

April 4, 2006

LAKE MERRITT PARK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ'S)

GENERAL QUESTIONS

What is Measure DD?

In November, 2002, the voters of Oakland passed a bond measure known as Measure DD—the Oakland Trust for Clean Water and Safe Parks—by an overwhelming majority (80%). This \$198 million bond will fund a variety of projects related to clean water and parks.

How were projects planned for the Lake Merritt Park area?

Projects in the Lake Merritt Park area were developed as a result a planning process that began in 1988 and culminated with the Oakland City Council's acceptance of the Lake Merritt Master Plan in June, 2002. This plan was developed through extensive public involvement and review.

To review the Lake Merritt Master Plan, please visit the following website:
<http://www.oaklandnet.com/community/index.html>

What Measure DD projects are currently underway for the Lake Merritt Park area?

There are ten projects currently underway which will dramatically improve the parkland around Lake Merritt:

- 12th Street Reconstruction
- Lakeside Drive and Municipal Boathouse
- Lakeshore Avenue and El Embarcadero
- E.18th Street Pier restoration
- Pergola restoration
- Cleveland Cascade restoration
- Children's Fairyland improvements
- Lakeside Park fire hydrant upgrades
- Lakeside Park irrigation system upgrade.
- Lake Merritt Water Quality projects

To review the Lake Merritt Park Projects, please visit the following websites;
<http://www.oaklandpw.com/Page684.aspx>
<http://clevelandcascade.org/>

Note: The City will be adding information about the smaller projects to the website in the near future.

TREE REMOVAL

How many trees will be removed as part of the projects at 12th Street, Lakeside Drive and Municipal Boathouse and Lakeshore Avenue and El Embarcadero?

A total of 224 trees are slated to be removed out of 503 existing trees within the 3 project areas and 521 new trees will be planted. In about two years, there will be 800 trees around the Lake: that is 59% more than there are today.

There are a total of 2,906 trees in all of Lake Merritt Park and the 12th Street project area together.

To put the impact in context, the tree removals associated with the Lakeside Drive/Municipal Boathouse project and the Lakeshore Avenue/El Embarcadero project will affect less than two percent (2%) of the trees around Lake Merritt. The remaining six percent (6%) are associated with the 12th Street project, which affects trees not currently part of Lake Merritt parkland.

Nearly 80% of the trees to be removed (179) are part of the 12th Street Reconstruction project, which involves reconfiguring 34 acres of area to replace the existing 12-lane expressway with a new, six-lane boulevard, adding a four-acre park and reconfiguring the parking lot at the Henry J. Kaiser Convention Center. It also involves removing the culverts under 12th Street and the creation of a tidal marsh to improve habitat along the Lake Merritt Channel and improve water quality in the Lake.

Project	Trees proposed for removal	Percentage of trees in Lake Merritt project area	New trees to be planted	New trees + existing trees to remain	Total increase in trees
Lakeside Drive/ Municipal Boathouse	20	0.7%	61	91	75%
Lakeshore Avenue/ El Embarcadero	25	0.9%	119	195	89%
New south lakeside park/ 12 th Street Reconstruction	179	6.2%	341	514	48%
TOTAL	224	7.8%	521	800	59%

Why are the trees being removed?

In general terms, the Measure DD, Lake Merritt Park projects provide historic opportunities to renovate and improve the landscape around Lake Merritt for the near term and for future generations. There has never been such a comprehensive effort in the park to improve the quality of landscaping, pedestrian circulation and environmental quality in the history of Oakland. That is not to say we should not protect the valuable

tree resources that exist around the Lake. We have protected the vast majority of healthy, long-lived, non-hazardous trees, except where the project benefits out-weigh the loss of trees.

Each tree within the three project areas was carefully evaluated by landscape design professionals and the City Arborist for health, hazard potential, appropriateness of location and project conflicts. This was done in conformance with the City's Tree Preservation Ordinance (Oakland Municipal Code 12.36) See <http://bpc.iserver.net/codes/oakland/>)

The City conducted 4 public tree tours to discuss the proposed removals in detail. The City's tree removal permitting process and feedback during the tree tours resulted in the preservation of 83 trees over the original tree removal proposal.

