

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

South Coast Area Office
301 E. Ocean Blvd., Suite 300
Long Beach, CA 90802
(562) 590-5071



Th19a

Filed: 05/15/2026
180th Day: 11/11/2026
Staff: WR-LB
Staff Report: 05/27/2026
Hearing Date: 06/11/2026

STAFF REPORT: REGULAR CALENDAR

Application No.: 5-26-0188

Applicants: Goldenvoice, LLC and City of Santa Monica

Agents: Susan McCabe, Anne Blemker, McCabe & Company

Location: Santa Monica State Beach, on the public beach south of the Santa Monica Pier (Los Angeles County)

Project Description: Proposed two-day ticketed temporary event music festival on Santa Monica State Beach in the Sandbox area south of the Santa Monica Pier, on one non-holiday weekend in September 2026, with festival hours from 12:00 PM to 11:00 PM on Saturday and 12:00 PM to 10:00 PM on Sunday, daily anticipated attendance of 35,000 attendees, and a 15-day setup and breakdown period encompassing approximately 900,000 square feet of public beach. The project includes temporary use of beach-adjacent parking facilities, a temporary rerouting of the regional beach bicycle path, and a Community Benefits Program providing free coastal access and recreation programming for underserved communities in the greater Los Angeles area, in the City of Santa Monica, Los Angeles County.

Staff Recommendation: Approval with conditions

SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The proposed project is a two-day ticketed music festival to be held on Santa Monica State Beach in the Sandbox area south of the Santa Monica Pier, City of Santa Monica, on one non-holiday weekend in late September of 2026 (date is not yet certain), with festival hours from 12:00 PM to 11:00 PM on Saturday and 12:00 PM to 10:00 PM on Sunday and daily anticipated attendance of 35,000 attendees. The organizer, Goldenvoice LLC, is a co-applicant with the City of Santa Monica.

The proposed event encompasses approximately 900,000 square feet of the sandy beach area on the publicly available Santa Monica State Beach. The fenced event footprint includes placement of a variety of temporary structures for two performance stages, with the main stage at approximately 60 feet in height, as well as ticketing areas, security screening areas, medical services, portable restroom facilities, performer and artist compounds, guest and VIP areas, staging and production areas, and temporary access and fire lanes. The perimeter fence will be placed a minimum of 15 feet inland of the mean high tide line. A minimum 10-foot dry sand corridor will be maintained along the seaward edge of the event boundary for lateral public beach access. All event infrastructure is temporary and will be fully removed following the conclusion of the event. Installation and removal of event infrastructure will occur over a total of 15 days prior to and following the event. Stage construction activities, including installation of the 10,000 sq. ft. main stage flooring system and stage structure, will commence during the first five days of the 15-day event period with no perimeter fencing in place and no public access impacts anticipated to the beach, bicycle path, restrooms, recreational equipment, or Ocean Front Walk. Approximately 92 percent of Santa Monica State Beach located within City limits will remain open and accessible to the public during the event period. The Santa Monica Pier, including its amusement park attractions and visitor amenities, will remain open and accessible to the public during the event.

While the Commission's Guidelines for the Exclusion of Temporary Events from Coastal Development Permit Requirements, adopted January 12, 1993, allow the Executive Director to exclude certain temporary events from permit requirements, a coastal development permit is still required when a temporary event involves the erection of fencing or other structures on the public beach, charges a general admission fee for use of an area where no fee is currently charged, is held in conjunction with other planned events that may cumulatively exclude the public from the beach for a longer period of time, or may directly or indirectly impact environmentally sensitive habitat areas.

A coastal development permit is required for this event because the event is more than one day, it involves the erection of temporary perimeter fencing excluding the public from an area of public beach and installation of temporary structures on public beach on State tidelands within the Commission's area of original jurisdiction, and proposes to charge a general admission fee for a portion of the event. The proposed event temporarily precludes the general public from using approximately 900,000 square feet of Santa Monica State Beach where the temporary event footprint is located; therefore, special conditions are necessary to protect public access and recreation for all people.

Over the years, the Commission has reviewed and approved temporary events and has conditioned or required either 100% free admissions or limited admission fees.

If 100% free admission was determined to be infeasible, the Commission has used the provision in the Guidelines, which allows temporary events to be excluded from permit requirements if more than 75% of the seating is available free of charge for general public. If the event cannot meet this requirement, a CDP application is reviewed by the Commission.

In past permit actions, the Commission has approved CDPs for temporary events that provide this equivalent public benefit by conditioning that 75% of the event capacity cost of admission be offset or mitigated by a public benefits package or program. Events comparable to the proposed temporary beach events previously approved by the Commission with similar conditions of approval include events held on Alamitos Beach in Long Beach in 2018 (CDP No. 5-18-0142) and 2019 (CDP No. 5-19-0246), a temporary live music and community event held on Dockweiler State Beach associated with the Los Angeles Jazz Festival (CDP No. 5-19-0953), and a privately ticketed three-day airshow event in Huntington Beach (CDP No. 5-25-0242).

In this case, the applicants have indicated that the provision of 75% free seating for the two days of the festival would not be feasible; however, the applicants and Commission staff have coordinated closely through multiple meetings to develop an alternative mitigation strategy. The proposed Community Benefits Program includes:

- 1,000 complimentary festival tickets per event day distributed with priority to underserved communities with historically limited coastal access,
- free coastal access and recreation programming for underserved youth and communities in the greater Los Angeles area including two ocean safety and surf instruction days at Santa Monica State Beach and Zuma Beach,
- sponsored Santa Monica Pier Corp annual Youth Day with transportation provided,
- a coastal aquatics and beach safety program at the Annenberg Community Beach House in Santa Monica,
- free public concerts at Reed Park in downtown Santa Monica,
- and cultural programming at Historic Belmar Park and Tongva Park centering on historically underrepresented communities in the coastal zone.

The Community Benefits Program also includes on-site Coastal Education Zones providing environmental stewardship programming to festival attendees, coordination with Heal the Bay for a corporate beach cleanup event, and cross-promotion of the California Coastal Commission's annual Coastal Cleanup Day to festival ticketholders.

City-sponsored capital improvements to Santa Monica State Beach and the Santa Monica Pier, funded in part through Festival-generated revenue and direct contributions from Goldenvoice, will provide durable long-term public benefits enhancing coastal access and recreational opportunities for all visitors to Santa Monica State Beach.

As conditioned, the proposed Community Benefits Program provides public access and recreational opportunities for underserved communities in the greater Los Angeles area

that, taken in totality, constitute an equivalent public benefit amount consistent with the Commission's findings in comparable temporary beach event permit actions.

The proposed event is scheduled for a non-holiday weekend in September 2026 following the Labor Day holiday weekend, a timing intentionally selected by the applicants to avoid the peak summer beach season and minimize potential conflicts with the highest levels of recreational beach use. To mitigate parking displacement during the two event days, the applicants will provide approximately 3,600 off-site parking spaces located outside the coastal zone at Santa Monica Airport and Santa Monica Business Park, with complimentary shuttle service available to both festival attendees and beachgoers. Similarly, the applicants will use parking lots for ride-share drop-off and pick-up as well as valet area for bicycles and scooters. The beach bicycle path will be temporarily rerouted for approximately 8 days. The applicants have proposed a comprehensive sustainability program including implementation of the City of Santa Monica's Zero Waste Plan protocols, a prohibition on single-use plastic and packaging, use of solar battery generators as the primary source of event power, and a food recovery program directing surplus food to local nonprofit organizations.

