



PARKS, RECREATION AND BEAUTIFICATION STAFF REPORT

TO: Parks, Recreation and Beautification Commission **DATE:** September 16, 2021

FROM: Kathy Petker, Parks and Recreation Director

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SUBJECT: Skate Park Improvement Project Review and Recommendation

RECOMMENDATION

Receive information on the Skate Park improvement project and provide input and recommendation on modifications to existing site and future site opportunities.

BACKGROUND

The existing skate park located at 1750 Ramona Avenue was built in 1999 as the first skate park in the county as a collaboration between several South County agencies. The park is located on a .68 acre parcel in a retail/commercial/multi-family housing area not adjacent to other recreational amenities. The City currently owns and maintains the park and has used various approaches to operating the site over time. The site was actively staffed for many years by City employees though this approach was cost- and labor-intensive. The City then contracted with the YMCA in 2015 to operate the facility though this led to limited operating hours given the YMCA's difficulty in securing staff for this role. In 2019, the City ended this contract with the YMCA and resumed direct operation of the site again though did not actively staff the facility given cost concerns and instead opened it for use beginning in the morning time during Public Works park tasks and closed at dusk by the City's contract janitorial company. This operating approach is currently in place today.

The skate park is actively used by users at all ages though has several challenges that staff have identified. There are significant maintenance costs for the landscape areas around the concrete bowl, recurring vandalism of various park features, excessive trash, intimidation of younger skaters, and evening access issues. Additionally, the restrooms are routinely vandalized and require repairs. It is difficult for the Police Department to patrol the site due to its stand-alone location, lack of lighting, and site grades, which obstruct a portion of the site from view at the street.

Capital Improvement Project (CIP) 1260 was included in the current Capital Improvement Program adopted by the Council to address these challenges. CIP 1260 is budgeted for \$228,000 in the current FY 2021-22 and \$100,000 in FY 2022-23. Following the adoption of the current Capital Improvement Program, staff met to discuss the site and identify solutions. The scope of work initially proposed for CIP 1260 included concreting several landscaped areas, adding site lighting, removing the existing restroom building, removing the kiosk building, improving benches and seating, and restricting access to the lower portion of the site. Staff also discussed the future of the skate park

and the possibility of building a new skate park at a more suitable location given the popularity of the skate park. In brainstorming ideas for a new facility, staff identified the east side of 16th Street Park as a potential location as it locates the skate park in an actual park with park restrooms. Such a site could be expanded to better serve younger users, allow for greater visibility, and simplify patrol of the site. A new skate park would likely cost between \$1-2 million and would inhibit other potential uses at the location such as an additional ball field or dog park. Staff would also note that a new skate park would possibly enable the City to sell the existing property for a more suitable use at the current location such as housing.

In conjunction with the longer-term possibility of building a new skate park, staff also discussed the need for a more limited scope of modifications at the current site which could address some of the more immediate concerns at the current skate park. Staff determined that removal of the kiosk and restroom buildings, redesigned seating, addition of lighting, and creation of a portable restroom enclosure would address the maintenance, vandalism, and intimidation concerns. Such modifications are estimated to cost \$150,000 compared with the total project budget of \$328,000.

Staff is seeking the Commission's input and recommendation on these more immediate modifications as well as the idea of building a new skate park facility as a long-term goal. Such a goal would be part of a capital needs assessment currently underway by City staff which includes future parks and recreational facilities. The Commission's recommendation will be provided to the Council as part of a Capital Improvement Program update on October 12. Staff will continue to engage the Commission in this capital needs assessment during future meetings to identify the Commission's priorities for future parks and recreational facilities to share with the Council.

FISCAL IMPACT

Proceeding with the original CIP 1260 scope would represent a cost of approximately \$330,000 over the next two fiscal years. However, pursuing the more limited scope of modifications identified by staff would reduce the anticipated project cost to \$150,000 by eliminating costly items like the installation of new concrete areas and new benches and tables. A new skate park facility would cost between \$1-2 million though staff believes some costs could be offset by grants and donations.

ALTERNATIVES

The Commission has the following alternative to consider:

1. Receive information on the Skate Park improvement project and provide input and recommendation on modifications to existing site and future site opportunities; or
2. Provide other recommendations to staff and Council.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

The agenda was posted in accordance with the Brown Act.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Picture of South County Skate Park, 1750 Ramona Avenue

South County Skate Park

