



## CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

### PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION REPORT

**AGENDA DATE:** May 24, 2017

**TO:** Parks and Recreation Commission

**FROM:** Parks Division, Parks and Recreation Department

**SUBJECT:** Parma Park Sustainable Trail System Plan

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Commission receive a presentation on the Parma Park Sustainable Trail System Plan.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

##### Background

Parma Park is characterized by dense native vegetation, steep terrain and sweeping views of Santa Barbara, Montecito and the Channel Islands. The 200-acre park contains 5.5 miles of trails that are remnants of ranching activities or trails built years ago by equestrian volunteers. The main road developed for utility access also serves as a trail. Trail users include hikers, runners, dog walkers and equestrians. Bicycles are limited to the utility access road. The specialized needs of equestrians are of particular importance due to limited equestrian opportunities in the City. Some road segments and trails are steep, easily eroded and not sustainable due to their location and the soil type. Other trails are positioned well but need reshaping to improve drainage and facilitate maintenance. And finally, trails that traverse environmentally sensitive habitat, such as creeks, could be redesigned.

##### Project Description

The purpose of the Parma Park Sustainable Trail System Plan is to provide a recreationally satisfying and safe trail experience, protect natural and cultural resources and support sustainable trail maintenance. The project includes two phases. Phase I includes assessment of existing trails and preparation of a sustainable trail system plan. The assessment will determine if trails and the access road meet the Trail Management Objectives (TMOs). TMOs are the prescription for the trail system, such as trail slope, pitch and width. Trail areas that do not meet TMOs will be identified and discussed in a report and map. Also part of Phase I, a sustainable trail plan will be designed to refurbish existing trails to meet the TMOs and sustainability guidelines. Where this is not practical or to provide new recreational opportunities, trails may need to be relocated, decommissioned or new trail segments proposed. The new trail system will be kept within the existing corridor to the greatest extent possible but new trail segments may

be required to meet project objectives. A report and maps will include the purpose and the specifics of sustainable features and details of the sustainable trail system. Examples of sustainable features that may be introduced into the system include rolling contours, tread outslope, grade reversals and other methods and proper drainage to help prevent erosion and aid in maintenance. The final portion of Phase I will be the physical marking of the trail corridor in preparation for Phase II. Phase II, not a part of the current task, includes environmental review, permitting, construction and an updated maintenance plan.

### Community Outreach

A community meeting was held at the park on March 14, 2017 to provide information about the project and to receive input from the community. A mailer was sent to residents within 600 feet of the park and to other interested parties. The mailer included a link to a survey about park use and the project. The mailer was also on the City's website and posted at the park. Twenty-seven people attended the community meeting and 115 people responded to the survey. A summary of survey results is attached.

### Next Steps

The Department conducted a request for proposals process and received three qualified responses from experienced organizations. The project schedule assumes Phase I will begin in June 2017 and be complete by December 2017. Phase II would begin the first quarter of 2018, with the majority of the trail work complete in fall 2018 and, depending on the scope of the trail renovation, work could carry into spring 2019. Parks and Recreation will continue the annual trail maintenance work during plan development.

### **BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:**

The Parma Park Trust provides funds for Parma Park maintenance, repair, and special projects, such as this project. The Parma Park Co-Trustees reviewed and approved the project. Project Phase I and Phase II are estimated to range from \$203,000 to \$324,000 to complete, depending on the extent of trail improvements. Final construction costs will be refined when the final plans are complete.

**ATTACHMENT:** Survey results and community meeting comments

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**SUBMITTED BY:** George Thomson, Capital Projects Supervisor

**APPROVED BY:** Jill E. Zachary, Parks and Recreation Director