



# City of Santa Barbara California

## PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

**REPORT DATE:** August 18, 2005  
**AGENDA DATE:** August 25, 2005  
**PROJECT ADDRESS:** 309 Shoreline Drive (MST2005-00167/CDP2005-0004)  
Sediment Management Plan  
**TO:** Planning Commission  
**FROM:** Planning Division, (805) 564-5470  
Jan Hubbell, AICP, Senior Planner  
Michael Berman, Project Planner/Environmental Analyst

### **I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

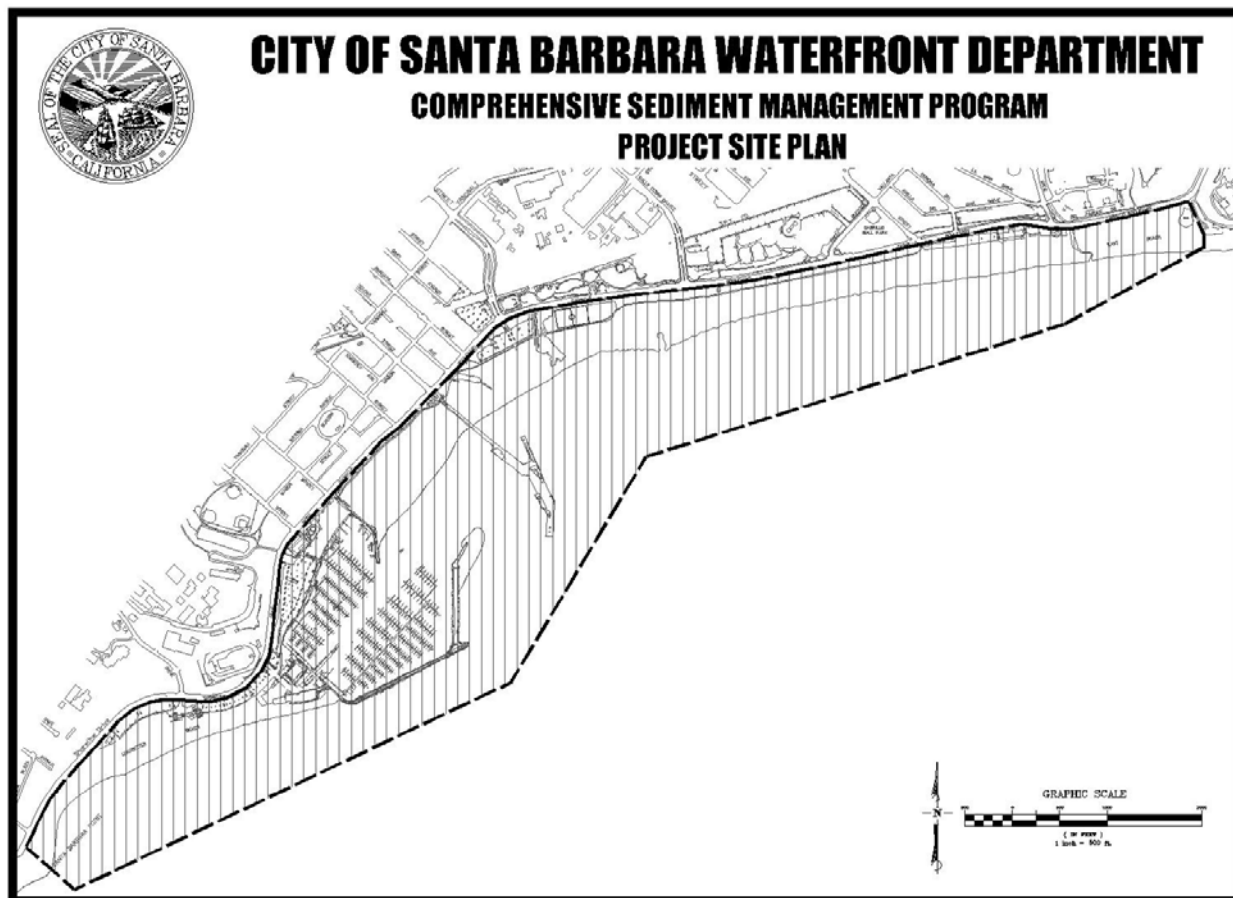
The proposal is to reauthorize a 10-year Coastal Development Permit for the Sediment Management Program. The Sediment Management Plan would include maintenance dredging of the non Federal Channel portions of the harbor area, pumping sand over the breakwater and to East Beach, and grading and grooming the sand to achieve predetermined contours on the beach from Santa Barbara Point to the Clark Estate. The project includes an enlarged berm at the mouth of Mission Creek designed to preclude Mission Creek from flowing into the Wharf. Beach grooming would be conducted to remove debris above the wrack line from the beach, includes grading on the beach to achieve predetermined contours, and has been expanded from the previous permit to extend easterly from Sycamore Creek to the Clark Estate. A detailed project description is included in Exhibit C, Attachments 1 and 2.