Eighty percent of the trees (179 trees) are being removed due to construction conflicts related to the reconfiguration of the 12th Street area. The environmental benefits of this monumental improvement project clearly outweigh the loss of trees.

A total of 25 out of 103 existing trees along Lakeshore Avenue/El Embarcadero are being removed because they are a potential hazard, are in poor health or are crowding and screening the Pergola.

Trees at Lakeside Drive and the Municipal Boathouse are being removed because of construction conflicts and the benefits of the project outweigh the loss of trees. In addition, most of the trees being removed are either in poor health and are short-lived species. A few trees are being removed because they are screening the historic Municipal Boathouse building and because they drop large quantities of fruit on the walkways.

What is the timing of the removals?

Trees are scheduled for removal in the early stages of construction for all three major projects in the summer of 2006. Tree removals are expected to be done all at once on each project since these projects have a relatively short construction duration and there is considerable cost savings with a single continuous operation. In the case of the 12th Street project, where 80% of the trees will be removed, trees will be removed all at once to allow the contractor to work continuously on all parts of the 34 acre site in order to complete the project as quickly as possible.

What kinds of trees are being planted? Can natives or Mediterranean tree species be planted?

The general plant selection concept is to continue the historic theme of planting trees around Lake Merritt that are as diverse as Oakland's population as well as providing habitat for the wildlife at the Lake. This theme continues the original planting concept of providing trees that are familiar to people who have resettled in Oakland from various parts of the United States and the world.

A wide variety of tree species from various parts of the world will be planted, including natives and Mediterranean-climate trees. This will provide biodiversity to guard against diseases, such as Dutch elm disease or sudden oak death syndrome decimating large numbers of trees.

The vast majority of trees to be planted will be long-lived and disease resistant and are expected to live for 80 to 150 years. Various species of oak trees will be planted throughout the park with a large percentage of those being the native coast live oak. The area around the Lake Merritt Channel will be planted exclusively with local native plants. Australian tea trees will be planted close the shoreline of the Lake to replace the ones that have died out over the years. The largest number of a single species will be planted as street trees, which will be either ginkgo or London plane trees.

Why are ginkgo trees being planted when they produce so much pollen?

The ginkgo tree was considered for extensive use as a street tree since the Lake Merritt Master Plan phase. As with native oaks, London plane trees, pines and many other plants, the ginkgo does produce pollen for a time during the spring season. On the plus side, ginkgo trees are a very desirable street tree with an attractive form and spectacular yellow leaves in the Fall.

How big will the new trees be when they are planted?

Most of the trees to be planted will be 24-inch box specimens. This means that the rootball will be 24-inches square. The height of the trees when they are planted will vary by species, but an average height of the tree would be about 8 feet. A few trees to be planted near the 12th Street waterfront overlook will be larger specimens with 3-foot and 5-foot square rootballs and the height of these trees will be from 12 to 20 feet tall.

Although cost of planting large trees is a consideration, there are two important reasons the 24-inch box size tree is being planted. First, the trees must be large enough to withstand vandalism in an urban environment. Second, trees that are smaller when planted grow faster because they adjust to their new environment faster than larger trees and they have less chance of having a constricted root system as a result of being propagated in a nursery. The 24-inch box size is the best size to meet these two requirements.

How long will it take for the trees to grow to be a sizeable shade tree?

Tree growth rates will vary with species and with environmental conditions. As a general rule, most trees will take about 20 years to become a sizeable shade tree. To achieve optimal growth rates for the trees, a state-of-the-art computerized irrigation system will be installed with the construction projects. This way, trees will receive the right amount of water during the growing season.

In good urban forestry management, we want to avoid the tendency to plant fast-growing short-lived trees to have a quick effect. Many of the trees that are planned for removal

around Lake Merritt Park were planted because they grow fast and now are reaching the end of their life span after 50 or 60 years. We do not want to repeat that mistake again.

Where will the birds go and what will happen to the nesting birds and nesting squirrels in the trees to be removed?

In accordance with the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act, trees will be inspected by a biologist prior to their removal to avoid disturbing the active nests of native birds. If trees contain such active nests they will be left in place until the birds are mature enough to leave the nest of their own accord.

Trees will also be inspected for squirrel nests as well. If there are active nests, the trees will be left in place until the squirrels are mature enough to leave the nest of their own accord. Currently, the scheduling of tree removal appears to be outside the active period of squirrel nesting.

