



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

OB # 5

MEETING DATE: AUGUST 7, 2000

ITEM NUMBER:

ATTACHMENT 2

SUBJECT: FAIRVIEW PARK TRAILS

DATE: JULY 24, 2000

FROM: PUBLIC SERVICES DEPARTMENT

PRESENTATION BY: WILLIAM J. MORRIS, PUBLIC SERVICES DIRECTOR

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: DAVID J. ALKEMA, PARKS PROJECT MANAGER
(714) 754-5300

RECEIVED

AUG 02 2000

PUBLIC SERVICES

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council approve the following recommendations:

- A. Fairview Park Master Plan Amendment Request:
 - 1. The paved multi-purpose trail located adjacent to the Fairview Channel be downgraded to an unpaved pedestrian trail.
 - 2. Deny the request that all new trails in Fairview Park be constructed of dirt or natural materials including decomposed granite.
 - 3. Approve the use of concrete as an acceptable substitute for trails indicated to be constructed with asphalt pavement.
- B. Staff requests that the City Council reconfirm the master planned width of the multi-purpose trail system in Fairview Park.

Fairview Park Citizen's Advisory Committee Recommendation:

At the May 18, 2000, the Fairview Park Citizen's Advisory Committee voted to recommend to the Parks, Recreation Facilities and Parkways Commission as stated in the recommendation under section "A" above.

Parks, Recreation Facilities and Parkways Commission Recommendation:

At the May 24, 2000 meeting, the Parks, Recreation Facilities and Parkways Commission voted to recommend to the Planning Commission as stated in the recommendation under section "A" above.

Planning Commission Recommendation:

At the July 24, 2000 meeting, the Planning Commission voted to recommend to the City Council that the paved multi-purpose trail located adjacent to the Fairview Channel be downgraded to an unpaved pedestrian trail, to deny the request that all trails in Fairview Park be constructed of dirt or natural materials, and rejected staff's request to approved concrete as an acceptable substitute for asphalt on the trails indicated to be constructed with asphalt.



BACKGROUND

At the December 15, 1997 meeting, the City Council approved the Fairview Park Master Plan. The plan includes a well-developed trail system consisting of 3 miles of paved multi-purpose trails and 6.78 miles of unpaved pedestrian trails. The pedestrian trails are to be constructed of decomposed granite or dirt and will range in width from 5-8 feet. The paved multi-purpose trails are to be constructed of asphalt and range in width from 5-15 feet (Attachment A).

The proposed installation of paved trails has created concern for park neighbors and other residents and staff recently received several letters and a petition from Mr. Tim Cromwell requesting that a limit be placed on the amount of paved trails in the park (Attachment B).

As per Council Policy 500-11 (Attachment C), Mr. Cromwell's request to amend the Fairview Park Master Plan was forwarded to various City departments, the Fairview Park Project Manager, the Fairview Park Citizen's Advisory Committee, the Parks, Recreation Facilities and Parkways Commission, and the Planning Commission for review and recommendation to the City Council.

Staff recommended to the Fairview Park Citizen's Advisory Committee, the Parks, Recreation Facility and Parkways Commission, and the Planning Commission that the paved multi-purpose trail located adjacent to the Fairview Channel be downgraded to an unpaved trail, denial of the request that all new trails in Fairview Park be constructed of dirt or natural materials, and approval of the use of concrete as an acceptable substitute on trails that are to be constructed with asphalt pavement (Attachment D).

The Fairview Park Citizen's Advisory Committee approved staff's recommendation at the May 18, 2000 meeting, the Parks, Recreation Facilities and Parkways Commission approved staff's recommendation at the May 24, 2000 meeting and the Planning Commission approved the downgrading of the multi purpose trail adjacent to the Fairview Channel to an unpaved pedestrian trail, rejected the request that all trails in Fairview Park be constructed of dirt or natural materials, and rejected staff's request to allow concrete as a substitute for asphalt on trails indicated to be constructed with asphalt (Attachment E).

