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DRAFT - PARKS DEPARTMENT PROPOSED PROJECT REVIEW PROCESS

GENERAL

The purpose of the Proposed Project Review Process is to outline a procedure for reviewing and considering a proposed park improvement project brought forward by a project proponent or sponsor¹. The proposed process is a general outline and will largely depend on the type of proposal submitted, the scope of work involved, and associated opportunities and constraints.

The intent of the process is to better determine whether or not a proposed project is in compliance with existing requirements, agreements, County General Plan, Use Permit, Park Master Plan (if one exists for the park facility), and to ensure the most appropriate development and use of land in harmony with the park.

The Proposed Project Review process is intended to be an open public process, with opportunity for public input and involvement. The Parks Commission, Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors meetings are all public meetings.

The Parks Department, Parks Commission or other reviewing and approval bodies may rely on the following “findings” as guiding principles to help determine the appropriateness of a proposed project:

- Impacts. A proposal shall consider and address potential impacts such as environmental impacts, water quality and water service impacts, traffic and parking impacts, increase in noise levels and visual impacts. Potential impacts may need to be addressed through special studies, evaluations, or reports developed by a qualified, licensed professional engineer, contractor or consultant.
- Intensification of an existing use. A proposal shall not increase existing uses above and beyond the current levels and capacity allowances unless such impacts have been analyzed, can be mitigated, are deemed necessary and justified, and approved.
- Maintain park character. A proposal shall fit within the overall, existing character of the park facility and help to preserve the park’s natural, cultural and recreational resources. General assessment and determination may be based on existing plans or guidelines, staff commission, and/or community input and the unique attributes, qualities, natural terrain and native beauty of the specific park facility.

All costs associated with the project, including yet not limited to the planning, design, development, special studies and reports, materials and labor shall be at the expense of the project proponent or sponsor, unless other agreements have been approved by the Board of

¹ Project proponent or sponsor can be an individual, community group, organization, county department, partnering agency or an approved 501(c) 3 non-profit authorized to do business with the County.

Supervisors. The county may assist by providing in-kind resources, and may consider waiving fees associated with the proposed project review process².

PROJECT REVIEW PROCESS

Application submitted to County Parks Department

- All proposed projects shall be submitted by application, along with the required material and associated fee, to the Director of the Parks Department. The proposal should be well thought out and the application should contain enough detailed information for a thorough review. The more information provided will result in a more complete review and analysis of the proposed project.
- Within approximately thirty (30) days³, a response will be provided to the applicant. The response will outline the next step in the review process, request additional information, material, or clarifications.
- Once the Parks Department determines that the application is complete, the information provided in the project's application will be used to develop a staff report and the project would be scheduled to be presented before the County Parks Commission for review, input and direction. The time frame for taking a proposal to the Parks Commission would depend on the submittal of a complete application, the Parks Commission meeting schedule and a final determination by the Parks Director.

Park Commission Review and Recommendation to the Board of Supervisors

The Parks Commission is responsible for acting in an advisory capacity to the County Board of Supervisors in promoting, aiding, encouraging and conducting a public parks program, including the development of recreational and park facilities. The Parks Commission meetings are open to the public and duly noticed as per the requirements of the Brown Act. There is an opportunity for public comment at these meetings.

- The Parks Commission will consider the proposed project and may take action and forward a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to either approve or deny the proposed project based on the findings made, or direct the applicant to return (to the commission) with additional information, material or revisions.
- Depending on the proposed project and associated scope-of-work involved, the project may require review, input and recommendation from the County's Planning Commission,

² Applicants must submit a Fee Waiver Request as a part of their application in order for the County to consider waiving fees associated with the proposed project review process.

³ The timeframe for consideration of a proposed project and response to the applicant is consistent with the CA State Permit Streamlining Act (Government Code § 65920 et seq.). The Permit Streamlining Act was enacted in order to expedite the processing of projects and achieves this goal by (1) setting forth various time limits within which state and local government agencies must either approve or disapprove permits and (2) providing that these time limits may be extended once (and only once) by agreement between the parties.

and/or Development Review Committee (DRC)⁴ for further review, analysis and direction from involved County Departments and partnering agencies, or review by other agencies with a significant interest in the proposed project.

- The proposed project would ultimately require a final review by the Parks Commission, and recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.

Board of Supervisors Consideration and Approval

The Board is the decision making body and may approve, modify or deny the proposed project.

- If the Board approves the project, they would provide further direction to include the project in the Park Department (and if necessary, other departmental work programs) and identify associated resources to implement the project.
- If approved, the Board would direct the Parks Department to develop an Agreement between the County and applicant to clearly address the obligations and expectations for on-going maintenance, operations and financing. The Agreement would require approval by the Board of Supervisors.
- If the Board denies the project, the action would be the final step in the review process.

⁴ The DRC is a process the County uses to provide early issue identification associated with proposed projects prior to submittal of a formal (development) application. The meeting is between the applicant and involved departments or agencies and is not a public meeting. A fee is required, yet may be waived.

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