The City funded a consultant study to evaluate potential effects of tree removal on birds. The study is available upon request. In summary, the report concluded that urban bird populations are adaptable and opportunistic in choosing where to forage and nest. The specialist concluded that the tree removals would not have an adverse effect on the local bird community, and that planting 521 new trees “will offset any short-term, localized habitat loss by increasing the amount of tree habitat around Lake Merritt over the long term, resulting in a net benefit to the local bird community.”

Can any of the trees to be removed be used by wood workers or artists?

We are evaluating how best to manage the construction contracts to use the wood for wood working or artistic pursuits. It may be most feasible to provide the wood to public schools, such as Laney College, so it can be utilized as part of wood-working or art programs.

Can some of the larger healthy trees be relocated?

The City evaluated the feasibility of relocating some of the magnolia trees in the Kaiser Convention Center parking lot. According to an experienced tree-moving contractor, 9 trees in the parking lot were considered candidates for relocation and the cost of tree relocation ranged from \$8,500 to \$20,000 depending on the size of the tree. Considering the amount of root loss the trees would suffer and the risk of losing the tree after transplanting, it was determined that the cost of relocation cannot be justified.

What percentage of the newly planted trees are expected to survive?

The projects will be maintained by the landscape contractor for one year following installation of the landscaping. This means that during the first year after the trees are planted, the contractor will replace any tree that declines, dies or is damaged.

We are not expecting many of the trees to decline or die because of not being suited to the environmental conditions around Lake Merritt. The trees species selected are reliable under these conditions.

In addition, the trees will be planted with a 3 to 5-foot diameter mulched area around each tree to avoid having mower operations damage the bark on the trunks of the trees.

How is the City going to take care of the Lake Merritt park improvements with the current maintenance staff shortage?

Many citizens have expressed concerns about the City's ability to maintain the Lake Merritt Park improvements at an acceptable level. City Council members have heard these concerns and will consider ways to address this issue.

Increasing funding for the Landscaping and Lighting Assessment District (LLAD) may be a way to ensure a higher level of maintenance for Lake Merritt Park. The LLAD is funded by a property tax assessment and provides funding for city-wide landscape and lighting maintenance. Since the LLAD was passed in 1989, there has been no cost of living increase and the maintenance inventory has grown by 300 acres of parks, 10,000 new street trees and 3,200 new street lights. The LLAD is being considered for a ballot measure in the near future to increase the level of funding to help maintain parks and open space and lighting in the city.

For more information on the LLAD, please visit the following website:
<http://www.oaklandpw.com/Page700.aspx>

Will there be new trees planted on the bird islands? In Lakeside Park near Grand Avenue?

Trees are not proposed for removal or planting on either the bird islands or in Lakeside Park near Grand Avenue as part of these projects.

WILDLIFE AND DOGS IN LAKE MERRITT PARK

Will dogs be allowed in the new park areas?

Dogs are not permitted in any City of Oakland park, except in designated dog parks. However, leashed dogs are allowed on the sidewalks adjacent to the street around Lake Merritt. Dogs will be allowed on the new ten-foot-wide multi-use path where there is no other sidewalk next to the street, such as along Lakeshore Avenue. This facility will provide a much better experience for dog-walking than the existing sidewalk.

An off-leash dog park is proposed for a portion of the lawn area adjacent to MacArthur Boulevard between Grand Avenue and Lakeshore Avenue and north of the Lakeview Library. This dog park project is being managed by a community-based organization and has funding provided from sources other than Measure DD.

How will construction of the proposed projects impact the bird sanctuary?

Construction of the three proposed projects is not anticipated to adversely affect the bird sanctuary.

Is there a plan for getting rid of the geese at Lake Merritt?

Measure DD can only be used for capital improvements. As a result, the only project related to goose management will be the installation of signage advising park users not feed the geese and the replacement of some grass areas, where geese feed, with shrub areas.

The City's Planning Department is currently preparing to issue a Request For Proposals (RFP) to qualified consultants to study the geese at Lake Merritt and make recommendations on methods for management.

With the abundance of birds at Lake Merritt, how are bird related diseases, such as avian flu and West Nile virus, being monitored to protect public health?

