



Parks and Waterfront Commission

## **PARKS AND WATERFRONT COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING**

Wednesday, December 11, 2013, 6:30 P.M.  
Frances Albrier Community Center  
2800 Park Street, Berkeley, CA

### **AGENDA**

The Commissions may discuss any items listed on the agenda, but may take action only on items identified as Action.

#### **Preliminary Matters**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** (Chair)
2. **ROLL CALL** (Secretary)
3. **ANNOUNCEMENTS** (Chair)
4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES\*** for November 13, 2013
6. **PUBLIC COMMENT**
7. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**
  - a. **Director's Office** (Scott Ferris)
  - b. **Parks Division** (Sue Ferrera)
  - c. **Waterfront Division** (John Mann)

#### **Action Item**

8. **APPROVE THE 2014 MEETING SCHEDULE \*** (Chair)
9. **COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATION ON USE OF OFF-LEASH AREA AT CESAR CHAVEZ PARK \*** (Chair)
10. **POTENTIAL BALLOT MEASURE TO IMPROVE PARKS FACILITIES \*\*** (Chair)
  - a. **Action:** Approve sending a report to Council recommending that the City submit to the voters a proposal to increase funding for maintenance and improvement of Berkeley parks.
  - b. **Action:** Approve criteria for selection of projects to be included in the report to Council.
  - c. **Action:** Recommend various projects to be included in the report to Council.

#### **Information Items**

11. **RECENT COUNCIL REPORTS\***
12. **COMMUNICATIONS \***
13. **ADJOURNMENT**

\* document is attached to agenda packet.

\*\* document will be provided at the meeting.

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**SB343 Disclaimer:** Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the Commission regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection at Parks Recreation & Waterfront Department Office at 2180 Milvia Street, Berkeley, CA.

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**Commission Information:** The agenda packets for the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Waterfront Commission are available for review at [www.cityofberkeley.info/commissions](http://www.cityofberkeley.info/commissions); the Berkeley Main Library and the Parks Recreation & Waterfront Department Office at 2180 Milvia Street –3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, during their normal business hours. If you have questions, call Commission Secretary, Roger Miller at 981-6704 at 2180 Milvia Street, Berkeley, CA 94704 or by email at [rmiller@cityofberkeley.info](mailto:rmiller@cityofberkeley.info).

**MISSION STATEMENT – PARKS AND WATERFRONT:** The Parks and Waterfront Commission shall be an advisory board and shall review the policies, projects, programs, planning efforts, activities, funding, and the physical condition of parks, pools, camps, recreation centers, the Marina, and public greenery, and shall advise the City Council on these matters.

#### COMMISSION MEMBERS

<b>Mayor -</b>	Michael Veneziano	<b>District 3 -</b>	Jim McGrath	<b>District 6 -</b>	Michael Boland
<b>District 1 -</b>	Shirley Brower	<b>District 4 -</b>	Toni Mester	<b>District 7 -</b>	Dru Howard
<b>District 2 -</b>	Phil Catalfo	<b>District 5 -</b>	Susan McKay	<b>District 8 -</b>	Caitlin Brostrom

**DRAFT**

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

FROM: Parks and Waterfront Commission

SUBJECT: Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Funding

**INTRODUCTION**

For the last six months, the new Parks and Waterfront Commission has reviewed the condition of Berkeley's fifty-two parks and other recreational facilities, with an increasing sense of alarm. Since 1982, the citizens of Berkeley have supported a number of different tax measures that provide additional funding for their parks including Measure HH in 2008 by a vote of over 77%. However, these measures have failed to keep up with the increased maintenance needs of the parks, and there is a long list of needed projects in almost every park and facility.

The tax measures provided funds for maintenance outside of the City's general fund, which continued to pay for recreational programs. But even with these measures, staffing has dropped from 186 full time positions in FY 2002 to 157 in FY 2013, with a loss of personnel in both areas. Four positions were cut in FY 2012, and without intervention, another 3 positions are slated to be eliminated in FY 2014.

While the parks tax has supported maintenance staff, the capacity of the tax to underwrite major maintenance efforts has deteriorated along with our aging and much used facilities. Currently the Parks Director Scott Ferris estimates that over \$30 million in capital and major maintenance projects remains unfunded.

