



R-26

Date: July 24, 2007

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Patrick O'Donnell, Fourth District
Councilmember Rae Gabelich, Eighth District

Subject: **Breakwater Study Funding**

The Long Beach breakwater was built in the 1940s and is one of three offshore barriers that protect the Port of Long Beach. The breakwater also served to safeguard the Long Beach Naval base. In the past decade, numerous questions have been posed regarding the breakwater's role in water pollution. While many have called for a reconfiguration of the breakwater, such a process would require a two-phase study.

On July 5, 2005, the City Council voted to request the Federal government to conduct a first-phase Reconnaissance Study to determine if there was an interest in a reconfiguration study of the Long Beach breakwater. A Federal appropriation request was made to fund this study. This appropriation request, as well as attempts to secure grants to fund the study, has been unsuccessful. Supporters of a Reconnaissance Study have cited the availability of Tidelands funds as a potential source of funding.

Water quality issues are at the forefront of the City's environmental challenges. There are several groups focused on addressing these serious issues, such as the City's annual Beach Report Card. An environmental assessment of the breakwater may show that our beach water quality would be significantly improved by reconfiguration.

A study should likely focus on the reconfiguration of the breakwater, as opposed to a full removal, which may cause damage to homes and other structures. Reconfiguration could involve several scenarios, including removing sections or lowering the height of the breakwater. The Reconnaissance study is vital in determining the City's next steps.

Recommendation:

Request City Manager to allocate funds up to \$100,000 from the Tidelands Fund for a Long Beach Breakwater Reconnaissance Study.