This reply was provided by Stephanie Benavidez Supervising Naturalist, City of Oakland.

Let me assure you that every precaution has been taken to monitor the birds/wildlife not only at the Lake, but throughout the City itself. For years the Naturalist staff has dealt with various diseases and outbreaks. Any animals reported to us dead or alive, are collected and based on their condition are sent to the various labs for testing. For example, crows, ravens or Covad family get tested for West Nile, poultry, domestic ducks etc. for avian flu, foxes and skunks for rabies and distemper. We put out current information to the public when concerns like these arise to educate and eliminate misinformation.

The tot lot has always been a place we especially pay attention to since children as young as several months up to junior high are always among our wildlife. To date there has never been any communicable diseases passed between birds and humans at the Lake.

For additional factual information please refer the public to the Powerpoint presentation at www.acgov.org/PublicHealth/av/resource. Also list the CDC (Center for Disease control) www.cdc.gov/flu/avian and WHO (World Health Organization) www.who.int/disease/avian_influenza as additional websites where a daily update of the flu's progress.

Also please spread the word that the public should not handle any dead or sick birds, but instead should report it to the Rotary Nature Center at 238-3739 or to Animal Control.

TRAFFIC, BICYCLES AND PEDESTRIANS

General overview

In 1877, a scenic boulevard was proposed to loop around Lake Merritt. Today, much of the Lake is surrounded by a high-speed arterial roadways. One goal of the Lake Merritt Master Plan and Measure DD is to return to the concept of a slower, scenic boulevard that is more in keeping with the beautiful park setting. In addition, bicycle and pedestrian safety will be greatly improved, and the park itself will be significantly expanded.

What effect will the projects have on parking around Lake Merritt?

A fundamental guiding principle coming out of the public involvement process of the Lake Merritt Master Plan was that there should be no net loss in parking. The projects have essentially held to that principle and there will be very little change in the number of parking spaces around Lake Merritt.

There will be changes in some areas. First Avenue will have on-street parking eliminated in order to provide traffic lanes leading to and from 12th Street. Additional parking on Lakeshore Avenue in a diagonal configuration will compensate for loss of parking on First Avenue.

Will the reduction of 12th Street from 12 lanes to 6 lanes cause traffic congestion?

On the 12th Street project, the existing 12-lane expressway is to be transformed into a six-lane boulevard that will improve the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists. Lakeshore Avenue at 12th Street is to be closed with a cul-de-sac. All other existing streets in the area will remain open to provide the most convenient traffic circulation network.

Studies analyzed the traffic volumes, traffic patterns, and Level of Service (LOS) for current conditions as well as for projections to year 2025. The LOS for year 2025 for the various intersections is acceptable and range from A (free-flowing conditions) to C (stable operations with some restrictions and lower speeds). The only exception to the acceptable traffic operations is along 2nd Avenue. By year 2025 during peak usage, the LOS along 2nd Avenue will be unacceptable with extreme congestion. The eventual installation of three traffic signals to replace stop signs along 2nd Avenue will mitigate the traffic delays.

Will the reduction of Lakeshore Avenue from 4 lanes to 2 lanes cause traffic congestion?

This reconfiguration provides for expansion of Lake Merritt Park by one acre, the addition of class II bike lanes on Lakeshore Avenue, and the transformation of the road into a pedestrian and park friendly, neighborhood street.

Traffic studies were performed for Lakeshore Avenue and coordinated with the adjoining 12th Street project. The projected arterial (Lakeshore Avenue) year 2025 Level of Service (LOS) is C (stable operations with some restrictions and lower speeds) with average arterial speeds of 16.6 to 17.5 miles per hour during peak hours. The only exception is where the northbound, afternoon peak LOS is D (delays and reduced speeds) with an average arterial speed of 12.4 miles per hour.

In addition, a separate analysis for year 2025 conditions was performed to appropriately size the length of the left turn storage lanes along Lakeshore Avenue so vehicles in left turn lanes will not back up into the through traffic lanes.

Will there be traffic congestion on El Embarcadero, if one of the two crossings is closed?

