



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 568-2240

**Department Name:** Community Services  
**Department No.:** 057  
**For Agenda Of:** March 18, 2014  
**Placement:** Departmental  
**Estimated Time:** 3 hours  
**Continued Item:** No  
**If Yes, date from:**  
**Vote Required:** Majority

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** Department Herman D. Parker, Community Services Director (805) 568-2467  
Director:  
Contact Info: Jill Van Wie, Program & Project Business Leader (805) 568-2470  
**SUBJECT:** Goleta Beach 2.0 Project Selection; Second Supervisorial District

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**County Counsel Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence**

As to form: N/A

**Planning & Development**

As to form: Yes

**Recommended Actions:**

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a. Receive a report on the Environmental Impact Review (EIR) project and project alternatives presented in the Proposed Final EIR (Attachment 1) for the Goleta Beach 2.0 Project; and
- b. Select a project for Goleta Beach 2.0 and direct staff to submit the selected project as part of a Coastal Development Permit (CDP) application, including the Proposed Final EIR, to the California Coastal Commission (CCC) for approval.

**Summary Text:**

**RECOMMENDED BOARD ACTION**

In this report and attached EIR, staff is presenting the materials necessary to support your Board's selection of a preferred project at Goleta Beach County Park to submit to the CCC for approval to resolve a longstanding violation associated with unpermitted rock revetments and rock revetments with expired permits at the Park. While staff is not making a specific recommendation in this regard, your Board may select the 2014 EIR project or one of the alternatives as the project to submit to the CCC. Alternatively, your Board may combine elements from the EIR project or alternatives and assemble a new project to submit to the CCC for their review and approval. The selection of a project is a necessity due to the risk of enforcement action and potential assessment of fines by the CCC if no action is taken on moving a project forward.

## **HISTORY**

Goleta Beach County Park is a 29-acre County park that was constructed in the early 1940s using fill material placed on the natural sand spit at the mouth of the Goleta Slough. Beginning in the late 1980s and continuing into the early 2000s, the Park experienced episodes of shoreline erosion associated with intense El Nino type storm events, which resulted in a narrowing of the sandy beach and damage to Park areas, including turf, parking, and picnic facilities. The County obtained emergency permits from the CCC for the temporary placement of rock revetments along the western and central portions of the shoreline to prevent further damage to the Park. The CCC's approval of the temporary installation of emergency rock revetments included requirements for the County to develop a long-term management strategy for protecting the Park, including the consideration of soft approaches (i.e., not rock revetments or seawalls etc.) to provide shoreline erosion protection. The temporary permits from the CCC have expired. In order to resolve this situation, the County must obtain approval for a long-term solution to managing the Park. A detailed permit history is provided in the Background and Chronology sections of this Board Agenda Letter.

In 2012, the Board of Supervisors authorized preparation of an EIR for the Goleta Beach 2.0 project. The Draft EIR (DEIR) prepared for the Goleta Beach 2.0 Project was completed in June 2013 and was circulated for a 90-day review and comment period. The DEIR identified several significant impacts associated with the EIR project, primarily related to removal of the revetment and associated exposure of the upland Park facilities (e.g. lawn area, picnic tables/BBQ pits, parking, etc.) to storm damage and erosion. In addition to the EIR project, the EIR includes an analysis of five project alternatives which are intended to avoid or substantially lessen significant environmental effects of the project while still meeting most of the project objectives. These alternatives are summarized below and, along with the EIR project, are provided for your Board's review and consideration for selection of a project for submittal to the CCC for their review and approval.

## **EIR PROJECT AND ALTERNATIVES**

### *EIR Project*

The proposed project analyzed in the EIR includes the following elements (see Attachment 2 for a site plan of the EIR Project):

- Removal of the 1,200 feet of rock revetments that are either unpermitted or have expired permits;
- Relocation of major utilities and the bike path at the western end of the Park farther landward and outside of the coastal erosion hazard zone (i.e. the portions of the Park most susceptible to future coastal erosion) and protection of the utility corridor with a compacted earthen berm;
- Removal of parking lots 6 and 7 and conversion of this area to sandy beach; and
- Protection of the Goleta Sanitary District's sewer outfall vault near the restaurant and pier with a 250-foot long buried geotextile dune and cobble berm system.

