



Legislation Text

File #: 13-0122, **Version:** 1

Recommendation to authorize City Manager to proceed with the entitlement phase of the proposed Long-Term Belmont Pool Revitalization Project (Project), and with the installation of a temporary outdoor pool or other interim option. (District 3)

On January 13, 2013, the City's Belmont Pool Natatorium (Belmont Pool) was temporarily closed due to a Structural and Seismic Evaluation (Evaluation) that concluded the facility (Exhibit A: Location Map) was seismically unsafe in the event of a moderate earthquake. Ensuring life-safety was a key objective for conducting the Evaluation. The Evaluation was performed by Paul KT Yeh, Structural Engineer, of TMAD Taylor Gaines (Exhibit B). The City's Building Official has reviewed the Evaluation, inspected the facility, and determined that the Belmont Pool, in its current condition, is a substandard building that is seismically and structurally unsafe. The City Engineer also reviewed the Evaluation and concurs with the Building Official's determination. The Belmont Pool was constructed in the late 1960's and met all applicable building codes at the time. However, based in part on current building codes, the Belmont Pool is now in need of either a major seismic retrofit and other upgrades, or a complete reconstruction. For over 40 years, the Belmont Pool has fulfilled a critical role in the City's development, providing young children, adolescents, adults and seniors with diverse recreational and competitive swimming opportunities.

Recommended Long-Term Project

In 2008, the Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine hired a consultant to help develop a cost estimate to retrofit and upgrade the existing Belmont Pool and conduct community outreach. The cost for such retrofit and upgrade was estimated at \$44 million for construction alone; however, a report was never finalized because of budget constraints. In February 2012, the City Council appropriated funding to reinstate the planning process for the Project. Since then, staff has carefully considered historical information, held discussions with staff from the California Coastal Commission, reassessed the facility's condition, held several focused meetings with recreational and competitive users, and is now recommending approval to proceed with the entitlement and environmental review of the proposed Project (Exhibit C).

Staff from the California Coastal Commission has notified the City that any replacement facility must provide broad based recreational opportunities, and consequently, expressed their reluctance to recommend approval of a competitively-focused aquatics facility. As such, the proposed Project carefully balances broad based recreation and specialized competitive opportunities in an indoor Natatorium in the approximate location of the existing Belmont Pool, and a new outdoor pool immediately north of the existing facility. The proposed Project is intended to host all competitive swim and water polo events that are currently hosted (local/regional/national), while providing added water space to enhance the experience of all users and potentially attracting additional events. Examples of local, regional, and national (NCAA) swim and water polo competitions that are intended to be accommodated by the proposed Project include: California Interscholastic Federation, Pac-12, Mountain Pacific Sports Federation Conference, and Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference. While the existing Belmont Pool does not meet international standards for major events, the proposed Project will meet such standards for water polo and 50-meter, 25-meter and 25-yard swimming.

The preliminary cost estimate for the proposed Project is \$54 million, inclusive of construction and soft costs, including recreational diving boards. Additional water space to accommodate taller competitive diving platforms (5, 7.5 and 10 meters) would increase the cost by \$8.1 million. If City Council supports the proposed Project, the next step is to initiate the proposed Project's entitlement phase, which includes California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) clearance and any required local discretionary approvals such as Site Plan Review.

Interim Options to Provide Pool Facilities

In light of the results of the TMAD Taylor Gaines Evaluation, the following interim options were considered to help address the closure of the Belmont Pool:

1. Install a temporary outdoor pool in the adjacent parking lot;
2. Conduct selective demolition of the Natatorium to remove the existing roof and strengthen the support columns, and potentially install a new roof;
3. Conduct an emergency seismic retrofit of the existing columns using a fiber wrap method; or
4. Accommodate existing user groups at other City and local pools, if feasible.

Staff recommends Option 1 (Exhibit D) because it is the most cost-effective and flexible option that will provide needed pool space during Project entitlement. Option 1 would cost approximately \$4.2 million, and take 5 to 8 months for approval by the California Coastal Commission as well as construction. As a reference, the City previously installed a temporary pool in downtown Long Beach during the 2004 Olympic swim trials. In this option, the pool could be reused as part of the permanent design.

Option 2 would involve surgical demolition that is difficult, time-consuming, and would cost between \$4.2 million and \$5.5 million, while taking 6 to 9 months to complete. Option 2 would also require that the existing pool facilities be protected. If Option 2 is preferred, it is highly recommended that the support columns be strengthened and a horizontal truss system be installed without a roof deck (open ceiling), or install a new lightweight steel construction roof deck instead. As part of this option, a complete conversion to an outdoor pool was considered, but is not recommended by the project's Structural Engineer, due to: a) regular strong winds that carry beach sand, which may interfere with pool components (e.g. filtration and electrical systems) that were not designed for such conditions; b) another wall system will be necessary to protect against winds and beach sand, thus increasing costs; c) additional engineering will be necessary to ensure that the Special Events and Office/Locker Room Building will not be negatively affected; and, d) the improvements would be temporary until a new facility is constructed.

Option 3 involves strengthening the support columns using a fiber wrap method, costing approximately \$3 million and taking 3 to 5 months to complete. While the least costly, this option will not provide any interim accommodations should the proposed Project proceed to construction, and will result in the lack of pool facilities for 9 to 12 months once construction commences.

Option 4 would have minimal cost but also limits the accommodations of existing activity. Not all recreation and competitive uses could be relocated to existing pools.

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Linda Vu on February 1, 2013 and by Budget Management Officer Victoria Bell on February 1, 2013.

City Council approval of this item is requested on February 12, 2013 to allow staff to expeditiously proceed with the next steps of this important project.

The preliminary, estimated cost for the long-term Project is at least \$50 million, and funding will be requested in phases as the Project moves forward. The additional, estimated cost for the Option 1 recommendation of a temporary outdoor pool is \$4.2 million, and is budgeted for FY 13 in the Tidelands Operations Fund (TF 401) in the City Manager Department (CM).

Approve recommendation.

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APPROVED:

PATRICK H. WEST

CITY MANAGER