The plan to reconfigure El Embarcadero between Grand Avenue and Lakeshore Avenue involves closing the southern traffic couplet and converting the northern couplet, which is adjacent to the Lakeview Library, into two-way traffic. Conversion of the northern couplet does require the widening of the roadway by approximately two feet towards the Library in order to provide safe clearances for the new two-way traffic. Closure of the southerly couplet of El Embarcadero allows for the expansion of Lake Merritt Park and the construction of a formal plaza and multi-use path as an entryway to the Pergola structure.

Traffic studies were performed for the intersection of El Embarcadero and Grand Avenue and the intersection of El Embarcadero and Lakeshore Avenue. The Level of Service (LOS) during both morning and afternoon peak hour for the Grand Avenue intersection is projected to be C (stable operations with some restrictions and lower speeds) in the year 2025. The LOS for the Lakeshore Avenue intersection during the peak morning is D (delays and reduced speeds), and with mitigation measures of utilizing an overlap right turn lane for southbound Lakeshore Avenue traffic, the peak afternoon hour LOS will be D or better. There may be intervals of heavy congestion during the peak afternoon use, but the duration of these periods should be brief.

The community and the Lakeview Library were not consulted as to the closure of the southern couplet of El Embarcadero and the conversion of the northerly couplet to two-way traffic.

The plan to close the southern traffic couplet of El Embarcadero originated from the Grand Lake Green Link Plan and the Adams Point Urban Design Plan. The guidelines in Lake Merritt Master Plan and the current construction plan are consistent with the other studies with respect to the reconfiguration of El Embarcadero. Both the planning processes included extensive public involvement and included representatives of the Oakland Public Library.

Why can't both couplets at El Embarcadero be closed?

Complete closure of both couplets at El Embarcadero has been shown to be unacceptable as evidenced by the temporary closure of the street during the Alameda County storm sewer construction project in 2004, which resulted in traffic gridlock. Traffic simulations also indicate severe traffic delays in the area during peak hours if both couplets of El Embarcadero were permanently closed.

Some citizens have proposed closing only the northern couplet in order to create a larger buffer for the library. However, a conversion of the southern couplet to two-way traffic

is contrary to the intent of the Lake Merritt Master Plan because it would not allow for park expansion next to the Lake and the creation of a plaza adjacent to the Pergola.

The idea to close the northern traffic couplet near the Lakeview Library instead of the southern couplet would not result in any significant changes to the projected traffic flow. Construction costs to close either the northern or southern couplet are not significantly different, although added costs and delay would be incurred to revise the current design.

Won't there be much more noise for the Library with all the traffic crossing on the northern couplet of El Embarcadero?

Although there would be additional traffic routed onto the northerly couplet, the noise levels should be reduced because of the slower traffic speeds that will result from the friction of narrower lanes and from removing the free right turn configurations at the intersections of Lakeshore and Grand.

Can pedestrian activated traffic signals be installed at mid-block crossings at the Lakeview Library, Cleveland Cascade and Scottish Rite Center?

The City's traffic engineers are very reluctant to provide traffic signals at mid-block crossings for safety reasons. The concern is based in the theory that if mid-block crossings are signalized there will be more pedestrian accidents because motorists don't expect to stop at mid-block locations, and therefore some vehicles will not stop. In addition, if pedestrians have a signal, some people will be less cautious about watching out for cars at the crossing.

With the narrowing of the streets around Lake Merritt and by providing bulb-outs, pedestrians will have less distance to cross streets, which is a major safety improvement.

Will the new multi-use path accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists?

Commuter cyclists, who generally travel at higher speeds, are more likely to utilize the class 2 bicycle lanes on the streets surrounding Lake Merritt. The continuous class 2 bicycle system around Lake Merritt is being provided to encourage cyclists use the on-street system. The multi-use path is thought of as more of a low-speed bike route for recreational cyclists.

What material will the paths be made of?

The path along the Lake edge near Lakeshore Avenue will be stabilized decomposed granite. The multi-use path will be made of decorative concrete. A softer-surface decomposed granite jogging path will run along one edge. The paths around the Lake must meet a number of different needs, including ADA requirements and the ability to withstand maintenance trucks that work on the Necklace of Lights. Various rubberized track surface products were considered, but were found to be expensive and not durable enough.

Will the slip turns or “pork chop” island traffic configurations be eliminated at the corner of 14th Street and Lakeside Drive and at both ends of El Embarcadero at Grand and Lakeshore?

