

CITY OF PACIFICA  
Parks, Beaches and Recreation Commission  
December 16, 2020

**SUBJECT:**

Pacifica State Beach Surf Camp/School Permitting

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Discuss the various aspects of the Surf Camp School Policy, make recommendations for next steps and provide direction to staff on a plan to move forward in making changes to the policy.

Approved the staff recommendations, including:

- Suggested minor edits/changes to the existing policy for 2021.
- Extension of current CAPP program for 2021.
- Creation of a working group committee that will make recommended changes to the policy in order to create a Community Access Partner Permit (CAPP) program as well as address overall policy considerations.
- Appoint Commissioner liaisons to the working group.

**STAFF CONTACT:**

Michael Perez, Director, Parks, Beaches and Recreation  
(650) 738-7381, [perezm@ci.pacifica.ca.us](mailto:perezm@ci.pacifica.ca.us)

**BACKGROUND:**

In 2003, the City's Public Works Department developed a Master Plan for Public Improvements at Pacifica State Beach. To address beach related issues during the implementation of these improvements, a Beach Subcommittee was formed on April 15, 2004. The subcommittee's work consisted of making recommendations and developing guidelines for the elimination of fires, beach hours of operations, ideas for the creation of a parking program, and recommendations for signage.

On April 25, 2005, the recommendations were on the agenda of the regularly scheduled City Council meeting. Council approved the implementation of a policy to support the Ordinance listed above and directed staff to come back to the following meeting with some changes and clarifications to the guidelines. At the May 9, 2005 regular City Council meeting, council directed staff to proceed with implementation of the Pacifica State Beach Surf Camp/School Policy Guidelines. The policy set a limit of three surf camp/schools, two large (25-student limit) and one small (12 student limit).

At their regular meeting on January 23, 2013, the PB&R Commission adopted changes to the Surf Camp/School Policy (attached) that included allowing one local surf shop to apply annually for a permit to increase the number of students that were currently allowed (for surf shops) from 5 to 12 at the small surf camp rate.

At the June 8, 2020 City Council meeting approximately 30 emails/letters and 13 speakers addressed concern over the surf camp permitting process. In particular, many wrote or stated that they were concerned about racial equity relating to beach access, and that the permitting

process makes it difficult for non-profits, like Brown Girls Surf (BGS) and City Surf Project (CSP) to apply for a surf camp permit;

In addition, several commenters shared personal anecdotes relating to the importance of equitable beach access, their experiences at the beach and surfing, as well as volunteering with non-profits that work with diverse communities. Many of the speakers advocated reforming the surf camp permitting process.

Since this time, several meetings on this topic have been held, below is a brief summary of those meetings. Additional staff reports from those meetings have been attached to this report.

- June 22, 2020 City Council Meeting - Council referred this work item to the Parks, Beaches and Recreation (PB&R) Commission to evaluate the Pacifica Surf Camp/School Policy to determine if/how the program could be amended to allow more surf camps to operate, or to revise the permit renewal process in order to support non-profits that work with diverse communities.
- On July 22 and August 5, 2020, PB&R Commission study sessions – Discussion of the existing surf camp policy, equitable access relating to the beach and permit holders, input from the public and a proposal from two non-profits for a Community Access Partner (CAPP) program.
- August 26, 2020 – PB&R Commission meeting – Commission approved changes to the Surf Camp/School Policy to include two CAPP participants for a six-month pilot program. Commissioners also agreed to put this on their work plan, with further study sessions and meetings.
- October 14, 2020 – PB&R Commission study session was held for reviewing the City's current surf camp/school requirements, guidelines, and rules and to compare and contrast these requirements with other agencies and review the CAPP proposal (a second proposal was submitted by Brown Girls Surf/City Surf Project). Staff gave a presentation covering applicant qualification review, current guidelines and rules, introduced and read the Santa Monica purpose statement, explained the percentages on the Comparison to Other Agencies chart, and explained the projected surf camp timeline and total participant counts as broken down by season. The CAPP proposal was also summarized.

## **DISCUSSION**

As we are evaluating the existing policy to make changes, there is a desire to move forward with the CAPP proposal more permanently. The most recent communication and proposal from Brown Girls Surf and City Surf CEO's recommends that the focus be on creating a CAPP system before overhauling the current permit system. Commissioners have expressed a desire to do both at the same time.

