

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

NO. 04-85


DATE March 17, 2004

C.D. 07

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF A USE AGREEMENT FOR THE PAXTON-ARLETA SITE

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 General Manager

Approved _____ Disapproved _____ Withdrawn _____

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board:

1. Approve a Use Agreement, substantially in the form on file in the Board Office, which will allow the Department to demonstrate tenure of a County-owned site at the northeast corner of Arleta Avenue and Paxton Street in the Pacoima area of Los Angeles, said tenure being a prerequisite for grant funding for the recreational development of the site;
2. Direct the Board Secretary to transmit the Use Agreement to the Mayor for review in accordance with Executive Directive No. 16, and the City Attorney for approval as to form;
3. Authorize the General Manager to execute the Use Agreement upon receipt of the aforementioned approvals; and
4. Upon approval of the grant, direct staff to report to the Board on site development plans, including the steps taken to satisfy any required mitigation measures needed for approval of the plans under the City Guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act.

SUMMARY:

On January 15, 2004, Grants Administration staff submitted an application for \$1.5 million in funding under the Proposition 40, Urban Park Act of 2001, to develop a recreational site known as Paxton-Arleta, located at the intersection of Arleta Avenue and Paxton Street, west of Sharp Avenue,

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in the Pacoima area of Los Angeles. The Board of Recreation and Parks Commissioners gave general authority to staff to have grant applications prepared for Proposition 40 funds on November 5, 2003, by Board Report No. 03-364. Council's approval came by Motion on December 5, 2003, File No. 03-2608. If this grant is approved, the Department will return to the Board seeking approval to develop a variety of recreational improvements such as sportsfields, an ADA accessible play area, a parking lot, a circulation path, security lighting and landscaping with benches, picnic tables, and a drinking fountain.

The proposed new park totals 4.55 acres, is owned by the Department of Public Works of the County of Los Angeles and is part of a larger, watershed management site under the jurisdiction of the County Flood Control District. They have determined that the site would be potentially suitable for park purposes. Exhibit "A" is a site plan.

Accordingly, the County has offered to enter into a twenty-five year Use Agreement with the City so that grant funding may be obtained and a new park developed. There is no fee for the City's use of the site although the development and maintenance of any improvements will be the City's sole responsibility. If grant funding is not obtained, it is expected that the Use Agreement will be terminated.

As part of the grant application, an Initial Study was prepared to identify any potentially significant environmental impacts from the proposed development of the site. The Initial Study determined that these impacts could occur; however, it is expected that all potential impacts can be mitigated to a level less than significant through appropriate mitigation measures. Consequently, it was recommended that a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) be prepared in compliance with City CEQA guidelines. In accordance with the terms of the grant program, the MND will be prepared once the grant has been awarded but before the final Board approval of the development plan and before the release of grant funds. Approval now of the Use Agreement will allow for the grant application process to be completed, which if funding is approved, will in turn allow completion of the CEQA process for the proposed project. As a result of the information obtained from the MND, the Commission may decide to modify, condition or disapprove the development project. Nothing in the Use Agreement shall limit the Commission's right to exercise their independent judgement and discretion with respect to the proposed development project. In particular, the City's obligations under the Use Agreement to develop the site are subject to, and shall not arise until after, completion of the CEQA process.

In addition to the grant being requested from the State, \$75,000 in matching funds from both Proposition 40 per capita (2/3) and \$75,000 in matching funds from the the Roberti-Z'berg-Harris programs will be devoted to the project. Therefore, the total anticipated cost of the project is \$1,650,000.

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The Assistant General Manager, the Superintendent of Operations West, and the Councilmember for the Seventh District support the project.

This Report was prepared by Joan Reitzel, Senior Management Analyst in Real Estate and Asset Management.