Yes. These slip turns will be eliminated as part of the bicycle pedestrian safety program for the Lake Merritt projects. Slip turns allow vehicles to make turns at much faster speeds and provide additional conditions for conflicts with pedestrians and cyclists.

How will pedestrian access to Laney College be improved?

The 12th Street reconstruction project will significantly improve pedestrian access from the Lake area to Laney College by providing a multi-use path adjacent to the Lake Merritt Channel as well as providing three new stop lights and cross walks across the reconfigured, six-lane 12th Street.

Are there any provisions for bus or rapid transit around the Lake?

Our design staff has been working closely with AC Transit to maintain the existing bus routes around Lake Merritt. Existing bus stops will be retained and service through the 12th Street area will be improved with added bus stops in front of the Kaiser Convention Center.

Will the traffic signals on Lakeshore Avenue be timed to facilitate traffic flow?

Once the lane reduction improvements are made on Lakeshore Avenue, the City will evaluate the corridor for signal timing. The project includes the latest technology in the traffic signal controllers so timing the signals will be possible.

MUNICIPAL BOATHOUSE / LAKESIDE DRIVE PROJECT

What assurances do we have that a restaurant in the Municipal Boathouse will be successful?

The Municipal Boathouse building will be restored to be very attractive, the location on the Lake is very scenic and unique and there is a large concentration of residences and businesses nearby. The significant increase in residents now underway in downtown Oakland is seen as a major contributor to the anticipated success of the restaurant. Proposals from restaurant operators are being carefully evaluated to determine which restaurant provides the best opportunity for success.

What is the process and schedule for selection of the restaurant operator?

In January, 2005, a restaurant broker was selected through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process. The restaurant broker conducted an outreach campaign for maximum exposure to the industry, locally, the Bay Area and nationally. Over 55 restaurant operators responded to the marketing out-reach and 8 restaurant operators submitted proposals. The proposals were ranked based on criteria, such as operation and ownership experience, business plan, viability of finances and previous work with public agencies.

Negotiations are continuing. City Council will conduct a public discussion and make a final selection of the restaurant operator later this year.

What incentives and subsidies are being offered to the prospective restaurant operators?

The restaurant operator is required to fund and manage construction of major tenant improvements to the Municipal Boathouse building. Incentives, such as reduced rent for a specific period of time, are likely to be part of the negotiations between the City and the restaurant operator.

What is the parking requirement for the restaurant? Can on-site parking be eliminated and provide all needed parking at the Scottish Rite parking lot or all have valet parking?

All the prospective restaurant operators have indicated that the 52-space lot is about one third to one half of the parking desired for successful operation of the restaurant. The restaurant operators will need to provide valet parking to make up the difference. The City's Real Estate Services Department has been exploring the availability of nearby sites for valet parking.

Eliminating on-site parking would make the building unsuitable for most uses and would make restaurant use infeasible, according to the City's Real Estate Services Department. If reconfigurations on Lakeside Drive provide more on-street parking this could reduce the need for some on-site parking. The issue still remains that on-street parking would be public parking and could not be counted on as parking exclusively for the restaurant.

Why is the parking lot for the Municipal Boathouse sited in the existing large lawn area?

The Lake Merritt Master Plan provided guidelines for the site work at the Municipal Boathouse and Lakeside Drive Park, including the recommendation to consolidate the existing off-street parking into a single 52-space lot north of the Boathouse on the existing large lawn area. As indicated earlier, the Lake Merritt Master Plan went through an extensive public involvement phase and was accepted by the City Council in 2002.

There is a trade-off in utilizing the lawn area for parking, but by doing this the following important objectives are achieved:

- Improve vehicle/pedestrian circulation - Moving parking lots away from the shoreline path system will avoid vehicle/pedestrian conflicts and improve the experience of people using the multi-use pathway.

- Improve water quality – Moving the parking lots away from the shore of the Lake will allow storm water run-off from the street and parking lots to be treated through a bio-swale.
- Improve parking operation and space efficiency – Consolidating vehicle parking will remove the uncertainty of navigating two lots and reduce area used for parking by 0.1 acre or 20%. Open space for park users will increase.
- Improve aesthetics of the building - Moving parking lots away from the historic building will provide it with an appropriate landscaped setting.

