

APPROVED

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

NO. 13-194

DATE July 10, 2013

JUL 10 2013
BOARD OF RECREATION
AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

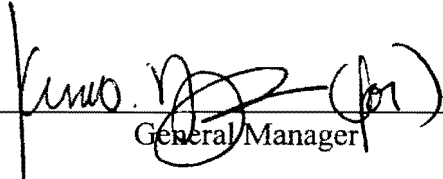
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BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: HANSEN DAM PARK - DISCOVERY SCIENCE CENTER OF LOS ANGELES - APPROVAL OF INITIAL EXHIBIT PLAN

R. Adams _____
H. Fujita _____
V. Israel _____

K. Regan _____
*M. Shull _____
N. Williams _____


General Manager

Approved 

Disapproved _____

Withdrawn _____

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board approve the Initial Exhibit Plan for the Discovery Science Center of Los Angeles, as described in the Summary of this Report.

SUMMARY:

On December 10, 2012, the Board approved a Lease Agreement between the Discovery Science Center (DSCLA), a non-profit organization based in the City of Santa Ana in Orange County, and the City of Los Angeles, acting by and through the Board, for the use, operation, and maintenance of a museum and learning center at Hansen Dam Park, proposed to be called the Discovery Science Center of Los Angeles (Board Report No. 12-327).

As detailed in the Lease Agreement, DSCLA will operate and maintain a museum and learning center (Center) at Hansen Dam Park, at the facility formerly known as the Children's Museum of Los Angeles, for a term of thirty (30) years. DSCLA is responsible for any costs associated with the construction of any necessary building and tenant improvements; the design, fabrication and installation of the Center's exhibits; and the long-term operation and maintenance of the facility. DSCLA is required to initiate the design, fabrication, and installation of the Center's exhibits by September 30, 2013, and to open the Center on or before March 31, 2015.

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Proposed Building Modifications and Exhibit Program

Pursuant to the terms of Exhibit E (“Improvements and Exhibits Agreement”) of the Lease Agreement, the plans and design for the Center’s exhibit program, when completed, must be submitted to staff for review, and presented to the Board for approval, prior to any construction taking place at the site. As discussed in Articles 4.1 and 4.2 of Exhibit E of the Lease Agreement, DSCLA is required to develop and deliver a completed Initial Exhibit Plan for the Center to the Board on or before September 30, 2013 and that said Initial Exhibit Plan shall include the concept design plan, layout within the Center, and cost for the exhibits to be developed and installed in the Center by the March 31, 2015 opening date.

DSCLA has recently completed the Initial Exhibit Plan for the Center and it has been submitted to, and reviewed by, City staff. The Initial Exhibit Plan proposes the following exhibits and improvements at the Center:

- 4D Movie Theater - Movies and shows are performed in the 4D Theater. Specific movies dedicated to young audiences will be shown daily.
- Animal Sing-along - Children follow words under a bouncing ball and sing familiar tunes with singing animals.
- Aquavator and Recreational Waterways - Tours Los Angeles’ natural underground water storage system and kayaking the Los Angeles River.
- California Friendly Garden and related games
- Children’s Literacy Gallery and Reading Room - Parent and child reading zones along with a giant read along book featuring different characters throughout the year to match the Rotating Exhibits.
- Conservation House - Walk through home with electronic scavenger hunts on energy and water conservation, water reclamation, and recycling.
- “Discovery Market” - Shopping game teaches how to make earth friendly choices when buying food. Also has a healthy choices label reading game.
- Helicopter Tours - A domed theater that explains where Los Angeles’ water comes from, and what the Los Angeles’ watersheds are.
- Nursing Lounge - Provides a peaceful zone for mothers to nurse their young children while learning about baby health facts.
- One Water - Follows the water recycling process from home to treatment plant to aquifer. Hands-on exploration of how the treatment plant works.
- Outdoor Amphitheater for stage shows and demonstrations
- Planetary Research Station - Projects global data on a (6) six foot sphere to show how our local environment is connected to the rest of the world.
- Race to Recycle - Trash sorting game teaches how to divert trash away from landfills.
- Rotating Traveling Exhibits - The Rotating Exhibit Gallery will showcase traveling exhibits featuring relevant literature characters and will change throughout the year.

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- School Readiness Resource Center - Aimed at helping parents and children prepare for school. The Center will also have books for parents to check out and take home for further reading.
- Sierra Challenge - Combines answers from the EcoChallenge and other parts of the museum with recreational activities to unlock a treasure (i.e., a treasure hunt maze).

The Initial Exhibit Plan for the Center is attached as Attachment No. 1.

The budget for the Center building improvements and exhibit program is currently estimated at \$22,400,000.00. City and DSCLA have identified sufficient capital funds needed in order to fund the proposed Center building improvements and exhibit program.

Upon approval of this report, DSCLA can commence with the development of the detailed working drawings, specifications, and final plans needed to initiate the design, fabrication, and installation of the Center's exhibits by the September 30, 2013 deadline.

Proposition K funded "Sierra Challenge" Exhibit

The Department was recently awarded a \$1,251,750.00 Proposition K 8th Cycle competitive grant for the design and construction of a permanent exhibit at the Center. The specific exhibit that was the subject of Proposition K 8th Cycle grant proposal is known as the Sierra Challenge exhibit. The current concept for the Sierra Challenge exhibit is a treasure hunt maze that children will navigate using the knowledge and concepts learned in other parts on the Center. The Sierra Challenge is included at a part of the Initial Exhibit Plan developed by DSCLA and attached as Attachment No. 1.

It is the intent of the Department to make the \$1,251,750.00 in Proposition K 8th Cycle funds available to DSCLA, through the process and procedures established in Exhibit E of the Lease Agreement, for design, construction, and installation of the Sierra Challenge exhibit.

Environmental Review

Staff has determined that the project has been previously evaluated for environmental impacts in compliance with City California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, and the proposed Lease Agreement will not cause any additional adverse environmental impacts. A Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) was adopted by the Los Angeles City Council on May 24, 2000 in connection with the Children's Museum of Los Angeles project, including the operations of the facility. A Notice of Determination was filed with the Los Angeles City and County Clerks on June 20, 2000. The proposed operation of the Center, under the terms of the Lease Agreement, will not substantially change the scope of the original operational plan of the Children's Museum of Los Angeles project, nor require any additional mitigation measures.

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Therefore, the previously adopted MND is still valid for this Lease Agreement, and no additional CEQA documentation is required for Board approval.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

The approval and execution of the Initial Exhibit Plan will have no impact on the Department's General Fund.

The costs for the design, development, and construction of building improvements and tenant improvements described in the Initial Exhibit Plan are anticipated to be funded by funding sources other than the Department's General Fund.

The costs associated with the long-term operation and maintenance of the improvements described in the Initial Exhibit Plan will be the responsibility of DSCLA.

This report was prepared by Darryl Ford, Management Analyst II, Planning, Construction, and Maintenance Branch.