



Executive Director's
Report to the
Board of Harbor Commissioners

DATE: SEPTEMBER 29, 2020

FROM: ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION NO. _____ - ADOPTION OF THE FINAL INITIAL STUDY/NEGATIVE DECLARATION AND APPROVAL OF THE INNOVATIVE BARRACUDA CHASSIS DEPOT PROJECT AT 915 EARLE ST (LOS ANGELES HARBOR DEPARTMENT APPLICATION FOR PORT PERMIT NO. 190327-046; STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NO. 2020080336)

SUMMARY:

Staff requests adoption of the Final Initial Study/Negative Declaration (IS/ND) for the proposed Innovative Barracuda Chassis Depot Project (Project) along with comments and responses to comments, and approval of the proposed Project as described in the Final IS/ND.

The proposed Project would permit the expanded operation of a chassis depot that provides storage, maintenance, and repair of chassis, and expand existing operations to include on/off hire of chassis (i.e., stop/start operations) at 915 Earle Street on Terminal Island. Innovative Terminal Services, Inc. (Innovative) proposes to expand the existing approximately 7-acre property to a total of approximately 13.2 acres. A Term Permit would be issued for the operation of the proposed chassis maintenance yard and depot for up to 10 years in order to combine all Innovative-entitled parcels under one permit. Payment of the costs associated with the Final IS/ND is the responsibility of Innovative under Reimbursement Agreement No. E-7074 with the City of Los Angeles Harbor Department (Harbor Department).

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Harbor Commissioners (Board):

1. Find that, pursuant to the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15074, the Final Initial Study/Negative Declaration for the proposed Innovative Barracuda Chassis Depot Project at 915 Earle Street, (a) has been completed in compliance with the State CEQA Guidelines and the Los Angeles City CEQA Guidelines; (b) was presented to the Board for review and was reviewed and considered by the Board prior to approving the proposed Innovative Barracuda Chassis Depot Project; and (c) reflects the independent judgment and analysis of the City of Los Angeles Harbor Department as the Lead Agency;

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2. Find that, based on the whole record before it, including (a) the information contained in this report and (b) the Final Initial Study/Negative Declaration for the Innovative Barracuda Chassis Depot Project at 915 Earle Street, the proposed Project would not have a significant effect on the environment pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080 and State California Environmental Quality Guidelines Section 15070;
3. Find that all information added to the Final Initial Study/Negative Declaration after the public review period, but before adoption, merely clarifies, amplifies, or makes insignificant modifications, and that recirculation is not necessary;
4. Adopt the Final Initial Study/Negative Declaration for the Innovative Barracuda Chassis Depot Project at 915 Earle Street;
5. Approve the Innovative Barracuda Chassis Depot Project at 915 Earle Street, in consideration of the Final Initial Study/Negative Declaration, including comment letters received and the responses to comments;
6. Authorize the City of Los Angeles Harbor Department to file the Notice of Determination for the Innovative Barracuda Chassis Depot Project at 915 Earle Street with the Los Angeles City and County Clerks; and
7. Adopt Resolution No. _____.

DISCUSSION:

Project Background/Context – The existing Project site is approximately 7 acres and is currently being used as a chassis storage, maintenance, and repair facility (chassis yard). Innovative identified the expansion parcels, totaling approximately 6.2 acres, to accommodate expanded operations. The Project area, including the expansion area is mostly paved, except for a 1.5-acre unimproved dirt area at the southern portion of the expanded property. This area would be graded and paved as a result of the proposed Project. The unpaved parcel to the south was previously developed and contained a now demolished building that served as a dog food manufacturing plant and an office. This plant was demolished in 2018. The expanded approximately 13.2-acre property would be used as a full-service chassis depot, which would include the addition of stop/start functions of chassis to existing operations.

Project Objectives – The proposed Project would optimize the use of existing land that supports chassis storage at the Project site. Also, the proposed Project would provide a full-service depot that would increase the efficiency of terminal operations by providing storage, maintenance, repair, and stop/start functions of chassis on Terminal Island in the

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Port of Los Angeles (Port). With the issuance of a Term Permit for up to 10 years, which combines all Innovative-entitled parcels, the efficiency of goods movement would be increased in the Port by providing off-terminal maritime support to help meet the demands of Port marine terminals now and in the future.

Project Description – The proposed Project would permit and expand property currently operated as a chassis yard that provides storage, maintenance, and repair of chassis, and modification of existing operations to include stop/start hire of chassis (i.e., rental and return operations). Innovative proposes to expand the existing approximately 7-acre property by approximately 6.2 acres, to a total of approximately 13.2 acres.

Of the existing and expanded property, construction would occur only at the southernmost area of the site (approximately 2.7 acres). Site improvements or modifications are not required for the other portions of the proposed Project site. The southernmost area of the site has approximately 1.2 acres that is partially paved, with the remaining area consisting of unimproved dirt. This unimproved dirt area would require compacting, grading, and paving of approximately 1.5 acres. All development would comply with the City of Los Angeles Low Impact Development ordinance stormwater management strategy requirements. The remaining 1.2 acre area may need to be spot filled with a slurry seal. The existing wall located within this parcel would also be removed. Existing fencing would be maintained to secure the site, and approximately 500 linear feet of new fencing and a gate would be installed.