**PUBLIC INPUT**

The Parks and Waterfront Commission held three public meetings in different locations to solicit public input on setting priorities for the parks. Each of these meetings was well attended, and the last one was standing-room only. We also received significant testimony at our regular meetings in August and November. Dozens of people offered their observations at those meetings, and others sent letters and emails. It is clear that the people in Berkeley love their parks and want them maintained at a higher standard.

**RECOMMENDATION**

The Parks and Waterfront Commission recommends that the City Council consider submitting to the voters a proposal to increase funding for maintenance and improvement of Berkeley's parks. We understand that elements of this proposal will be subject to public opinion polling and may be adjusted to reflect public opinion. We hope that you consider this Commission an ally in that effort, and continue to consult with us in crafting any measure that is eventually submitted for the 2014 ballot. We realize that it may be difficult to get approval for two measures, but our Parks need funding for both maintenance that can be raised through an increase in the parks tax, and for capital improvements that would qualify for a bond measure, which has significant financial

benefits, particularly at current interest rates. We think the funding measure should have the following provisions:

- a. **Increase the maintenance tax by approximately 10%.** The park maintenance tax generates about \$9.3 million in revenue, but that is not sufficient to cover existing personnel and major maintenance projects. As a result, the condition of the parks is deteriorating, and expensive repairs are required for facilities such as the James Kenney Community Center where dry rot has spread. We estimate that such an increase in the maintenance tax would generate enough funds to prevent additional layoffs in FY2014, and would cover maintenance of a renovated Willard Pool. It would also generate enough funds to reduce the backlog of major maintenance projects and allow staff to fix small problems before they threaten to close facilities.
- b. **Engage Berkeley citizens as volunteers in our parks.** Currently Berkeley Partners for Parks coordinates volunteer efforts. We realize that volunteers sometimes make life more difficult for staff, but we are convinced that each park is part of a community, and that engaging park users is essential to success. We think that stronger cooperation between City staff and volunteers would improve communication, and help park users appreciate the contributions of the staff. Recognizing volunteers as partners would also foster a sense of stewardship of public resources, and has proved successful in Oakland and San Francisco.
- c. **Develop a plan for long-term sustainability of the parks.** The City's open space element, prepared in 1988 and revised in 1992-3, does not provide a robust look forward for managing the parks. The City is aware of this deficiency, noting that "... much of the data included in the element (park facilities status and acreage, for example) is now outdated."

Because the Open Space Plan does not include detail on the uses that should be encouraged at Cesar Chavez Park, or along the Santa Fe right of way, we recommend that the plan be updated to reflect those newer parks, and include a blueprint for the sustainability of the Parks going forward. We recommend that the plan develop a mini-business plan for each significant facility, and metrics that identify users, and areas in which facilities can be re-envisioned to save maintenance costs.

- d. **Ensure accountability and Transparency.** The Commission recommends that the Council establish, as part of any ballot measure, an accountability measure that articulates the metrics for measuring improvement in the parks, a body to review those measures, and an annual report process with an opportunity for public comment. We believe this measure will improve communication, and long term support for the parks.

## Jim McGrath's list of potential projects

- A. Re-open Willard Pool. From my perspective, it is inequitable to have one junior high school in the City with a pool and the other without one. I found the energy of the Willard Pool supporters inspirational, and the equity issues of a much higher rate of drowning for African Americans persuasive. People with means in Berkeley can teach their children to swim at King Pool, West Campus, or at Strawberry Canyon. But extending swimming to those of more modest means requires both more facilities and operational costs, including learn to swim programs. Berkeley High school has successful athletic programs like crew that send athletes without economic resources to college on scholarships. The ability to swim is essential to extend these opportunities to all kids. Estimated cost \$4.7 million, per Scott Ferris.
- B. Set aside \$1 million for shortfall in insurance funding at Berkeley Tuolumne Camp, pending resolution of legal questions about use of bond funds. It is likely that there will be costs to rebuild the Camp to newer standards and avoid flood-prone areas and restored habitat. While insurance will cover most of the rebuilding, and fundraising by supporters will be necessary, a demonstration of willingness to help pay for the reconstruction will be essential for rapid progress.
- C. Cedar Rose Park. Cedar Rose Park is one of the oldest parks in Berkeley, and was selected to receive funding from the East Bay Regional Park District's measure WW. However, there are important safety and historic elements that are not covered by that measure. \$1.5 million would provide for the most pressing safety and longevity projects.
- D. Cesar Chavez Park. At 90 acres, Cesar Chavez is Berkeley's largest park. It is also relatively closer to West Berkeley, which lacks parks. Maintaining the landfill's integrity during the post-closure process limits options for intensive recreation, but the paths, landscaping, and erosion control all need attention. Bringing the paths up to Bay Trail standards will provide significant benefits for the disabled community, as the park is tied into the upgraded Bay Trail recently completed, and to the Berkeley Outdoor Recreation Program (BORP) which encourages recreation for those in wheelchairs and adaptive bicycles. \$1 million would provide for the most pressing needs
- E. Live Oak. Live Oak Park is rather large, at 5.5 acres, and is centrally located near commercial areas. It has some of the most heavily used and intensive recreational facilities, with tennis, volleyball and basketball courts, and a popular recreational center. \$1.2 million would allow the most pressing upgrades to the art and recreation center.
- F. Aquatic Park. Aquatic Park consists of nearly 33 acres of land and nearly 68 acres of water, making it the second largest park in Berkeley. It is venerable—old—having been constructed during the WPA in 1935-37. It is also the home to the Berkeley Outdoor Recreation Program and the landing for the bicycle and pedestrian bridge that provides access to the waterfront. There have been a number of recent improvements at the north end, but the trails on the west side are not friendly for those with disabilities, and circulation is badly impaired due to deteriorated culverts (often called tide tubes.) \$2.5 million would provide for the tide tubes, paving and landscaping to improve accessibility.

