

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: JEN SANTOS, INTERIM DIRECTOR,
RECREATION AND PARKS DEPARTMENT
SUBJECT: PARKS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS FUNDING AND
PRIORITIZATION
AGENDA ACTION: STUDY SESSION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Recreation and Parks Department that the Council hold a Study Session to receive information, discuss, and provide input on the Parks Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) funding and prioritization process. No action will be taken except for possible direction to staff.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this Study Session is to provide an update regarding the process and funding priorities for Parks Capital Improvement Projects with special focus on the Park Development Impact Fees and Measure M - Parks for All funding sources.

BACKGROUND

Annually in January through March, Parks Planning staff plan and organize the upcoming fiscal year's capital projects based on available funding and prioritization considerations. This creates a 5–10-year parks capital projects plan based on a variety of funding sources. The prioritized list is presented to the Board of Community Services for feedback and recommendation to Council for approval. Council then reviews and approves during the annual budget process.

This Study Session will focus on the two main funding sources for Parks Capital Projects: Park Development Impact Fees and Measure M-Parks for All funding.

Park Development Impact (PDI) Fees are collected from residential developments for the purpose of acquiring and constructing new parks to accommodate park land acquisition in relation to the growth in housing. Businesses, commercial development, hotels, and similar non-residential developments do not contribute towards PDI fees. Park Development Impact fees can also be utilized for enhancement of existing park land if acquisition and new development is not practicable. PDI funds may be used for recreational and park capital project needs and may not be utilized for maintenance.

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Further, PDI fees are collected in four quadrants created by the intersection of Highways 101 and 12. Any fees collected in a quadrant must be utilized within that quadrant to ensure that equity of park access is being maintained and implemented in conjunction with new or expanded housing per the State Quimby Act.

Measure M – Parks for All is a ten-year countywide tax measure in which the City of Santa Rosa receives a portion for recreation and parks enhancement. The tax measure sunsets on March 31, 2029, and a campaign is anticipated to begin in 2026 to gain momentum and support in advance of the vote for citizens to reenact the tax measure.

An initial expenditure plan was approved by Council in 2019 which dedicated the first two full years of funding towards the recovery of fire damaged parks and landscapes, creation and implementation of a significant community outreach plan, and creation of a parks condition assessment and prioritization plan known also as the deferred maintenance plan.

Council also approved the long-range expenditure plan which dedicated 50% of the remaining and projected tax funds received in years 3-10 towards capital projects.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

Not applicable.

ANALYSIS

As part of the approved Measure M expenditures, a draft parks Condition Assessment and prioritization plan was developed. The Condition Assessment analyzes conditions of all parks and provides a priority ranking based on a condition ranking system developed with staff and community input.

The draft Condition Assessment provides a ranking of all park types and park amenity types by quadrant and is the basis for prioritization of park projects. Park types include community, neighborhood, special purpose, trails, and open space. Amenities are the items within a park such as a sports field, playgrounds, benches and similar. The draft Condition Assessment report provides an objective, base-line documentation of the need and priority of parks and amenities throughout the city.

Other park prioritization considerations include but are not limited to the availability of new park land for acquisition, community outreach priorities, grant funding opportunities, ability to combine resources, the General and Specific Plans, stakeholder interests and industry trends.

The Finance Department will provide the amount of PDI funding to be budgeted per quadrant in January of each year and staff prepare the parks CIP budget for the upcoming year. The budget recommendations are shared with the community at the Board of Community Services and Board members make a recommendation to Council to adopt the parks CIP budget projects.

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PDI budgets vary widely year over year and are entirely dependent upon housing construction. For example, one year \$80,000 might be available to budget and the next year \$3 million in one quadrant. Therefore, a 5–10-year plan is developed so that the next priorities are known in advance. The 5–10-year plan is regularly updated based on a wide variety of factors, always beginning with the need to keep the parks safe.

The PDI funds and the Measure M capital funds future priorities are generally the same although Measure M budget funds are consistent with approximately \$2 million +/- per year for budgeting, whereas PDI funding varies widely. Measure M priorities are projected for the entire duration of the Measure until 2029.

As funding becomes available as part of the budget, projects move forward with planning, design, CEQA (environmental compliance), and finally construction.

FISCAL IMPACT

The Study Session is for information only, and no City Council action other than direction and feedback to staff is being taken. There is no fiscal impact from this Study Session.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This study session is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under section 15061(b)(3) and 15378 in that there is no possibility that the implementation of this action may have significant effects on the environment, and no further environmental review is required.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

None.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

None.

PRESENTER

Jen Santos, Interim Director of Recreation and Parks