Under the proposed Project, Innovative would operate the facility as a full-service chassis depot, adding stop/start functionality to its existing operations. The new stop/start function would allow truckers to pick up and return chassis to the site, renting and returning chassis on a regular basis. Due to this new stop/start function, truck traffic would increase, adding an estimated 258 trucks per day (round trips). The truck trips to and from the Project site, however, would be truck trips already traveling to the Harbor District and are considered minor diversions from their existing trips. The new stop/start function would also require Innovative to extend its current hours of operation from 7:00 AM - 4:00 PM, to 7:00 AM - 3:00 AM. The expansion parcels would provide land for increased storage of approximately 2,480 additional chassis (making the site's capacity approximately 5,280 chassis), and the facility's hours of operation would increase from 7:00 AM - 4:00 PM, to 7:00 AM - 3:00 AM. The expansion of Innovative's operations would require nine additional employees, for a total of 20 employees per day.

The existing property contains a metal building that is currently used to perform maintenance and repair of chassis and for storage of tools. The building would continue to serve the same purposes as part of proposed Project operations. Maintenance activities for the proposed Project would remain the same as they are currently, but the

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frequency of maintenance may increase incrementally solely due to more chassis being stored at the site.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

CEQA Documentation and Public Involvement – In compliance with the State CEQA Guidelines and the Los Angeles City CEQA Guidelines, the Harbor Department, as the CEQA Lead Agency, has prepared an IS/ND for the proposed Project which contains the following: a description of the proposed Project and location, an initial study checklist, and an analysis of potential impacts and proposed findings.

The Draft IS/ND dated August 2020 was circulated for public review and comment for a period of 30 days beginning on August 20, 2020, and ending on September 18, 2020. In accordance with State CEQA Guidelines §15072, a Notice of Intent (NOI) to adopt the IS/ND was issued on August 20, 2020 and was posted on August 21, 2020. Approximately 90 notices were mailed or emailed to agencies, stakeholders, neighbors, and other interested parties. The NOI and accompanying Draft IS/ND was filed with the Los Angeles County Clerk and was made available for public review on the Port's website at: <http://www.portoflosangeles.org>. A copy of the document was also available for public review at the Harbor Department's Environmental Management Division (EMD) located at 222 West 6th Street, 9th Floor, San Pedro, by appointment due to COVID 19. Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines § 15073, the Draft IS/ND was submitted to the State Clearinghouse for review by state agencies. A public hearing was not conducted during the public review period for the Draft IS/ND and is not required pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines § 15202.

Public Comments Received and Response to Comments – A comment letter from California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) was received during the public review period of the Draft IS/ND. CDFW's comment letter recommended inclusion of three mitigation measures to lessen potential impact to nesting birds and raptors. The Port has added language to clarify the use of pre-construction surveys and monitoring for construction activities conducted between January 1 and September 15. Standard operating procedures that are now identified in the Project Description would be implemented to ensure compliance with existing laws protecting nesting birds. As a result of these changes to Project Description, additional mitigation measures are not warranted. A copy of the comment letter and staff response to comments are included in the Final IS/ND (Transmittal 1).

Based on the comments provided, staff identified no new environmental effects that were not assessed in the Draft IS/ND, and no mitigation is required. Changes added to the Final IS/ND after the public review period merely clarify, amplify, or make insignificant

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modifications. None of the issues raised during the comment period trigger the need to re-circulate the Final IS/ND pursuant to the requirements of State CEQA Guidelines §15073.5.

Finding and Conclusions – The Final IS/ND includes a discussion of the proposed Project's effects on the existing environment. No significant effects on the environment were identified, and no mitigation is required.

Record of Proceedings – When adopting an IS/ND as required by State CEQA Guidelines §15074, the public agency shall specify the location and custodian of the documents or other material, which constitute the record of proceedings upon which its decision is based. These records are in the care of the Director of Environmental Management, City of Los Angeles Harbor Department, 222 West 6th Street, San Pedro, CA 90731.

Notice of Determination – In accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines §15075, a Notice of Determination will be filed with the Los Angeles City and County Clerks after the proposed Project is approved. The filing of the Notice of Determination starts a 30-day statute of limitations on court challenges to the approval under CEQA.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Staffing/consultant costs associated with the preparation of the Final IS/ND for the proposed Project will amount to approximately \$65,000 and will be borne by Innovative under Reimbursement Agreement No. E-7074 with the Harbor Department. Innovative will be financially responsible for the payment of pre-construction and construction costs associated with the proposed Project.

CITY ATTORNEY:

Based upon the information presented to the City Attorney's Office, the Board may certify that the Negative Declaration has been completed in compliance with CEQA.

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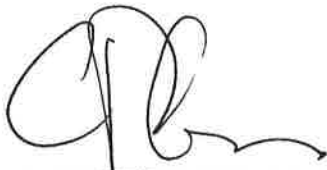
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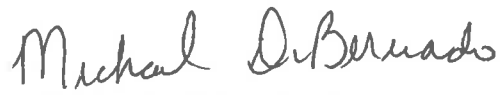
TRANSMITTAL:

1. Final Initial Study/Negative Declaration

FIS Approval: 
CA Approval: 



CHRISTOPHER CANNON
Director of Environmental Management



MICHAEL DiBERNARDO
Deputy Executive Director

APPROVED:



EUGENE D. SEROKA
Executive Director

CC/mrx
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