The applicants contacted the Los Angeles Audubon Society regarding Western Snowy Plover presence at Santa Monica State Beach in response to the proposed September event timing. The applicants submitted a 2023 study confirming that plover roosting has generally declined in Santa Monica during the monitoring period and that the identified protection zone is located north of the Santa Monica Pier a significant distance from the proposed event footprint. As conditioned, the applicants will retain a qualified biologist to conduct a pre-event survey and implement a 500-foot no-disturbance buffer if any roosting plovers or plover nests are observed in the project vicinity.

Staff is recommending approval of the coastal development permit with seven special conditions. The special conditions include: **1) Duration and Scope of Permit; 2) Required Approvals; 3) Beach and Shoreline Access; 4) Community Benefits Package; 5) Biological Resource Protection Program; 6) Water Quality; and 7) Post-Event Compliance Report.**

As conditioned, the proposed temporary 15-day event protects and encourages public access to the sea, especially for segments of the greater Los Angeles population that have disproportionate barriers to accessing the coast, and protects coastal resources. As thus conditioned, staff recommends the Commission find the project consistent with the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act and approve CDP application number 5-26-0188. The motion to carry out the staff recommendation is on page six of this report.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. MOTION AND RESOLUTION	6
II. STANDARD CONDITIONS.....	6
III. SPECIAL CONDITIONS	7
IV. FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS	12
A. PROJECT LOCATION & DESCRIPTION	12
B. PUBLIC ACCESS & RECREATION	14
C. MARINE RESOURCES.....	23
D. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES.....	24
E. VISUAL RESOURCES	25
F. LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM.....	26
G. CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT	26
APPENDIX A – SUBSTANTIVE FILE DOCUMENTS	27

EXHIBITS

[Exhibit 1 – Project Location](#)

[Exhibit 2 – Concert Area](#)

[Exhibit 3 – Community Benefits Package](#)

[Exhibit 4 – Transportation Management Plan](#)

I. MOTION AND RESOLUTION

Motion:

I move that the Commission **approve** Coastal Development Permit Application No. 5-26-0188 subject to the conditions set forth in the staff recommendation.

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

Resolution:

The Commission hereby approves Coastal Development Permit Application No. 5-26-0188 for the proposed development and adopts the findings set forth below on grounds that the development as conditioned will be in conformity with the policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act and will not prejudice the ability of the local government having jurisdiction over the area to prepare a Local Coastal Program conforming to the provisions of Chapter 3. Approval of the permit complies with the California Environmental Quality Act because either 1) feasible mitigation measures and/or alternatives have been incorporated to substantially lessen any significant adverse effects of the development on the environment, or 2) there are no further feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would substantially lessen any significant adverse impacts of the development on the environment.

II. STANDARD CONDITIONS

This permit is granted subject to the following standard conditions:

1. **Notice of Receipt and Acknowledgment.** The permit is not valid and development shall not commence until a copy of the permit, signed by the permittee or authorized agent, acknowledging receipt of the permit and acceptance of the terms and conditions, is returned to the Commission office.
2. **Expiration.** The permit is valid only for the temporary event period authorized herein. If the authorized event is not conducted by the end of September, this permit shall expire. Application for extension of the permit must be made prior to the expiration date.
3. **Interpretation.** Any questions of intent of interpretation of any condition will be resolved by the Executive Director or the Commission.
4. **Assignment.** The permit may be assigned to any qualified person, provided assignee files with the Commission an affidavit accepting all terms and conditions of the permit.

5. **Terms and Conditions.** All terms and conditions of this permit are binding on both Goldenvoice, LLC and the City of Santa Monica, and any agents acting on their behalf throughout the authorized event period.

III. SPECIAL CONDITIONS

This permit is granted subject to the following special conditions:

1. Duration and Scope of Permit.

A. By Acceptance of this permit, the permittee agrees to all of the following:

1. PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF THE PERMIT, provide the final September dates of the two-day event and final dates of the setup and take down dates, as soon as possible.

Coastal Development Permit No. 5-26-0188 shall only authorize:

1. A two-day Santa Monica Music Festival to be held on a weekend at the end of September 2026 with festival hours from 12:00 PM to 11:00 PM on Saturday and 12:00 PM to 10:00 PM on Sunday.
2. Set-up and timely removal of those facilities necessary to stage the event, as set forth in the site plans submitted to the South Coast District Office on March 13, 2026. All facilities shall be entirely removed from the beach no later than fifteen (15) days following setup.

B. The permittees shall submit evidence of compliance with the special conditions of this permit to the Executive Director at least two (2) days prior to the commencement of set-up activities. The paid festival event shall only proceed if the free community benefit elements described herein are confirmed as implemented or committed to proceed as approved. If the community benefits programming is not implemented as described the Community Benefits Program ([Exhibit 3](#)), the permittees shall submit revised plans for review and approval by the Executive Director. The Executive Director shall determine if there are substantial changes to the project and if a coastal development permit amendment is required.

C. The permittees shall undertake development in accordance with the approved plans. Any request for a change to the installation, operation, or removal schedule of the facilities shall be reported to the Executive Director. The Executive Director shall determine if there are substantial changes to the project and if a coastal development permit amendment is required.

2. **Required Approvals.** By acceptance of this permit, the permittees agree that they shall obtain all other necessary local, state, and federal permits that may be necessary for all aspects of the temporary development, including approvals from the City of Santa Monica, California Department of Parks and Recreation, State

Lands Commission, and any federal or state agency with jurisdiction over sensitive resources at this location, unless confirmation is received from those agencies that such approvals are not required.

3. **Beach and Shoreline Access.** By Acceptance of this permit, the permittee agrees to all of the following:

- A. **Adjacent Access.** Public access to and along the shoreline shall be maintained during the entire duration of the event, including set-up and takedown activities. A minimum 10-foot dry sand corridor shall be maintained along the seaward edge of the event boundary throughout the full 10-day fenced period. The perimeter fence shall be placed a minimum of 15 feet inland of the mean high tide line. Lateral access along the shoreline shall not be impeded by the event. City and Event staff shall not restrict public use of any area outside the event perimeter except as necessary for immediate public safety.
- B. **Public Access Signs.** The permittees shall install temporary signs that facilitate, manage, and provide public access to and around the approved event site and identify any public features that will be provided during set-up, takedown, and event activities. Signs shall be conspicuously sited to maximize visibility from parking lots, the regional bike path, open beach areas, and the water, and shall be designed to provide clear information to beachgoers and bike path and pedestrian path users. All signs shall include translation into languages used commonly in Los Angeles, including but not limited to English and Spanish. Signage shall acknowledge the California Coastal Commission's role in providing public access at this location. Signage shall be posted identifying the seaward dry sand corridor as a public access and emergency vehicle route.
- C. **Bike Path.** The bicycle path reroute shall commence no earlier than 12:01 AM on the Monday prior to the event weekend and shall return to normal operations no later than 5:00 PM on the Tuesday following the event weekend. If temporary closure of the bicycle and pedestrian path is necessary for safety during installation or tear-down of equipment between 5:00 AM and 10:00 PM, an interruption of traffic on the pedestrian and bicycle route is authorized with a flagperson to stop bicycle and pedestrian traffic for no longer than 5 minutes at a time. If temporary closure is necessary between 10:00 PM and 5:00 AM, an interruption is authorized with a flagperson for no longer than one hour at a time.
- D. **Public Restroom Access.** PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicants shall submit to the Executive Director an updated site exhibit confirming the specific number, type, and locations of supplemental portable restroom facilities to be provided outside the event perimeter for non-ticketed beachgoers during the two event days. The supplemental facilities shall be located in reasonable proximity to the event perimeter and shall be identified through publicly visible signage. The permittees shall ensure that the total publicly

accessible restroom capacity in the immediate vicinity of the event site is sufficient to serve the non-ticketed beach-going public throughout the two event days.