Additionally, at the June 19, 2000 City Council meeting, staff presented a status report on Fairview Park capital improvement projects and requested that the City Council approve staff's prioritization of the projects currently being planned. At that meeting, several residents voiced concerns about the paved multi-purpose trail system in the City Council approved Fairview Park Master Plan. Council requested that staff address the concerns raised about the paved multi-purpose trail system and bring this information back to the City Council in a report (Attachment F).

ANALYSIS

The letters and petitions submitted by Timothy Cromwell requesting a limitation be placed on the amount of paved trails in the Fairview Park Master Plan has been addressed as per Council Policy 500-11. Staff is recommending the down-grading of the multi-purpose trail system adjacent to the Fairview Channel to an unpaved pedestrian trail, denial of the request to construct all new trails of dirt or natural materials, and the substitution of concrete for asphalt as the paving material on the multi-purpose trails. These recommendations were previously approved by the Fairview Park Citizen's Advisory Committee, and the Parks Recreation Facilities and Parkways Commission. The Planning Commission voted to approve the downgrading of the multi-purpose trail adjacent to the Fairview Channel, rejected the request to construct all trails with dirt or natural materials, and rejected staff's request to substitute concrete for asphalt on the trails indicated to be constructed with asphalt.

Additionally, staff was directed to address issues raised at the June 19, 2000 meeting regarding the multi-purpose trail system. Staff has reviewed the Fairview Park Master Plan, the Caltrans Highway Design Manual, the County of Orange Regional Riding and Hiking Trail Design Manual, requested that the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) provide an opinion on the issue, and requested that the Costa Mesa Building Official provide an opinion on the possible use of decomposed granite as an alternative paving material for asphalt or concrete on the multi-purpose trail system in Fairview Park. The results of that research are provided below:

Caltrans Standards

The City of Costa Mesa uses standard designs provided in the Caltrans Highway Design Manual for the construction of highways and multi-purpose trails. The use of Caltrans standard designs provide the City an umbrella of liability immunity against personal injury claims. The multi-purpose trail system approved in the Fairview Park Master Plan is a Class I Bikeway as defined in Section 1003.1 of the Caltrans Highway Design Manual. A Class I Bikeway is defined as a bike path that provides a completely separate right of way for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians with minimal cross flow traffic. Class I bikeways are to be used to serve corridors not served by streets and highways or where wide right of ways exist and provide recreational or direct high speed commuter routes not provided by the road system. The most common applications are along rivers, oceanfronts, canals, utility right of ways, abandoned railroad right of way, within college campuses or within or between parks (Attachment G).

The structural section of a bike path should be designed in the same manner as a highway. A minimum pavement thickness of 2 inches of asphalt concrete is recommended. Consideration should be given to increasing the asphalt content to provide increased pavement life (Attachment H).

Per Caltrans standards, the minimum paved width for a two-way bike path shall be 8 feet with a minimum 2-foot wide graded areas provided on both sides of the pavement. Where heavy bicycle volumes are anticipated and or significant pedestrian traffic is expected, the paved width of a two-way path should be greater than 8 feet, preferably 12 feet or more. Experience has shown that paved paths less than 12 feet wide will break up along the edges as a result of loads from maintenance vehicles. Caltrans standards suggest that where equestrians are expected, a separate facility should be provided (Attachment I). These specifications are reflected in the Fairview Park Master Plan.

County of Orange Regional Riding and Hiking Trail Design Manual

The County of Orange design manual provides standards for hiking/jogging, equestrian, and mountain bike trails. The trails range from low use, four feet wide single track trails, to paved and unpaved multi-use trails (Major trails) for high use areas.