- G. James Kenney is one of the few parks located in West Berkeley. It is 4.2 acres in area, and includes basketball, volleyball, and tennis courts, a gymnasium, a recreational center, and a tot lot. \$1.5 million would allow repair of dry rot and the most pressing court repairs.
- H. Bay Trail spur in the Marina. Providing full compliance with the ADA in all of Berkeley's parks is an enormous and expensive challenge. But the director of the BORP programs at Aquatic Park has recommended that improvements to the Bay Trail are one of the highest priorities for accommodating the greatest number of people with the widest range of disabilities. Recreational programs run from the BORP center at Aquatic Park can now reach the south Basin. Completing the Bay Trail spur in the marina, and improving the paths at Cesar Chavez Park would make the entire waterfront accessible to those with disabilities for approximately \$1 million.
- I. Ohlone Park. Work has been under way at Ohlone Park, and \$250,000 would allow completion of the dog park and upgrading the trash receptacles and benches, called for in the public meetings.
- J. Update the Master Plan. Portions of the Master Plan that cover parks in Berkeley date back to 1977, and the most recent addition, the Berkeley Marina Master Plan, was adopted in 2003. While maintenance projects on existing facilities do not require modifications to the City's plans, implementation of new facilities at Cesar Chavez and the Santa Fe right-of-way require that the City adopt a plan establishing those uses. The public has made a persuasive case that it is inequitable for portions of the Santa Fe ROW to have been completed in some parts of the city, and to lie fallow and fenced in other parts. \$800,000 would provide funding for an update, including planning for long term sustainability and reduced maintenance costs, planning for Santa Fe right of way, and a pilot project for Santa Fe ROW.

December 1, 2013

To: Parks and Waterfront Commission  
From: Vice-Chair Toni Mester  
RE: Action Item 11

**Parks Ballot Measure Criteria:** as our representative on the Measure M team, I attended many meetings in a process that produced a scorecard of objective criteria (attached). When the outcomes of the Measure M process were presented in a special session of the City Council on October 1, members lauded our efforts with comments like “you’ve given the City a model” (Wengraf) and “this wonderful process...an example of what we can do when we’re serious and dedicated” (Maio). In light of such approval, we should consider objective criteria for the Parks ballot measure(s) and if time allows, weighted in a similar scorecard. If time doesn’t allow for the scoring, we could order them in rough priority. After discussions and emails among our committee, I have developed the following criteria to submit as part of our report to the Council. Please look them over, make changes, and put them in order of your priority so we can have a productive discussion next Wednesday.

### **Criteria for inclusion in parks ballot measure**

The project should provide, entail or require:

**Equity:** addresses a perceptible imbalance in delivery of recreational resources City-wide.

**Community needs:** meets the needs of an underserved community, group or neighborhood that has not benefited from parks improvements or has waited a long time for the improvements.

**Net benefit:** benefits a large cohort of users or increases the number of users.

**Serve multiple user cohorts:** will attract users of various ages, serve families, provide safe play for children and be accessible to the disabled.

