




**EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
AGENDA STAFF REPORT**

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<b>DATE</b>	December 19, 2023
<b>TITLE</b>	Authorization Approving Application for Federal Funds from the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Economic Development Initiative Community Project Funding for the Concord-Port Chicago Building Restoration Project in the Amount of \$3 Million
<b>DIVISION</b>	Finance and Management Services
<b>FROM</b>	Katy Hornbeck, Grants Manager Dr. Ana M. Alvarez, Deputy General Manager
<b>APPROVED</b>	Sabrina Landreth, General Manager 

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**RECOMMENDATION**

The General Manager recommends that the East Bay Regional Park District's Board of Directors authorize an application to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for federal grant funds from the Economic Development Initiative Community Project Fund for the development of a joint visitor center at Thurgood Marshall Regional Park – Home of the Port Chicago 50 in the amount of \$3,000,000.

**BACKGROUND**

On July 13, 2019, the former Concord Naval Weapons Station (CNWS) was formally transferred to the East Bay Regional Park District (Park District). The CNWS part of the larger Port Chicago military complex and was referred to as "Concord Hills Regional Park" during the planning process. In 2021, the park was renamed Thurgood Marshall Regional Park – Home of the Port Chicago 50.

The CNWS accommodated the changing needs of its inhabitants and settlers for centuries, including indigenous people, miners, ranchers, and the United State Navy, as well as local wildlife species from grizzly bears to California red-legged frogs. From the 1940s until its closure in 2005, the property was used exclusively by the military, limiting public access as well as private development. The CNWS emerged as a prominent part of the East Bay landscape, offering striking grassland and hillside views while contributing to a substantial network of undeveloped open space. CNWS was approved for closure by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) in 2005.

In the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010, Congress directed the NPS to work in partnership with the East Bay Regional Park District and the Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial in California for the development of a joint visitor center.

The Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial Enhancement Act was included in the National Defense Authorization bill, which was signed into law on October 29, 2009. The Act recognized the largest home front disaster of World War II – a waterfront explosion that killed more than 300 sailors, over 200 of whom were African American. The tragic event had the powerful outcome of ultimately leading to the integration of the military.

The Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial was established to memorialize the munitions explosion at Port Chicago Naval Magazine on July 17, 1944, the subsequent mutiny trial, and the African American community response to these events that exposed the shameful injustices of racism in the military. These events were a catalyst for the Navy, the armed services, and ultimately, the nation to weigh the costs of racial segregation. The memorial serves as a reminder of the ongoing struggles for equality and social justice today. The regional park site has been identified as an ideal site for a joint visitor center by the Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial Foundation due to its ability to provide an opportunity to understand the complexity of the Port Chicago stories within their historical geographic context.

In 2012, the Concord City Council adopted the Concord Reuse Project Area Plan and designated the western slopes of the Los Medanos Hills and the adjacent area as the future Regional Park site. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the National Park Service and the Park District in February 2012 for the development of a joint visitor center. Friends of Port Chicago National Memorial has worked closely with the two agencies on planning for this visitor center.

In July 2020, the East Bay Regional Park District adopted a Land Use Plan and an Environmental Impact Report to begin the process of building Thurgood Marshall Regional Park – Home of the Port Chicago 50 on over 2,500 acres, in partnership with the National Park Service, to serve generations of current and future East Bay residents. Development will include future park amenities such as a visitor center, staging areas, public access points, and miles of recreational trails for hiking, biking, and nature viewing.

## **ANALYSIS**

In 2021, Congressman DeSaulnier requested House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies to direct \$10 million of the National Park Service (NPS) construction program funds be used for the previously authorized visitor center at the Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial. In 2023, \$3 million was approved and appropriated into Department of Housing and Urban Development's Economic Development Initiative Community Project Fund for the preliminary design and planning phase of the Visitor Center Project at Thurgood Marshall Regional Park – Home of the Port Chicago 50. While the funds have been appropriated to HUD, the Park District is still required to submit an application package and go through the formal approval process prior to receiving an executed grant agreement.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This action proposes submission of a grant application in the amount of \$3,000,000 and appropriation of those funds if awarded. The estimated total project cost for preliminary design and planning is \$3 million. When completed, this project may increase the long-term operational cost of the Park District.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

None.



**EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT  
RESOLUTION NO. 2023-12-  
DECEMBER 19, 2023**

**AUTHORIZATION APPROVING APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL FUNDS FROM  
THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT'S ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE COMMUNITY PROJECT FUNDING FOR THE  
CONCORD-PORT CHICAGO BUILDING RESTORATION PROJECT IN THE  
AMOUNT OF \$3 MILLION**

**WHEREAS**, the East Bay Regional Park District (Park District) is seeking funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Economic Development Initiative Community Project Fund and must submit an application to accept the funds; and

**WHEREAS**, \$3 million was approved and appropriated into Department of Housing and Development's Economic Development Initiative Community Project Fund for the preliminary design and planning phase of the Visitor Center Project at Thurgood Marshall Regional Park – Home of the Port Chicago 50; and

**WHEREAS**, Park District procedures require Board of Directors approval for all grant applications; and

**WHEREAS**, Thurgood Marshall Regional Park – Home of the Port Chicago 50 was identified as an ideal site for a joint visitor center by the Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial Foundation due to its ability to provide an opportunity to understand the complexity of the Port Chicago stories within their historical geographic context; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Directors of the East Bay Regional Park District hereby:

1. Approves the filing of an application for federal funds up to \$3 million; and
2. Certifies that the applicant has reviewed, understands, and agrees to the articles contained in the contract shown in the Grant Guide; and
3. Agrees to comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws, ordinances, rules, regulations and guidelines; and
4. Appoints the General Manager or Assistant General Manager of Finance and Management Services/CFO as agent of the East Bay Regional Park District to conduct all negotiations, execute and submit all documents, including, but not limited to applications, agreements, amendment, payment requests and perform such acts, which may be necessary for the completion of the aforementioned project; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Assistant General Manager of Finance and Management Services/CFO or Budget Manager is authorized to amend the current year's budget, without further Board action, upon receipt of the executed grant contract from the Grants Manager. The budget amendment will include an increase in budgeted revenue and a corresponding increase in appropriation for the amount stipulated in the grant contract.

Moved by Director \_\_\_\_\_, and seconded by Director \_\_\_\_\_, and adopted December 19, 2023, by the following vote:

FOR:

AGAINST:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT: