



CITY OF LONG BEACH

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION & MARINE



October 7, 2008

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HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve a designation of Long Beach as the "Aquatics Capital of America."
(Citywide)

DISCUSSION

The Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine, through its Marine Bureau, has been involved with a committee formed by a number of interested residents, with the goal to encourage the designation of the city as the "Aquatics Capital of America." The philosophy of this group was to celebrate the aquatic facilities, history, programs, and events in the city, with the objective to enhance the city by increasing city pride, attracting business and tourism, and increasing national visibility of the city.

Over the past two years, this committee has accumulated an inventory of city aquatic assets, and developed a list of aquatic programs, events, attractions, and commercial enterprises. Key members of this committee have met with City management, elected officials, and key city stakeholders, such as the Long Beach Convention and Visitors Bureau, to explain the proposal, which has been well received.

The committee has developed a formal proposal (Attachment A). The following excerpts provide additional detail and explanation regarding the proposal:

- Long Beach has an extraordinary number of aquatic assets and activities. The numbers and diversities of people and businesses benefiting from those assets and activities are also extraordinary.
- There is a good possibility that Long Beach's aquatic position is unique, and that Long Beach has become the *de facto* "Aquatics Capital of America."
- It is time to recognize and understand those aquatic assets and activities, to quantify their scope and the benefits they provide, and to support linkages between them that directly increase benefits to the city's businesses, its diverse communities, and its water-related organizations.

- The Aquatic Concept should visibly and publicly be aimed at:
 1. Enhancing the city's reputation as a tourist destination;
 2. Providing increased and stable employment opportunities for the hospitality and support businesses that are essential for aquatic events;
 3. Expanding water-related educational and recreational opportunities for young people and members of the city's diverse communities;
 4. Integrating educational and training programs for the youth of the Greater Long Beach area, based on water-related employment opportunities;
 5. Helping provide expanded audiences and on-scene support for corporate sponsors of aquatic events, and facilitating the integration of technology, such as posting results on-line or streaming audio and video of events;
 6. Enhancing the significance and visibility of aquatic training programs and events in support of young people aspiring to amateur or professional sport prominence; and
 7. Emphasizing the need for good air and clean water essential for successful use of aquatic assets and events.
- Long Beach has an abundance of aquatic assets and related activities. From Alamitos Bay to the Port of Long Beach, there are miles of sheltered waterways filled with boats from sabots, to fishing boats, to rowing shells, to pleasure boats capable of worldwide cruising, to ocean liners and cargo vessels. Shoreline activities range from kite boarding, to beach games on the sand, to kiddie activities on Mother's Beach, to model sailboat racing in El Dorado Park, to educational and recreational programs at the Aquarium of the Pacific. Inland, there are swimming and water polo programs at schools and community swimming pools. And, with Long Beach facing the San Pedro Channel and Catalina Island, there are multitudes of offshore activities for fishing, diving and, of course, highly competitive racing of sail and powerboats.

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Gary J. Anderson on August 22, 2008, and Budget Management Officer Victoria Bell on August 22, 2008.

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

October 7, 2008

Page 3

TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

City Council action is requested on October 7, 2008, in order to continue with this process.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact to the City relative to this item.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Approve recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,



PHIL T. HESTER
DIRECTOR OF PARKS, RECREATION AND MARINE

PTH:MS
Attachment

APPROVED:



PATRICK H. WEST
CITY MANAGER

ATTACHMENT A

LONG BEACH:
THE AQUATICS CAPITAL OF AMERICA
PROPOSAL

Presented by: Tom Shadden

ESTABLISHING LONG BEACH AS THE AQUATICS CAPITAL OF AMERICA

Long Beach has an extraordinary number of aquatic assets and activities. The numbers and diversities of people and businesses benefiting from those assets and activities are also extraordinary.

There is a good possibility that Long Beach's aquatic position is unique, and that Long Beach has become the *de facto* "Aquatics Capital of America." This position should be exploited.

It is time to recognize and understand those aquatic assets and activities, to quantify their scope and the benefits they provide, and to support linkages between them that directly increase benefits to the city's businesses, its diverse communities, and its water-related organizations. It is time to integrate those aquatic assets and activities in such a way that Long Beach can be recognized as the indisputable Aquatics Capital of America.

