



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION REPORT

AGENDA DATE: July 27, 2010
TO: Parks and Recreation Commission
FROM: Administrative Division, Parks and Recreation Department
SUBJECT: Mesa Lane Steps Repair/Reconstruction Project

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission receive an update on the Mesa Lane Steps Repair/Reconstruction Project

DISCUSSION:

Mesa Lane Steps is one of three public beach access stairways maintained by the Parks and Recreation Department. First constructed in 1982, the stairway is popular with residents of the West Mesa and Alta Mesa neighborhoods, including children, dog walkers, surfers, families, and others. They are also well used by other South Coast residents. In addition to general maintenance over the years, in 1991, the foundation of the stairs at the beach was repaired and the foundation footprint expanded. In 2002, the guardrail was replaced to make it compliant with the Building Code and an accessible handrail was added to the stairs. In the 20 years since the last reconstruction, the landing foundation and concrete stairs have degraded due to wear and tear from the beach tidal environment.

Repair of the lowest section of stairs became a high priority for the Department in 2007. Although work on the project was delayed a number of years due to staffing and capital project budget reductions, the Department received additional General Fund capital funds in Fiscal Year 2011 to complete engineering design and permitting.

Project Description

The project will remove the last flight of wood stairs and landing, and remove the concrete stairs and foundation. The last flight of stairs will be reconstructed using 12-inch diameter stainless steel piles at the upper landing, a concrete foundation and shorter 12-inch diameter stainless steel piles at the bottom landing. The lowest flight will also be constructed with stainless steel stairs and guard/hand rails. The existing concrete stairs will be replaced with new concrete stairs. The stairs are designed to meet criteria established by the California Coastal Commission related to projected sea rise and durability. The Coastal Commission requires that a beach structure be designed to last a minimum of 50 years. It should also be designed to withstand a 50-year storm event. Finally, it must be designed to meet expected sea rise over a 50-year

period. The total footprint of the stairs on the beach will decrease from an estimated 150 square feet to 50 square feet.

Project Design and Permitting

In December 2010, Bengal Engineering was contracted to prepare the coastal engineering study and preliminary design plans for the project. Bengal Engineering has extensive experience with coastal bluff beach access stairways, most recently for the County of Santa Barbara. The preliminary engineering design plans were submitted to the Community Development Department for environmental review and permitting on June 30, 2011. Relevant sheets from the preliminary plans are included as an attachment to this report. The project requires approval of a Coastal Development Permit (CDP) from the Planning Commission. Final engineering design plans will be developed once a CDP is approved.

Project Funding and Construction

The Department currently has enough funding to complete all design and permitting requirements for the project. Preliminary estimates prepared by the project engineers estimate that project construction costs will be \$600,000. Because the project does not have full funding, it is not known when construction will begin. Under the best case scenario, grant funds will be secured in 2012, and the project will be constructed between September and November 2012. If funding is not secured, construction will be delayed until 2013 or beyond. The project schedule is intended to avoid busy summer beach months.

When funding allows the project to move forward, the steps will be closed to the public for the duration of demolition and construction. The beach area outside of the construction zone will remain open. Nearby beach access will still be available at Arroyo Burro Beach, Thousand Steps, Shoreline Park, and Ledbetter Beach. Staff is working with the County Parks Department to coordinate site access from Arroyo Burro County Park.

Public Outreach

On July 7, 2011, the Department distributed a notice to almost 700 households in the surrounding Mesa neighborhood. The purpose of the notice was to inform area residents of the project and the scheduled public hearings. Public outreach will continue as the project progresses.

ATTACHMENTS: Preliminary Design Plans

SUBMITTED BY: Jill E. Zachary, Assistant Parks and Recreation Director

APPROVED BY: Nancy L. Rapp, Parks & Recreation Director