**Pressing and preventative repair:** needs immediate repair that will cost more if delayed.

**Ready to implement:** has passed the planning stage including environmental review if required and is good to go.

**Visible:** corrects or improves an obvious need or eye-sore

**Outcomes:** identifies results and returns within a practical time frame

**Cost effective:** leverages funds and qualifies for grants

**Planning:** needs seed money to get off the ground

**Sustainable maintenance:** keeps up with inflation and staff costs

## Measure M

# Scorecard Evaluation Criteria

No.	Evaluation Criteria	Project Rating	
		Max. Points	Rating
<b><u>Resource Allocation and Durability</u></b>			
RAD 1	<b>Rates high on Streetsaver output for complete "reconstruction"</b>	10	
RAD 2	<b>Leverages funds</b>	10	
RAD 2.1	Secures grant funds		
RAD 2.2	Cost effective in the long run		
RAD 2.3	Spend money on things that will solve multiple problems		
RAD 3	<b>Candidate for durable or permeable paving - long lasting</b>	10	
RAD 3.1	Use durable pavement systems		
RAD 3.2	Use durable permeable pavement where advantageous		
RAD 4	<b>Ready to implement</b>	10	
RAD 4.1	Involves few utility interferences		
RAD 4.2	Engineering and evaluations can be done quickly		
Subtotal		40	
<b><u>Overall Community Improvement</u></b>			
OCI 1	<b>Enhances public health and safety</b>	10	
OCI 1.1	Improves traffic safety		
OCI 1.2	Advances traffic calming		
OCI 1.3	Enhances equitable community benefits		
OCI 2	<b>Advances Berkeley Complete Streets Policy</b>	5	
OCI 3	<b>Advances bicycle and pedestrian plans</b>	10	
OCI 4	<b>Integrates with other City Plans</b>	5	
OCI 4.1	Advances SOSIP, DAP, CAP, and/or other Area plans		
Sub-total		30	
<b><u>Environment and Climate</u></b>			
EC 1	<b>Consistent with Watershed Management Plan</b>	15	
EC 1.1	Improves stormwater quality		
EC 1.2	Mitigates flooding		
EC 2	<b>Includes Green Infrastructure</b>	10	
EC 3	<b>Consistent with Climate Action Plan Goals</b>	5	
EC 3.1	Reduces greenhouse gas emissions		
EC 3.2	Prepares for long term adaptability		
Sub-total		30	
TOTAL		100	



DRAFT

To: Parks and Waterfront Commission Subcommittee for Parks Funding Measure  
From: Susan McKay, Commissioner  
Date: 30 November 2013  
Re: PWC Recommendation for 2014 Parks Bond

Phil and I had a chance to put our heads together to discuss some funding scenarios. The text below reflects our thoughts.

In considering the parks department deficit, we are concerned that even with an increase in the parks tax and a bond measure, the parks will continue for the foreseeable future to need additional funding beyond the level of the raised parks tax and City's general fund. The worst case scenario could be that the tax payer obligation would rise, but the parks would remain critically under-funded. The thing we most want to avoid is having to go back to the voters, sooner than we lead them to expect, to ask them to approve an additional tax increase and/or bond measure beyond what we're asking them to approve at this time.

In addition there will be special projects proposed by citizens that may be important to address so the budgeting for increased funding must remain somewhat flexible.

Therefore, we suggest the following scenarios be considered:

**Scenario 1**

**A - Raise Parks Tax to fund structural deficit and restore staff, planning**

**B - \$20 M Bond to address 30% of deferred maintenance including \$5M for pools**

The idea is to halt facilities' degradation and implement a repair and maintenance program for approximately 5 years (\$4M/year at \$20M). During that time a community based review and hard look at the parks facilities and operations should occur with the result being the development of a 15 to 20 year plan to maintain and operate a sustainable park system. At that point return to voters for major bonding to fund parks per a sustainable plan.

**Scenario 2**

**A - Raise Parks Tax to fund structural deficit and restore staff (including sufficient funds to prevent deferred maintenance)**

**B - \$60 M Bond to address 100% of deferred maintenance including \$17M for pools**

The idea is to implement the Parks Department deferred maintenance and capital improvements over a period of 15 years. Projects will accelerate over the years as the department capacity is increased to handle that amount of funding and project work. During this time a community based review group should oversee the implementation program and work with the department to insure facilities and operations are maintainable with the goal being a sustainable park system.

Looking forward to a good discussion next week.