The Aquatic Concept should visibly and publicly be aimed at:

1. Enhancing the city's reputation as a tourist destination;
2. Providing increased and stable employment opportunities for the hospitality and support businesses that are essential for aquatic events;
3. Expanding water-related educational and recreational opportunities for young people and members of the city's diverse communities;
4. Integrating educational and training programs for the youth of the Greater Long Beach area, based on water-related employment opportunities;
5. Helping provide expanded audiences and on-scene support for corporate sponsors of aquatic events, and facilitating the integration of technology, such as posting results on-line or streaming audio and video of events;
6. Enhancing the significance and visibility of aquatic training programs and events in support of young people aspiring to amateur or professional sport prominence; and
7. Emphasizing the need for good air and clean water essential for successful use of aquatic assets and events.

AN ABUNDANCE OF AQUATIC ASSETS AND ACTIVITIES

Long Beach has an abundance of aquatic assets and related activities. From Alamitos Bay to the Port of Long Beach, there are miles of sheltered waterways filled with boats from sabots, to fishing boats, to rowing shells, to pleasure boats capable of worldwide cruising, to ocean liners and cargo vessels. Shoreline activities range from kite boarding, to beach games on the sand, to kiddie activities on Mothers' Beach, to model sailboat racing in El Dorado Park, to educational and recreational programs at the Aquarium of the Pacific. Inland, there are swimming and water polo programs at schools and community swimming pools. And, with Long Beach facing the San Pedro Channel and Catalina Island, there are multitudes of offshore activities for fishing, diving and, of course, highly competitive racing of sail and powerboats.

Long Beach's aquatic assets and activities are many and diverse; a partial list includes:

- Aquarium of the Pacific
- Queen Mary
- Beaches
- Swimming/Diving
- Marinas
- Launch Ramps
- Yacht Clubs
- Rowing
- Boating Education and Training
- Sea Festival
- Fishing
- SCUBA Diving
- Commercial Boating Opportunities
- Cruise Lines
- Boat Shows
- Shipping and Transportation
- Desalination
- Wetlands

Aquarium of the Pacific

Aquarium of the Pacific has become recognized as a center for scientific discovery and played host to numerous national convocations on Ocean Literacy and other such topics. Recently, the Aquarium of the Pacific sponsored a project titled "Catch a Wave," which was designed to focus on Southern California Surfing Culture, while explaining the science behind waves.

The Aquarium of the Pacific attracts some 1.4 million attendees per year, and reaches out to nearly 200,000 K-12 children via 30 classroom and theater programs. An additional 46,000 children are accessed through an "Aquarium on Wheels," and the facility provides continuing education programs to teachers at every grade level on water and energy conservation.

Queen Mary

Attracts some 1.5 million attendees per year for entertainment and educational events.

Beaches

Approximately 11 miles of beaches and accessible waterways provide recreation and sporting venues for nearly one million people per year ranging from simple fun on the beach to competitive games, to lifeguard competitions attracting over 5,000 participants and spectators.

Swimming

Three City pools (Belmont*, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Silverado) serve over 200,000 individuals with swim lessons, aquatic classes, and recreational and competitive swimming under programs of the City's Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine, as well as school and neighborhood pools with active water polo competitions; included are swim programs to insure kids are water safe.

*The Belmont Plaza Pool has hosted international, national, and PAC-10 swimming and water polo championships over the years.

Marinas

Dockage for 3,800 boats in City marinas, for 3,000 boats in private slips, and serves the interests of more than 12,000 people and their guests.

Launch Ramps

Six public launch ramps for trailer boats handle over 45,000 launches per year.

Yacht Clubs

Five yacht clubs with clubhouses, and several without clubhouses, serve more than 2,500 members, plus their families and guests, providing active youth programs, and well over 100 regattas per year, including the renowned Race Week and the International Congressional Cup, which attracts worldwide media coverage; these clubs welcome visiting international sailors.

Rowing

The Long Beach Rowing Association, one of the premier centers in the world, serves over 300 adults for recreational and competitive rowing, approximately 120 rowers from 14 middle and high schools (300 in summer camp rowing), approximately 100 competitive rowers from CSULB, and an Adaptive Rowing Program that benefits mentally and physically disabled individuals.

Boating Education and Training

The United States Sailing Center provides small-boat sail training, coaching, and competition for over a dozen high schools, beginning and advanced classes for keelboat sailing, training for Olympic sailing hopefuls, sailing experiences for disabled individuals from nine medical and treatment organizations, and Youth-at-Risk sailing for individuals from 12 organizations, shelters and schools;

The Leeway Sailing and Aquatics Center serves over 3,000 children annually in beginning and advanced small-boat sailing, board sailing, kayaking and canoeing.

