



MEMORANDUM

Date: October 2, 2014
To: Olympia City Council
From: Jim Nieland, Chair
Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee
Subject: Preliminary 2015-2020 Capital Facilities Plan
PRAC Recommendation to City Council

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee respects and appreciates the hard work the Department has put into the proposed CFP Project List for the period 2015-2020. They have done an admirable job accommodating special projects proposed by the City Council while doing their best to maintain a viable park system. This has been done within a situation of overall reduced funding.

Staff has considered various funding sources to create a mix of projects that best accommodates needs within the ability of limited resources. An addition to the traditional plan is a fund to accomplish small capital projects. Projects were selected using logical selection criterion.

PRAC recommends adoption of the 2015 – 2020 CIP Project List as presented by the Olympia Parks and Recreation staff.

Future Funding Strategy

Appropriation for CIP projects is down 50% from previous funding levels, reduced from \$500,000 to \$250,000. The Department has been notified that this reduced funding level should be expected as a normal for future years. This reduction results from overall reduction of City revenue and other significant financial demands on City funds. The increasing cost of health care and retirement funds will further challenge the City within the next few years, along with decreasing levels of State funding to cities.

The OPARD has responded to these reductions with staff reductions, cut backs in park maintenance, programs, and increased use of volunteers to name a few.

Reduced funding creates an ever growing list of deferred maintenance needs. The Department is only able to respond to the most severe problems. Routine maintenance also suffers, resulting in a generally "tired" and run down appearance of many parks. PRAC recognizes that in the future, significant changes in funding strategy need to be adopted.

Starting in the 2015 work plan PRAC will establish a committee to investigate and suggest a long term strategy for parks funding. The committee will consider all revenue sources, the parks plan, citizen surveys, the use of volunteers, OPARD assigned responsibilities, Citizen requests, lists of new park recommendations, development of existing parks land, and methods of funding new parks acquisitions and large development projects.