- E. Recreational Equipment. PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicants shall submit to the Executive Director an updated, specific site plan in relation to the existing public recreational equipment (rings and the slacklining park). If any such equipment will be inaccessible to the general non-ticketed public during the event, the applicants shall identify the number of days it will be inaccessible to the public and identify alternative locations for equivalent recreational opportunities in the immediate vicinity. The permittees shall ensure all equipment is returned to its original location and condition no later than the conclusion of the load-out period.
- F. Parking and Traffic Management. The permittees shall implement the Transportation Management Plan submitted to the South Coast District Office on March 13, 2026. This permit authorizes temporary use of only the included public beach parking areas identified in [Exhibit 4](#) of this staff report. Signage shall be posted at all temporarily closed beach lot entrances directing beachgoers to the complimentary shuttle service and identifying alternative publicly available parking locations within the coastal zone of Santa Monica. The complimentary shuttle service for beachgoers shall operate, at a minimum, during the hours of 11am to 12am on Saturday and 11am to 11pm on Sunday.
- G. The permittees shall undertake development in accordance with the approved plans. Any request for a change to the installation, operation, or removal schedule of the facilities shall be reported to the Executive Director. The Executive Director shall determine if there are substantial changes to the project and if a coastal development permit amendment is required.

4. Community Benefits Package.

- A. PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicants shall submit to the Executive Director the following:
 - 1. Distribution plan for 2,000 complimentary festival tickets to the organizations identified in the Community Benefits Plan ([Exhibit 3](#)) and confirmed transportation plans for the 2,000 ticketholders as well as programs serving underserved youth including the Makos ocean safety days, Pier Corp Annual Youth Day, and City coastal aquatics and beach safety program.
 - 2. Attendee Engagement Plan describing the specific incentives, marketing initiatives, and gamification opportunities that will be used to drive participation with the on-site Coastal Education Zones and to promote registration for the California Coastal Commission's 42nd Annual Coastal Cleanup Day on September 19, 2026. The

plan shall identify the specific incentives offered and shall describe how participation with the Coastal Education Zones and Coastal Cleanup Day registration will be tracked and reported in the Post-Event Compliance Report required by Special Condition 7.

- B. The permittees shall implement the Community Benefits Program as submitted to the South Coast District Office on May 11, 2026. The paid festival event shall only proceed if the free community benefit elements described herein are confirmed as committed to proceed as approved. If any element of the Community Benefits Program is not implemented as described herein, public access mitigation may be required.
5. **Biological Resource Protection Program.** The permittees shall carry out development in accordance with the following protection measures:
- A. **Sound and Lighting Design.** All speakers, including amplified speakers, shall be positioned and directed to focus sound within the event venue and away from adjacent residential neighborhoods and the ocean. All nighttime lighting shall be shielded and directed away from the ocean and night sky. The lowest intensity lighting appropriate to each use shall be employed. Up-lighting and event searchlights or spotlights are prohibited. Structures, including concession and merchandise tents, shall be designed to minimize light spillage and maximize light shielding to the maximum extent feasible. All ambient lighting shall be extinguished immediately following the conclusion of event hours each evening.
 - B. **Protection of Special Status Species.** The permittees shall coordinate with the Los Angeles Audubon Society to acquire data on Western Snowy Plover observations at Santa Monica State Beach no more than two weeks before event activities and shall submit that data to Commission staff. The permittees shall retain the services of a qualified biologist with the appropriate recovery permits to conduct biological surveys and submit the name and qualifications of that individual for the review and approval of the Executive Director at least two weeks before the events. No more than 72 hours prior to any event activities, the approved biologist shall survey the project site and the area within a 300-foot radius of the project site on foot. The surveys shall be submitted to the Executive Director within two days of survey completion but before event setup. If any roosting plovers or plover nests are observed in the project vicinity, a 500-foot buffer from the roosting or nesting site shall be installed using wildlife-permeable fencing with appropriate educational and warning signs, and event setup shall not commence in the affected area until the Executive Director has reviewed and approved a revised site plan.
 - C. The permittees shall undertake development in accordance with the approved plans. Any request for a change to the installation, operation, or removal schedule of the facilities shall be reported to the Executive Director. The Executive Director shall determine if there are substantial

changes to the project and if a coastal development permit amendment is required.

6. **Water Quality.** The permittees shall implement the best management practices described in the project description submitted to the South Coast District Office on March 13, 2026. Additionally, the following best management practices shall be implemented:
 - A. The permittees shall remove and legally dispose of all trash, waste, oil, grease, and other materials that may be deposited within and adjacent to the event area incidental to public use of the beach and adjacent parking facilities.
 - B. The event site shall be cleared of trash by the end of each day of event activities, including set-up and takedown.
 - C. The permittees shall surround all fuel storage areas with a double layer of sand or gravel bags to contain any fuel that is spilled and keep absorbent spill cleanup materials on hand in the event of a spill.
 - D. The use of single-use plastic foodware, serviceware and packaging on-site is prohibited.
 - E. Any and all debris resulting from event activities shall be removed from the project site within 24 hours of the completion of final site breakdown.
7. **Post-Event Compliance Report.** Within 30 days of the conclusion of the event, the permittees shall submit a Post-Event Compliance Report to the Executive Director that includes the following:
 - A. **Public Access Report.** A description of how public access to Santa Monica State Beach, the Santa Monica Pier, Ocean Front Walk, the regional bicycle path, and adjacent public spaces was maintained or impacted throughout the full 15-day event period, including documentation of any incidents that adversely affected public access, daily attendance figures, parking and shuttle utilization data, and a description of how the seaward dry sand corridor was managed throughout the event period.
 - B. **Community Benefits Compliance Report.** Documentation of the implementation of each element of the Community Benefits Program, including participation numbers by program, demographic data on participants where feasible, a description of how complimentary festival tickets were distributed and to which organizations, and confirmation that all free community programming described herein was implemented as approved. For program elements with completion dates extending beyond the 30-day reporting period, including the Tongva Park cultural activation and any capital improvements not yet completed, the permittees shall submit a timeline and implementation plan confirming how and when those elements will be completed. If there is evidence that any element of the Community Benefits Program was not implemented as described herein, the permittees shall submit revised plans with mitigation for review and approval by the Executive Director.

