

Agenda Report

DATE: June 13, 2005

TO: City Council

THROUGH: Public Safety Committee

FROM: City Manager

SUBJECT: **PROPOSED PILOT PROJECT WITH PASADENA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT (PUSD) TO EXPAND COMMUNITY OUTDOOR PLAY SPACE THROUGH JOINT USE OF MADISON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PLAY AREA FOR PUBLIC RECREATION DURING NON-SCHOOL (PRIMARILY WEEKEND) DAYS**

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. approve the concept of working with Pasadena Unified School District to identify and develop available school sites for community weekend use for public recreation purposes;
2. approve Madison Elementary School as the pilot project for developing a weekend use plan for public recreation;
3. direct staff to identify the site requirements and operational plan, including costs, for joint use of Madison Elementary School, and return to City Council for approval of final project.

BACKGROUND

Ongoing demand for additional open space for public recreation in Pasadena has been documented in various studies over recent years. While discussion of unmet need has often focused on the shortage of fields for use by organized sports groups on weekends, there is also a significant need for open space to support passive, non-organized recreation activities (picnics, grass areas for children's play, etc.). The shortage of local outdoor play space is particularly critical in neighborhoods with large numbers of families and young children residing in multi-family housing that offers little or no green space.

While efforts continue underway to find opportunities and resources to address the need for additional open recreation space, one opportunity is to collaborate with local schools to make outdoor recreation space on school sites available to local residents on non-school days (primarily weekends). Currently, several PUSD middle and high schools provide access to their sports fields facilities for use by local sports organizations. Additional PUSD schools -- particularly those located in neighborhoods with limited passive recreation space -- may offer potential sites for public recreation during weekend daytime hours. Most such school sites are currently fenced and are closed during non-school hours. Through collaborative City-PUSD efforts, such school sites could potentially become hubs for passive recreation activities by local residents.

The concept of "Shared Facilities with PUSD" was discussed by the City Council's Public Safety Committee at their meeting of March 28, 2005. At that meeting, the Committee expressed interest in exploring possible weekend access by community residents to school sites for passive public recreation use. It was mentioned that such a concept has been suggested by residents participating in the current City Open Space Element and Parks Master Plan process. Committee members stated interest in learning more about how such shared use might work and what kind of physical plant or other modifications might be required to support this concept. Madison Elementary School was suggested as a possible pilot site to explore for a shared weekend use opportunity. PUSD Board of Education Chair Ed Honowitz was in attendance and expressed interest in further consideration of the matter, and suggested that the appropriate place to discuss this concept would be with the PUSD Board's Facilities Subcommittee. It was agreed to schedule a joint meeting of the City Council Public Safety Committee and the PUSD Board of Education Facilities Subcommittee, to further consider the concept of shared use of school facilities for weekend public recreation use.

On May 4, 2005, a special joint meeting of the City Council Public Safety Committee and the PUSD Board of Education Facilities Subcommittee was held at the PUSD Board of Education Center. The Joint Committee Meeting included an overview of the concept of shared school facility use for weekend public recreation, and identified sample items that PUSD would require be studied to consider implementation of such a concept at Madison Elementary School, including: grounds and facility security during public use; separation of open space area and use from access to school buildings; access to restrooms; custodial and grounds keeping services; and, cost and source of funding for any required site modifications. The Joint Committee also posed questions regarding whether the existing Joint Use Agreement between the City and PUSD is sufficient to support such an effort or would a new form of agreement be required. The two committees agreed that prior to exploring details for a pilot project site; each would take the concept to their respective bodies (i.e. City Council and Board of Education) and recommend approval of the shared use concept and approval to proceed to secure the necessary specifics to consider Madison Elementary School as the pilot project site. Once both bodies had approved said recommendation, City and PUSD staff would be directed to proceed to develop the details, costs, etc. for the Madison site concept, for further consideration and action.

CITY – PUSD JOINT USE OF FACILITY AGREEMENT

Following the discussion at the Special Joint Committee Meeting of May 4, 2005 regarding whether the existing City-PUSD Joint Use of Facility Agreement covers the proposed shared facility use of school site for public recreation on weekends, City staff conducted a preliminary review of the concept as related to the existing Agreement (#13,991) between the City and PUSD for Joint Use of Facilities. It appears that the proposed shared weekend use of school facilities for City recreation and parks purposes is consistent with the existing Agreement, as that Agreement provides the overall authorization and guidelines for the joint participation of PUSD and the City with regard to “the use by City of District facilities, and conversely, for the use by District of City facilities”. It is anticipated that should a specific weekend shared use project such as Madison Elementary School be developed, prior to implementation a supplemental Memorandum of Agreement or related document would be developed to include the specifics of that project, location, costs, operational guidelines, etc. The following provides a brief background on the two current agreements between the City and PUSD regarding facilities: the Joint Use of Facility Agreement (#13,991) and the Agreement allocating \$437,000 for Construction or Improvement of Multi-Purpose Sports Fields at 8 specific school sites.

The **City-PUSD Agreement for Joint Use of Facilities** was first adopted in 1989, with the following stated purpose:

. . . to provide, by the joint participation of District and City, for additional and better utilized public recreational facilities of all types. Specifically, it is the desire of the parties to provide, by this agreement, for the use by City of District facilities, and conversely, for the use by District of City facilities.

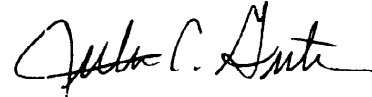
The Agreement declares the public interest in the fullest use of facilities owned by the City and PUSD, recognizing that both own “certain real properties . . . portions of which can be used for park and recreation facilities and uses”. The Agreement requires the City and PUSD to coordinate use and to secure permits from each other for use as appropriate, and sets guidelines addressing such issues as indemnity, maintenance and repair. The Agreement establishes the priority for reciprocal usage of facilities, depending on the ownership of the facility and the user. When PUSD-owned recreational facilities are not in use for “School-Oriented Programs”, the next priority for use is “City of Pasadena Recreation and Parks Programs”. Likewise, when the City is not using recreational facilities for City programs, the next priority for use is “School-Oriented Programs”. The current Agreement (copy attached with amendments) is effective to 2013.

A second facilities-related agreement currently in effect between the City and PUSD was adopted in 2003 to support improvements on PUSD recreational use facilities. **Contract #18,162 allocated \$437,000 to PUSD to fund specific sports fields improvements at 8 local schools:** Audobon, Don Benito, Eliot, Field, Madison, Marshall, Muir and Washington. This contract remains in effect, with reimbursement paid to PUSD as the specific projects are completed.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no specific fiscal impact to the City as the result of this recommendation. Upon approval of the recommendation, staff will identify the site requirements and costs for implementation of a weekend public recreation use for Madison Elementary School, and return to City Council with a report outlining funding requirements to implement the project.

Respectfully submitted,



For CYNTHIA J. KURTZ
City Manager

Prepared and Approved by:



Patricia A. Lane, Director
Human Services and Recreation Department

Concurrence:



Martin Pastucha, Director
Public Works Department

Attachment