

APPROVED

SEP 20 2006

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

NO. 06-276

DATE September 20, 2006

BOARD OF RECREATION
and PARK COMMISSIONERS

C.D. 4

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: RUNYON CANYON PARK – PARKING AREA (W.O. #E1904613) - ADOPTION OF MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION, APPROVAL OF PROJECT AND ALLOCATION OF QIMBY FEES

J. Combs _____	J. Kolb _____
H. Fujita _____	F. Mok _____
S. Huntley _____	K. Regan _____
B. Jensen _____	*M. Shull <i>See p. 11.5</i>

[Signature]

 General Manager

Approved _____

Disapproved _____

Withdrawn _____

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board:

1. Review, consider, and adopt the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the construction of a permeable gravel parking area and relocation of the existing open lawn area at the Fuller Avenue entrance of Runyon Canyon Park;
2. Direct staff to file a Notice of Determination with the Los Angeles City and County Clerks;
3. Authorize the Chief Accounting Employee to transfer \$291,637 in Quimby Fees, which were collected in 2004-2005 Fiscal Year, from Account 460K-00 to the Runyon Canyon Park account 460K-RN; and
4. Approve the allocation of \$200,000 in Quimby Fees at the Runyon Canyon Park account 460K-RN for the Runyon Canyon Park – Parking Area (W.O. #E1904613) project.

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

PG. 2

NO. 06-276

SUMMARY

The Project Agreement (Grant No. 58F6-94-0204) with the County of Los Angeles (County) for the Runyon Canyon Park improvement project, funded by the Los Angeles County Parks and Open Space District (Proposition A-I) in an amount of \$1,000,000, originally called for the construction of a visitor information center and a parking lot near the Fuller Avenue entrance to Runyon Canyon Park. Recognizing that the park needs have changed since this original scope was formulated in 1998, the project scope was revised to include new security metal fence and gates at the Mulholland Drive entrance and a permeable gravel parking area at the Fuller Avenue entrance. This scope change was approved by the L.A. for Kids Steering Committee on October 7, 2004, and adopted by the City Council (Council File No. 04-2440) on December 8, 2004. The County has also issued and executed a Project Agreement Amendment to allow the scope change.

The improvements at the Mulholland Drive entrance have since been completed. The improvements included an 8-foot high security metal fence and gates constructed by City vendor, as well as new water and electric meters and service connections by the Department of Water and Power. A dedication ceremony was held by the Department and the 4th Council District (CD-4) office on September 10, 2005.

The Department is now recommending approval of the project elements at the Fuller Avenue entrance. Under the guidance of the "Runyon Canyon Park Master Plan and Design Guidelines" prepared in 1984, and following the Department's "Off-Leash Dog Exercise Area Policy" adopted by the Board (Board Report No. 382-99) on October 6, 1999, the proposed parking area at the Fuller Avenue entrance will provide greatly needed off-street parking for the park.

The proposed improvements at the Fuller Avenue entrance consist of the following scope of work:

- A. A gravel-based parking area to accommodate up to 80 cars, featuring a low-impact and permeable surface that is both ecologically sensitive and environmentally friendly. The parking area utilizes a tiered or terraced design that nestles into the existing grade and allows the parking area to blend with the natural terrain and minimizes grading work. The terraced parking area will also help break up the mass and scale, and enhance the aesthetics. In addition to providing the much needed parking to the park patrons, the parking area is also designed to help minimize water runoff and control erosion. The existing concrete steps and foundation walls from the mansion ruins will remain intact and undisturbed.

The construction of the new parking area may potentially be completed by the Bureau of Street Services. Staff will report back to the Board when the final construction costs are determined and final arrangements and agreements are made with the Bureau of Street Services, prior to the start of construction of the new parking area.

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

PG. 3

NO. 06-276

- B. The existing open lawn area will be relocated to a new area above the proposed parking area. The new open lawn area will feature the same size and amenities as the existing one, including a 4-foot high fence and landscaping along the perimeters. All larger trees will be preserved to provide shade in this new open lawn area.

The relocation of the open lawn area will be completed by the Department's in-house construction forces, at the Department's own expenses, without using the project's Proposition A-I funds or the Quimby funds to be allocated to the project.

The proposed parking area and the relocated open lawn area are approximately 26,000 square feet and 16,000 square feet in size, respectively, for a total of 42,000 square feet, or .96 acre, which represents less than 1% in area of the 134-acre park. In addition, the proposed parking area and the relocated open lawn area are outside the designated off-leash dog exercise area, and therefore the proposed improvement work does not reduce the size of the existing off-leash dog exercise area. The existing concrete remnants of the remains of the former McCormack mansion will not be disturbed and will remain in situ.

The Bureau of Engineering Environmental Management Group prepared in accordance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the State CEQA Guidelines, a proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the construction of the new parking area and the relocation of the open lawn area at Runyon Canyon Park.

A public notice was published in the Los Angeles Times on February 23, 2006, announcing the availability of the draft MND for public review. The draft MND was circulated to governmental agencies and the public for review and comments for a 21-day period from February 24, 2006 to March 17, 2006. A final MND has been prepared, consisting of the Draft MND, public and agency comments received, and staff responses to all relevant environmental issues raised. The final MND and Initial Study are attached to this report for the Board's review, consideration, and adoption.

Out of the original \$1,000,000 Proposition A-I grants, \$116,186 were expended on the design of the visitor information center, and \$106,880 were expended on the construction of fence and gates and the new water and electric meters at the Mulholland Drive entrance. The remaining balance of \$776,934 is available for the project.

Currently, there is \$291,637 available in Quimby Fees collected in Fiscal Year 2004-2005 which can be transferred from account 460K-00 to the Runyon Canyon Park account 460K-RN. The total Quimby Fees in the amount of \$200,000 can be allocated to the Runyon Canyon Park project (W.O. #E1904613). These Quimby Fees were collected within two miles of Runyon Canyon Park, which is the standard distance for the allocation of Quimby Fees for community parks.

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

PG. 4

NO. 06-276

Therefore, the total funding available for the construction of the new parking area at the Fuller Avenue entrance is \$976,934. Based on the cost estimate provided by the Bureau of Street Services, funds are sufficient to complete the project.

Council District 4 and Griffith Region staff support the recommendations as set forth in this report.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

The aforementioned remaining balance in Proposition A-I grants and Quimby funds will fund the construction of the parking area; therefore, there is no anticipated immediate fiscal impact to the Department's budget. The cost to be borne by the Department to relocate the open lawn area has yet to be determined. Future operations and maintenance costs will be included in the Department's future annual budget requests.

Prepared by Paul Tseng, Project Manager, Bureau of Engineering (BOE) Architectural Division.
Reviewed by Neil Drucker, Program Manager, BOE Recreational and Cultural Facilities Program,
and by Bradley Smith, Chief Deputy City Engineer, BOE.