### **II. REQUIRED APPLICATIONS**

The discretionary application required for this project is a recommendation to the California Coastal Commission regarding the approval of a Coastal Development Permit for the Sediment Management Program, in the Coastal Commission Permanent Jurisdiction, of the City's Coastal Zone (SBMC § 28.45.009.6.p).

### **III. RECOMMENDATION**

The proposed project conforms to the policies of City's General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Local Coastal Plan and environmental impacts have been mitigated to a less than significant level. Therefore, Staff recommends that the Planning Commission adopt the Addendum and Mitigated Negative Declaration, and recommend that the California Coastal Commission approve the Sediment Management Plan, for ten years, making the findings outlined in Section VII of this report, and subject to the conditions of approval in Exhibit A.



**APPLICATION DEEMED COMPLETE:**  
**DATE ACTION REQUIRED:**

July 8, 2005  
October 6, 2005

**IV. SITE INFORMATION AND PROJECT STATISTICS**

**SITE INFORMATION**

Applicant: Karl, Treiberg, Waterfront Dept.	Property Owner: City of Santa Barbara
Parcel Number: 045-250-011, -012, 033-120-018, 033-120-015, -016,-018, -022, 017-112-001, 017-191-003, 017-271-001, 117-312-003, 017-353-001, 017-383-001, 017-191-004, 045-240-004	Lot Area: 110.1 acres
General Plan: Harbor/Beach/Open Space	Zoning: HC/PR/SD-3 (Harbor Commercial/Park and Recreation/Coastal Overlay)
Existing Use: Harbor and Recreation	Topography: Variable (beaches/harbor bottom)
Adjacent Land Uses: North – Recreation/Residential/College/Commercial      East - Residential South – Ocean      West - Recreation	

**V. ZONING ORDINANCE CONSISTENCY**

The proposed project would meet the requirements of the Harbor Commercial/Park and Recreation/Coastal Overlay Zone because it is designed to accommodate the ongoing uses in the zone. Findings are required for projects within the Parks and Recreation Zone. These findings are provided in Section VII C.

**VI. ISSUES**

**A. COMPLIANCE WITH THE LOCAL COASTAL PLAN POLICY**

Applicable policies of the General Plan, Local Coastal Plan, Harbor Master Plan, and Coastal Act, are attached as Exhibit D, Attachment C. As discussed below, the proposed project is consistent with the policies of these plans.

*Land Use Plan:* The project would be consistent with Land Use Plan designations and policies. The project site is designated as Harbor/ Beach on the City General Plan Land Use Element, and is zoned HC/ PR/ SD-3 (Harbor Commercial/ Park and Recreation/ Coastal Overlay.) The Local Coastal Plan, Component 8, describes the area land use as public beach and recreational facilities, Stearns Wharf, Harbor, and related commercial facilities. LCP Policy 12.1 identifies “Harbor Preservation” as the first priority for potential projects in the Waterfront Area. The proposed Waterfront Sediment Management Program is a necessary ocean-dependent public service activity for protection of existing public and private land uses and facilities in the waterfront area.