The estimated cost to implement this project is approximately \$4.2 million, not including the costs associated with relocation of the high pressure gas line and reclaimed water line, which is assumed to be paid by the respective utilities.

*EIR Alternative 1 – Natural Shoreline Management*

This alternative includes the following elements (see Attachment 3 for a site plan of Alternative 1):

- Removal of 1,200 feet of rock revetments that are either unpermitted or that have expired permits, removal of parking lot 7 and placement of sand within the former parking lot 7 area;
- Relocation of utilities and the bike path in the western end of the Park outside of the coastal erosion hazard zone;
- Installation of a Dynamic Cobble Berm Program (DCBP) composed of construction of a system of geotextile core dunes and cobble berms to create a cobble sill and dune line across 2,050 feet of the beach to buffer the shoreline from extreme effects of climatic cycles and shoreline oscillation;
- Installation of a 20-foot long rock Reflected Wave Energy Dissipater (RWED) inside the eastern cove of the headland at the west end of the beach to minimize wave reflection and downcoast erosion; and
- Periodic beach nourishment under the Beach Erosion Authority for Clean Oceans and Nourishment (BEACON) Coastal Regional Sediment Management Plan (CRSMP) to supplement nourishment efforts by County Flood Control (assuming such nourishment activities receive proper CCC permits in the future, as past permits have expired).

The estimated cost to implement this alternative is \$8.4 million (excluding the cost of relocating the major utilities, which is assumed to be paid by the respective utilities).

*EIR Alternative 2 – Temporary Revetment Retention and Pilot Coastal Protection Projects with Beach Nourishment*

This alternative includes the following elements (see Attachment 4 for a site plan of Alternative 2):

- Retention of the 1,200 feet of emergency revetments located in the western and mid-section of the Park for an additional 20 years while experimental “eco-friendly” shoreline protection methods, similar to suggestions provided by Friends of Goleta Beach, are tested in gaps within those existing revetments. This would allow testing to determine the efficacy of these approaches over two decades of storm seasons while retaining protection of the Park by existing revetments. The options would be evaluated by County staff and/or contractors against existing conditions for their:
  - Disruption of wave energy and run-up.
  - Protection of Park, utility infrastructure and public recreation facilities.
  - Consistency with recreational use of the beach and level of disruption to beach users.
  - Cost and difficulty of implementation post-nourishment and over longer cycles.
  - Aesthetic impacts and effects on upper intertidal biological resources and success of new dune habitat.

The pilot projects that would be implemented for this alternative would be installed concurrently and include:

- (1) Construction of a 250-foot long buried cobble berm and geotextile core dune system extending west of the existing restaurant rock revetment, protecting the GSD sewer vault and parking lot 3;
- (2) Two sections of vegetative revetment composed of Canary Island Date Palms or other suitable species: One 280-foot section would be installed immediately west of

the cobble berm / geotextile revetment protecting the GSD sewer vault, and one 100-foot section would be installed in an unprotected area (the gap between two segments of existing emergency revetment further west down the beach); and

(3) Installation of Pressure Equalizing Modules (PEMs), which are a series of vertical plastic pipes buried in the sand that facilitate drainage of wave run-up while minimizing erosion of sand from the beach. The PEMs would be installed in three different areas: fronting the cobble berm/geotextile revetment, in an unprotected area and fronting one of the existing rock revetments.

- A single beach nourishment event of 100,000 cubic yards to supplement other nourishment programs;
- Retention of Parking Lots 6 and 7, utilities, and the bike path at their current locations;
- After the 20 year test period, the existing rock revetments, either unpermitted or with expired permits, located west of the restaurant would be removed and the entirety of the Park west of the restaurant would be protected instead with the selected pilot technique.

The estimated cost to implement this alternative is \$10.9 million to \$15.6 million, depending on which test method is selected for final implementation.