IV. FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS

A. PROJECT LOCATION & DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is a temporary two-day ticketed music festival to be held on Santa Monica State Beach in the Sandbox area south of the Santa Monica Pier, City of Santa Monica, Los Angeles County ([Exhibit 1](#)). The event would take place on one non-holiday weekend in the end of September 2026, with festival hours from 12:00 PM to 11:00 PM on Saturday and 12:00 PM to 10:00 PM on Sunday. Daily anticipated attendance is 35,000 attendees. The organizer, Goldenvoice LLC, is a co-applicant with the City of Santa Monica, which supports the project.

Santa Monica State Beach is a popular coastal recreation area that is easily accessible by public transit and multiple modes of transportation and provides the public with excellent coastal access opportunities and a wide range of free and lower-cost recreational activities. Throughout the year, visitors to Santa Monica State Beach can take advantage of ocean swimming, surfing, beach volleyball, fishing, sightseeing, use of the regional coastal bicycle path, and access to the Santa Monica Pier, which provides dining, amusement attractions, and scenic coastal views. Many of these activities are free or lower-cost visitor and recreational opportunities protected by Section 30213 of the Coastal Act. The beach is served by the Metro E Line (Expo) Downtown Santa Monica Station, located approximately 0.8 miles from the event site, Big Blue Bus routes along Colorado Avenue and Ocean Avenue, and the Ocean Front Walk pedestrian corridor.

The standard of review for the project is Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act. Most of the proposed event area is located within the Commission's area of original jurisdiction on State tidelands, and the standard of review is Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act. The City of Santa Monica has a certified Land Use Plan but does not yet have a certified Local Coastal Program, and for those project components landward of the Commission's original jurisdiction, the City's Land Use Plan may serve as guidance.

The Commission has previously reviewed and approved temporary events on public beaches in the greater Los Angeles area, including a temporary community and live music event held on Alamitos Beach in downtown Long Beach in 2018 (CDP No. 5-18-0142) and 2019 (CDP No. 5-19-0246), a temporary live music and community event held on Dockweiler State Beach associated with the Los Angeles Jazz Festival (CDP No. 5-19-0953), and a privately ticketed three-day airshow event on Huntington City Beach (CDP No. 5-25-0242). These prior permit actions provide relevant precedent for the Commission's evaluation of the proposed project.

Installation and removal of event infrastructure will occur over a 15-day period. During the first five days of this period, stage construction activities will take place with no perimeter fencing in place and no impacts to the beach bicycle path or coastal access.

Through the subject project, the applicants propose to temporarily enclose approximately 900,000 square feet of sandy area of the Santa Monica State Beach within a temporary perimeter fence for the creation of a two-day music festival venue ([Exhibit 2](#)). The event footprint will include two performance stages, with the main stage at approximately 60 feet in height, as well as ticketing areas, security screening areas, medical services, portable restroom facilities, performer and artist compounds, guest and VIP areas, staging and production areas, and temporary access and fire lanes. All structures are temporary and will be fully removed following the conclusion of the event.

The applicants propose to provide 1,000 complimentary tickets per event day, for a total of 2,000 complimentary tickets across the two-day festival, to be distributed with priority to underserved communities and communities with historically limited coastal access. In addition, the applicants have proposed a robust Community Benefits Program that includes free coastal access and recreation programming for underserved youth and communities in the greater Los Angeles area ([Exhibit 3](#)).

During the two festival days, the Community Benefits Program will include on-site Coastal Education Zones operated by confirmed nonprofit partners, including Heal the Bay, the Office of Sustainability, Sandy Days Surf Camp, Makos Surf Camp, Santa Monica Community Gardens, r.World, Global Inheritance, and BYOBottle, providing environmental stewardship and coastal education programming to festival attendees. Attendee engagement will be driven by marketing initiatives and event incentives including merchandise and ticket upgrade opportunities designed to increase participation with partner organizations and coastal stewardship activities. Cross-promotion of the California Coastal Commission's 42nd Annual Coastal Cleanup Day on September 19, 2026 will reach all festival ticketholders, with an anticipated direct participation of 2,500 people.

During the entire 15-day temporary event period, including setup and takedown activities, private event security will patrol the perimeter of the project site and ensure that public access to the adjacent beach and Ocean Front Walk remains open to the public at all times. The applicants have retained multiple contracted security and crowd management vendors operating under a Public Safety Standard Operating Procedure coordinated with the City of Santa Monica and Los Angeles County Fire Department Lifeguard Division.

All speakers, including amplified speakers, will be directed to focus sound within the event venue and away from adjacent residential neighborhoods. Lighting will be directed landward and away from the ocean and night sky to the maximum extent feasible with warm-hued ambient lighting used during event hours only.

To reduce vehicle traffic and parking demand within the Santa Monica coastal zone, the applicants have deliberately structured their transportation plan to discourage single-occupancy vehicle travel directly to the beach and will actively promote public transit, rideshare, bicycle, and micromobility access to the event. The proposed project requires the temporary use of five beach-adjacent parking facilities, displacing a total of approximately 2,478 parking spaces during the two event days, with an additional 325 spaces on the Pier Deck and Lot 1A-South occupied for a 10-day period. Rather than

maintaining these lots as general event parking, certain lots will serve a specific operational function within a multimodal transportation hub designed to reduce the overall number of vehicles in the area near Santa Monica State Beach during the event period. Lot 1 North (250 spaces, 4-5 days) will accommodate event-related use while 963 spaces remain available to the public. Lot 1A-South (60 spaces, 10 days) will be used for load-in and artist staging. Lot 4 South Short-Term will be used in two phases: 130 spaces beginning approximately 7 days prior to the event for load-in, box office, and ADA check-in, with the remaining 995 spaces converted to bicycle valet and micromobility parking for 3 days surrounding the event. Lot 5 South Long-Term (778 spaces, 2 event days) will serve as the designated rideshare drop-off and shuttle hub. The Pier Deck (265 spaces, 10 days) will be used for artist staging, preparation, and back-of-house operations. Lot 4 South Long-Term and Lot 5 South Short-Term will remain fully available to the public throughout the event period ([Exhibit 4](#)).

The applicants have determined that maintaining the lots closest to the event as open general parking during the event would create induced congestion as motorists circulate in search of parking immediately adjacent to the event entrance, impeding access for emergency vehicles and non-ticketed beachgoers. Where lots are not required for production and staging purposes they have been converted to lower-impact multimodal uses including bicycle valet, micromobility parking, rideshare drop-off, and shuttle operations, further reducing vehicle demand for the event. No parking lots in Santa Monica's coastal zone will be advertised or promoted to festival attendees. For those who choose to drive, attendees will be directed exclusively to approximately 3,600 off-site parking spaces located outside the coastal zone at Santa Monica Airport and Santa Monica Business Park. A complimentary shuttle service from Santa Monica Airport and Santa Monica Business Park Lots will operate during the two event days. Both the off-site lots and shuttle services will also be available for the general public. Public transit, rideshare, bicycle, and micromobility options will be the primary modes encouraged for all attendees and beachgoers alike.

The beach bicycle path will be temporarily rerouted for a portion of the 10-day fenced period beginning at 12:01 AM on the Monday prior to the event weekend and returning to normal operations by approximately 5:00 PM on the Tuesday following the event weekend.