Major trails are typically multi-use trails that have suggested standards including 10-foot wide pavement (asphalt or decomposed granite) with a 4-foot wide equestrian path and 2 foot wide jogging path (Attachment J). The County's standards are meant to serve hiking/jogging, equestrian, and mountain bike (non-motorized) use whereas, the multi-purpose trail system in Fairview Park will also serve commuter bicyclist, roller bladers, scooters, skateboarders, and other park users.

Building Safety Division Input

The City's Building Safety Division within the Development Services Department was consulted with regarding the acceptability of using decomposed granite as a trail pavement surface. The California Building Code requires that hard surfaced paths are required to serve buildings or other functional areas and that the surfacing material for trails is not regulated as long as the trail does not lead to a building or a functional area. The Building Official has the authority on a case-by-case basis to make judgments on the acceptability of paving materials used in public parks. Rick Brown, the City of Costa Mesa Building Official, has stated that he will support the use of "native" materials in Fairview Park where he has regulatory authority to do so (Attachment K).

Orange County Transportation Authority Grant

On November 12, 1999, the City of Costa Mesa was awarded a \$500,000 Transportation Enhancement Activities (TEA) grant by the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) for the construction of the paved multi-purpose trail system in Fairview Park. The grant application submitted by the City was based on the Council approved Fairview Park Master Plan, except that concrete was used as the construction material in lieu of asphalt pavement.

Staff recently sent a letter to OCTA informing them of the controversy regarding the paved multi-purpose trail system in Fairview Park and requested an opinion on the acceptability of narrowing the

multi-purpose trail and the substitution of decomposed granite for asphalt or concrete as the trail surface (Attachment L). Staff also requested a determination from OCTA regarding the impact that substituting decomposed granite for asphalt paving or concrete will have on the \$500,000 TEA grant recently awarded to the City.

OCTA staff has informed Costa Mesa staff that they are unable to provide answers to the questions raised regarding the narrowing of the multi-purpose trail system and substitution of decomposed granite. This issue was forwarded to the OCTA Technical Steering Committee for final determination (Attachment M). The Committee, at their July 26, 2000 meeting, recommended that all class I bicycle facilities meet minimum Caltrans standards in width (8 foot width with 2 foot shoulders) and in materials (asphalt pavement or concrete). No action was taken on the status of the TEA grant if decomposed granite is used.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

I. Fairview Park Master Plan Amendment Request:

Alternatives considered included:

1. The City Council could determine that the existing trail system in Fairview Park, as approved in the Fairview Park Master Plan is acceptable in location and composition.
2. The planting of trees in the buffer zone north of the Fairview Channel would provide an additional layer of privacy for the residents on Swan Drive and at the same time would maintain residents views into the park. The trees would need to be planted in a fashion that would allow for annual weed fire prevention wood abatement. Arrangements would also need to be made to secure water for the newly planted trees.
3. The master-planned multi-purpose trail next to the Fairview Channel could be eliminated, except for the easterly portion, which connects to the proposed parking lot entrance.
4. The City Council could determine that all new trails in Fairview Park should be constructed of dirt, decomposed granite or other natural materials. The Building Official has stated that hard surfaced paths are required to serve buildings and other functional areas of the park and that he is required to review each project on a case-by-case basis. He has also stated that he will support the use of native materials wherever he has regulatory authority.

II. Issues raised at the June 19, 2000 meeting:

Staff has addressed the possibility of reducing the width of the multi-use trails and the use of decomposed granite. No other alternatives were considered. Caltrans standards suggest a minimum trail width of 12 feet or wider in high traffic areas and asphalt pavement. The Orange County Regional Riding and Hiking Trail Design Manual supports both paved and unpaved trails but their design is focused primarily at hiking/jogging, equestrians, and mountain biking trails, not multi-purpose commuter and recreation trails as approved in the Fairview Park Master Plan.

Decomposed granite may be used as a trail pavement surface contingent upon review of final plans and approval by the Building Safety Official for handicap accessibility.

