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TO: Parks & Community Services Board

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SUBJECT: Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan
Park Board Process

Background

The Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan project represents a City vision which has been reaffirmed in adopted plans for over twenty years. Due to its transformative potential and its goal of creating an extraordinary community-wide public asset, in March 2007 the City Council appointed a 13 member Citizen Steering Committee to help accomplish this vision. The Committee was tasked with providing guidance to staff, engaging in a broad public outreach process, and serving as an advisory body to the Council, the Park Board, and the Planning Commission. The Council provided the Steering Committee with 12 Planning Principles to guide their work. The Steering Committee Charge and Planning Principles are attached.

The Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan project will culminate in a draft Master Plan that includes three elements:

- Park Master Plan for a new waterfront park on Meydenbauer Bay,
- Land Use Plan for the adjacent upland areas, and
- Steering Committee Recommendations Report that addresses both elements.

While the project has always included both park planning and land use planning components, the Committee began its work with a focus on land use planning for areas in close proximity to the future park. After reaching consensus on a land use concept in January 2008, the Committee focused on development of park master plan alternatives through the Fall of 2008 when a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was begun. The land use and park components were re-merged, and the DEIS evaluated the alternatives that had been developed through Committee work and the public outreach process. The DEIS was issued in early June 2009.

Following the DEIS public comment period, the Committee reached consensus on a preferred alternative that includes both a new waterfront park on Meydenbauer Bay and a land use plan for adjacent upland areas. This milestone was reached after 20 committee meetings spanning a two-

year plus period, six public open house/workshops and the completion of the DEIS. The preferred alternative will now be evaluated in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), and a draft Park and Land Use Plan as described above will be prepared. The draft Park and Land Use Plan and FEIS will be presented to the City Council later this year for transmittal to the Parks & Community Services Board (Board) and Planning Commission. The roles of the Park Board and Planning Commission will be different from one another, as described below.

Park Board Role

The Board's work on the project will begin when Council transmits the documents, and will have the broader role of reviewing the overall Master Plan. Board work will begin with a comprehensive review of the proposal that resulted from the Steering Committee process. The Board will take all input under advisement, deliberate, and develop a formal recommendation for the Master Plan. The Board will forward its recommendation to Council for action.

Planning Commission Role

After Council approves the Master Plan, the Planning Commission work will begin. The Commission will focus on a subset of issues, essentially evaluating any Comprehensive Plan Amendments (CPAs) and Land Use Code Amendments (LUCAs) that are needed to implement the Master Plan. It is likely that the amendments will be limited to the "upland" portions of the study area. The amendments will be reviewed as part of the City's annual Comprehensive Plan update process.

Next Steps

The draft Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan (integrating the draft Park Master Plan, the Land Use Plan, and Steering Committee Recommendation Report) and the FEIS are expected to be completed in November and forwarded to Council for transmittal to the Park Board. After the Park Board presents their formal recommendations to Council for the Master Plan and after Council deliberations, a final Park and Land Use Plan will be adopted by Council. After Council action, the Park Master Plan element will be finalized consistent with the Council decision. The expected sequence of steps involving the Parks Board is:

- Issue Final EIS and draft Park and Land Use Plan, including the Park Master Plan element (November 2009);
- Present Final EIS and draft Park and Land Use Plan to Council for transmittal to Park Board (December 2009);
- Park Board review, public hearing, and recommendation on the master plan to Council (January, February and March 2010);
- Council adoption of master plan by resolution, completing the park portion of the plan (spring 2010);

Attachments

Steering Committee Charge
Planning Principles



Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan

STEERING COMMITTEE CHARGE

The Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan Steering Committee is directed to provide guidance to city staff in developing work products to accomplish the Meydenbauer Bay Park. Specifically, this work will involve the development of draft alternatives for both the Park Master Plan and the neighboring upland area, evaluating those alternatives, and ultimately selecting final land use and park master plan alternatives and identifying actions to implement the vision. The project will culminate with final reports summarizing the recommendations of the committee on both the land use and park master plan project components.

