

**CITY OF ALBANY  
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA  
STAFF REPORT**

Agenda Date: June 20, 2011

Reviewed by: JRL

**SUBJECT:** Endorsement of Albany Beach Habitat Restoration and Public Access Feasibility Study

**REPORT BY:** Ann Chaney, Community Development Director

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**WATERFRONT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

That the City Council review the *Habitat Restoration and Public Access Feasibility Study for Albany Beach*, and send an endorsement to the East Bay Regional Park District Board of Directors, if supported, by way of Resolution No. 2011-34 (attached).

**BACKGROUND**

In 2002, the Eastshore State Park General Plan was completed. General Plan policies related to the Albany Beach area are as follows:

- A-1: "Protect the dune habitat at the Albany Beach by introducing boardwalks and/or fencing. Boardwalks should be designed to provide for wheelchair access.
- A-3: "Explore the feasibility of expanding the dune areas behind the beach."
- A-5: "Enhance beach/Bay access for non-motorized watercraft by creating a vehicle drop-off and parking at the south end of the beach. Locate restroom facilities near the beach water access."

In 2010, the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) Board authorized hiring an environmental consulting firm to proceed with a feasibility study for Albany Beach. In late 2010 and early 2011, two public workshops were held on the study findings gathered by the consulting team, one of which was held in Albany. During 2010 and 2011, the Albany Waterfront Committee discussed this issue during several of its meetings.

On April 28, 2011, the EBRPD Executive Committee approved the project description and forwarded a favorable recommendation of the Study to the full Board of Directors for its consideration in potentially developing a restoration and public access project at Albany Beach. It is anticipated that the full Board will consider this item at their July 5 meeting. On May 4, 2011, the Albany Waterfront Committee voted to recommend that the City Council review the Study and send an endorsement to the EBRPD Board, if supported. The vote was three in favor with one absent and one abstention due to a conflict of interest.

## **DISCUSSION**

The color version of the Feasibility Study recommendation that was presented to the Executive Committee on April 28, 2011 can be accessed through the following website:

[http://www.ebparks.org/files/ebrpd\\_brd\\_exec\\_cmt\\_packet\\_04-28-2011.pdf](http://www.ebparks.org/files/ebrpd_brd_exec_cmt_packet_04-28-2011.pdf)

The EBRPD Staff based their recommendation on the following criteria: Feasibility Study and outreach efforts, the ESP General Plan, water quality compliance, property ownership and legal access, protection of public health and safety, minimizing potential environmental impacts, permit requirements and approval time, funding availability and cost/benefit value.

Features of the proposed project include:

- Wetland expansion and enhancement
- Habitat protection (fencing)
- Beach access enhancements
- Creation of oyster habitat
- Shoreline stabilization and enhancement along the Neck
- Creosote timber and inorganic removal
- Water access, parking, restroom, bike racks, exhibits
- Sand placement at beach and dune plus dune enhancement
- Picnic area plus preserve Eucalyptus
- Rough cost estimate: \$3,994,050\*

District staff has identified potential funding sources for project implementation, but has not yet secured funding for this project. It should be noted that the project description takes into consideration the future Bay Trail alignment. Implementing the project would require the acquisition of the 2.8 acres adjacent to the beach.

\*Estimates do not include costs for property acquisition, easements, permitting, design, staff time, monitoring and maintenance.

## **SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT**

Enhancing the beach and wetlands area will promote habitat protection. Providing an accessible water-oriented recreational area within close proximity to Albany residents and regional users, as well as extending the Bay Trail, will help reduce greenhouse gases.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

None.

Attachments:

Resolution No. 2011-34

Web Link Provided: [http://www.ebparks.org/files/ebrpd\\_brd\\_exec\\_cmt\\_packet\\_04-28-2011.pdf](http://www.ebparks.org/files/ebrpd_brd_exec_cmt_packet_04-28-2011.pdf)