FISCAL REVIEW

Construction costs for decomposed granite, asphalt and concrete are comparable but concrete walkways are the cheapest option over the long haul (Attachment N). Decomposed granite erodes very easily in inclement weather and requires regular maintenance to insure a safe pavement surface. Asphalt also requires periodic preventative maintenance including patching and slurry sealing to prevent erosion of the pavement surface. Over time, the oils in asphalt pavement separate from the aggregate and the pavement surface decomposes and requires overlaying or replacement. Concrete, on the other hand, is a very durable pavement surface and only requires minimal maintenance over a

50-year period. Depending on the option that City Council chooses, future plans will include the material chosen and the cost will vary appropriately.

LEGAL REVIEW

Council Policy 500-11 provides a process whereby the Fairview Park Master Plan may be amended. The City Council has the final authority to amend the Fairview Park Master Plan.

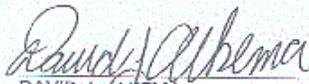
CONCLUSION

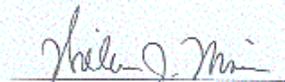
The multi-purpose trail system was designed to meet Caltrans highway design standards for Class I Bikeways. Adherence to Caltrans standards provides the City with a high level of safety based on the existing and anticipated usage of the park and trail system.

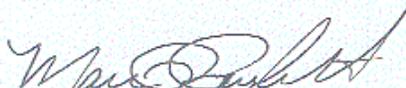
It is unclear at this time if changing the adopted standards and Fairview Park Master Plan will be acceptable to OCTA or have an impact on the recently awarded \$500,000 TEA grant for construction of the paved multi-purpose trail system.

The Costa Mesa Building Official has stated his support for the use of native materials on trails but will review each project on a case-by-case basis to determine if the proposed improvements meet applicable handicap standards. If not, then more permanent materials such as concrete or asphalt paving would be required.

The Fairview Park Citizen's Advisory Committee and the Park, Recreation Facilities and Parkways Commission supported staff's recommendations regarding the request to amend the Fairview Park Master Plan. The Planning Commission also supported staff's recommendation with the exception of the substitution of concrete for asphalt pavement on the multi-purpose trails. The recommendation, if approved by the City Council will maintain the integrity of the Master Plan and provide the residents of Costa Mesa a wide range of recreational opportunities at Fairview Park. Therefore, staff recommends that the City Council support the construction of paved multi-purpose trails as provided in the Fairview Park Master Plan. Staff also recommends the use of concrete as an acceptable substitute for trails indicated to be constructed with asphalt pavement.


DAVID J. ALKEMA
PARKS PROJECT MANAGER


WILLIAM J. MORRIS
PUBLIC SERVICES DIRECTOR


MARC PUCKETT
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

Attachments:

- A - Fairview Park Master Plan pages 7-7 and 7-8
- B - Letter from Mr. Tim Cromwell dated March 23, 2000
- C - Council Policy 500-11
- D - Commission Staff Reports
- E - Committee and Commission Minutes
- F - June 19, 2000 Council Staff Report
- G - Caltrans Highway Design Manual pages 1000-2 through 1000-4
- H - Caltrans Highway Design Manual page 1000-10
- I - Caltrans Highway Design Manual page 1000-5
- J - County of Orange Regional Riding and Hiking Trail Design Manual pages 14 and 2
- K - Email from Rick Brown, Costa Mesa Building Official dated May 1, 2000
- L - Letter to OCTA dated June 27, 2000
- M - Letter from OCTA dated July 25, 2000
- N - Borthwick Guy Bettenhausen letter dated November 15, 1999

cc: Allan L. Roeder, City Manager
Rick Brown, Building Official
Don Lamm, Development Services Director
William J. Morris, Public Services Director
Steve Hayman, Administrative Services Director
Stacia Mancini, Recreation Manager
Perry Valentina, Assistant Development Services Director
Parks, Recreation Facilities, and Parkways Commission