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City of Berkeley



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TO: Parks & Recreation Commission
FROM: Vicki Elmer, Public Works Director
SUBJECT: CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS FOR CITY PARKS

INTRODUCTION

As part of the FY 1993-94 Budget Process the City Council identified \$1.5 million from the PERS refund to be allocated in FY 1994-95 for parks capital improvement projects. On February 1, 1994, the Parks and Recreation Commission approved a motion recommending specific projects be given priority in the FY 1994-95 Capital Improvement Project (CIP) process because of their critical effects on the health and safety of park users (Attachment A). More recently, Councilmembers Olds and Woodworth submitted an item to the Council recommending that priority be given to parks capital improvements which are supported by the Parks and Recreation Commission (Attachment B). For an over-view of the open space issues facing the City, staff has attached the relevant section of the Conditions, Trends, and Issues Report (Attachment C).

Staff recommends that the Parks and Recreation Commission:

1. Approve the process for spending the \$1.5 million outlined in this report, which:
 - A. Uses the 1984-85 Master List as a basis for selecting projects during this fiscal year;
 - B. Provides for a series of public meetings in May to solicit input on the priority rankings and new projects;
 - C. Uses revised priority descriptions which include the need to consider disabled accessibility; and
 - D. Spends the money over a three year period; and
2. Approve the revised priority descriptions as developed by staff:



standard of five acres per 1,000 persons. The Report identifies funding as primary constraint and raises questions as to achieving a balance between budget limitations and capital improvement needs.

There has been some discussion at the staff level of issuing a bond for infrastructure improvements citywide. The bond would fund improvements for streets, public buildings, and parks. A bond issue would provide a secure funding source for parks capital improvements and would enable the \$1.5 million to be spent quickly on immediate needs.

Parks Project Expenditures - FY 1991-92 to Date

Despite limited funding, some progress has been made in completing project identified by the Commission. Attachment E contains a listing of parks related expenditures by project. The first column, prior year expenditures, includes costs incurred from FY 1991-92 until FY 1993-94. The Revised FY 1993-94 budget for the project is in the second, and the actual expenditures for this fiscal year appear in the third column. The Public Works Department's budget request to the City Manager for FY 1994-95 is in the last column. The information was generated from the City's financial system, and the project descriptions may represent combinations of projects on the Master List.

OPTIONS FOR THE USE OF THE \$1.5

There are 2 major options for using the \$1.5 million that the Parks and Recreation Commission could consider:

1. Establish a fund that would earn interest and fund small park improvements over a period of years.

There are a number of benefits to be derived from using the \$1.5 to establish a fund for parks capital projects. The Commission may remember that there was some discussion of using the full \$7.8 million PERS refund to establish a fund for Berkeley parks, however, the final decision by the council last June, resulted in the allocation of \$1.5 million for the parks. Establishing a fund would provide a secure funding source for improvements, and provide an excellent source of funding for matches required in grant applications. The annual interest generated on \$1.5 million would be approximately \$50,000 to 60,000, based on the March 15, 1994 rate. This interest would be able to fund small improvements, while the principal could be held for grant match requirements or as a permanent parks endowment which interested community groups could contribute to.

The disadvantage to this approach is the time it would take to address the needs identified by the Commission. Establishing a fund would mean that the improvement process would occur in small increments over time, and the impact of the relatively small amount of improvement would be mitigated by the impact of inflation.

2. Select projects from the 1984-85 Master List, with input from the community, and spend the \$1.5 million over three years

In order to move quickly the Commission could use the Master List as a basis for selecting the projects to be funded. This approach would enable the money to be spent over a three year process, and provide an immediate solution to the top priority items identified by the Commission. This option does not provide a mechanism for funding future needs.

It is staff's recommendation that the Commission use the process outlined below to select projects during this fiscal year to be funded by the \$1.5 million. The projects identified through this process, but not funded, could be used to justify the need for a bond measure to fund future improvements.

PROPOSED PROCESS FOR SELECTING PROJECTS

Staff has developed a process which enables the Commission and the public to re-rank and add to the Master List. Attachment F contains a preliminary "Revised Master List" of parks projects prepared by staff. The Master List was used as a basis, the new items are either requests from the community or new needs identified by staff. Budget estimates still need to be developed for the projects. These numbers will be available for the Commission's review in April. As part of the process, staff will be requesting the Commission to discuss the list in detail; rank the projects in order of priority; and rank the projects within each priority category.

For the additions, staff has ranked the projects based on the priorities originally established by the Commission. However, staff is suggesting modifications to the priority descriptions below.

Proposed process time-line

This process could be initiated after Council approval, and following the schedule outlined below:

March 28, 1994 Parks and Recreation Commission discusses and approves proposed process

April 12, 1994 Process on Council agenda for approval

April 15, 1994 Advertise process, public notice of meetings

→ April 25, 1994 Parks & Recreation Commission regular meeting - public input on the list

→ Note: Parks & Rec
May 9, 1994 rescheduled
for Saturday 5/7/94
Parks & Recreation Commission special meeting - public input on the list Workshop Format

→ May 16, 1994 Parks & Recreation Commission special meeting - Commission discussion of projects Hearing Format

→ May 23, 1994 Parks & Recreation Commission regular meeting - Commission selection of projects

June 7, 1994 Council considers and acts on Commission recommendation

June 10, 1994 Implementation process begins (pending Council approval)

The schedule listed above is very tight, and assumes two special Commission meetings, but does ensure that the implementation process starts as soon as possible. The schedule also assumes that the Council takes action at the June 7, 1994 meeting. They may want to discuss this at a subsequent meeting in June, if that occurs the implementation schedule will be delayed.

Proposed Priority Descriptions

Since the development of the 1984-85 list, staff has identified two new factors which the Parks and Recreation Commission may want to consider in ranking projects as part of this process: (1) The resources that are offered through neighborhood involvement; and (2) the A.D.A. 1991 legislation that mandates compliance with accessibility standards.

To assist the Commission in its efforts to rank the projects, staff has revised the priority descriptions as follows:

- PRIORITY 1:** Projects that address imminent structural and serious injury issues—in existing park and recreation facilities.
- PRIORITY 2:** Projects that increase and improve usability (especially use by disabled persons) and eliminates related hazards—in existing park and recreation facilities.
- PRIORITY 3:** Projects that increase and improve usability and rehabilitate equipment and infrastructure—in existing park and recreation facilities.
- PRIORITY 4:** Projects that create or provide new park and recreation facilities.

The Commission may want to consider community support for projects as a factor in its evaluation.

New Projects - Required Information

Staff expects that the Commission will receive a number of requests for new projects not currently on the Master List. Staff recommends that the Commission establish a list of required information to be submitted to the Commission to assist in the project ranking process. Staff has developed the following list for the Commission's consideration:

1. Project Description.
2. Contact Person and phone number.
3. Cost of the project in detail: planning/design; construction; fees; other costs; and contingencies.
4. Project schedule showing that the project will be completed within 3 years.
5. Amount of outside funding or in-kind services to be provided, if any.