged communities of color are able to experience the museum, are politically correct under today’s standards, they in no way mitigate the impacts of denying the public the use of a downtown waterfront park for two decades.

As noted in the staff report:

The associated (2001) PMPA was approved by the Commission based on the proposal that parking on Navy Pier would be limited to an interim period and that conversion to a park would occur following the Navy’s relinquishment of the pier. Thus, the applicant has benefited from the pier remaining a parking lot by collecting revenues while the public has not yet received the benefit of a public park.

We believe that the mitigation plan proposed by staff in their report does not justify exempting this proposal from developing a CEQA required EIR. That EIR should include serious consideration and analysis of several alternatives including one that would move all parking off the pier onto nearby public parking lots, and another that would entail construction of a new one level parking structure beneath the surface of Navy Pier, as reflected in the earlier initial Navy Pier Park concepts report by consultant Owan Lang. It is likely that such an EIR process will produce better alternatives than the new proposal includes and a more effective plan for mitigating the loss of a public waterfront park for twenty years.

Need for a Clearer Commission Monitoring, Evaluation and Enforcement Plan

We also believe that more stringent conditions and mitigation plans, including a very clear monitoring and enforcement plan, must be incorporated before your Commission ever considers approval of this proposal, along with a commitment of staffing to ensure effective oversight of this project.

The lack of any substantial Coastal monitoring or enforcement plans in the staff report brings into question the commitment of your staff to oversee this project and make sure that it is carried out in a timely manner. We hope that you will bring the enforcement tools provided to you by the California legislature to bear on this proposal and its implementation.

We believe that this plan should include clear calendar date deadlines for each phase of the rehabilitation of the pier and the construction of the park, with daily fines of at least \$100,000 for each day any of those deadlines are missed for any reason. We believe that only when they face large daily fines or equivalent penalties are the port and the Midway likely to give this project the priority needed to ensure that it will ever get built.

The use of ambiguous language is a traditional feature of Coastal staff reports, and gives us even more pause.

For example, on page 32, the staff report notes that:

“the parking to be provided in the park isn't necessarily a permanent commitment. Should circumstances arise where the parking can be further reduced or eliminated, the park could be further expanded on the pier in the future.”

While this might be taken as a promise that the park portion of the pier might someday be expanded, it might also be twisted by the applicants in an attempt to justify inaction or the retention of more parking spaces on the pier. Without a more effective Coastal monitoring and enforcement plan, we can see the port and Midway coming back to your Commission in the summer of 2007 claiming that changes in circumstances have prevented them from starting construction of this project and requesting yet another lengthy extension.

If it is the intention of your Commission and staff to expand the park in the future, you need to replace the language above to make a clearer commitment to ensuring that the construction of the proposed 3.6 acre park is just one step toward a larger park, and that under no circumstances will the applicants be allowed to increase the number of parking space on the pier beyond the 145 included in the new proposal.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on this proposal, which was not made available for public review or comment by the port or Midway before the issuance of this staff report.

Don Wood
San Diego Waterfront Coalition
619-463-9035
Dwood8@cox.net