

Letter to Board of Harbor Commissioners

Commissioners:

The xxx Neighborhood Council has reviewed the staff recommendations regarding the Public Access Investment Plan (PAIP) for 2020-2025 and we are extremely disappointed. Our Council put a great deal of time and effort into soliciting input from the community and making recommendations regarding the use of these funds. We were initially told that the Port was taking an estimated \$46 million off the top for 8 “supporting” projects leaving an estimated \$42 million for other projects. At the Sept 23, 2021 Board of Harbor Commissioners meeting, Port staff recommended four projects totaling \$4.0 - \$4.2 million. They reported that the costs of the first round of projects approved in 2015 had increased from \$143.2 Million to \$230.1 million. It was unclear from the presentation if the funding for the 8 “supporting” projects was included in the \$230.1 million. Staff should clarify which, if any, of the 8 projects have been completed or are included in the total projected costs.

The very limited recommendations did, however, partially address two of our top priorities: Connectivity and the Life Support System for the Aquarium.

Because the amount of funds available is based on 10% of the Port’s annual Operating Income and cargo is at an all time high, we anticipate that additional funds will be available for this five-year period. Connectivity is a high priority and first consideration for any additional funds should be given to implementing the recommendations of the connectivity plan once it is developed.

The community input we gathered during the process of developing the recommendations for the PAIP made it clear that there is a need for additional funding. We strongly support the suggestion by Commissioner Pirozzi that the PAIP be made a permanent part of the Port’s Operating procedures.

CC: Gene Seroka, Councilman Buscaino