Can additional parking be provided on Lakeside Drive, such as diagonal parking, so that the on-site-parking can be reduced or eliminated.

A supplemental study is being performed by the City's consultants to re-analyze parking lot locations and to examine new on-street parking expansion options. The study was made available to the public on March 31, 2006 and will be reviewed by the Life Enrichment Committee at its meeting on April 11, 2006 at 6:00 pm in Hearing Room 1 of City Hall.. Please visit the following website for the meeting agenda and the report: <http://www.oaklandnet.com/> Under "Website Highlights" click on Council minutes and Agenda".

What is the parking lot surfacing made of and can the lot be screened with vegetation?

The appearance of the parking lot will be as natural as possible. The parking stalls will be a semi-permeable decomposed granite paving and the driveways through the lot will be colored concrete. The lot will also be lower in elevation than the lakeside Drive so it will be less visible from the street.

Views of the lot will be buffered with tree and shrub planting. The design staff will look at ways to maximize screening of the lot while maintaining adequate visibility for security and allowing views to the Lake.

How would the Municipal Boathouse parking lot be operated? Would the restaurant owner be required to control objectionable late-night activities at the lot?

The role of the restaurant operator in the operation of the lot has not been determined at this time. It is one of the elements of the on-going negotiations. When the restaurant operator is selected, they will be required to secure a conditional use permit, and the citizens of Oakland will be able to comment on the management of the lot. Regardless of who operates the lot, gates will be installed to prevent late-night use.

Can the restroom, which is currently proposed to be located opposite 17th Street and residential buildings, be eliminated or relocated elsewhere on the site?

An important goal of the Lake Merritt Master Plan is to provide restroom facilities at roughly evenly spaced increments around the Lake for the convenience of the public. In

addition, the Municipal Boathouse, with its boating events and other outdoor activities, needs a free-standing restroom close by.

As part of the Municipal Boathouse renovation project, the existing, exterior restroom facility is to be reconstructed and relocated to the north end of the new parking lot. The relocation and reconstruction is desired in order to eliminate the existing concealed area between the restroom and the Boathouse, to resolve existing drainage problems between the buildings, to enhance the historic Boathouse building setting, to allow for clear sight lines from the street for monitoring by police, and to provide a restroom designed to minimize negative behavior.

A supplemental study was performed by the City's consultant to re-analyze the new restroom location. As a result of this study, staff is recommending that the new restroom be located closer to the Boathouse building. As with the parking study discussed above, the study was made available to the public on March 31, 2006 and will be reviewed by the Life Enrichment Committee at its meeting on April 11, 2006 at 6:00 pm in Hearing Room 1 of City Hall.. Please visit the following website for the meeting agenda and the report: <http://www.oaklandnet.com/>. Under "Website Highlights" click on Council minutes and Agenda".

What is the reason for the grand stairway to the Municipal Boathouse building and is it appropriate?

The City and the designers feel that with the return of the Municipal Boathouse to public use, and especially as a restaurant, that a grand stairway leading to the main entrance of the building is appropriate and needed. The grand stairway is about 22 feet wide, including a 4-foot-wide planter in the middle of the two stairways. This is the same width as the main entryway to the building and is in scale with the architecture. The enhancements, which are funded by the Oakland Rotary Clubs, provide interest and richness to the design with subtle colors and forms in the paving that will complement the building and the site.

If the lawn area north of the Municipal Boathouse is taken up by a parking lot, what other open space is there in the area?

The area currently occupied by the two existing parking lots will be converted into open space, including landscaping and terraces with seating. In addition, a new 4-acre park is being constructed along 12th Street, to the south of the Boathouse.

MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS

Why does Measure DD funding need to be spent now? Can't the projects be more phased?

- Construction cost inflation means that the longer we wait to build projects, the more they will cost.
- Phasing a project is less efficient for the contractors, so costs would be substantially higher.

- Phasing a project means that temporary pedestrian and auto detours and congestion around the Lake will be extended over a longer period of time.
- Federal tax rules require that general obligation bond monies must be spent within certain time limits after bond issuance.
- Most citizens have been patiently waiting for the design phase to be completed, and are looking forward to seeing actual implementation of these long-awaited improvements.

What is the competitive bid process on these projects?