The steering committee will serve in an advisory capacity to the City Council, the Planning Commission, and the Parks Board. At the conclusion of its work, the committee will transmit its recommendations on the future land use and park master plan vision and implementing tools to the City Council. The City Council, following review of the committee recommendation and after review by City boards and commissions, will be the ultimate decision-maker on the project and appropriate amendments to City policies and regulations.

The steering committee will be guided by several broad planning principles approved by the City Council for the project. These principles are provided in Attachment B.

In conducting its work, the steering committee should recognize that a wide representation of opinions, expertise, and objectives exists within the individual members of the committee. The steering committee members should respectfully consider each other's views, and should combine their talents to represent the broad interests of the community at large, recognizing that the park will be a community-wide asset.

All aspects of any issue should be fully considered before drawing conclusions and recommendations. The steering committee should also participate in broader public outreach efforts on the project, ensuring that the whole community is engaged in the process and the relevant interests are considered and appropriately addressed.

Approved by the City Council March 19, 2007



Meydenbauer Bay

PARK AND LAND USE PLAN

PLANNING PRINCIPLES

1. **Remarkable and memorable shoreline experience.** The park will be an extraordinary community-wide public asset. The new park will greatly increase waterfront access, recreational opportunities for all Bellevue residents, and in conjunction with its proximity to the Downtown Park and neighborhood, establish Bellevue as a waterfront city. The surrounding area should complement and take advantage of the unique shoreline location.
2. **Spectrum of activities.** The new park should provide visitors with a wide range of activities and experiences, from active recreation such as swimming and sailing to passive enjoyment of intimate, green, natural areas. The park plan should artfully blend traditional park uses with a new urban experience, allowing individuals to enjoy different or multiple experiences with each visit or over time.
3. **Complementary land uses.** Urban design and land uses in the upland area adjacent to the park should be pedestrian-oriented and serve the broader community to make the transition from the upland to the shoreline seamless, enjoyable, inviting, and compelling. They should draw the pedestrian toward the water, convey a sense of excitement, and provide an interactive experience between the waterfront and upland areas.
4. **Increased physical and visual access.** Corridors that visually open up the waterfront from upland areas and that facilitate pedestrian movement from Downtown Park to the waterfront should be maximized. It is critical that corridors and public spaces overcome real or perceived physical obstacles to reaching the shoreline.
5. **Pedestrian priority.** The park and its connections should be places that can be enjoyed by pedestrians without fear of conflicts with automobiles. Where vehicle drives or parking areas are necessary, they should be designed and located to promote a "pedestrian first" message.
6. **Economic vitality.** The park and its connections should support the nearby business community, providing an interactive and welcoming environment for downtown employees, residents, and visitors. Land uses and urban design elements should contribute to the economic vitality of the area as a whole.
7. **Superior design.** The park should be reinforced, communicated, and celebrated through high quality urban design, landscape architecture, building design, and streetscape treatment, not only within the park itself but also throughout nearby public spaces and park connections. The plan should reflect a high standard of excellence.

8. **Environmental stewardship.** The park design should respect and reflect its unique and sensitive waterfront setting. The plan should explore opportunities to incorporate measures that improve the shoreline characteristics and water quality in the bay. Best practices for sustainable building and land management should be incorporated.
9. **History.** The park design should recognize the heritage of Meydenbauer Bay, from the time of Native Americans, explorers, and early settlers to the industries of whaling, ferrying, and today's residential and pleasure boat moorage. The plan should assess opportunities to preserve and reuse structures of historical note and incorporate means to animate the Bay's rich heritage through public art and interpretive programs.
10. **Neighborhood enhancement and protection.** The land use component should be a catalyst for revitalization of older uses while minimizing impacts on neighboring residential areas. Redevelopment of properties in the study area or conversion of apartment buildings to condominiums is expected in the foreseeable future. The land use plan should ensure through rules or incentives that these actions occur in a manner that is both consistent with the area's land use vision and sensitive to adjacent residential uses.
11. **Coordinated planning process.** The park master plan and the land use plan will impact and influence one another. The planning schedule needs to be flexible and expedient, necessitating close coordination.
12. **Commitment to implement.** The Waterfront Plan should include an implementation strategy that leads to the fulfillment of the vision.

Approved by the City Council March 19, 2007