
Public Works Department
Field Operations Division

To: Mayor & Council

Through: Don Bessler, Public Works Director

From: Craig Hayton, Parks Manager
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Date: August 10, 2017

Subject: Recreational Value CIP

Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to provide Council with an update on the Recreational Value Capital Improvement Project (CIP) and proposed methodology for prioritizing projects to ensure social equity in the condition and play value of our neighborhood parks.

Strategic Priorities

This project meets two City Council strategic priorities:

- #3 – Enhancing the quality of life for all Tempe residents and workers through investment in neighborhoods, parks, the arts, human services, and city amenities, with an emphasis on equity and diversity.
 - Performance Objective 16 – Achieve ratings of “Very Satisfied” or “Satisfied” with the Quality of City recreation, arts, and cultural centers greater than or equal to the national benchmark cities as measured in the Community Survey.
- #4 – Implementing sustainable growth and development strategies, including improving Tempe’s public transit system to meet future needs, by actively seeking innovative technologies and leading the way in creating a more sustainable community.
 - Performance Objective 11 – Achieve a tree coverage of 25 trees per acre on average on City owned property.

Background

The Recreational Value and Equity concept was first presented to City Council at the October 2, 2015 retreat; at that time, Council provided direction to refine the process. This issue was in response to the deteriorated condition of the park system over many years and an acknowledgement that the adopted

four tier City Council CIP Strategy for asset management was working and needing to plan for level three and level four investments. Specifically,

The current asset management approach to CIP projects includes four levels:

1. Public Health & Safety
2. Existing Assets (i.e., take care of what we have)
3. Customer Enhancements
4. System Expansion & New Amenities

While the City continues to address Level 1) public health and safety, Level 2) asset management improvement projects, Recreational Value provides opportunities for parks to equitably move into the next phase of the Capital Improvement process: Level 3) customer enhancements and Level 4) system expansion and new amenities.

The Recreational Value CIP will fund park improvements to bring city parks up to a “recreational value” standard as measured by the number and type of functional amenities that exist within in a park to generate different opportunities for playing, interacting, and drawing people of all ages to visit the park. In fiscal year 2017-18, there are \$2.29 million Recreational Value Enhancement CIP funds available.

Consistent with the established condition rating for existing park assets which has been utilized as the allocation methodology for determining priority of the level 1 and 2 improvement projects, the methodology and process outlined below has been presented to, reviewed by, and commented on by the following boards, commissions, and groups:

- Parks, Recreation, Golf, and Double Butte Cemetery Board
- Neighborhood Advisory Commission
- Commission on Disability Concerns
- Tempe Neighborhoods Together (TNT)

Methodology

The issue of park asset disparity “recreational equity” is a critical one that necessitates a two-part action plan. First, acknowledging that all neighborhoods deserve a park that have a minimum level of park amenities, “base amenities” which are addressed as the highest priority, prior to fulfilling complete level 3 or adding level 4 projects.

Base park amenities are amenities that every park should have, and include four features: 1) ramadas; 2) trees; 3) playgrounds; and 4) site furnishings such as picnic tables, park benches and drinking fountains, to name a few. Along with these types of base amenities, the total number of each base amenity required in each park must be generally normalized which will be calculated based on park acreage—a breakdown for each base amenity can be found in Appendix A.

After base amenities in all neighborhood parks have been elevated to the target level to ensure equity, enhanced amenities adding additional recreational value will then be addressed, allowing the City to focus on the original intention of the Recreational Value Enhancements CIP. As mentioned previously, enhanced amenities are defined as amenities within parks that provide specific opportunities for playing, interacting, and drawing people of all ages to visit the park, and can include off-leash areas, fitness trails, sport courts, splash pads, and skate parks, to name a few. Enhanced amenity types should reflect neighborhood interest and the total number would also be based on overall park size and general fiscal equity.

Process

Base Amenities:

1. Inventory base amenities
2. Score park inventories
3. Rank & prioritize parks
4. Address deficiencies

The first step in addressing deficiencies requires capturing an initial inventory of existing park base amenities. Next, each park's base amenity inventory is scored and parks are ranked by overall score. Then, cost estimates are obtained for addressing deficient base amenities calculating a per park and overall park system cost to achieve a base amenity target. Finally, base amenity deficiencies will be addressed by park score or in conjunction with other large park construction projects, such as during playground renovations. Area residents will have opportunity to provide input on ramadas and other such items that typically involve public outreach.

Enhanced Amenities:

Addressing enhanced amenity deficiencies follows the same process outlined above, with the addition of a more robust public input process to determine the types and numbers of enhanced amenities that are desired in each park.

Timeframe

Funding is currently available in the Recreational Value Enhancements CIP and staff anticipates the following timeframe for implementing this exciting new CIP project:

- Council feedback and direction – August 2017
- Inventory/Rank/Prioritize base amenities – Fall 2017
- Update Council via on-going Friday Packets – Fall 2017
- Begin addressing base amenity deficiencies – Fall/Winter 2017

Appendix A:

Category	Type	Description	Goal	Total Point Value
Ramadas	Ramadas	Covered ramada, either by roof or shade fabric	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 0-2 acres = 0 2. 2-5 acres = 1 3. 5-10 acres = 2 4. 10+ acres = 3+ 	5
			Ramada Category Points	5
Trees	Trees	25 trees per acre = 25% canopy coverage	25 trees per acre	10
			Tree Category Points	10
Playgrounds	Inclusive Equipment	Equipment that includes multiple challenge levels for children with and without disabilities	Yes	2
Playgrounds	Play Structures	Contains central play structure	Yes	2
Playgrounds	ADA Surfacing	Exceed ADA surfacing standards	Yes	2
Playgrounds	Individual Components	Contains individual play components	Yes	2
Playgrounds	Shade Structures	Contains a playground shade structure	Yes	2
			Playground Category Points	10
Site Furnishings	Picnic Areas	7'-11' table with grill	1 per every 2 acres	2
Site Furnishings	Benches	Bench	1 per acre	2
Site Furnishings	Drinking Fountains	3-tiered drinking fountain	1 per every 3 acres	2
Site Furnishings	Trash & Recycle Containers	Trash/recycle container	3 per acre	2
Site Furnishings	Dog Bag Dispensers	Dog bag dispenser	1 per every 3 acres	2
			Site Furnishing Category Points	10
			TOTAL POINTS	35