



MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council

FROM: Maria Ruth, Chair
Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee

DATE: May 1, 2017

SUBJECT: Interim Improvements on the Isthmus

At our April 20, 2017 meeting, the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC) received a briefing and viewed the four concept plans for interim improvements to the city-owned Isthmus properties. These four concepts were also presented the night before at the public meeting on April 19, 2017. After thoughtful discussion by PRAC members, we unanimously passed a motion to recommend the following:

- Concept D for the larger, rectangular site (former County Health Building)
- Concept B for the smaller, square site (former County Housing Authority Building)
- Rather than trees, which would likely be small, afford little in terms of shade or screening of street and adjacent parking lots, and possibly need to be removed when final Isthmus improvements are constructed, PRAC recommends landscaping similar to that at the Plum/Henderson landscaping island.

PRAC felt that the recommendation stated above would allow for the most flexibility of the space, allowing for somewhat experimental use of the larger space for special events (music performances, live theater, etc) while still offering the smaller space as a more traditional grassy park area for picnicking. During the interim-use time period, the community's evolving use of these dual spaces will help inform the future long-term planning for the properties.

We appreciate the opportunity to participate in the Isthmus park planning and welcome the positive changes the finished plan will affect in downtown Olympia.