



PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: SEPTEMBER 22, 2004

ITEM NUMBER:

SUBJECT: SITE FURNISHINGS IN CITY PARKS

DATE: SEPTEMBER 15, 2004

FROM: PUBLIC SERVICES DEPARTMENT, MAINTENANCE SERVICES DIVISION

PRESENTATION BY: BRUCE A. HARTLEY, MAINTENANCE SERVICES MANAGER

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: BRUCE A. HARTLEY, (714) 754-5123

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Commission receive and file a report on the site furnishings utilized in City parks.

BACKGROUND

At a recent meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission staff was requested to return to the Commission with information on what types of site furnishings (tables, benches, etc.) are typically installed in City parks. The following information and attachments are intended to provide an overview of the types of site furnishings that are found throughout the City with an explanation of the selection criteria as appropriate.

ANALYSIS

Currently there are no City standards for site furnishings in City parks. However, for public rights-of-way/parkway applications there is a standard 'bus bench' and 'trash receptacle' as listed in the 'Streetscape and Median Development Standards'. This style of bench is typically installed at high-use bus stops that do not have a bus shelter. Some of these benches have been installed in Lions Park with matching trash receptacles as a method to provide some level of protection for the tot-lot from the adjacent parking area and the potential for accidental vehicular intrusion into the play area. See Attachment 1.

In the remaining parks and parkways throughout the City there are several different types of tables, benches and other site furnishings. Newer parks and recently completed improvement projects have furnishings that are unique, such as Fairview Park, Ketchum-Libolt Park and the Neighborhood Community Center Fountain Plaza. Older parks may have furnishings that were originally installed when the park was constructed and may not match newer installations found throughout the park system. The Victoria Street parkway has unique site furnishings as well. See Attachment 2.

In the past four years a concerted effort has been made to identify various funding sources to replace ageing park site furnishings. Annually, the proposed Maintenance Division budgets have included requests for funding to replace vandalized and

unserviceable site furnishings. Additionally, grant funding for furnishings made of recycled materials and bench donations received from local residents have supplemented those efforts. With the available funding, the Parks and Parkways Maintenance Section has made great progress in bringing new benches, tables, trash receptacles and drinking fountains to many of the parks and parkways throughout the City. See Attachment 3.

With the development of a program to replace site furnishings there came the question of whether to replace wooden tables and benches with 'like kind' or to develop a consistent approach to installing those types of products that will provide the best use over the longest period of time, for the lowest cost. With extensive knowledge of the impact the weather, insects, park patrons and vandals have on the City's park site furnishings, staff evaluated the various options and determined that there are a few types of benches and tables that tolerate abuse better than others. The benches and tables now being installed on a frequent basis are described as web-coated, expanded steel. These tables and benches are typically purchased in forest green, with gloss black supports, but are also available in other colors. They are vandal resistant and have colors that tend to compliment most park, landscape or tot-lot settings. Staff finds that these tables resist efforts to be carved, ignited or skated, three of the most frequently experienced causes of damage. Matching trash receptacles are used, as a replacement for the steel drum that was used in the past. See Attachment 4.

Recycled tables and trash receptacles have been used more frequently in the past three years throughout the City's parks. With grant funding available through the City's Beverage Container recycling programs, several tables, trash receptacles and other products made from 100% recycled plastic materials have been successfully integrated into the park system. These funds supplement the Operation & Maintenance funding of the Maintenance Division, allowing more benches, tables and trash receptacles to be replaced. The recycled plastic tables are typically placed in high-use areas, such as the larger community parks, but are being tested on a limited basis in smaller neighborhood parks as well. See Attachment 5.

On a case-by-case basis, unique site furnishings have been selected for use. These special projects include locations such as Fairview Park, Ketchum-Libolt Park, Lions Park, the Neighborhood Community Center and the Downtown Recreation Center. Two unique benches were donated by the Mesa North Homeowners Association and are located in Paularino Park. See Attachment 6.

The Maintenance Services Division has balanced the goal of standardizing site furnishings with the desire of landscape architects and the public to create more interesting design concepts in public spaces.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

1. The Commission could receive and file the report.
2. The Commission could request more information from staff, or could direct that a more consistent standard be established for the benches, trash receptacles, and other furniture in the parks. A request of this nature would require prior City Council approval in accordance with City Council Policy 300-6.

FISCAL REVIEW

There may be fiscal impacts associated with this item, depending on the cost of any “standardized” furnishings that may be selected.

LEGAL REVIEW

No legal review is required for this item.

CONCLUSION

The City of Costa Mesa parks, parkways and public open spaces contain a wide variety of site furnishings. The current trend in standardizing site furnishings in public areas has been appropriately balanced with the need for variety and economy. The information contained in this report is intended to provide the Commission an overview of those furnishings. It is recommended the Commission receive and file this report.

BRUCE A HARTLEY
Maintenance Services Manager

WILLIAM J. MORRIS
Public Services Director

- ATTACHMENTS:
1. [Photographs of standard ‘bus bench’ and ‘trash receptacle’ for public rights-of-way.](#)
 2. Photographs of tables located along the Victoria Street parkway
 3. Photographs of new site furnishings installed in parks.
 4. Photographs of web-coated, expanded steel tables and benches.
 5. Photographs of 100% recycled plastic benches.
 6. Photographs of miscellaneous site furnishings.

C: City Manager
Public Services Director
Recreation Manager
Staff