



## INFORMATION REPORT

DATE: October 7, 2013

TO: City Manager  
DEPARTMENT: Economic Development  
SUBJECT: Santa Cruz Wharf Master Plan and Engineering Report Update

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APPROVED: DATE:

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In October 2012 the City accepted an \$850,000 grant from the US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration to develop a Santa Cruz Wharf Master Plan and Engineering Report. The City provided a local match in the amount of \$170,000 from the Parks and Recreation Facilities Tax Fund for a total project budget of \$1,020,000.

The Master Plan component focuses on identification of economic development opportunities for the Wharf, establishment of design and development standards for existing and new buildings, re-visioning of public spaces, enhancement of recreational use and public access, integration of educational and scientific resources and assets, evaluation and recommendations related to public safety, and the identification and preparation of studies and permits necessary to implement the recommendations, initiatives, and best practices resultant from the Wharf Master Plan.

The Engineering Report encompasses a comprehensive engineering inspection and structural evaluation of the Wharf's pilings, support structures, and decking; an evaluation of the existing boat landings, roadways, pedestrian walkways, and parking areas; analysis of sewer, refuse handling, lighting, and fire suppression systems; identification and evaluation of mitigation measures designed to reduce environmental impacts related to climate change and severe seismic and weather events; an evaluation of the potential for a new landing capable of handling research and passenger vessels; and the preparation of plans and specifications for the correction of identified structural deficiencies and recommended improvements to the Wharf's infrastructure and systems.

ROMA Design Group was selected to lead the Wharf Master Plan and Engineering Report effort and began work on the project in July 2013. The Master Plan scope of work is divided into four parts: 1) an extensive early public engagement process through a series of meetings with Wharf tenants, neighbors, businesses, civic groups, educational and scientific organizations, recreational and marine oriented interests and other stakeholders in the community as well as the Coastal Commission staff and city departments; 2) incorporation of preliminary observations and findings into a draft format; 3) milestone meetings with the public and city departments in which findings, potentials, and recommendations are presented for additional input and comment; and

4) Planning Commission and City Council briefings culminating in a final presentation to the City Council in January 2015. A list of Timelines and Events Accomplished to date is attached as Exhibit A.

ROMA's co-consultant charged with responsibility for the Engineering Report is Moffat & Nichols, a firm with prior experience with the Santa Cruz Wharf. Underwater inspection of the approximately 4,700 Wharf pilings and evaluation of the Wharf deck and supporting structures commenced in August 2013; initial indications are that the pilings and deck support structures are in serviceable condition. Additional structural analysis is being provided by local firm Mesiti- Miller Engineering. Work on the Engineering Report components listed above continues and a draft report is expected in February 2014.

Although still in the early stages of the Wharf Master Plan and Engineering Report project, several interesting preliminary concepts have come to the forefront and have been selected for further analysis and consideration. The creation of a 24' wide pedestrian and bike promenade on the east side of the Wharf would increase and enhance public access to the Wharf and the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, and would reduce or eliminate pedestrian use of the Wharf roadway which is a current safety concern. The promenade would also serve as access for emergency vehicles on peak summer days in which Wharf events tend to constrict traffic flow. Construction of the promenade would also serve to increase the lateral stability and resiliency of the Wharf. Pedestrian and bike amenities such as wood decking, benches and bike racks, together with marine-oriented interpretative displays and signage, gives rise to the concept of the proposed promenade serving as a new half-mile regional park on the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. Early conversations with Coastal Commission staff regarding the promenade have been favorable in the context of creating additional public space and access to visitor and resident-serving coastal resources.

Consideration is also being given to relocating the Wharf parking control booths further out onto the Wharf, to where the Wharf widens to the east. This would serve to reduce or eliminate traffic stacking into the Beach Street intersection on peak summer days and would remove the existing visual barrier to the Wharf that the current booths project. Also proposed is a parkcard or pay-in-place system similar to those used in downtown parking garages and surface lots which would eliminate cash transactions at the booths and reduce vehicle egress times.

Very preliminary discussions are also occurring regarding a potential redesign of the two-lane traffic roundabout slated for the Wharf/Beach Street intersection. Changing to a single lane design would enhance pedestrian and bike safety through the roundabout, enable linkages and connections between the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Exploration Center, the Wharf, and the Beach Area, and would also serve to create a stronger sense of arrival and a more inviting gateway to the Wharf. Dialog continues with ROMA, its traffic subconsultant, and Public Works staff regarding issues and impacts associated with the parking and roundabout concepts.

Yet another interesting concept revolves around replacing the trash and recycling system currently in use on the Wharf. Heavy city refuse and recycling vehicles contribute to deterioration of the asphalt road surface on the Wharf, which results in negative water quality impacts as

surface water drains through the cracked asphalt into the Monterey Bay. Repair of damage to the Wharf roadway caused by heavy refuse vehicles also has a significant impact on the Wharf's operating budget.

ROMA is proposing the installation of a clean, technologically advanced, sustainable, and cost effective pneumatic refuse and recycling system. Users deposit trash and recyclables in secure, sealed load points or stations located within the Wharf businesses and at strategic locations on the Wharf itself, and high speed air moves the material through a stainless steel piping system mounted under the Wharf to a central collection point where it is automatically sorted, stored for pick-up, or converted to energy.

Eliminating heavy refuse and recycling vehicles will serve to reduce the damage to the Wharf roadway and the resultant introduction of pollutants into the marine environment. Removal of the existing refuse and recycling enclosures from the Wharf will eliminate visual blight, rodent and insect infestations, and offensive odors associated with the enclosures. Additional parking spaces will also be gained from the elimination of the enclosures. The pneumatic system is modular in design and implementation, which could result in economies of scale with the incorporation of waste and recycling streams from the Boardwalk, the newly proposed La Bahia hotel, the Wastewater Treatment Plant, and adjacent commercial businesses. As with the parking and roundabout concepts described above, issues, impacts, and costs associated with this innovative and green waste handling system continue under analysis by ROMA and city staff.

More information about the Wharf Master Plan and Engineering Report, including preliminary concept sketches and graphics, can be found on the Wharf Master Plan and Engineering Report Resource Page online at <http://www.cityofsantacruz.com/index.aspx?page=1914>.

Please contact Norm Daly, project manager for the Wharf Master Plan and Engineering Report, at 831-420-5109 or [ndaly@cityofsantacruz.com](mailto:ndaly@cityofsantacruz.com) for more information or answers to questions.

Submitted by:

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Attachment: Exhibit A - Timeline and Events Accomplished