


Memorandum

Date: December 12, 2006
To: Mayor and City Council
From: Suja Lowenthal, Second District 
Subject: Queen Mary Property Visioning Process

REQUESTED ACTION:

Respectfully request the City Manager coordinate a visioning process for the restoration of the Queen Mary and development of its surrounding properties that includes a City Council study session and an outline of the process for reaching consensus on guiding principles and goals for use of the site.

Request the City Manager to engage the Downtown Visioning Committee in the Queen Mary visioning process to encourage complementary planning and development within the harbor area.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On December 9, 1967, the Queen Mary arrived in Long Beach after a 31 year sailing career that included 1001 crossings of the Atlantic Ocean, six years of service in World War II as a troopship transporting 765,429 military personnel to and from the United States, and host to stars and heads of state such as Sir Winston Churchill, Spencer Tracy, Clark Gable, Mary Pickford and Greta Garbo. Considered by many to be the grandest ocean liner ever built, "The Grey Ghost," as she was fondly called, combined the graceful lines and architecture of traditionalism *and* modernity inside and out – a rare quality missing from other great ocean liners of her time. During her tenure in Long Beach, the Queen Mary has been a centerpiece of our harbor and tourist industry, serving as a hotel and attraction for visitors from around the world.

With the recent settlement between the City of Long Beach and Queen's Seaport Development, Inc. (QSDI), we have taken the first step toward resolving issues involving the bankruptcy court, allowing us to look forward to the opportunities afforded with the Queen Mary and the 45 acres surrounding it. In order to maximize our opportunities, we need to begin with a plan for reaching consensus followed by development of principles and goals for the site. The City's vision for the Queen Mary and its surrounding properties will enable interested developers to draft proposals celebrating the historical significance of the ship while enhancing the public access of its surrounding properties.