For management of the waste generated by the event, the applicants will implement the City of Santa Monica's Zero Waste Plan protocols, including a mandatory three-bin waste collection system, a prohibition on single-use plastic and packaging, and a food recovery program. Solar battery generators will serve as the primary source of power for the event. Following the conclusion of the event, the applicants will conduct a comprehensive site restoration process to return the beach to its pre-event condition.

B. PUBLIC ACCESS & RECREATION

The exclusive use of a segment of public beaches by the promoters and operators of special events, and the associated limitations on public access and recreation, has long

been an issue of prime importance to the Commission. The following Coastal Act policies protect the public's right to public access and recreation opportunities:

Section 30210 of the Coastal Act states:

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

Section 30211 of the Coastal Act states:

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

Section 30212 of the Coastal Act states, in part:

(a) Public access from the nearest public roadway to the shoreline and along the coast shall be provided in new development projects...

Section 30213 of the Coastal Act states:

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

Section 30220 of the Coastal Act states:

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

Section 30221 of the Coastal Act states:

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

Santa Monica State Beach is a unique and particularly popular segment of the California coastline, located adjacent to the Santa Monica Pier and the downtown Santa Monica commercial district and directly accessible from the Metro E Line Downtown Santa Monica Station. The beach provides the public with a wide range of free and lower-cost coastal recreational opportunities including ocean swimming, surfing, beach volleyball, fishing, and use of the regional coastal bicycle path and Ocean Front Walk pedestrian corridor. Santa Monica State Beach has accommodated temporary events in the past, including a Cirque du Soleil performance authorized by de minimis waiver, and

the Commission has found this general area appropriate for visitor-serving temporary events when adequate public access protections are in place.

The proposed project is a temporary two-day ticketed music festival that will be located on approximately 900,000 square feet of Santa Monica State Beach. During the 10-day fenced event period from setup through takedown, a portion of the sandy beach will be developed with temporary fencing and other structures that will restrict the general public from use of the event footprint and will disproportionately impact underserved populations as discussed in the Environmental Justice subsection below. During the two event days, non-attending members of the public will be excluded from the event footprint. Approximately 92 percent of Santa Monica State Beach located within City limits will remain open and accessible to the public during the event period.

In order to preserve lateral public access along the shoreline, the applicants will maintain a minimum 10-foot dry sand corridor along the western edge of the event boundary. The perimeter fence will be placed a minimum of 15 feet from the mean high tide line. The applicants have indicated that the corridor must remain primarily a pass-and-repass zone during the festival due to critical public safety requirements, as it serves as a necessary emergency access route for law enforcement, fire personnel, EMS resources, and Los Angeles County Lifeguards. Public Safety Officers will be stationed at key access locations to facilitate pedestrian movement and ensure the route remains clear for emergency vehicle access. Signage will be posted identifying the corridor as a public access and emergency vehicle route, and members of the public seeking stationary recreational beach use will be directed to beach areas north and south of the event footprint. As conditioned through **Special Condition 3A**, event staff shall not restrict public use of any area outside the event perimeter except as necessary for immediate public safety, and the corridor shall remain open to lateral pedestrian through-movement throughout the 10-day fenced event period. During the preceding five-day stage construction period, no perimeter fencing will be in place and public access to all portions of the beach, Ocean Front Walk, and the bicycle path will be maintained

There are 28 existing public restrooms located within the event area perimeter that will be closed during the two event days. The temporary closure of these restroom facilities to the general public constitutes a direct public access and recreation impact under Section 30210 of the Coastal Act, as it limits the availability of public facilities on a heavily visited segment of Santa Monica State Beach during peak daily use hours on both event days. This impact is directly offset by applicant's proposal to provide supplemental portable restroom facilities for non-ticketed beachgoers in the immediate area outside the event perimeter during the two event days, ensuring that the total publicly accessible restroom capacity in the vicinity of the event site is not reduced below what is necessary to adequately serve the non-ticketed beach-going public. The supplemental facilities shall be located in reasonable proximity to the event perimeter and shall be clearly identified through signage directing beachgoers to their locations. As conditioned through **Special Condition 3D**, confirmed locations and details for these supplemental facilities shall be submitted to the Executive Director for review and approval before issuance of the permit.

No event infrastructure will be placed directly on Ocean Front Walk. The event entrance will be sufficiently set on the sandy beach area to prevent attendee queuing on Ocean Front Walk. Crossing guards and Operations Area Managers will be stationed at the event entrance and at the sole authorized vehicle access point at the intersection of Ocean Front Walk and Seaside Terrace to maintain unobstructed public use of Ocean Front Walk throughout the event period. Only brief, controlled delays in pedestrian movement will be necessary to accommodate authorized event vehicle crossings. As conditioned through **Special Condition 3B**, the permittees shall install signage throughout the event area directing attendees to keep Ocean Front Walk unobstructed and prohibiting queuing on the pathway.

The proposed event footprint encompasses the Muscle Beach area south of the Santa Monica Pier, which contains existing public recreational equipment including gymnastic rings and a slacklining park that are regularly used by members of the public free of charge. It is anticipated that a large portion of this equipment may be enclosed within the event perimeter during the two event days. The temporary loss of access to the Muscle Beach recreational equipment constitutes an additional public access and recreation impact under Sections 30210 and 30213 of the Coastal Act. City of Santa Monica has allocated \$625,000 of the Goldenvoice License Fee to fund replacement of the public beach recreation equipment in this same Muscle Beach area, representing a long-term investment in the very recreational resources temporarily impacted by the event. The Commission finds this commitment to fund and provide upgrades to the facilities for the benefit of all future beach visitors to be an appropriate and connected form of mitigation for the temporary closure of existing equipment. As conditioned through **Special Condition 3E**, the permittees shall submit a final determination and updated site plan confirming the status of the recreational equipment, and all equipment shall be returned to its original location and condition no later than the conclusion of the load-out period.

The beach bicycle path will be temporarily rerouted beginning at 12:01 AM on the Monday prior to the event weekend and returning to normal operations by approximately 5:00 PM on the Tuesday following the event weekend. During this period cyclists will have two options: use of the California Incline detour route on dedicated bicycle lane infrastructure, or a 1.05-mile dismount zone on Ocean Front Walk for those who choose not to use the detour. Variable Message Sign boards will be placed along both approaches to provide advance notice. As conditioned through **Special Condition 3C**, the reroute is limited to the minimum period necessary for event operations.

The temporary use of approximately 900,000 square feet of Santa Monica State Beach for a 15-day period, along with the associated closure of 28 public restrooms and temporary loss of access to a portion of the Muscle Beach recreational area during the two event days, and the bicycle path reroute for a portion of the event period, represent the primary public access and recreation impacts of the proposed event. All are temporary and resolve upon conclusion or before the 15-day event period. The applicants have proposed mitigation including the \$625,000 direct capital investment in Muscle Beach recreation equipment, supplemental portable restroom facilities outside the event perimeter, and dedicated bicycle detour options. As proposed and

conditioned, the Commission finds these mitigation measures address the temporary impacts.