#### *EIR Alternative 3 – Westward Managed Retreat Program (2015-2050)*

This alternative includes the following key elements (see Attachment 5 for a site plan of Alternative 3):

- Westward retreat of developed portions of the Park away from the environmentally sensitive mouth of Goleta Slough and historic sandspit;
- Restoration of natural processes of the Goleta Slough mouth and the historic sandspit at Goleta Beach through demolition and removal of parking lot 1 at the Park's east end, including removal of 900 feet of legal non-conforming rock revetment and 15,000 cubic yards of artificial fill;
- Restoration of 2 acres of natural sandspit beach and environmentally sensitive coastal strand and mud flat habitats;
- Protection of coastal related and coastal dependent recreation support facilities (e.g., parking, restrooms) and utilities from shoreline fluctuation, storm damage and wave run-up over the long term through permitted retention of the 1,200 feet of existing revetments, which are either unpermitted or with expired permits, located west of the restaurant for up to 20 years or through the next major storm when they become exposed, whichever occurs first; and
- In 20 years or sooner if the revetments become exposed, relocation of the existing revetments up to approximately 40 feet landward to the seaward edge of the historic coastal process zone, and construction of a buried revetment through the existing shoreline lawn area, extending from the restaurant for 2,000 feet to the headland at the Park's west end.

The estimated cost to implement this alternative is \$22.8 million.

#### *EIR Alternative 4 – No Project, Scenario 1 – Removal of Emergency Rock Revetment*

This alternative includes the following elements (see Attachment 6 for a site plan of Alternative 4):

- Removal of the revetments with expired permits or no permits (1,200 feet total);

- No other changes would be made to the Park.

The estimated cost to implement this alternative is \$2 million.

*EIR Alternative 5 – No Project, Scenario 2 - Retention of Emergency Revetment*

The alternative includes the following elements (see Attachment 7 for a site plan of Alternative 5):

- All existing revetments, including the 1,200 feet of emergency revetments located in the west and central west portions of the Park, would be retained;
- No other changes would be made to the Park.

There would be no cost to implement this alternative.

Implementation costs with all the alternatives do not include permitting costs or on-going operation and maintenance costs.

*Matrix Attachment*

A matrix, included as Attachment 8 to this Board letter, highlights the key elements, estimated costs and expected outcomes of the different project alternatives for easy comparison. Information contained in the matrix includes the following:

- A comparison of each alternative's impact on the existing rock revetment, as well as utility and bike path relocation;
- A comparison of the immediate impacts of each alternative on available parking within the Park, notwithstanding future damage that could occur to parking in the event of a significant storm event or series of storm events;
- A comparison of each alternative's solution to protecting the sewer vault and shoreline from erosion and storm damage;
- A general cost comparison of each project based on estimates prepared by Penfield and Smith;
- Whether supplemental beach nourishment (beyond what would otherwise occur under future County Flood Control projects) is included, though beach nourishment could be incorporated into any of the project alternatives;
- Whether replacement parking is included as an element of each project alternative, though replacement parking could be incorporated into any of the alternatives and is identified as a mitigation measure in the EIR;
- The likely effect of each alternative on protecting the shoreline lawn area and associated facilities from storm damage and erosion; and
- The likely effect of each alternative on the sandy beach in terms of preserving beach width and allowing the shoreline to naturally fluctuate.

In addition, a summary table comparing the impacts of the different project alternatives for each issue area, relative to the EIR project, is included in Attachment 9 to this Board letter and is also included in Section 7.0 of the Proposed Final EIR.

**CCC INPUT**

In approving the prior CDP for a 30-month retention of the emergency rock revetments in the early 2000s, the CCC gave the County three options for moving forward towards a long term solution, including: 1) submitting an application to permanently retain the revetments, 2) submitting an application for an alternative project to address beach erosion, or 3) submitting an application to remove the revetments and restore the site. While the County initially considered requesting permanent retention of the emergency revetments in 2003, CCC staff encouraged the County to limit the request to a temporary term in order to give sufficient time to undertake substantive studies of alternatives to address coastal erosion at Goleta Beach. In approving the temporary permits, the CCC found that insufficient information existed to fully analyze either the potential impacts that the permanent retention of the revetment may have on shoreline processes and biological resources at Goleta Beach, and/or the long-term alternatives that may be available. The CCC was therefore only willing to grant the temporary retention of these revetments while these studies were being conducted. To this end, consistent with a special condition placed on the CDP authorizing temporary retention of the emergency revetments, the applications seeking a long-term solution were to include studies that assessed soft approaches to managing the beach, including beach nourishment and managed retreat. When the CCC denied the prior Goleta Beach long-term beach management project (the permeable pile groin) in 2009, the CCC as a whole did not provide any direction as to what alternative project the County should pursue. However, several of the Commissioners encouraged the County to consider a managed retreat approach.

In reviewing the latest project and the alternatives contained in the DEIR for Goleta Beach 2.0, the CCC staff suggested that the County analyze a phased retreat approach to managing the Park.

In the context of the current proposal, below is an excerpt from pages 11 and 12 of the CCC staff letter commenting on the DEIR released in June 2013; the full comment letter is included in the Proposed Final EIR and as Attachment 10 to this Board letter.

“All of the proposed alternatives in the DEIR replace the unpermitted revetment with some alternative armoring. The identified cycle of erosion and recover at Goleta Beach strongly suggests support for relocation of the utilities to a safer inland location, combined with an adaptive retreat or managed retreat for the coming decades. In order to balance the need to protect both the upland area and the sandy beach area of the park in a manner consistent with the policies and provisions of both the County’s certified Local Coastal Program and the Coastal Act, we request that the County evaluate the following alternative:

Adaptive Management/Phased Approach: Please evaluate an alternative for an adaptive managed retreat approach to: (1) immediately remove the existing unpermitted rock, (2) relocate the utilities to the utility corridor or the highway corridor, (3) relocate the Goleta Sanitary District vault and outfall pipeline landward to avoid the need for construction of new shoreline protection or relocate to a location where those structures will be protected by the existing permitted rock revetment, (4) allow for minor repair/reconstruction of existing upland areas of park that are subject to infrequent periodic erosional events, and (5) as upland areas of the park become subject to more frequent erosive events and wave action due to sea level rise, implementation of a detailed, well-planned phased approach to managed retreat that includes a ‘Managed Retreat Implementation Plan (MRIP) (discussed throughout the DEIR as a mitigation measure). Rather than immediately remove parking areas or other park infrastructure (restrooms, picnic tables, etc.), a phased plan would keep these facilities as long as possible and respond incrementally by

removing/relocating the more seaward structures first as erosion occurs over the short-term and long-term outlined in a MRIP. This alternative should include figures/site plans showing potential new locations for all facilities and structures proposed for relocation.”

Failure to act on this project in the form of obtaining a permit to remove the 1,200 feet of rock revetment that is unpermitted or has expired permits, or obtaining approval from the CCC for either permanent retention of the revetments or an alternative project, puts the County at risk of enforcement action by the CCC and the potential for the assessment of fines.

## **CCC PROCESS AND NEXT STEPS**

Once your Board selects a project to submit to the CCC for approval, County staff will package a CDP application for submittal. Once submitted, the CCC staff would have 30 days to review the application to determine whether or not it is complete for processing. Once the application is deemed complete, which could take multiple rounds of review and resubmittals depending on the nature of the additional information CCC staff requests, pursuant to the Permit Streamlining Act the CCC staff would have six months to process the application and bring it to a CCC hearing for consideration. However, the staff can request an additional three months to bring the project to hearing if the County is agreeable to such an extension. Depending on the timeframe for application completeness, obtaining an action from the CCC on the selected project could take a year or more. Once the permit application is before the CCC for action, the CCC could approve the project, deny the project, or approve the project with modifications. If the project is approved as-is or approved with modifications (and the County is agreeable to the modifications), P&D staff would then process the Development Plan and accompanying CDP locally before the County Planning Commission for approval and certification of the EIR. Any action by the County Planning Commission is appealable to your Board and to the CCC. This local permit process may require revisions to the EIR and possible recirculation depending on the project approved by the CCC.

County staff recommends processing the project in this order (CCC CDP approval first, followed by local permit approval and certification of the EIR) because the CCC has the ultimate authority in approving a project. It would be premature and inefficient to complete the local permit process first, including certification of the Final EIR, before obtaining project approval by the CCC.