In recent years, staff has made an effort to get permitting information out by end of the calendar year with the goal of completing the process in January/February. With 2021 less than month away, and because of COVID-19 related challenges, staff recommends that any large-scale changes to the program not take place until the 2022 permit year.

### **Recommendations:**

- Permits may be granted for 2021 with some minor changes to the Applicant Qualification section, as outlined below.\*
- Extend the CAPP program through 2021. (Note: BGS and CSP do not have programs scheduled for summer weekends).
- To adopt the staff recommended changes to the Applicant Qualifications of the Surf Camp to take effect in 2021.

- Creation of a working group committee that will make recommended changes to the policy in order to create a Community Access Partner Permit (CAPP) program as well as address overall policy considerations.
  - Goals - to create a CAPP program criteria and requirements - equitable access for underrepresented groups by creating a permit program with equitable access for these groups, to include integration with the current surf camp/school policy where appropriate, and to make further recommendations for the improvement of the policy as a whole.
  - Suggested work plan items:
    - Community Access Partner (CAPP) Permit – a very comprehensive proposal submitted by BGS and CSP can be used as a template for the creation of this program. (attached)
    - Overall Surf Camp/School Policy
      - Application process – Application process and review, information required for submission, request for proposals (to have one or not, how often?), review process (formation of a review committee), review of guidelines and rules.
      - Camp and/or student limits - “Load” or number of surf camp/school participants on the beach – method of calculating these numbers, calendar of usage and schedule, number of permits issued.
      - Purpose/Mission Statement – At the October study session Santa Barbara’s purpose statement was shared as part of staff’s presentation. Commissioners expressed a desire to create one as well and staff recommends the creation of a purpose statement for Pacifica.
  - Members of working group to include: PB&R staff, one to two Commissioners, representative of a CAPP school, representative of a commercial school, member of Surfrider and/or other stakeholders/partner agency, member of a beach related organization – Pedro Point Surf Club or Pacific Beach Coalition - as well as a member of the public. Staff would contact partner agencies to provide a representative and any individual position would include an application process to be determined later.
  - Timeline – the following are suggestions for a potential timeline of the working group’s schedule, to be discussed and/or modified.
    - Frequency – 1 – 2x/month maximum
    - January 2021 – selection and first meeting
    - Length of meetings – 6-9 months. A goal for updates may be every three months, or have a presentation/update scheduled for the June 2021 Commission meeting.
    - Final presentation – to be determined/Summer 2021.
    - Commission makes final recommendations – Fall 2021 for 2022 season.

## **Recommended Changes for Current Surf Camp/School Policy for 2021**

- **\*Applicant Qualifications** – all current qualifications for commercial surf camps are recommended to remain. Commission may consider adding new qualifications, some of which were discussed at previous meetings, as well as staff recommendations:
  - Copy of Certificate of Insurance for \$3 million dollar (\$3,000,000) liability insurance for current year – staff recommends adding in the requirement to name the City of Pacifica as an additionally insured/certificate holder.
  - Proof of current WSI (water safety) and CPR certification on file for each employee. This requirement should remain. Adding in that possessing a lifeguarding certification by at least one camp/school staff on duty is highly desirable.
  - Applicant and all staff must be proficient in surfing – staff recommends adding that all staff must be proficient at instructing and being good educators.
  - Schedule – while we have required vendors to submit their schedule, it is not specifically listed as part of the requirements. Staff recommends adding this as part of the policy. This will also help in keeping track of the overall beach usage by camps and assist with determining peak vs non-peak usage times.

### **RELATION TO CITY COUNCIL GOALS AND WORK PLAN:**

This action helps to support youth services, which is a component of **A Healthy and Compassionate Community**. It also promotes **An Engaged Community**, taking actions to restore trust in city government, expanding communication and building community.

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with the creation of a working group committee other than staff time.

### **ATTACHMENT LIST:**

August 26, 2020 Surf Camp/School Policy Staff Report

August 2020 adopted Surf Camp/School Policy for Pacifica State Beach

Proposed Framework for CAPP Program 10.02.20

Example of CAPP Application Scenario and Timeline