



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: August 2, 2004

ITEM NUMBER:

SUBJECT: Council Prioritization And Review Of Programs - Mobile Recreation And Mobile Skate Park Programs

DATE: July 22, 2004

FROM: Administrative Services Department

PRESENTATION BY: Jana M. Ransom, Recreation Manager

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jana M. Ransom 714-754-5300

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff requests that City Council provide direction to the City Manager regarding maintenance of funding for the "Mobile Recreation" and "Mobile Skate Park" programs as approved for fiscal year 2004-05.

BACKGROUND:

Mobile Recreation Program–

Though mobile recreation programs are not new and programs exist in numerous cities, the concept in Costa Mesa was born in 1999 when the Recreation Division proposed a new use for the City's soon-to-be-retired police department S.W.A.T. van. The intent for the program was to provide a quality, drop-in, recreational after school and school-vacation "playground program on wheels" at various locations around Costa Mesa. It would be provided to youth, in their neighborhoods, who are unable to take advantage of other after school programs available in Costa Mesa due to program location, transportation issues, participation fees, poor quality, etc. It was also recognized that since only three of Costa Mesa's 29 parks have buildings or community centers from which recreation staff could provide programs and supervision, this self-contained mobile recreation program could visit City parks and provide supervised recreational activities to youth at some of these park sites.

This program was additionally found to provide supervised recreational activities at the large number of both City-sponsored and community-provided special events held annually in Costa Mesa. These special events include: the City Police & Fire Emergency Services Expo; CMPD DARE Fair; CMPD "National Night Out"; multiple Fairview Park Committee events like "Earth Day Clean Up", "Paws Around the Park", "Lounge Chair Theatre"; Human Relations Committee "Community Picnic"; Child Care & Youth Services Committee "Day in the Park" event; six Recreation Division "Concerts in the Park", "Holiday Snowhill", "Spring Eggcitement", CostaMazing "Fun Run"; LULAC/COPC Festival, "Child Awareness Month" at South Coast Plaza; Families Costa Mesa "Health Fair", etc.

Mobile Skate Park Program-

The Mobile Skate Park Program was originally established in 2001 at the direction of the Costa Mesa City Council as an alternative for skaters to safely and legally practice their chosen sport when the built-in, permanent cement skate park at Charlie/Hamilton Streets was not approved. Portable skate elements and a truck to store and haul the equipment were purchased. A program was created and staff were hired and trained to implement the program and supervise program participants.

ANALYSIS:

Mobile Recreation and Mobile Skate programs began at different times and as separately created and supervised programs under the direction of two different part-time Recreation Leader IV's and full-time Recreation Coordinators and Recreation Supervisors. To consolidate program operations and supervision and to reduce expenditures, both programs were combined in 2002, eliminating one part-time Recreation Leader IV position and placing both programs under the supervision of one full-time Coordinator and Supervisor.

Staff have attached additional reference materials for Council consideration (Attachment #7).

The following information describes in more detail each individual program:

Mobile Recreation Program–

The Mobile Recreation Program is a drop-in, non-custodial, self-contained mobile playground program on wheels, bringing recreation activities out into neighborhoods and City parks in the community, providing recreation opportunities to those children who stay close to their homes to recreate and may not attend other recreational after school or school-vacation programs.

As the program is a drop-in, non-custodial recreation program, meaning children are not required to remain in the program at all times nor to be signed in and out by parents or guardians, for minimum safety and program implementation standards, ratios of part-time Recreation Division staff to children are 1 to 25 whenever possible.

The program operates Monday-Friday, September through June from 2-5pm and July through August from 10am-3pm, serving Costa Mesa's neighborhood recreational needs, while offering positive role models, influential leadership, social activities, and opportunities to learn how to use leisure time in a positive way to youth ages 5-12.

The program is identified as a "Fully Supported" program within the Council-approved "Cost Recovery Guidelines for Recreation Activities" and is therefore free to all participants.

While this program may seem little more than a vehicle with some games, miscellaneous recreation equipment, and staff who pass this equipment out to kids, upon further investigation and review of its goals and objectives as identified in Attachment #1, the program can be found to be far more than this. Recreation staff are trained, knowledgeable

and experienced in working with youth. They plan and implement activities for the children who take part in the program.

The program is structured around three key components:

- **RECREATION:** Staff-planned and organized recreational activities & programs (games, arts & crafts, sports, nature, theatre, miscellaneous, etc).
- **FREE PLAY:** Supervised “free play” activities &/or activities chosen by the children and implemented &/or supervised by staff.
- **EDUCATION:** Homework assistance, reading, implementing “Character Counts” training and/or teaching “Fundamental Assets” for successful youth, etc.

