

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

NO. 03-314

DATE October 1, 2003

CD 9

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZATION TO NEGOTIATE THE TERMS OF A POTENTIAL AGREEMENT WITH THE GENERAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT (GSD) FOR SECURITY SERVICES FOR PERSHING SQUARE PARK, TO DETERMINE THE FEASIBILITY OF GSD PROVIDING ABOVE-GROUND SECURITY SERVICES, 24 HOURS A DAY/7 DAYS PER WEEK

L. Barth _____	J. Kolb _____
T. Corrales _____	B. Lukehart _____
*J. Combs  _____	R. Reyes _____
H. Fujita _____	



 General Manager

Approved _____ Disapproved _____ Withdrawn _____

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board:

1. Authorize staff to negotiate the terms of a potential agreement with the General Services Department (GSD) for security services for Pershing Square Park to determine the feasibility of GSD providing above-ground security services, 24 hours a day/7 days per week.
2. Direct staff to bring back to the Board the findings and recommendations of Staff and any resulting proposed agreement, for the Board's consideration.

SUMMARY:

On September 22, 2000, GSD commenced operating the Pershing Square Garage under an agreement with the Department. The entire Pershing Square facility was in need of additional and more effective security at the Park level in order to control crime, inappropriate behavior, and non-permitted park activities which were seen as discouraging the general public from visiting the facility and attending events. On December 3, 2000, a security vendor on a City contract administered by GSD, began providing security services on the surface of the Park at an annual cost of \$231,000.

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Contract security services were chosen over having Park Rangers provide the service due to staffing shortages. At the time, the Rangers were on an on-call basis for the Park and did not have sufficient staff to accommodate 24 hours per day/7 days per week coverage at the Park. GSD anticipates that the cost of providing Park security services through a vendor under contract with the City will increase by 30% in December under a new contract.

Despite some efforts on the part of GSD working with security vendor management and on-site staff, contract security services continue to be inconsistent and unacceptable. The job performance of contract security over time has not been up to the Department's or the local community's expectations. The Department has invested considerable time and effort attempting to correct problems and deficiencies, but has not seen consistent improvement. Park level security is particularly important to the facility. Members of the public make their judgments as to the safety of the Park and their willingness to use the Park based on their perceptions of the ability of surface level security to control the area and keep it safe. Inconsistent performance breeds doubt and a hesitancy on behalf of the public to use the facility. This Department feels that a high quality of security services is a key element in establishing Pershing Square as a thriving venue for the downtown business community. Unfortunately, this contract security under the auspices of GSD has not resulted in the desired level of service.

Use of Park Rangers is one option that has been considered for the provision of security services for the Park. However, the Ranger vacancy rate is currently 43%. The limited number of Rangers available to provide service to the Park on a daily basis prevents this approach from being a viable option. While efforts are in progress to increase the recruitment and retention of new Rangers, full staffing is not likely in the near future. Even if fully staffed, there would not be sufficient Rangers to dedicate to Pershing Square for the required security needs until additional positions solely dedicated to Pershing Square were to be created.

The Downtown Center Business Improvement District (DCBID) has proposed to provide surface security services, 24 hours a day/7 days a week with a minimum of two officers at all times, through their contract security force (Purple Shirt Security) at a total annual cost of \$346,020. The Purple Shirt Security force currently provides security services on the streets in the DCBID area and their proposal would integrate Pershing security with security throughout the DCBID. The DCBID has an excellent reputation with the business community and their security services have developed a superior reputation as a proactive security force. The Department has worked with DCBID to develop a draft agreement to provide the surface security for the Park.

Following the Department's submission of the Notice of Intent to Contract to the CAO's Office for the proposed agreement with DCBID, GSD came forward with a new proposal to provide security services. Service Employees International Union Local 347, which represents Park Rangers, also came forward and formally requested to meet and discuss the issue.

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GSD has proposed to provide Park level security services, 24 hours a day/7 days a week, with a minimum of two officers at all times, using General Services Security personnel (City staff) at a total annual cost of \$328,528. GSD would also use City staff to provide security in the parking garage. The GSD proposal aims to upgrade surface security and maintain the integration of security for the Pershing Square Garage and Park.

The objective of the downtown business community and the Department is to upgrade the security services at Pershing Square and create a safe environment that will attract visitors to the park. The Department would like to continue to explore the feasibility of using GSD security employees to provide these services.

This report was prepared by James L. Combs, Assistant General Manager, Operations West.