*Dredging:* The project would be consistent with applicable policies of the California Coastal Act (§ 30233) and Local Coastal Plan, including Harbor Master Plan (Policy MAR-2, -4), that recognize the need for sediment dredging to maintain navigation lanes and facilities, facilitate

down coast replenishment of sand, and maintain recreational beaches. The project would provide for dredging to remove sediments that build up in the harbor and waterfront areas. This sediment removal would remove hazardous shoaling, maintain safe boating navigation, facilitate down coast sand transport, and replenish recreational beaches. Dredge spoils suitable for beach replenishment would be deposited on beaches to replenish and maintain recreational areas.

Policies require that dredging and sediment management activities incorporate feasible measures to minimize environmental effects. The project incorporates measures identified by technical experts with input from resource agencies that restrict dredging activities during specified times and areas to avoid impacts to protected and sensitive wildlife species and habitat; and which require archaeological studies and/ or monitoring in specified areas prior to disturbance to avoid impacts to subsurface archaeological resources. Technical studies based on adequate water quality testing have demonstrated that the proposed dredging activities involve temporary turbidity and darkening of water only, similar to what occurs under natural processes, and would not result in significant water quality effects. Feasible mitigation measures incorporated into the project would minimize environmental impacts.

*Creation of Small Boat Quiet Water Sailing Area:* The project would be consistent with specific Local Coastal Program/ Harbor Master Plan policies (Policy DEP-1, Action DEP-1.1) that identify the creation of a small boat sailing area off West Beach to improve recreational boating opportunities.

*Visual Aesthetics:* The Coastal Act § 30251 and Local Coastal Plan (LCP) Policy 9.1, as well as Conservation and Scenic Highways Elements policies, recognize coastal scenic qualities as visual resources to be maintained and protected. The project involves no permanent structures, and entails only the continuation of periodic sediment management and beach grooming activities over a ten-year period. Potential changes from existing beach contours toward identified “ideal” contours are minimal and would not result in a negative change in visual character. Beach grooming activities would provide temporary visual enhancement of beach appearance.

LCP Policy 12.2 requires projects be evaluated with respect to the following visual resources criteria: Openness, Lack of Congestion, Naturalness, and Rhythm. These criteria were primarily intended to evaluate new structural developments and associated uses for appropriate intensity in the Waterfront Area, and are not clearly applicable to the proposed Sediment Management Program. Project activities would have a minor, temporary negative effect to public viewsheds from Cabrillo Boulevard, a scenic drive, beach areas and other park and recreation facilities. However, as the continuation of an existing activity, the project would not represent a change in the existing levels of openness with respect to coastal resources and urban facilities, or traffic congestion, or naturalness, or rhythm..

## **B. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

Staff prepared an Initial Study (Exhibit D, Attachment A), including technical consultant

studies, on water quality, biological resources and sand transport, for the previously approved Sediment Management Plan. The analysis demonstrated that, with identified mitigation measures, project impacts on the environment would be less than significant, and a Mitigated Negative Declaration determination was made. The Waterfront Department agreed to incorporate all identified mitigation measures into the project.

The Mitigated Negative Declaration identified potentially significant effects on protected wildlife species and archaeological resources. Mitigation measures with specified time and area restrictions on dredging, sediment disposal, and beach grooming activities would avoid impacts to wildlife species, including California Least Tern, Western Snowy Plover, Steelhead Trout, and California Grunion. Archaeological resource studies and monitoring would be required within limited specified areas sensitive for subsurface deposits. No other potentially significant impacts were identified; however, standard measures are recommended to minimize short-term air quality, noise, traffic and parking effects of heavy equipment use. The MND was adopted by the Planning Commission in 2000.

