



MEMORANDUM

Date: October 29, 2007

To: Chair and Committee Members
Pima County Bond Advisory Committee

From: 
Nicole Fyffe
Executive Assistant to the
County Administrator

Re: **Parks and Recreation Bond Subcommittee Recommendations**

Background and Need

The Parks and Recreation Bond Subcommittee, made up of Chairman Gary Davidson and Subcommittee members Carolyn Campbell, Byron Howard, Terry Hutts, John Neis, Ted Prezelski, Thomas Six, and Tom Warne met 12 times since first meeting on February 1, 2007. Each supervisorial district was represented.

One way to assess the need for certain projects is to look at the number of requests and the number of individuals actively supporting the projects. The Subcommittee was tasked with prioritizing over 200 requested projects totaling almost \$1 billion. At the same time, thousands of people showed support for various parks and recreation projects through letters, email, petitions, and attendance at meetings.

According to the presentation provided to the Subcommittee by Director Rafael Payan, Pima County is behind the national average in terms of traditional parks and recreational facilities. On average, municipalities provide 10 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. The City of Tucson is lower than average at 6 acres per 1,000, while Pima County lags at 2 acres per 1,000. Parks are a leading indicator of a community's economic, physical and social health. Statistics show communities with adequate parks and recreational opportunities have lower crime rates because they provide opportunities for physical activity, organized sports, family oriented gatherings, environmental education, and quiet contemplation. At one time physical activity was available to young people at school during recess and breaks. Now, many schools can no longer provide physical education or opportunities for field trips to natural places. Parks help to fill this gap by providing safe and challenging activities for all ages and abilities.

Requests considered by this Subcommittee included funding for community centers, sports fields, picnic facilities, trails, improvements to natural and cultural resource sites, parkland acquisition, and to address the regulatory compliance and infrastructure needs of our existing parks.

Process

The Subcommittee began by developing criteria to prioritize project requests (see attached). The criteria are an expansion of the basic criteria adopted by the Bond Advisory Committee in February 2007.

The Subcommittee then heard presentations on each of the proposed bond projects from Pima County Natural Resources Parks and Recreation, Town of Marana, Town of Oro Valley, Town of Sahuarita, and City of Tucson. Presentations were organized by Supervisorial district, with

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one meeting allocated to project requests in each district. Considerable time was allocated each meeting to hear from the public and interested parties. Meetings were well attended by the public with approximately 50 people attending each meeting. In addition, County staff continued to provide public comments and petitions received through e-mail or hard copies, to the Subcommittee throughout the deliberations.

The Subcommittee tried to include projects deemed high priority by the various jurisdictions and unincorporated communities, while also considering whether these communities and jurisdictions had received funding recommendations from other bond subcommittees. In addition, the Subcommittee invited various interest groups and community groups to provide the Subcommittee their expert opinions on priorities. For example, the Subcommittee relied on the expertise of Pima Trails Association and the Bicycle Advisory Committee for recommendations on the highest priority needs for trails and linear parks.

Bond Funding Recommendations by Tier

The Subcommittee arrived at a recommendation of 95 projects totaling \$356,291,000, broken into three Tiers, with Tier 1 being the highest priority and including 38 projects totaling \$123,701,000. Some projects received partial funding in more than one tier. The table below shows these recommendations grouped in categories by type of projects. Attached is a list of the recommended projects grouped into categories, a list of the recommended projects sorted by project number, a list of the projects that were not recommend for bond funding, and a map showing the locations of the recommended projects.

Recommendations by Category

<u>Category</u>	<u>Tier 1</u>	<u>Tier 2</u>	<u>Tier 3</u>	<u>Total</u>
Sports Fields & Facilities, Lights, Pools and Other	\$44,950,000	\$48,640,000	\$32,353,000	\$125,943,000
Sports & Recreation Buildings, Community Centers	\$28,800,000	\$15,850,000	\$22,952,000	\$67,602,000
Linear Parks	\$1,600,000	\$23,050,000	\$15,750,000	\$40,400,000
Natural Resources, Ranches, Trails	\$12,325,000	\$13,420,000	\$1,375,000	\$27,120,000
Land Acquisitions	\$35,801,000	\$17,700,000	\$6,000,000	\$59,501,000
Reclaimed Water	\$0	\$0	\$16,000,000	\$16,000,000
Safety, ADA, Environmental Compliance	\$225,000	\$9,000,000	\$6,750,000	\$15,975,000
Zoo	\$0	\$3,750,000	\$0	\$3,750,000
Total	\$123,701,000	\$131,410,000	\$101,180,000	\$356,291,000

These recommendations do not address all the recreation needs in Pima County or requests discussed. However, these recommendations do begin to address the shortage in sport fields and recreation centers, continued investment in expanding and connecting our river park system and other trails, capital improvements associated with newly acquired ranch and natural resource based properties, land acquisition for new parks and expansions of existing parks,

extension of the reclaimed water system to conserve our limited surface and groundwater, and continued capital improvements to our existing parks. The recommendations include projects that are both regional in nature, like the Canoa Ranch Historic Interpretive Center, and meet unmet needs in a specific area of the County, such as expansion of the Purple Heart Park in Rita Ranch. The recommendations include projects that involve public/private partnerships, such as the Sahuarita YMCA pool and recreation complex, as well as partnerships with schools, such as the Coronado Middle School Athletic Fields upgrades. The recommendations also include projects with broad public support, such as the conversion of the Rillito Race Track to a soccer field tournament site.

Recommendation

The Parks and Recreation Subcommittee respectfully recommends that the Bond Advisory Committee consider including the attached list of projects recommended under Tiers 1, 2, and 3, in a possible 2008 bond election.

Summaries of the meetings are available on the County bond web site at www.bonds.pima.gov, or upon request. Individual project description sheets for these recommended projects are not attached due to the large number of projects. A link will be set up on the County's bond web site in order to provide access to these descriptions. Hard copies are available upon request, and will be provided prior to a full meeting dedicated to this topic early next year.

NF/dr

Attachments

- c: The Honorable Chairman and Members, Pima County Board of Supervisors
Gary Davidson, Chair, Parks and Recreation Bond Subcommittee
C.H. Huckelberry, County Administrator
John Bernal, Deputy County Administrator - Public Works
Rafael Payan, Director, Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation
Suzanne Shields, Director, Regional Flood Control District
Linda Mayro, Manager, Cultural Resources
Carlo DiPilato, Planning & Development Division Manager, Natural Resources Parks and Recreation