

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

City and County of San Francisco

RESOLUTION NO. 23-0190

WHEREAS, The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC), on behalf of the City and County of San Francisco (City), is leading efforts to implement one of the City's first climate change adaptation initiatives, the Ocean Beach Climate Change Adaptation Project (Project) located at Ocean Beach, south of Sloat Boulevard to address the long-term physical changes needed to combat climate induced sea level rise in the City, specifically at Ocean Beach; and

WHEREAS, The SFPUC, in collaboration with San Francisco Recreation and Park Department, San Francisco Municipal Transportation Authority, and San Francisco Public Works has developed the cross-agency Project, otherwise known as Project No. CWWFAC01; and

WHEREAS, The Project focuses on implementing two of six key moves of the 2012 Ocean Beach Master Plan at South Ocean Beach and includes (1) closure of the Great Highway Extension to most vehicular traffic and (2) the introduction of a multipurpose coastal protection/restoration/access system; and

WHEREAS, The Project was developed in order to meet the terms of a 2014 legal settlement agreement and a 2015 California Coastal Commission permit, which has received subsequent time extensions of a total of 2.5 years with a current expiration date of June 30, 2024, both of which establish timelines for developing and implementing a long-term strategy for shoreline management at South Ocean Beach; and

WHEREAS, In 2018, the City amended its Local Coastal Plan, the Western Shoreline Area Plan, to adopt policies that advance the Plan's general vision for South Ocean Beach, including the closure of the Great Highway between Sloat and Skyline Boulevards; and

WHEREAS, The Project is necessary to protect the integrity of the SFPUC's wastewater assets built to protect public health and the environment, including the Lake Merced Tunnel, the Westside Pump Station, and the Oceanside Treatment Plant; and

WHEREAS, This project will implement a comprehensive shoreline management and protection plan in partnership with relevant stakeholders and regulatory agencies to provide a long-term solution to the erosion issue along South Ocean Beach, and to mitigate potential impacts to the Lake Merced Tunnel and other critical wastewater assets at this location; and

WHEREAS, The objectives of the Project are to (1) implement the city's local coastal program policies for the long-term management of South Ocean Beach, including managed retreat, beach nourishment, and sea level rise adaptation in compliance with Coastal Commission permit requirements, (2) preserve and enhance coastal public access and recreation, habitat, and scenic quality at South Ocean Beach, (3) protect the Lake Merced Tunnel and related wastewater system infrastructure from damage due to shoreline erosion, storm and wave hazards, and sea level rise in order to maintain current operational capacity and meet regulatory permit requirements, and (4) maintain vehicle access for: SFPUC wastewater facility operations, San Francisco Zoo visitor parking lot via Sloat, Emergency response personnel, maintenance of public access trail, and long-term beach nourishment, and the SFPUC's wastewater assets built to protect public health and the environment;; and

WHEREAS, SFPUC and San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department staff negotiated a letter of agreement containing the basic terms of an anticipated Memorandum of Understanding to (1) memorialize ownership and maintenance obligations for Project improvements, (2) set forth the terms and conditions under which the SFPUC will construct and install the Project improvements, (3) memorialize the process and respective responsibilities for obtaining permanent easement rights from the National Park Service for certain Project improvements, (4) provide the terms and conditions for SFPUC's use of San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department property for installation or construction of Project improvements, and (5) provide the terms and conditions for each department to use the lands of the other department for ongoing operation, maintenance, and repair of its respective Project improvements; and

WHEREAS, On September 28, 2023, the Planning Commission certified the Final Environmental Impact Report for the Ocean Beach Climate Change Adaptation Project (Case No. 2019-020115ENV) prepared pursuant to the CEQA by Motion No. 21398; and

WHEREAS, The San Francisco Zoological Society and the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department, have raised concerns about the sufficiency of vehicle access to the Zoo's patron parking lot under the Project, which would remove the southern entrance and exit to the Zoo lot and require vehicles entering the Zoo lot to perform a U-turn at the end of Sloat Boulevard; and

WHEREAS, The Environmental Impact Report considered access to the San Francisco Zoo under the Project, and concluded that such access would not result in significant impacts related to hazardous conditions or inadequate emergency access; and

WHEREAS, The Planning Department is the custodian of records, located in File No. 2019-020115ENV at 49 South Van Ness Avenue, Suite 1400, San Francisco, California; and

WHEREAS, The Project files, including the Final Environmental Impact Report, CEQA Findings and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program have been made available for review by this Commission and the public, and those files are part of the record before this Commission; and

WHEREAS, This Commission has reviewed and considered the information contained in the Final Environmental Impact Report, the CEQA Findings, and all written and oral information provided by the Planning Department, the public, relevant public agencies, SFPUC staff and other experts and the administrative files for the Ocean Beach Climate Change Adaptation Project; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Commission, having reviewed and considered the Final Environmental Impact Report and the record as a whole for the Ocean Beach Climate Change Adaptation Project, finds that the Final Environmental Impact Report is adequate for its use as the decision-making body to approve the Project, and hereby adopt the CEQA Findings and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That this Commission hereby approves the Ocean Beach Climate Change Adaptation Project and authorizes staff to proceed with actions necessary to implement the Project, including obtaining a Coastal Development Permit from the California Coastal Commission and any other required permits, provided that subsequent Commission action will be required to award the contracts for construction of the Project; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That this Commission hereby approves the letter of agreement describing the anticipated Memorandum of Understanding between the SFPUC and the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department regarding construction and operation of the Project; and authorizes the General Manager of the SFPUC to negotiate and execute said Memorandum of Understanding with San Francisco Recreation and Park Department; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, The SFPUC, in coordination with the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency, San Francisco Recreation and Park Department, Planning Department, and Public Works, will evaluate vehicle access to the Zoo parking lot, and will consider whether any subsequent project is necessary to provide enhanced vehicle access, subject to any environmental review necessary at that time; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That this Commission urges the San Francisco Recreation and Park Commission and the Board of Supervisors to restrict vehicular traffic on the Great Highway Extension and take any other actions necessary to facilitate the Project.

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the Public Utilities Commission at its meeting of October 10, 2023.


Secretary, Public Utilities Commission