



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: APRIL 5, 2005

ITEM NUMBER:

SUBJECT: SKATE PARK OPERATIONS

DATE: MARCH 24, 2005

FROM: ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DEPARTMENT – RECREATION DIVISION

PRESENTATION BY: JANA M. RANSOM, RECREATION MANAGER

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: JANA RANSOM, 714-754-5300

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive and accept the Parks and Recreation Commission recommendation on the day-to-day operations of the permanent skate park located in TeWinkle Park.

BACKGROUND:

Staff representatives from Public Services, Police, City Attorney and Administrative Services (Recreation, Human Resources and Risk) Departments met the first week of January to discuss issues and develop recommendations for the day-to-day operations of the permanent skate park located in TeWinkle Park. On March 16, 2005, Recreation Manager, Jana Ransom, made a presentation to the Board of Directors of the Mesa Del Mar Homeowners Association and introduced the operational elements of the skate park, and answered questions regarding impacts of the skate park on the neighborhood. At the March 23, 2005 regular meeting, the Parks and Recreation Commission received the proposed operations report from staff. At this time, staff is introducing the operations plan to City Council for discussion. Staff is recommending:

Hours of Operation

- **8:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.**

The 9:00 p.m. close is to keep in line with the closing of the Tennis Center so that all participants are out of the park at the same time. Having a common end time for all facilities will assist with closing the park and making sure all users are out of the park at the appropriate time.

- **Lights**

Staff suggested that lights go off gradually, one bank at a time, between 8:50 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. MUSCO controller has this capacity.

Maintenance

- **Maintenance staff will inspect and clean daily**

- Will not open gates if any conditions warrant keeping facility closed (i.e. damage, graffiti, vandalism).

- Will power wash as needed.
- Maintenance is not conducting a “safety assessment,” they are inspecting to the same standards as any park and will open, if clean. If there is damage to the skate surface, they will treat as any facility and repair or close as conditions warrant.
- **Maintenance required to keep inspection log** (similar to playground inspection log)

Supervision

- **Staff recommend that the Skate park not be supervised**
 - Part time supervision is not recommended as the City’s liability goes WAY up if you staff the facility. Police will commit to significant patrol, at least initially, which will set the tone of City enforcement. They will cite violators and be active.
 - Staff recommends no phone on site. PD reports that most users already have cell phones and PD receives many “crank” 911 calls from public phones. In addition, vandalism is common on telephones in public parks. The Tennis Center has a phone in case of emergency.
 - “Webcast Cameras” are allowable as long as they are not operated or monitored by the City. Webcast taping or monitoring could be considered supervision if there is the perception that someone is remotely monitoring site and “should have seen” an incident. City should state that web cams are not monitored and are to be used only for “recreational” purposes, or other such language.

Signage/Municipal Code/Rules/Enforcement

- City Attorney is writing supporting Ordinance
 - **PD needs ability to issue citations for rule infractions**
 - PD needs rules signage in several prominent places
 - PD will “absorb” enforcement of this facility into normal operations.
 - An escalating 3-strikes will be used to deal with repeat offenders.
- Signage inside park
 - No Food/drink
 - **No bicycles/scooters**
 - Safety Equipment Required
- Closure Notifications
 - Damage/Cleaning
 - Events
 - Behavior

Neighbor Relations

- City Website
 - Staff suggested that the City have an interactive page where people can send comments/questions
- One month before opening, door to door flyer with info
- Two months after opening, door to door flyer/questionnaire asking residents to give us input about how things are going at the park
- City staff will work through the Mesa Verde Homeowners Association to provide on-going assessment and feedback opportunities

ANALYSIS:

In reviewing other skate parks in the state, staff found that there is an almost equal distribution of those that are supervised and those that are not. There are arguments that support going in either direction. Attachment 1 shows a chart of skate parks operated in other cities. The staff involved in the Operational Issues discussion felt that, with good policing of the area, any problems relating to skate park use would be controlled. The Police Department will bear the load of enforcement for illegal activities that occur in and near the park and for monitoring impacts on other users and nearby residents. Recreation Division staff will continue to manage the tennis concession and park permitting.

The recommended hours of operation are the same as those now in place for the Tennis Center. Lighting for the skate park is not expected to adversely increase the amount of light currently “spilling over” toward residential areas. Administrative Services Department (Recreation Division) staff may provide fee-based programs and contract classes at the site.

As mentioned above, staff presented the operation plan to the Parks and Recreation Commission and met with the home owners association board and answered questions on a variety of issues including hours of operations, required safety equipment, skating etiquette, enforcement of regulations and site supervision. The Parks and Recreation Commission accepted the staff recommendation as presented and forwarded on to City Council.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Commission was offered and considered the following alternatives:

1) Recommend that the skate park be supervised

Cost to implement this alternative is related to the hours of operation and/or the hours the Council wishes the skate park be supervised. While staff does not recommend it, Council could choose to supervise the park only during peak periods (as is done with lifeguards at beaches).

- **If City decides to supervise**, staff recommends
 - Two staff at all times, “ambassadors” (Recreation Leaders levels II, III and IV)
 - Staff to have first aid training
 - Participants sign waivers. While not perfect, liability waivers do offer some protections
 - Reduce Hours of Operation (3:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on weekdays, 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, Summer Weekdays and Holidays)
 - Cost \$120,000
 - Estimate is for staff hours only (no materials/supplies) with one lead staff
 - Staff would have cellular telephone
 - Liability of City increases
 - Storage and staff space will be an issue
 - City could schedule specific skating times by age group and/or ability.

2) Recommend that the City assign Park Rangers to TeWinkle Park

- Recommend “bicycle-mounted” or foot patrol, daily, 3:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

3) Allow bicycles and/or scooters in the skate park, or, set usage times for bicycles and/or scooters to use skate park

- Staff does not recommend this alternative for several reasons:
 - possibility of injury due to bicycles/scooters flying through the air is greater
 - concrete damage is greater with bicycle use
 - fewer people can participate in/on elements with bicycles allowed

FISCAL REVIEW:

As recommended in the report, staff anticipates that the operation of the skate park will have a budgetary impact of approximately \$10,000 for the electricity to operate the lights. This cost is part of the FY 06 proposed Maintenance Services budget. At this time, staff anticipates that any other maintenance and enforcement costs associated with the skate park can be provided by existing staff.

LEGAL REVIEW:

The City Attorney’s office participated in the January 2005 Skate Park Operations meeting and provided input for staff recommendation. The City Attorney’s office has reviewed and approved the report as presented.

CONCLUSION:

With construction of the skate park expected to be completed in early Summer 2005, the City is preparing for the day-to-day operations of the facility. Staff met with other City staff, including Police, Risk Management, and Public Services and consulted with other cities to discuss the issues of operating a permanent skate park. Based on those discussions, staff is recommending the above operations plan, which was accepted by the Parks and Recreation Commission at the March 23, 2005 meeting.

Council is requested to accept the Parks and Recreation Commission recommendation on the operations plan, as outlined in the staff report.

Signatures on the following page.

JANA M. RANSOM
RECREATION MANAGER

STEPHEN N. MANDOKI
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIRECTOR

JOHN HENSLEY
Chief of Police

DISTRIBUTION: City Manager
Assistant City Manager
Administrative Services Director
Public Services Director
Chief of Police
Skate Park Operations Committee

ATTACHMENTS: 1 [Survey of California Skate Parks](#)

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