### **Background:**

Goleta Beach County Park, the most visited of the County parks with approximately 1.5 million visitors per year, is a 29-acre County park located in the unincorporated area of Santa Barbara County, one-third mile east of the University of California Santa Barbara and one-half mile south of the City of Goleta. Goleta Beach Park was officially constructed in the early 1940s using fill material placed on the natural sand spit at the mouth of the slough. The County of Santa Barbara took ownership of the Park from the State of California in 1970. The Park includes approximately 4,000 linear feet of beach frontage along Goleta Bay. The facility’s recreation amenities include a 1,500-foot long fishing and pedestrian pier, safe swimming and surf fishing, boat launch and storage, a segment of the California Coastal Trail, picnic/BBQ facilities with lawn and shade trees, visitor-serving food service, nature observation, marine research and education, and full access for persons with disabilities (sand accessibility, parking, picnic and play areas). Furthermore, its location less than a mile from Old Town Goleta and Isla Vista, two dense urban areas with a high proportion of low-income

residents who use the Park regularly, implements the Coastal Act provision to provide “maximum access for all people” to coastal recreational opportunities (PRC 30210).

## **CHRONOLOGY**

As noted above, Goleta Beach Park experiences episodes of shoreline erosion from intense El Nino type storm events. From the late 1980s through the early 2000s, these storms have resulted in the loss of sandy beach area and over one acre of developed park land, including turf, recreational facilities and parking spaces. Attachment 11 to this Board letter provides photo documentation of the damage sustained. The incremental loss of sand, turf, facilities and infrastructure since the late 1980s has cost over \$10 million in County and Federal funding in repairs and temporary stop gap measures such as sand nourishment and rock revetments. Until the most recent storm in early March 2014, the Park was restored and the beach was relatively wide and sandy. The revetments have essentially remained buried, but some were uncovered during the most recent storm and are currently exposed. At the hearing on March 18, 2014, staff will provide an overview of the current status of the beach.

In December 2002, the Executive Director of the CCC issued an emergency permit (No. 4-02-251-G) for the placement of 600 linear feet of rock revetment (See Attachment 12). Prior to expiration of the emergency permit in May 2003, the County (under Board direction) submitted an application for the temporary retention of the revetment for an additional two years. The County had initially considered applying for the permanent retention of the revetment. However, CCC staff encouraged the County to only request a temporary retention of the revetment in order to give sufficient time to undertake substantive studies of alternatives to address coastal erosion at Goleta Beach as well as fully evaluate the potential impacts that the permanent retention of the revetment may have on shoreline processes and biological resources at Goleta Beach. In January 2004, the CCC approved a CDP (No. 4-02-251; see Attachment 13) for a 30-month temporary retention of the 600 feet of emergency revetments. The 30-month time frame was approved in order to give the County time to develop a management strategy for long-term protection of the County Park and was based on a supposition that insufficient information was available to permit the revetment on a more permanent basis. This CDP was conditioned to require the County to conduct various studies of erosion at Goleta Beach and effects of shoreline protection structures on coastal processes and biological resources, as well as studies of alternative solutions (e.g., beach nourishment or managed retreat) to shoreline erosion protection. The County was also required during this time period to: 1) submit an application to permanently retain the revetments, 2) submit an application for an alternative project to address beach erosion, or 3) submit an application to remove the revetments and restore the site.

In January 2005, the Executive Director of the CCC approved a second emergency permit (No. 4-05-005-G) for the installation of an additional 350 feet of revetment (see Attachment 14). In July 2005, the CCC approved an amendment to the CDP (No. 4-02-251-A1) to incorporate the 350 feet of revetment with the previously approved 600 feet of revetment for the 30-month temporary term. Finally, in November 2006, the CCC approved a second amendment to the CDP (No. 4-02-251-A2) to grant an additional 18-month extension to January 14, 2008 in order to give the County additional time to complete the required studies and submit an application for the long-term management of the Park. Pursuant to the CCC direction, the County initiated a master planning process, which included significant involvement by the public, culminating in a 2007 EIR which assessed both managed retreat and shoreline stabilization through use of a permeable pile groin and beach nourishment. In 2008,



before the expiration of the temporary CDP, the Board of Supervisors submitted a CDP application for the permeable pile groin project to the CCC for approval. This project was rejected by the CCC by a 9-1 vote in July 2009 due in large part to concerns over the potential impacts of the project on sand supply to down-coast beaches. The revetments remained in place while the CCC again directed the County to develop an alternative solution to managing the Park.

