



**CITY OF SANTA BARBARA**  
**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION REPORT**

**AGENDA DATE:** September 24, 2014  
**TO:** Parks and Recreation Commission  
**FROM:** Engineering Division, Public Works Department  
**SUBJECT:** Alameda Park Well Relocation Project

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Commission:

- A. Recommend to City Council that the design proposed for the Alameda Park Well Relocation Project is compatible with the use and character of Alameda Park;
- B. Make the following findings pursuant to SBMC section 28.37.025 to approve the relocation of the existing groundwater well:
  - i. That the proposed park and recreation improvements are appropriate or necessary for the benefit of the community and visitors;
  - ii. That the proposed park and recreation facilities including lighting, play areas, parking facilities and associated landscaping, will be compatible with the character of the neighborhood;
  - iii. That the total area of the site and the setbacks of all facilities from the property lines and street are sufficient, in view of the physical character of the land, proposed development and neighborhood, to avoid significant negative effects on surrounding properties;
  - iv. That the intensity of park use is appropriate and compatible with the character of the neighborhood;
  - v. That the proposed park and recreation facilities are compatible with the scenic character of the City; and
  - vi. That any proposed structures or buildings are compatible with the neighborhood in terms of size, bulk and scale of location; and
- C. Make the following findings pursuant to City Charter section 520:
  - i. The well relocation is compatible with and accessory to the purposes to which the property is devoted because : A) a portion of the water supply developed by the well will be devoted to park irrigation and maintenance, thus rendering the well accessory to the park use; B) the findings made above pursuant to SBMC section 28.37.025 demonstrate that the well location is compatible with park uses; C) use of the well will be by agreement between the

Parks and Recreation and Public Works Departments, and fully regulated by the City; and D) permission for the well will be contingent upon the Parks and Recreation and Public Works Department reaching agreement to the satisfaction of the City Administrator on all relevant construction and use issues, including appropriate compensation for the use of the parkland.

## **DISCUSSION:**

### Background

The City of Santa Barbara (City) relies on groundwater as one of the water sources meeting the needs of its customers. Groundwater is especially important during times of drought when surface water supplies may be restricted. The Alameda Park Well was constructed in 1990 to support the groundwater supply available to the City. The original construction was permitted by the Community Development Division and approved by City Council. In February of this year the well began pumping sand due to a failure in the well structure. The well has since been out of service.

### Project Goals

The Public Works Department would like to relocate the existing well from its position in a planted area of the park near the Kids World Playground to a planted area approximately 100 feet away (Attachment 1). Understanding the importance of the site to the surrounding neighborhood, Engineering Staff has worked with Parks Staff to determine a project timeline that minimizes the impact to park services.

### Project Design Development

The Engineering Division retained Pueblo Water Resources (PWR) to develop design plans and specifications for the relocated groundwater well. Early in the design process, as recommended by Parks Staff, the City required PWR to add the services of a licensed Landscape Architect and Certified Arborist.

The design team has developed a well-siting study, tree protection plan, and preliminary design plans for design review. The well-siting study determined the new location of the relocated well that maintained the appropriate hydrogeology and complied with concerns raised by the stakeholders involved. The tree protection plan was developed by a Certified Arborist and used to develop the well-siting study by identifying trees for removal that were either in poor condition or had an irregularity that limited their growth potential. The tree protection plan also defined appropriate protection measures for trees in or near the proposed construction area. The preliminary design plans have been developed by a licensed Landscape Architect, and incorporate recommendations from

the Street Tree Advisory Committee (STAC), including improvements to the irrigation system in the impacted area, and the tree protection plan (Attachment 2).

### Project Review and Approval

The project requires design review and approval by the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC), as the park is located in the El Pueblo Viejo Landmark District. The project will also require a building permit issued by Building and Safety and a Public Works permit issued by the Public Works Department.

The project has been reviewed by the City's Water Commission and by the STAC. At their August 7, 2014 regular meeting, the STAC recommended approval to the Parks and Recreation Commission to remove five (5) trees providing they were replaced with:

- One Giant Bird of Paradise with five trunks at least ½ the size of the original tree to be removed
- one Giant Bird of Paradise with three trunks at least ½ the size of the original tree
- two King Palms with at least eight feet of brown trunk height
- one Butia Capitata Palm with at least eight feet of brown trunk height

The revised plans incorporate all of the STAC recommendations. Parks and Recreation staff support the plan as submitted. The Parks and Recreation Commission is being asked to approve the removals and proposed project landscape plan.

At the request of the City Attorney's Office, the Engineering Division is recommending that the Parks and Recreation Commission make findings supporting the relocation of the groundwater well in Alameda Park, and that the project is compliant with City Charter section 520, Disposition of Real Property or a Public Utility. The well relocation project is "compatible with and accessory to the purposes to which the property is devoted", as the well provides a public benefit in the form of clean, safe drinking and irrigation water directly to the park as well as the surrounding community. The existing well will be destroyed and the Park land returned to its original use. The relocated well will occupy the same size area as the original well, but in a different location, thereby maintaining the conditions of the permitted use. Moreover, the well will be installed after an appropriate agreement permitting the well is reached between the Parks and Recreation and Public Works Departments. The City Attorney advises that this agreement must be to the satisfaction of the City Administrator on all relevant construction and use issues, including appropriate compensation for the use of the parkland. The proposed project meets all the requirements of subsection A, section 28.37.025 of the Municipal Code for findings of appropriate usage for property zoned for Park and Recreation.

With Commission approval, the recommendations and findings will be scheduled for City Council action in late October. As a separate action, and upon completion of Design and Building and Safety review, the project will be publicly bid and the awarded contract to

construct will be scheduled for City Council approval in early December. Project construction would begin in January and completed by April 2015.

**ATTACHMENT(S):** 1. Layout of Well Siting  
2. Landscape/Irrigation design, and Tree Protection Plan  
3. Master Application Site Photos

**PREPARED BY:** Philip Maldonado, PE, Project Engineer

**SUBMITTED BY:** Linda Sumansky, PE, Principal Engineer

**APPROVED BY:** Nancy L. Rapp, Parks and Recreation Director