An Addendum to the MND was prepared (Exhibit C). The Addendum focuses on changes in the project, regulations, and environment, but also carries forward the required and recommended mitigation measures from the MND. The Addendum concludes that no new significant impacts would occur and that no new mitigation measures are therefore required. There are changes in mitigation measures designed to clarify when and where they apply and mitigation measures have been added that are recommended because they do not address significant impacts, but would be beneficial.

The project has been amended as follows:

- The area subject to grooming has been extended to the east to the Clark Estate, adding approximately 4.3 acres on East Beach, including the volleyball courts.
- The dredging on the south side of the harbor may pump dredge spoils over the breakwater and dispose of them on the beach or surf.
- The berm adjacent to the mouth of Mission Creek has been expanded by approximately 1,344 cubic yards and is intended to divert creek flows away from the wharf and harbor.

The changes in the project are minor and do not result in any new significant impacts.

The only change in environmental circumstances is that the Western snowy plover could be found on the sandspit, at the end of the breakwater, year round. The snowy plover mitigation measure was amended to extend the need for avoidance or surveys to preclude their presence, year round, prior to sediment management plan activities being conducted. The Army Corps of Engineers prior permit requirement for snowy plover surveys, prior to operations on the beaches, has been added to the Addendum. In addition, an alternative equivalent mitigation for snowy plovers on the beaches using adaptive management techniques has been developed.

Biological and Water Quality evaluations (Exhibit C, Attachments 3 and 4) prepared to evaluate the new project impacts, both determined that project impacts with proposed

mitigation measures would be less than significant.

## **VII. FINDINGS**

The Planning Commission finds the following:

### **A. ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS FOR THE FINAL MND AND ADDENDUM (CEQA GUIDELINES §15074)**

1. The Planning Commission has considered the Addendum, dated August 18, 2005, for the Sediment Management Program (MST2005-00167), together with the Final Mitigated Negative Declaration (MST1999-00329) for the original project, including public comments received.
2. The Addendum to the Mitigated Negative Declaration for MST2004-00870 has been prepared in compliance with California Environmental Quality Act requirements and is hereby adopted. The Addendum, together with the adopted MND, constitutes adequate environmental analysis of the current proposed Sediment Management Program project.
3. Mitigation measures identified in the Mitigated Negative Declaration and Addendum have been agreed to by the applicant and incorporated into the current project as conditions of approval and would avoid or reduce all potentially significant impacts to less than significant levels. In the Planning Commission's independent judgment and analysis based on the whole record, there is no substantial evidence that the proposed project will have a significant effect on the environment.
4. The location and custodian of documents associated with the environmental review process and decision for the Sediment Management Program project (MST2005-00167) is the City of Santa Barbara Community Development Department, 630 Garden Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93102.

### **B. COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT (SBMC §28.45.009)**

1. The project is consistent with the policies of the California Coastal Act.
2. The project is consistent with all applicable policies of the City's Local Coastal Plan, all applicable implementing guidelines, and all applicable provisions of the Code.
3. The project is consistent with the Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200) Policies of the Coastal Act regarding public access and public recreation.

### **C. PARK AND RECREATION ZONE FINDINGS (SBMC §28.37.025)**

1. The proposed improvements are necessary for the benefit of the community and visitors, and are compatible with the neighborhood, in terms of intensity, size, bulk, and scale.
2. The proposed improvements are compatible with the scenic character of the City.

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**Exhibits:**

- A. Conditions of Approval
- B. Applicant's letter, July 13, 2005
- C. Addendum to the MND
  - Attachment 1 - Site Plans
  - Attachment 2 - Project Description
  - Attachment 3 - Biological Resources Evaluation, SAIC, July 2005
  - Attachment 4 - Water Quality Evaluation, SAIC, July 2005
- D. Planning Commission Staff Report, June 2, 2000
  - Attachment A - Final MND
  - Attachment C - Applicable General Plan, Local Coastal Plan, Coastal Act, and Harbor Master Plan Policies