When the design of the projects complete, projects will be advertised in all the standard construction trade publications and on the City's website. Any qualified contractor can bid on the project. The project is awarded to the contractor with the lowest bid who also satisfies the qualification requirements of bonding, contractor licensing, and local business participation.

In addition, the 12th Street project staff has been holding outreach workshops to promote the participation of local contractors.

Why doesn't the City clean up the litter and debris in the Lake?

We clean it all the time. The City has a contract with the Lake Merritt Institute to clean litter and debris in the Lake. They have equipment available in storage boxes at various locations around the Lake and coordinate the effort of many volunteers to help with the cleanup effort. They remove between 50,000 and 60,000 pounds of trash each year. In addition, the City operates an algae harvester during the summer months to keep the floating algae and widgeon grass in check.

What is the status of environmental review of these projects under CEQA?

The CEQA review was done in July 2002 in the form of an Initial Study and an Addendum to several environmental documents previously prepared, adopted, and certified by the City of Oakland. These include the EIRs for the Land Use and Transportation Element, the Estuary Policy Plan, the Coliseum Area Redevelopment Plan, and the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the General Plan Open Space, Conservation and Recreation Element. As each project design has been developed, additional technical studies (such as more detailed traffic studies) have been performed to further confirm the findings of the Addendum.

In addition, a Draft Tiered EIR focused on the proposed tidal marsh and channel-widening aspects of the 12th Street project is currently being prepared.

Do the projects include any amenities for children?

No additional children's playground facilities are being provided under the proposed Measure DD projects at Lake Merritt. There are existing children's playgrounds near the Rotary Nature Center and near the Lakeview Library. The improvements at Fairyland will provide additional amenities for children. The interpretive signage which will be installed will also provide some interest for children.

What was the process of community outreach for these projects?

Contacting the public was extensive and done through community organization representatives, direct mailing to individuals and listing in community event calendars in local newspapers.

Listed below is the community outreach process for the projects:

- October 13, 2001 – Open House Event at Lakeside Park with Interactive Displays, Questionnaires, Prioritization Exercises - Lake Merritt Park Master Plan
- December 5, 2001 – Public Presentation and Meeting - Lake Merritt Park Master Plan
- February 12, 2002 – Professional Charette to Exchange Design Concepts - Lake Merritt Park Master Plan.
- March 13, 2002 – Public Presentation and Meeting - Lake Merritt Park Master Plan
- June 27, 2002 – Formal Acceptance of Lake Merritt Park Master Plan by the City Council
- August 12, 2004 – Public Open House with Presentations and for Public Comment – Lake Merritt Park Pre- Design Development
- October 27, 2004 – Public Open House with Presentation/12th Street Project – Lake Merritt Park Pre- Design Development
- February 7, 2005 – Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board; Design Presentation of the Municipal Boathouse Project
- February 23, 2005 – Public Open House w/ Presentations and for Public Comment – Lake Merritt Park 35% Design Development
- October 17, 2005 – Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board; Design Presentation of the Lake Merritt Projects
- November 30, 2005 – Town Hall Meeting; Project Presentation with emphasis on Tree Removals
- December 14, 2005 – Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee; Design Presentation of the Lake Merritt Projects
- February 22 and 25, 2006 - Town Hall Meetings; Project Presentations

Other efforts have included:

- Presentations (2) at the Lake Merritt Breakfast Club
- Presentation at the Rotary Club
- Presentation at the Chamber of Commerce
- Stakeholder Meetings; August, September, and November 2001 and February 2003
- Monthly Measure DD Coalition Meetings
- Lake Merritt Public Tree Tours: December 3 and 14, 2005; January 7 and 21, 2006
- January 4, 2006 - Informational display boards for the 12th Street project posted at the south end of Lake Merritt.
- February 7, 2006 – Presentation on Municipal Boathouse/Lakeside Drive project to residents of the Essex building.

Future efforts will include:

- Presentations at Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee for Tree Removal
- An informational report to the City Council's Life Enrichment Committee on April 11, 2006.
- Public Meetings at Committee and Council prior to construction
- Conditional Use Permit Hearing for Proposed Restaurant at the Municipal Boathouse
- On-going Measure DD Community Coalition Meetings. See their website at http://oaklandparks.org/measure_dd.htm