



Culver CITY
PARKS, RECREATION & COMMUNITY SERVICES
COMMISSION

ParksandRecreationCommission@culvercity.org

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TO: CULVER CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS
 FROM: PARKS, RECREATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMISSION
 RE: PRCS BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 – COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS
 DATE: xx XXXX 2025

Dear City Council Members:

Thank you again for inviting our Commission to share recommendations for budget enhancements for improvement projects for the Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Department (PRCS). We appreciate that over the past few years the Council has adopted many of our requests. We hope that you will continue to support our vision to improve Culver City parks facilities and to implement the Parks Master Plan.

Our recommendations to you focus both on needs to begin to implement the plan and needs to continue PRCS operations. Throughout our recommendations, we have tried to follow the decision framework listed in the Parks Plan. We organize this letter by discussing staffing needs, then budget items needed to fund existing operations and parks, and finally with a proposed plan to begin to implement the parks plan.

Staffing

Fund an Additional Senior Management Analyst (\$180,600) & Management Analyst (\$156,900) (Ongoing)

The Parks Plan notes on page 234: "Sufficient funding and availability for staff for the parks system is limited. The current staff is stretched to capacity, and additional specialized staff would be needed for park improvements such as native planting areas, public art pieces, and new programming. Currently, the parks demonstrate overstressed budgets and overstretched staff." Nowhere is this overstretched staffing more apparent than in the position of Management Analysts. Currently, the department only has one Senior Management Analyst and two Associate Analysts. While these staffers are exceptional, they cannot begin to implement the Parks plan without additional assistance. The new Senior Management Analyst would work with the current Senior Management Analyst to divide current tasks and to implement the Parks Plan. The Management Analyst would support the existing and new Senior Management Analysts in all their duties.

Fund a Grant Writer position (\$156,900) (Ongoing)

Through the development of the Parks Plan, it is clear that there are significant grant opportunities that PRCS could be taking advantage of to fund new construction, updates to parks, and new and ongoing programming. PRCS is currently losing out on these grants as there is not enough staff capacity to find and apply for these grants. A full time Grant Writer position would allow PRCS to apply for and receive more grant money. Overtime, this position would be revenue enhancing.

Fund two Additional Maintenance Workers I (\$181,200) (Ongoing)

PRCS staffing continues to be a challenge, especially in the Maintenance Division. The Parks Plan notes on page 233 that “Prior to significant capital investments, it is critical that additional funding for general maintenance be secured for PRCS.” As we noted in our budget letter last year, the current staffing levels only allow for the department to fix things when they break which results in higher expenses for the city. With proper staffing, we believe that the ability to provide comprehensive preventative maintenance will result in improved safety, lower repair costs, and extend useful life of our facilities and equipment. We recommend that the Council fund two additional personnel positions of Maintenance Worker I.

Additional salary and benefits for part-time staff, especially lifeguards (Ongoing)

Staffing part time positions, especially lifeguards, continues to be a challenge for PRCS. Due to a nationwide shortage of lifeguards, PRCS must compete with neighboring jurisdictions that offer higher salaries and benefits for part-time staff. Without raising our salary and benefits, we will continue to be at a disadvantage to these other jurisdictions and this will harm our ability to offer pool time, camps, and other much needed programming.

Expenditures to fund existing operations

Increase in Playground Maintenance in the PRCS Operating Budget: \$75,000 (Ongoing)

We thank the Council for the ongoing funding for playground maintenance in the PRCS operating budget approved last year. Unfortunately, due to both the age of the equipment and inflation, we request additional funds to make up for shortfalls.

Fund In-house Youth Sports Programs: Staffing \$21,471 and Supplies \$7,029 (Ongoing)

We thank the Council for funding our in-house Youth Sports Program. It is off to a rousing success. To keep the momentum and to increase the program, PRCS needs additional funding to further develop and maintain these activities to continue and build on the success of the program thus far.

Ensure Compliance with California’s Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWEL0) (Multi-year)

We again thank the council for providing funds for a consultant to ensure our City’s compliance with the statewide Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWEL0). As the consultant completes their recommendations, PRCS will need additional funds to implement the recommendations in a Capital Improvement Project (\$600,000).

Tellefson Park Renovation

Now that we have the Parks Master Plan, it is vital that the City begins to implement its recommendations. The renovations suggested for Tellefson Park are a good place to start for several reasons.

1. Tellefson Park meets the criteria laid out in the decision framework in the Parks Plan: it is in an area with historically lower investment, in proximity to an Equity Focus Neighborhood, increases services in parks with high pressure, and helps achieve the

Parks Plan Vision, Mission, and Goals. In addition, there are likely to be available local, state, and federal funding mechanisms.

2. The renovation includes racket sports courts, which could be pickle ball courts. Pickle ball is a growing activity in our community with a very active and loyal participant base. Currently, there is great pressure in our parks system for pickle ball courts and pickle ball play at the Elenda Courts continues to create tensions between paddle tennis players, pickle ball players, and the neighbors. Creating a dedicated pickle ball space would relieve these pressures. In addition, the corner of the park where these courts will be placed is relatively far from residences and should reduce concerns about the noise.
3. The renovation is relatively small and does not require major construction. For these reasons, the renovations could be completed relatively quickly and inexpensively. This would show the community that the Council and City are serious about implementing the parks plan.

Items included in the renovation:

- Racket sports courts with spectator seating (Courts- \$686,400/ Seating- \$124,500)
- New picnic groves (\$76,960)
- Sand Volleyball court (\$52,800)
- New exercise equipment (\$38,000)
- Potential upgrade to restrooms
- Extended sidewalk and accessible walking paths throughout (Sidewalk \$65,280/ Walking Path \$120,400)
- Thin out tree canopy, remove unhealthy trees, and plant new trees in line with recommendations to replace trees with native species (\$14,000)

2025 is shaping up to be a very active year for PRCS with many exciting opportunities to support and sustain PRCS recreational facilities and programming for the community for decades to come. We thank the Council for your approval of many proposed initiatives over the last few years and hope that you will continue to support our vision to evolve Culver City PRCS as an exemplar of recreation and community service in our region.

Respectfully submitted,

PARKS, RECREATION & COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMISSION