



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION REPORT

AGENDA DATE: August 26, 2020
TO: Parks and Recreation Commission
FROM: Administration Division, Parks and Recreation Department
SUBJECT: Director's Report

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Commission receive a presentation on the status of various Parks and Recreation Department (Department) initiatives and activities.

DISCUSSION:

Labor Day Weekend Beach Closure

On August 11, the City Council included the closure of Santa Barbara beaches for the Labor Day weekend in the amendments to the emergency ordinance related to COVID-19 economic recovery. The closure will mimic the closure implemented for the July 4th weekend with beach use limited to active recreation and the closure of waterfront parking lots, with the exception of the Harbor lot and Stearns Wharf. As with the July 4th weekend, the beaches and beach front parks will be posted with signage outlining prohibitions on sunbathing, picnicking, BBQs, and group gatherings. Beach goers will be able to walk, run, swim, kayak, and engage in other active recreation activities. The Department will staff the weekend with lifeguards, parks grounds personnel, and park rangers. Other City departments that will support outreach and enforcement will include Waterfront, Fire, and Police.

Beachfront Venue Video Tours

Although due to the coronavirus pandemic all recreation and rental facilities are currently closed to the public, the Department is developing online tools to help market the facilities and promote recreation assets. Working with Welborn Media, the Department is filming video tours of four beachfront rental facilities: the Cabrillo Pavilion, Carousel House, Chase Palm Park Center, and Casa Las Palmas. Each video will soon be available on the City's website and YouTube channel, allowing potential customers to take a quick virtual "walk-through" of a venue before contacting Department staff. These video assets will enable the Department to better market the beachfront venues to prospective renters, improve customer service by offering a virtual alternative to an in-person tour, and increase efficiency

by allocating valuable staff time to members of the public who are closer to moving forward with a rental.

Ambassador Park Chumash Cultural Project

The Department is working with the State Coastal Conservancy and Chumash community members to develop conceptual plans to renovate Ambassador Park. Located on West Cabrillo Boulevard, Ambassador Park is located at what was Syuxtun Village, once the largest Chumash settlement along the coast. Key elements of the project include extensive stakeholder engagement to identify park improvements and development of professional conceptual design plans to secure preliminary approvals. The design would improve access to and use of the park with walking paths and a gathering location, provide landscape/habitat improvements, and recognize the Chumash heritage through interpretive signage. There is also interest in renaming the park to Syuxtun Village. Project design will be funded through a grant from the Coastal Conservancy. The award of grant funds is expected on September 3. A key first task will be the recruitment of a landscape design firm experienced in community engagement and passive park development. In addition to review and consideration by the Parks and Recreation Commission, the project will be subject to review by the Historic Landmarks Commission and the City Council.

PREPARED BY: Jill E. Zachary, Parks and Recreation Director