Parking and Traffic

The Commission has found that in many coastal beach locations a direct relationship exists between the provision of adequate parking and availability of public access to the coast. The City of Santa Monica operates approximately 12,243 paid off-street parking spaces within the coastal zone. Based on parking utilization data from September 2025, peak daily demand reached 68 percent of supply, resulting in a surplus of approximately 3,917 spaces. Average daily utilization during September 2025 was 42 percent, resulting in an average daily surplus of approximately 7,100 spaces within the coastal zone.

The proposed project will temporarily displace approximately 2,478 beach-adjacent parking spaces during the two event days, and 325 spaces of those spaces on the Pier Deck and Lot 1A-South will be occupied for a 10-day period. The temporary reduction in available public beach parking will be mitigated through a comprehensive multimodal transportation package designed around low-impact public transit rather than vehicle accommodation.

The event will not advertise or promote the use of any public beach parking lots to festival attendees. Instead, attendees will be directed to arrive via the Metro E Line at the Downtown Santa Monica Station located approximately 0.8 miles from the event site, Big Blue Bus routes along Colorado Avenue and Ocean Avenue, rideshare, bicycle, and micromobility options. A complimentary bicycle and micromobility valet, available to both attendees and the public, will be provided in Beach Lot 4 South during event hours, and a complimentary bike pass program will further incentivize zero-emission travel to the event.

For attendees arriving by rideshare, designated drop-off will occur at Lot 5 South adjacent to the main event entrance. To manage departure congestion and disperse rideshare traffic from the immediate event perimeter, rideshare pickup at the conclusion of the event will be directed to the Civic Center lot, located approximately 0.5 miles from the main event exit. For attendees who require off-site parking, approximately 3,600 spaces will be available outside the coastal zone at Santa Monica Airport and Santa Monica Business Park, with complimentary shuttle service operating to Lot 5 South from 11:00 AM to midnight on Saturday and 11:00 AM to 11:00 PM on Sunday. Off-site lots and shuttle service will additionally be accessible to members of the public. Signage will be posted at all temporarily closed beach lot entrances directing the public to alternative available parking locations within the coastal zone that remain open throughout the event period. Variable Message Sign boards will be deployed along key approach corridors providing real-time information to motorists regarding available parking locations and shuttle pick-up locations. As conditioned through **Special Condition 3F**, the applicants are required to implement the Transportation Management Plan as submitted and to ensure that beachgoers retain meaningful access to the coast throughout the event period.

Event Admission

In response to several commercial events that were to take place on the beach in a number of coastal communities, the Commission requested the Executive Director to investigate the number of possible events, and ways to assure that a proliferation of commercial and other special events would not displace the general public from use of the public beach. On January 12, 1993, the Commission's Guidelines for the Exclusion of Temporary Events from Coastal Development Permit Requirements was adopted to balance the use of the beach for short-term events, such as filming activities and sporting events and the general public's use of the beach. Over the years, the Commission has reviewed and approved temporary events and has conditioned or required either 100% free admissions or limited admission fees. If 100% free admission was determined to be infeasible, the Commission has used the provision in the Guidelines that allows temporary events to be excluded from permit requirements if more than 75% of the seating is available free of charge for the general public. In past permit actions, the Commission has exempted temporary events that provide, at a minimum, 75% of the total capacity free of charge to the public or equivalent public benefit.

The applicants have indicated that the provision of 75% free seating for the two days of the festival would not be feasible. However, the applicants and Commission staff have coordinated closely through multiple meetings to develop an alternative mitigation strategy. The applicants propose to provide 1,000 complimentary festival tickets per event day, for a total of 2,000 complimentary tickets across the two-day festival with an estimated total value of \$520,000, to be distributed to the organizations identified in [Exhibit 3](#) with priority given to underserved communities and communities with historically limited coastal access throughout the greater Los Angeles area. In addition, the applicants will provide 3,000 complimentary tickets to Goldenvoice regional events taking place in September 2026 at venues throughout Los Angeles, San Diego, and Santa Barbara with an estimated total value of \$225,000, distributed to the same priority organizations.

Beyond direct event access, the applicants have proposed a Community Benefits Program submitted to the South Coast District Office on May 11, 2026 that provides free coastal access and recreation programming for underserved youth and communities in the greater Los Angeles area. The program includes two ocean safety and surf instruction days for 250 underserved youth per day at Santa Monica State Beach and Zuma Beach through the Makos program; two sponsored youth access days for 300 underserved youth per day at the Santa Monica Pier with transportation provided through the Pier Corp Annual Youth Day; a coastal aquatics and beach safety program for approximately 200 underserved youth ages 7 through 14 from across Los Angeles County at the Annenberg Community Beach House and Santa Monica State Beach; two free public concerts at Reed Park in downtown Santa Monica anticipated to serve 5,000 attendees; a cultural activation at Historic Belmar Park anticipated to serve 5,000 participants centering Black Santa Monica history and the role of Black communities in shaping Santa Monica's coastal cultural identity; and a cultural activation at Tongva Park anticipated to serve 5,000 participants centering around Indigenous cultural identity in the downtown Santa Monica coastal zone.

The Community Benefits Program also includes on-site Coastal Education Zones during the two festival days, operated by confirmed nonprofit partners including Heal the Bay, the Office of Sustainability, Sandy Days Surf Camp, Makos Surf Camp, Santa Monica Community Gardens, r.World, Global Inheritance, and BYOBottle, providing environmental stewardship and coastal education programming to festival attendees. Attendee engagement will be driven by marketing initiatives and event incentives including merchandise, ticket upgrades, and gamification opportunities designed to increase participation with partner organizations and coastal stewardship activities. As conditioned through **Special Condition 4**, the applicants shall submit an Attendee Engagement Plan to the Executive Director prior to permit issuance detailing specific incentives and outreach methods to drive participation with the Coastal Education Zones and coastal stewardship programming to ensure that the 50,000 potential attendees meaningfully engage with educational opportunities.

Cross-promotion of the California Coastal Commission's 42nd Annual Coastal Cleanup Day on September 19, 2026 will further extend the reach of the Community Benefits Program beyond the event itself, with promotion going out to all festival ticketholders and an anticipated direct participation impact of 2,500 people. As conditioned through **Special Condition 4**, the applicants shall submit to the Executive Director prior to permit issuance a plan describing how Coastal Cleanup Day participation will be incentivized and tracked, with results to be documented in the Post-Event Compliance Report required by Special Condition 7.

The City of Santa Monica, as co-applicant, has committed to City-sponsored capital improvements within the coastal zone funded in part through Festival-generated revenue and the license fee. As discussed above, the City of Santa Monica has committed \$625,000 of the festival license fee revenue to replacement of public beach recreation equipment in the Muscle Beach area south of the Pier. In addition, Goldenvoice direct capital funding of approximately \$75,000 to \$80,000 includes ADA access improvements including semi-permanent beach access mats to remain City-owned for ongoing public use (\$25,000 to \$30,000) and beach access corridor improvements (\$50,000). Additional City-sponsored capital improvements to Santa Monica State Beach and the Santa Monica Pier, including beach restroom improvements near the Pier and Muscle Beach, lighting improvements beneath the Pier bicycle path, and Pier railing and lighting renewal, are included in the City's Capital Improvement Program for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 and will be accelerated through Festival-generated revenue. All improvements are targeted for completion no later than first quarter 2028 and will provide durable long-term public benefits enhancing coastal access and recreational opportunities for all visitors to Santa Monica State Beach.

Taken in totality, the public benefits package includes complimentary festival tickets valued at \$520,000, regional event tickets valued at \$225,000, City license fee capital investment of \$625,000 in Muscle Beach recreation equipment and Goldenvoice direct capital investment of approximately \$75,000 to \$80,000 in ADA access and beach access improvements alongside the City of Santa Monica's larger capital improvement investment, free community programming reaching an estimated 12,000 or more direct participants, and the 50,000 or more concertgoers reached through on-site

environmental education programming. The combination of these benefits are consistent with the Commission's findings in comparable temporary beach event permit actions including CDP Nos. 5-18-0142, 5-19-0246, and 5-19-0953. Considered altogether, the free tickets and programming as well as the capital improvements that support enhanced public access provide public benefits equivalent to a 75% free beach event.

Special Condition 7 requires the applicants to implement the Community Benefits Program as described herein and to submit a compliance report to the Executive Director within 30 days of the conclusion of the event.

Environmental Justice

Throughout our state's history, low-income communities, communities of color, and other marginalized populations, referred to as underserved communities in these findings, have faced disproportionate burdens in accessing the California coastline due to geographic, economic, social, institutional, and cultural barriers. Ensuring maximum and equitable public access to the California coastline (as required by Coastal Act Sections 30210 and 30213) is consistent with environmental justice principles reflected in the Coastal Act. Section 30604(h) states: "when acting on a coastal development permit, the issuing agency, or the commission on appeal, may consider environmental justice, or the equitable distribution of environmental benefits throughout the state."¹ The Commission adopted an environmental justice policy in March 2019, committing to consider environmental justice principles, consistent with Coastal Act policies, in the agency's decision-making process and ensuring coastal protection benefits are accessible to everyone. In approving the policy, the Commission recognized that equitable coastal access is encompassed in, and protected by, the public access policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act:

The Coastal Act's mandates to provide maximum access and recreational opportunities for all, and to protect, encourage, and provide lower-cost visitor and recreational opportunities embody fundamental principles of environmental justice. The Commission reaffirms its long-standing commitment to identifying and eliminating barriers, including those that unlawfully privatize public spaces, in order to provide for those who may be otherwise deterred from going to the beach or coastal zone. The coast belongs to everyone, and access cannot be denied or diminished on the basis of race, ethnicity, income socio-economic status, or place of residence or other factors listed in the Policy Statement.

Understanding that even nominal costs can be barriers to access preserving and providing for lower-cost recreational facilities is also an environmental justice imperative. This includes recreational opportunities such as parks, trails, surf spots, beach barbecue and fire pits, safe swimming beaches, fishing piers, campgrounds, and associated free or low-cost parking areas.

¹ Government Code Section 65040.12(e) defines environmental justice as "the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies."

In part, as embodied in the Commission’s adopted environmental justice policy, the term “environmental justice” is currently understood to mean equitable distribution of environmental benefits, including, in this case, equitable opportunities for coastal access and recreation. In California, equitable coastal access and recreation opportunities for all populations has not been realized due to historic and social factors, such as discriminatory land use and economic policies and practices.² Spatial analysis across demographics groups and proximity to public shoreline access points in California shows that a majority of Californians live within 62 miles of the coast, but populations closest to the coast are disproportionately white, affluent, and older than those who live farther inland.³ These disparities in proximity to coastal access across income and racial/ethnic groups also held true when the same analysis was conducted for Los Angeles County, which revealed even greater among Hispanic and Latino residents compared to other racial/ethnic groups. Loss of free or low-cost recreation opportunities also disproportionately impact low-income communities. Thus, throughout this staff report, staff use the term “underserved communities” to reference the low-income and communities of color that face environmental justice impacts of inequitable coastal access and disproportionate burdens of loss of low-cost recreation options.

Santa Monica State Beach, where the proposed event is located, is a popular coastal recreation area located adjacent to the Downtown Santa Monica Metro E Line station, which connects Santa Monica to Downtown Los Angeles and surrounding communities throughout the greater Los Angeles region. The proposed temporary exclusion of the public from approximately 900,000 square feet of public beach at this location during a 15-day period may disproportionately affect individuals from underserved communities in the greater Los Angeles area, particularly those who are transit-dependent or may not have access to alternate low-cost modes of transportation to access the coast. This impact raises environmental justice concerns with Sections 30210 and 30213 of the Coastal Act. Specifically, the exclusion of the public from a significant portion of Santa Monica State Beach in order to hold a two-day ticketed music festival does not maximize access or recreational opportunities for all people consistent with Section 30210, nor does such ticket pricing constitute a lower-cost visitor or recreational opportunity consistent with Section 30213.

Although the proposed event creates temporary impacts to coastal public access for underserved communities, as proposed and conditioned, those impacts are reduced to a less-than-significant level because: (a) the event is temporary and has been intentionally scheduled following the Labor Day holiday weekend to minimize conflicts with peak beach use season; and (b) the applicants have proposed and will implement a Community Benefits Program specifically designed to expand equitable coastal access and recreation opportunities for underserved communities throughout the greater Los Angeles area. As discussed above, the program prioritizes communities with historically limited coastal access through 2,000 complimentary festival tickets

² Robert Garcia & Erica Flores Baltodano, *Free the Beach! Public Access, Equal Justice, and the California Coast*, 2 *Stanford Journal of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties*. 143 (2005)

³ Reineman, et al., [*Coastal Access Equity and the Implementation of the California Coastal Act*](#), *Stanford Environmental Law Review Journal*, v. 36. Pages 96-98 (2016)

valued at \$520,000 and 3,000 regional event tickets valued at \$225,000 distributed to the organizations identified in [Exhibit 3](#); free coastal recreation programming with transportation provided for underserved youth from across Los Angeles County including ocean safety and surf instruction, sponsored Pier youth access days, and coastal aquatics and beach safety programming; cultural programming centering Black Santa Monica history at Historic Belmar Park and Indigenous coastal cultural identity at Tongva Park, each anticipated to serve 5,000 participants. Outreach materials and signage associated with the Community Benefits Program shall be provided in English and Spanish at minimum, consistent with the languages most spoken by the underserved communities targeted by the program. **Special Conditions 3 and 4** ensure that the paid festival event cannot proceed without the free community elements described in this staff report, require the proposed community benefit programs to be implemented as approved, and require multilingual signage to facilitate public access to and around the site for all people.

Special Condition 7 requires the permittees to submit a Post-Event Compliance Report to the Executive Director within 30 days of the conclusion of the event documenting actual participation numbers for each community benefit program, demographic data on participants where feasible, confirmation that complimentary tickets reached the organizations identified in [Exhibit 3](#), transportation provided for youth-serving programs, parking and shuttle utilization, corridor and restroom management during the event period, and any public access impacts not anticipated by these conditions. This report will also serve as an important tool for evaluating the overall success of the event and informing the feasibility and structure of any future events at this location.

As conditioned, the Commission finds the development consistent with the public access and recreation policies of the Coastal Act.

C. MARINE RESOURCES

Section 30230 of the Coastal Act states:

Marine resources shall be maintained, enhanced, and where feasible, restored. Special protection shall be given to areas and species of special biological or economic significance. Uses of the marine environment shall be carried out in a manner that will sustain the biological productivity of coastal waters and that will maintain healthy populations of all species of marine organisms adequate for long-term commercial, recreational, scientific, and educational purposes.

Section 30231 of the Coastal Act states:

The biological productivity and the quality of coastal waters, streams, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes appropriate to maintain optimum populations of marine organisms and for the protection of human health shall be maintained and, where feasible, restored through, among other means, minimizing adverse effects of waste water discharges and entrainment, controlling runoff, preventing depletion of ground water

supplies and substantial interference with surface water flow, encouraging waste water reclamation, maintaining natural vegetation buffer areas that protect riparian habitats, and minimizing alteration of natural streams

The proposed event will occur in a location where there is a potential for a discharge of polluted runoff and debris from the site into coastal waters. The spilling of fuel, debris, or waste onto the beach or in a location where it could be carried into coastal waters would result in an adverse effect on the marine environment. In order to reduce the potential for adverse impacts to water quality, **Special Condition 6** requires the appropriate storage, handling, and disposal of fuel, waste, oil, grease, and other materials and prohibits the use of single-use plastic foodware and packaging on-site. Special Condition 6 also requires the event site to be cleared of trash by the end of each day of event activities including setup and takedown and requires all debris to be removed from the project site within 24 hours of the completion of final site breakdown. The applicants have proposed to implement the City of Santa Monica's Zero Waste Plan protocols, including a mandatory three-bin waste collection system, a food recovery program directing surplus food to local nonprofit organizations, and use of solar battery generators as the primary source of event power, further reducing the potential for fuel-related impacts to coastal waters.

As conditioned, the Commission finds that the development conforms with Sections 30230 and 30231 of the Coastal Act.

D. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Coastal Act section 30240(b) states:

Development in areas adjacent to environmentally sensitive habitat areas and parks and recreation areas shall be sited and designed to prevent impacts which would significantly degrade those areas, and shall be compatible with the continuance of those habitat and recreation areas.

The proposed event would take place on Santa Monica State Beach. Coastal Act Section 30240(b) requires development that is adjacent to environmentally sensitive habitat areas and parks and recreation areas to be sited and designed to prevent significant degradation of those areas.

The proposed event is scheduled for a non-holiday weekend in September 2026, which falls within the post-breeding dispersal period for the Western Snowy Plover, a federally threatened species that occupies other portions of the Santa Monica State Beach. Commission staff requested that the applicants coordinate with the Los Angeles Audubon Society to obtain existing survey data regarding Western Snowy Plover presence and activity on Santa Monica State Beach. The applicants submitted a 2023 study, which provides results from plover monitoring conducted from 2004 through 2021 and finds that plover roosting has generally declined in Santa Monica during that period. The study identifies a proposed protection zone for the Western Snowy Plover in the

north beach area, located south of the Annenberg Community Beach House and north of Beach Lot 8 North, situated north of the Santa Monica Pier, more than a mile from the event footprint. The study does not indicate any roosting sites south of this identified location, and there are no other sensitive species known to be established within the sandy beach area of the proposed event site. However, nighttime lighting and loud noises, including amplified music, can disturb birds and other species living in the coastal and marine environments surrounding the proposed event.

In order to ensure the proposed development does not interfere with sensitive species that may be present in the project vicinity, **Special Condition 5** requires the permittees to coordinate with the Los Angeles Audubon Society to acquire current data on Western Snowy Plover observations at Santa Monica State Beach no more than two weeks before event activities and submit that data to Commission staff. **Special Condition 5** further requires the permittees to retain a qualified biologist with the appropriate recovery permits to conduct biological surveys, submit the name and qualifications of that biologist for the review and approval of the Executive Director at least two weeks before the events, and survey the project site and the area within a 300-foot radius on foot no more than 72 hours prior to commencement of any event activities. Survey results shall be submitted to the Executive Director within two days of completion. If any roosting plovers or plover nests are observed in the project vicinity, **Special Condition 5** requires that a 500-foot no-disturbance buffer be installed using wildlife-permeable fencing with appropriate educational and warning signage and that event setup shall not commence in the affected area until the Executive Director has reviewed and approved a revised site plan. **Special Condition 5** also requires all speakers to be directed to focus sound within the event venue and all nighttime lighting to be directed away from the ocean and night sky with the lowest intensity lighting appropriate to each use employed, no uplighting or event searchlights used, and all ambient lighting extinguished immediately following the conclusion of event hours each evening.

As conditioned, the development will not result in significant degradation of adjacent habitat or impacts to biological resources and is compatible with the preservation of those resources. Therefore, the Commission finds that the project, as conditioned, conforms with Section 30240(b) of the Coastal Act.

E. VISUAL RESOURCES

Coastal Act section 30251 states:

The scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural land forms, to be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas, and, where feasible, to restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas.

While the temporary event structures, including the main performance stage at approximately 60 feet in height and associated perimeter fencing, would have a temporary adverse impact to visual resources, all structures will be fully removed from the beach within the authorized 15-day period consistent with **Special Condition 1**. **Special Condition 5** requires that all nighttime lighting be directed away from the ocean and night sky and that the lowest intensity lighting appropriate to each use be employed, further minimizing temporary visual impacts. Other views of the water are easily accessed from the regional bicycle and pedestrian path and Ocean Front Walk, and lateral access along the shoreline will be maintained pursuant to **Special Condition 3**. Therefore, the project will have no long-term or significant adverse impacts on visual resources, consistent with Section 30251.

F. LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM

A coastal development permit is required from the Commission for the proposed development because it is located within the Commission's area of original jurisdiction and on state tidelands. The Commission's standard of review for the proposed development is the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act. The 1992 City of Santa Monica's certified land use plan is advisory in nature and may provide guidance for those portions of the project inland of the Commission's retained jurisdiction. As conditioned, the proposed temporary development is consistent with Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act and will not prejudice the City of Santa Monica's ability prepare a Certified Local Coastal Program.

G. CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

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

On March 12, 2026, the City of Santa Monica, the lead agency for CEQA, determined that the proposed event is categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Chapter 3, Article 19, Sections 15301, 15311, and 15323, finding that the proposed temporary music festival constitutes a minor temporary use of land with no adverse impacts to the environment.

The Coastal Commission's review and analysis of land use proposals has been certified by the Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency as being the functional equivalent of environmental review under CEQA (Section 15251(c)). The Commission has reviewed the relevant coastal resource issues of the proposed project and has identified appropriate and necessary modifications to address adverse impacts to such coastal resources. All above findings are incorporated herein in their entirety by reference. As such, there are no additional feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures

5-26-0188 (Goldenvoice, LLC and City of Santa Monica)

available which would substantially lessen any significant adverse environmental effects that approval of the proposed project, as conditioned, will have on the environment within the meaning of CEQA. Thus, if so conditioned, the proposed project will not result in any significant environmental effects, individual or cumulative, for which feasible mitigation measures have not been employed and complies with the applicable requirements of the Coastal Act to conform to CEQA.

APPENDIX A – SUBSTANTIVE FILE DOCUMENTS

- Guidelines for the Exclusion of Temporary Events from Coastal Development Permit Requirements, 1/12/1993