

APPROVED
MAR 23 2011

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

NO. 11-091

DATE March 23, 2011

BOARD OF RECREATION
and PARK COMMISSIONERS

C.D. 13

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: ECHO PARK – LAKE REHABILITATION (W.O. #EW40020A) PROJECT –
CONSIDERATION AND CONCURRENCE WITH FINDINGS OF THE FINAL
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND APPROVAL OF THE PROPOSED
PROJECT

R. Adams	_____	F. Mok	_____
H. Fujita	_____	K. Regan	_____
S. Huntley	_____	*M. Shull	<u>anf</u>
V. Israel	_____		

[Signature]
General Manager

Approved _____ Disapproved _____ Withdrawn _____

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Board:

1. Review and consider the Echo Park – Lake Rehabilitation (W.O. #EW40020A) Project Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) and associated Technical Appendices, on file in the Board Office, concurring with its certification by the City Council on December 7, 2010, and finding that:
 - a. the FEIR is adequate for the Board’s project decision;
 - b. the FEIR was completed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); and
 - c. the FEIR reflects the Board’s independent judgment and analysis;
2. Concur with the CEQA Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations adopted by City Council on December 7, 2010, on file in the Board Office, and make an additional, finding that the alternatives to the proposed project were infeasible;
3. Concur with the Mitigation Monitoring Program (MMP), on file in the Board Office, that was adopted by City Council on December 7, 2010; and,
4. Approve the proposed project as described in the FEIR.

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

PG. 2 NO. 11-091

SUMMARY:

In November 2004, the citizens of Los Angeles passed a \$500,000,000 Clean Water Bond Measure titled "Proposition O". The primary objective of all Proposition O funded projects is to protect public health by cleaning up pollution in the City's watercourses, beaches, and the ocean. The State of California has identified Echo Park Lake (Lake) as an impaired water body with the following types of water quality issues: algae, ammonia, eutrophic conditions, copper, lead, odor, polychlorinated biphenyls, trash, and pH. The broad goals of the proposed project are to improve the water quality conditions in the Lake and contribute to water quality improvements in the Los Angeles River Watershed, reduce use of municipal potable water, comply with the Regional Water Quality Control Board's intent to restore the Lake's existing and potential beneficial uses, help meet Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) requirements passed by the Regional Water Quality Control Board and other water quality targets, and implement multi-purpose solutions at the Lake, consistent with the Proposition O objectives of water supply, water quality, flood protection, water conservation, and recreation. The project has the additional goal of meeting the requirements of available funding sources, including Proposition O and Proposition K, which are instrumental in bringing the project to fruition.

The project site is located within Echo Park at 751 Echo Park Avenue. The City is proposing to implement in-lake improvements; vegetation, habitat and park improvements; and parkland structural best management practices (BMPs). The proposed improvements include a new Lake liner, approximately 4.2 acres of wetland vegetation, lotus bed restoration, a submerged partition berm to comply with California Department of Water Resources Division of Safety of Dams (DSOD) standards, a new Lake outlet structure, pump house demolition and construction of a new pump house near the southeastern shore of the Lake, new Lake water recirculation and aeration systems, low-flow runoff diversion into the Lake with the goal of reducing the use of municipal potable water, and extension of a storm drain to convey flood waters away from the site during construction. Additional BMPs include hydrodynamic separators, rain gardens, and irrigation system upgrades. Other improvements to the park include new overlook and boardwalk areas, new lighting, replacement of the path around the perimeter of the Lake, site furnishings, interpretative signage, and relocation of the Lady of the Lake statue to its original location.

For this project the Department of Public Works, Bureau of Engineering was the CEQA Lead Agency for the preparation and processing of the FEIR. The Department of Recreation and Park (Department) is functioning as a Responsible Agency because it has jurisdiction over Echo Park and the Lake. In accordance with Section 15096 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the Responsible Agency must use the FEIR to reach a project decision, make its own CEQA findings, and, if necessary, adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

PG. 3 NO. 11-091

The Findings and the Statement of Overriding Considerations state that the project would have potentially significant environmental impacts related to aesthetics, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, noise, and transportation and traffic. Most of these impacts would occur during project construction. The FEIR and MMP identify feasible mitigation measures that would reduce impacts to a less than significant level in the areas of air quality (odors); biological resources; cultural resources (archaeological resources); hazards and hazardous materials; hydrology and water quality; and transportation and traffic. However, even with implementation of mitigation measures, impacts would remain significant and unavoidable related to air quality (temporary construction emissions and regional nitrogen oxide [NO_x] emissions), and construction noise. In addition, feasible mitigation measures were not available to reduce aesthetic (visual character) or cultural resource (historical resource) impacts related to the solar lighting option. As such, the project required that a Statement of Overriding Considerations be adopted by the City Council to approve this Project.

In accordance with the requirements of CEQA, the FEIR also analyzed three alternatives to the proposed project: the No project alternative and two technical design alternatives. These alternatives were determined to be infeasible because they did not meet the water quality objectives, or resulted in substantially more environmental impacts.

A Notice of Determination was filed with Los Angeles County Clerk following the certification of the FEIR on December 8, 2010. Based on the Board's concurrence with the certification of the FEIR and the associated CEQA Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations, no further CEQA documentation is required for project approval.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

The proposed project has a budget of approximately \$84,863,313. The funding is from the following sources:

- a. The City Council approved \$84,263,313 in Proposition O General Obligation Bond Funding for the project.
- b. Allocation of Proposition K funding in the amount of \$600,000 for water quality improvements at Echo Park Lake.

Therefore, there will be no impact to the Department's General Fund.

This report was prepared by David Attaway, Environmental Supervisor, Department of Recreation and Parks and Alfred Mata, Proposition O – Project Manager, Department of Public Works, Bureau of Engineering and reviewed by Michael A. Shull, Superintendent, Planning, Construction and Maintenance Division, Department of Recreation and Parks.