The Long Beach Power Squadron provides seamanship, piloting and navigational education to some 100 boaters per year.

Sea Festival

The Sea Festival of Long Beach organizes, coordinates, and/or supports over 100 events including, the Catalina Power Boat Ski Race, the Transpacific Yacht Race, the Mayor's Cup sailing regatta, the Dragon Boat Races, AVB Pro Beach Volley Ball, the Beach Sandcastle Building Competition, and the Long Beach Spring Nationals - Circle Boat Races, plus numerous other events.

Fishing

In addition to countless individuals using private boats for fishing, there are three commercial charter boats that provide fishing opportunities to over 80,000 customers per year. Long Beach offers several shore accessible fishing venues. The Southern California Tuna Club sponsors an annual fishing tournament for local youth during the summer.

SCUBA Diving

The Southern California SCUBA Show is held each March at the Long Beach Convention and Entertainment Center. Seven dive charter boats service SCUBA and free-style diving clubs and individuals.

Commercial Boating Opportunities

Twelve commercial organizations providing boating opportunities to well over 20,000 individuals annually ranging from gondola rides, to dinner cruises, to tall-ship expeditions, to electric boat rentals, to bed and breakfast, to whale watching.

Cruise Lines

Carnival Cruises operates two ships with over 300,000 passengers traveling annually to Mexico on three, four, and seven-day cruises.

Boat Shows

The Southern California Marine Association provides information and boarding opportunities to over 40,000 people annually at their boat show in Rainbow Marina and the Long Beach Convention and Entertainment Center.

Shipping and Transportation

The Port of Long Beach handles nearly \$100 billion in goods and agricultural products each year, provides nearly 30,000 jobs in Long Beach with \$14.3 billion in regional wages and salaries, which results in nearly 1.4 million jobs nationwide. Aside from generating revenues for Long Beach, the Port has a 20-year record of environmental protection programs, which are featured in their Green Port Policy. Clean air and water are two of six basic program elements of the Green Port Policy.

Desalination

Advanced Research: The Long Beach Water Department is developing a practical and environmentally responsible approach to ocean desalination. It is the only such research and development program in the United States being funded by the federal government.

Wetlands

The Los Cerritos Wetlands Stewards is a non-profit organization that specializes in restoring, maintaining, enhancing, managing and researching an assortment of urban wetland, marine and upland habitats.

In 2006, Long Beach took its first major step in protecting and restoring 66 acres of the Los Cerritos Wetlands, located at the mouth of the San Gabriel River.

A complete list of aquatic assets and activities would be much longer, and might even be impossible to complete because new ones seem to appear regularly as people find new ways to take advantage of Long Beach's location and access to the water.

Regardless of the exact number, the significant issue now is to develop methods of disseminating and promoting these aquatic assets and activities in a way that will nurture their growth and expand their benefits to the entire city.

Long Beach, The Aquatics Capital of America

Aquatic: Activities and sports performed in and around the water

- Aquarium of the Pacific
- Queen Mary
- Port of Long Beach
- Boating
 - Sail
 - ◆ 1984 Yachting Olympics
 - ◆ Congressional Cup – The Nations Premier Match Racing Regatta
 - ◆ 2007 Olympic trials – 470 and Sailboard classes
 - Power Boating – Water Skiing
 - Rowing – 1932 Rowing Olympics
 - Paddling
 - Kayaking
 - Dragon Boats
 - Outrigger Canoeing
 - Sail and Kite Boarding
- Beach Volleyball
- Swimming
 - 2004 Olympic Trials
- Water Polo
- Fishing and Diving
- Other – Harbor Cruises, Aqua Link,

Infrastructure

- Marinas – Largest Municipal Owned in the US
- Yacht Clubs
- Sailing Clubs - CSULB
- Municipal Sail and Swim programs
- U.S. Sailing Center, Long Beach
 - High School
 - Collegiate
 - Disabled
 - At-Risk Youth
 - Olympic
- Rowing Center
 - High School
 - Collegiate
 - Olympic
 - Recreational
- Long Beach Marine Institute

Annual Major Events

- Beach Volleyball
- Sailing Regattas
- Congressional Cup
- Ficker Cup
- Mayor's Cup
- Long Beach Race Week
- Olympic Class Regatta
- Transpacific Yacht Race
- Rowing Regattas
- Swimming
- Water Polo
- Sea Festival
- Long Beach to Catalina Water Ski Race
- Dragon Boat Regatta