

December 15, 2020

Dear Honorable Commissioners,

We are writing on behalf of the Brown Girl Surf and City Surf Project communities to commend PBRC's ongoing commitment to creating a CAP program focused on equitable access to surf programming at Pacifica Beach, and to urge decisive action to move forward with the detailed development of this system.

We are thrilled that on August 26, the Commission voted unanimously to create a CAP permit program and initiate a "phase 1" by granting permits to Brown Girl Surf and City Surf Project. This will ensure that the participants of Brown Girl Surf and City Surf Project will be able to receive surf lessons at Pacifica beach through programs intentionally tailored to serve their needs. The vast majority of participants of these programs are folks of color, most of whom are living in households with incomes well below the median for the area. Their communities have historically been underrepresented in surfing, our state's sport. This move by the PBRC acknowledges the need for municipal level governments to proactively shift to policies centering equity in order to address decades of inequity in our country and state across race, income, and other factors. Pacifica is showing its willingness to lead the way.

At the same time, we were highly discouraged by the last study session, and what seems like a very slow process of nailing down the details for the CAP program going forward. The last study session was dominated by the comments of an influential individual who argued vehemently against the existence of any racial inequity in surfing. In doing so, this individual invalidated the experience of many surfers of color. He also espoused the idea that some people - those who grew up by the beach - are more entitled to enjoying the beach than others. All one needs to do is look around at any surf break in California to see that the sport of surfing does not represent the vibrant diversity of our state. A CAP program is needed urgently, and comments like those heard at the last study session should only add urgency to its development.

## **Recommendations**

### Critical Elements of the CAP program

Brown Girl Surf and City Surf project continue to maintain that a robust and equitable CAP program will have the following elements:

- Focus on creating equitable access to surf programming for groups who have been historically underrepresented in the sport
- Criteria for eligible applicants outlined in the document we submitted in July
- A permit application process/RFP process
- A clearly defined criteria and process for evaluating applications and determining - how many permits?/ to whom?/ what is the cost?
- Reflects understanding of what equity looks like - CAP program participants have as much of an equal right to access Pacifica state beach for surf instruction as participants of non-CAP surf programs.

### Adoption of Certain Staff Recommendations:

To ensure that the development of the CAP program move forward at a timely pace, and to ensure that the equity gains already made are maintained, we ask that the PBRC approve the following recommendations of Director Perez:

- The creation of a subcommittee to begin meeting in January, that will nail down the nuts and bolts of how the CAP system will function moving forward
- The extension of City Surf Projects and Brown Girl Surf's phase 1 permits through 2021.

Additional Recommendations for the Subcommittee and timeline.

Figuring out the nuts and bolts of a system is complicated. It should be done by a group with the capacity to delve into the “nitty gritty,” and a close understanding of how the system works and how it impacts stakeholders on the beach. Members of this group should share a commitment to equitable surf access as a starting point. We are concerned that a committee comprised of more than 5 members could prove unwieldy. While there are a number of potential committee members who could represent various beach-going constituencies, we urge including a representative of Surfrider SanMateo to act as an “at large” member. This will allow the committee to stay small while including the collective and diverse voice of surfers and beachgoers as represented by Surfrider. We are also concerned that the timeline presented by Director Perez is too long. We recommend that the first “official” CAPP permit year begin in June 1 2022, as this aligns well with non-profit programming structured around school year calendars and summer break. It would be essential for nonprofits to have 9 to 10 months advanced notice about whether or not they have been granted a CAP permit, so that they can plan for programs and apply for grant funding accordingly. Therefore a CAP permit application process launched in the summer with notification of permitting by September 1 would be ideal for this first year.

These recommendations are summarized below:

- We recommend that the subcommittee is limited to 5 members, all of whom share a commitment to equitable access to surfing. We recommend that these members include:
  - PBR Staff
  - PBRC commissioner
  - Representative of a CAPP school
  - Representative of a commercial surf school
  - Representative of Surfrider San Mateo Chapter
- We recommend an April 1 deadline for the subcommittee to present recommendations to PBRC, with a minimum of 4 meetings to take place between Jan and April 1.

In closing, we are available for any questions on any of the recommendations made, and would like to reiterate our appreciation for the PBRC's willingness to continue working toward equitable access to the beautiful beaches of Pacifica.

Sincerely,

Mira Manickam-Shirley, Executive Director of Brown Girl Surf  
Johnny Irwin, Executive Director of City Surf Project