Besides the daily visits to parks and street locations as a mobile playground program, as previously indicated in this report, the Mobile Recreation Program serves as a special events module that is requested to be at well over a dozen various special events in the community throughout the year. Since the program began, Mobile Recreation has visited 26 different sites spread geographically around Costa Mesa, providing supervised, positive, and healthy recreation programming to hundreds of Costa Mesa children.

Attachment #2 is a map of the various locations the program has visited and Attachment #3 are attendance figures at each of these various locations.

Mobile Skate Park Program-

The Mobile Skate Park program is a drop-in, non-custodial, recreation program designed for skaters of all abilities and ages, but is used primarily by youth of beginning to intermediate levels of skating ability. The program utilizes portable equipment to create a skate park consisting of the following skating elements: a quarter pipe, spine, fun box, grind rails, and several mini ramps and other terrain features. The program brings these various skating elements into the community on streets and City parks so participants have a safe, legal, and supervised area in which to skateboard and/or in-line skate.

The program is currently offered three days a week, at three different sites around Costa Mesa, September through June during after-school hours from 2-5pm, and during school vacation breaks including July through August with extended operating hours of 12-6pm.

Participants must register in the program, have signed Waiver and Release forms completed and on file, must wear proper safety equipment and follow all rules pertaining to the program, and are supervised by experienced and trained part-time Recreation staff. Because the program is staffed and supervised, the program ensures a positive, supervised environment, with safe, quality equipment for skaters to use.

Please see Mobile Skate Program goals and objectives as identified in Attachment #4.

Though not necessarily modeled after more “traditional” after school recreation playground programs, Mobile Skate is utilized by youth after school and during school breaks and is viewed by parents and families as a unique alternative to other after school program choices available to youth in the community.

The Mobile Skate program is identified as a “Fully Supported” program within the Council-approved “Cost Recovery Guidelines for Recreation Activities” and is therefore free to all participants.

Since the creation of the program, the Mobile Skate Program has visited 9 different sites spread geographically around Costa Mesa, providing supervised, positive, and healthy recreation programming to 1,373 participants. Only 15-20 participants can skate the Mobile Skate Park at any one time, and the surface they skate on must be safe and relatively smooth.

Please see Attachment #5, which indicates the locations the program has visited, and Attachment #6 provides attendance figures for the program.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

1. Keep one or both programs as is already approved and budgeted for in FY 2004-05.
2. Eliminate one or both programs in FY 2004-05.
3. Reduce the availability of one or both programs and thereby reduce the costs.
4. Remove one or both programs from the “Fully Supported” category of the “Cost Recovery Program for Recreation Activities” and implement an annual registration fee to help offset costs.
5. Solicit donations, sponsorships or grants to help offset costs of one or both programs.
6. Charge fees to other City Departments and/or organizations in Costa Mesa that want to use either program at their events.

FISCAL REVIEW:

One-quarter of a full-time Recreation Coordinator’s time is reflected in the budget as spent supervising both programs and when staff reviewed this budget for the Service Prioritization, actual time spent by this employee was calculated to be .25 FTE (or approximately \$9,282). Total direct cost for both Mobile Recreation and Mobile Skate programs is \$148,546. Of this total, Mobile Recreation accounts for \$83,421 and Mobile Skate \$65,125. The bulk of expenditures for each of these programs are on part-time recreation staff adding up to \$129,118 for both programs combined. Materials and equipment account for \$19,428.

LEGAL REVIEW:

No legal review is necessary for this item.

CONCLUSION:

Staff request that City Council provide direction to the City Manager regarding maintenance of funding for the Mobile Recreation and Mobile Skate Park Programs as approved for FY ‘04-05.

JANA M. RANSOM
Recreation Manager

HOWARD PERKINS
Acting Administrative Services Director

MARC R. PUCKETT
Director of Finance

RICHARD BRUNETTE
Recreation Supervisor

DISTRIBUTION: 1. Allan Roeder, City Manager
 2. Steve Hayman, Assistant City Manager

ATTACHMENTS: 1 [Mobile Recreation Goals & Objectives](#)
 2. [Mobile Recreation Site Map](#)
 3. [Mobile Recreation Sites & Attendance](#)
 4. [Mobile Skate Goals & Objectives](#)
 5. [Mobile Skate Site Map](#)
 6. [Mobile Skate Sites & Attendance](#)
 7. [Additional Reference Material](#)