In response to the CCC's denial of the permeable pile groin project, the Board authorized preparation of a preliminary engineering study in September of 2010 for a managed beach retreat project. This project was intended to restore a deep beach and reduce the risk of damage to existing Park facilities and utilities without the need for pile groins, rock revetments, or other significant beach stabilization structures. In September 2011, the Board of Supervisors reviewed the preliminary engineering studies and directed County staff to initiate preparation of an EIR for the managed retreat project, and on May 15, 2012, the Board approved the EIR contract for the Goleta Beach 2.0 project.

## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

The master planning process associated with the prior Goleta Beach project (permeable pile groin project) included convening of an 18-member Working Group which met for over one year in an attempt to reach a consensus on a long-term solution to managing the Park. However, the Working Group failed to reach a consensus and was divided between recommending a managed retreat alternative and a combination approach of hard structures and beach nourishment.

The current planning effort associated with Goleta Beach 2.0 has provided multiple opportunities for public comment and participation associated with preparation of the EIR, in addition to the opportunities for public input at the Board of Supervisors when the project was initiated and the EIR contract approved. The Notice of Preparation (i.e. Scoping Notice) for the Goleta Beach 2.0 Project EIR was issued on June 14, 2012, with a public scoping hearing held on June 28, 2012. The DEIR was completed and released for public review and comment on June 3, 2013. The public comment period was extended to August 30, 2013, providing a 90-day comment period. During this comment period, a Public Workshop was held on June 12, 2013 to provide an overview of the EIR, project alternatives, and impacts and mitigation measures, and a public hearing was held on July 23, 2013 to accept comments on the DEIR. Comments received during the public comment period for the DEIR included written comments from 172 agencies, organizations, and individuals; oral testimony from 25 individuals; 35 petition signatures; and 379 postcards.

### **Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

Budgeted: Yes; the CDP process and a portion of the potential construction costs are funded.

### **Fiscal Analysis:**

\$1,502,322 towards the Goleta Beach 2.0 project (Project) has been funded via a grant (#F12AF00307) from the United States Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP) which was officially awarded to the County of Santa Barbara on April 18, 2012; approximately \$630,000 has been committed to date. The grant for the Project is specifically for

coastal access, beach nourishment, partial managed retreat, and recreation enhancement to provide for the long term sustainability of the Park. The CIAP grant expires on December 31, 2015.

Ongoing routine maintenance costs would remain the same with each Alternative, but storm damage repair costs for each Alternative will vary depending upon the severity of damage; the repair costs associated with Alternatives 3 and 5 would likely be minimal, Alternative 2 repair costs would likely be slightly higher, Alternative 1 would likely have moderately high repair costs, and Alternative 4 would likely have substantial repair costs.

**Special Instructions:**

Please provide a copy of the minute order to Jill Van Wie, Community Services Department (CSD) – Parks Division.

**Attachments:**

- Attachment 1: Link to Proposed Final EIR: <http://www.sbcountyplanning.org/projects/11DVP-00000-00016/index.cfm>
- Attachment 2: EIR Project Site Plan
- Attachment 3: EIR Alternative 1 Site Plan
- Attachment 4: EIR Alternative 2 Site Plan
- Attachment 5: EIR Alternative 3 Site Plan
- Attachment 6: EIR Alternative 4 Site Plan
- Attachment 7: EIR Alternative 5 Site Plan
- Attachment 8: Project Alternatives Matrix
- Attachment 9: Impact Comparison Table of Alternatives
- Attachment 10: CCC staff DEIR comment letter
- Attachment 11: Photographic Documentation of Goleta Beach Storm Events and Park Loss
- Attachment 12: CCC Emergency Permit No. 4-02-251-G
- Attachment 13: CCC Coastal Development Permit No. 4-02-251
- Attachment 14: CCC Emergency Permit No. 4-05-005-G