

Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL **DATE:** MARCH 25, 2002

THROUGH: FINANCE COMMITTEE

FROM: CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: **RECOMMENDATION TO DEVELOP A PILOT, TEMPORARY
SKATEPARK PROJECT ON TENNIS COURT AT LA PINTOESCA
PARK**

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City:

- 1) approve the development of a temporary, pilot skatepark facility on the existing tennis court at La Pintesca Park, located at 45 East Washington Blvd., Pasadena, and
- 2) appropriate \$32,900 from the General Fund unappropriated fund balance to La Pintesca Park account # 8114-101-643320 for this project, to include site modifications (removal of posts, fencing); design; purchase and installation of skatepark equipment, and site supervision during operating hours for a pilot period not to exceed four months.

RECREATION AND PARKS COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

At their meeting of February 2, 2002, the Recreation and Parks Commission unanimously recommended approval of this action.

BACKGROUND

In response to a growing interest and demand for a safe, accessible facility for skateboarding in Pasadena, over the past year staff has studied options for developing a skatepark in Pasadena. This review has included an exploration of models, sites, estimated costs, operating policies, use, liability, and related matters for such an activity. Staff has visited various skatepark facilities in Southern California, reviewed operating options and costs (for example, a fixed, permanent facility vs. temporary or "portable" setup with suitable existing facility; supervised vs. unsupervised operation; free vs. user fee; etc.), considered potential locations for a skatepark in Pasadena, and conferred with staff in other communities who have experience with such facilities.

Based on the findings through this process, staff learned that cost for construction of new skateparks generally ranges from \$250,000 to \$500,000, in addition to land/site acquisition costs. Site selection is challenging: for example, a skatepark requires a location of sufficient size (generally from 10,000 to more than 20,000 square feet), with ready access to youth users, a reasonable setback from residential neighbors, and is compatible with surrounding uses. In searching for potential locations, staff did not

readily identify an available site for construction of a permanent skatepark that met all such criteria. Further, little data is locally available to document the level of unmet need for a skatepark, nor to identify the primary user groups (i.e. beginners to advanced skateboarders, young children to young adults, etc.) or what location or locations would be most accessible to potential users. Accordingly, staff recommends that the City establish a pilot skatepark project. A pilot, "temporary" skatepark would allow a period to determine the level of demand and utilization, identify key facility and operational needs and issues, track actual operating costs, and related information essential to a recommendation as to whether the City should pursue a permanent skatepark, multiple skatepark sites, or other alternatives, whether as a public, public-private, or privately-owned and operated facility. Further, should the pilot project demonstrate that there is a no need for a permanent skatepark facility, the temporary location could be readily reconverted to its former use at limited cost.

Based on our findings and location search through this process, it is recommended that the City establish a pilot skatepark project in La Pintoresca Park, utilizing the existing tennis court at this location. The current court receives very limited use for tennis play, so selection of this site would not significantly displace current recreation activities. La Pintoresca Park is located in an area with significant numbers of children and youth, including a group of young skateboarders who frequent this park and have approached the City about establishing a skatepark area. The Park Specialist at La Pintoresca has started working with these young people (primarily pre-teens and young teens) about developing such a project, and Library staff at the La Pintoresca Branch have assisted local youth in identifying skatepark models, researching skatepark issues, etc.

Public Works Department staff has studied the proposed tennis court and confirmed that the court surface can be converted for skatepark use, with little modification beyond removing the poles and net, and covering the remaining holes. The tennis court is approximately 7,200 square feet (120 feet by 60 feet) and is fenced on three sides, with the fourth side opening to a well-utilized basketball court. Accordingly, a fence would be installed on this fourth side, between the two courts, to allow continued use of the basketball area. The estimated cost for these site modifications is \$5,500. Based on similar models, the cost of site design, purchase and installation of equipment, is projected at \$17,500.

If this site is approved for the proposed use, staff will work with a group of skatepark youth and an experienced skatepark planner to develop the design and recommend equipment for temporary installation at the site. Outreach to the local neighborhood would also be part of the development process, to identify and address any potential concerns. The selected equipment would be installed to meet applicable health and safety requirements, in a manner that would allow the site to return to use as a tennis court in the future, as appropriate. The proposed skatepark would target beginning and intermediate skateboard users, with a particular focus on youth in approximately the 9 to 15 year old range. It would be supervised by a trained recreation leader, operate at scheduled hours (summer daytime hours and, effective with the start of the school year, during after school daylight and weekend hours) and available at no admission cost to the users. Specific rules and regulations requiring use of safety equipment (helmets, elbow pads, knee pads) would be posted and enforced, along with posted hours of operations (by age group or ability, as appropriate). Additional policies and practices will be developed and implemented as recommended by the City's Risk Manager, including:

- design development and approval by appropriately qualified personnel
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- purchase and installation of equipment designed and certified specifically for skatepark use
- documentation of a daily inspection of the site prior to opening to assure the facility and equipment is safe, securely in place, and any maintenance issues are addressed before the day's use
- proactive training offered to teach users safe skateboarding practices and encouraging respect for skatepark property
- on-site communication (phone or radio) system to allow immediate call to 911 to address any emergency matters
- require users to sign a release / assumption of risk form (with parent/guardian signature required if user is a minor), with issuance of an admission card which must be shown by the user to access the skatepark

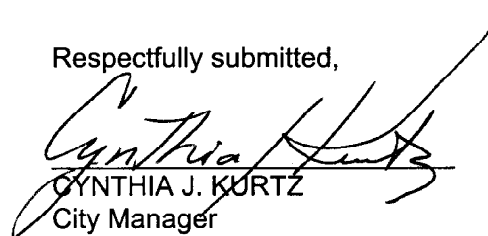
The skatepark is preliminarily envisioned for skateboard use (no BMX bikes or roller blades), but that may be adjusted in the future based on customer demand and the ability for the design and equipment to safely accommodate such use.

As a pilot project, the La Pintoresca Skatepark would target opening in late June or early July, approximately at the start of Summer 2002. The pilot would operate for four months, July through October, including approximately 10 weeks of summer (extended daily operating schedule) and 10 weeks of Fall after school operation. Staff would track use, maintenance costs, neighborhood and park impact, operating issues, etc. Following the pilot period, a recommendation will be submitted based on a review of the findings, addressing such issues as continuation of this activity, potential modifications in facility or operations, potential additional sites (including both temporary/portable and permanent, dedicated use facilities), etc.

FISCAL IMPACT

This project will reduce the General Fund unappropriated fund balance by \$32,900.

Respectfully submitted,



CYNTHIA J. KURTZ
City Manager

Prepared and Approved by:



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