



CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH

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COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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To: Community Services Commission
From: Jerry Moffatt, Commissioner
Date: July 13, 2016
Subject: ***NOVEMBER 2016 ADVISORY VOTE ON FUTURE DISPOSITION OF RODGERS SENIORS' CENTER***

STATEMENT OF ISSUE:

At the April 18, 2016 City Council meeting, Council directed the Community Services Department to follow the public process under the purview of the Community Services Commission to determine appropriate uses for the two-acre parcel of parkland, including opportunities for open space, park amenities, and a dedicated veterans' memorial hall on the property. At the June 8, 2016 meeting, the commission reviewed the following 4 options for the Rodgers parcel:

1. SELL A PORTION OF THE PROPERTY: Residential with developed park.
2. KEEP THE PARCEL AS IS: Use both buildings as rental facilities.
3. CREATE A NEIGHBORHOOD PARK: Keep small building as meeting space.
4. CREATE A NEIGHBORHOOD PARK: Demolish both buildings on property

In 2015, the City Council issued a Request for Proposal to develop the site as residential housing with an adjacent neighborhood park, with proceeds from the sale designated for citywide park improvements only. Because of the potential unknown risks in obtaining the necessary entitlements and conducting a successful "Measure C" campaign (Charter Section 612), to secure community support, multiple developers have walked away from the potential of purchasing the property from the City.

Huntington Beach has 76 parks throughout the City. The Rodgers site, although designated as park land, does not function as a neighborhood park and is located in close proximity to the beach. As presented in the last meeting, developing a neighborhood park on the site would add ongoing costs to already strained funding sources. If the property were to be developed, it would need to be prioritized along with the other needed projects citywide, and would cost approximately \$1.5 million to develop. It is also important to consider the potential lost opportunity to sell the property, thus making the true loss to the community closer to \$12.5 to \$17.5 million dollars.

Many of the City parks are aging and in need of improvements and updated amenities. The current adopted Park and Recreation Master Plan identifies approximately \$35 million in needed park improvements, with approximately \$27 million in projects identified as priority projects through 2019. Based on current development activity, staff estimates that park fee revenues will total approximately \$23 million over the next 5 years, creating a shortfall of approximately \$12 million.

This estimate does not include development of the two acre Rodgers parcel, which could cost up to \$1.5 million to develop as a passive neighborhood park. Additional amenities such as lighting or court surfaces could increase that cost.

In order to properly maintain/improve our existing 76 parks citywide, serving nearly 200,000 Huntington Beach residents, I propose that the city conduct a non-binding formal survey of all residents in the form of an advisory vote on the November, 2016 ballot, requesting input on the determination of future use of the Rodgers site including the possible sale of the property with all proceeds from a potential sale be designated only for citywide park improvements.

I believe that because the determination for the use of the Rodgers site has the potential to greatly impact all of parks within the City, each resident should have the opportunity to determine the disposition of this site. The outcome of the advisory vote in November 2016 will help the City Council better understand the desire of all city residents. If the residents advise for the sale of the property, the "Measure C" process would still need to be followed. If residents wish to see the parcel retained for a passive neighborhood park, the City will work with the Community Services Commission on recommendations to the Council for park design and development.

It is important for council to understand the resident priorities as it relates to the use of this public space; either generating significant one-time funding for citywide park improvements or prioritizing the development of a neighborhood two-acre park at a cost of approximately \$1.5 million dollars to the tax payers.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Recommend to City Council to direct the City Clerk to agenda by July 18, 2016, for City Council consideration, the necessary documents to place an advisory vote on the November 8, 2016, General Election Ballot. The ballot item will be entitled the "Determination of Future Use for the Former Rodgers Seniors' Center Site," with the following question:

"Shall the City sell the former Rodgers Seniors' Center site for the highest and best use with all proceeds, estimated to be up to \$14 million, designated to fund citywide park improvements, or shall the City expend approximately \$1.5 million, and commit ongoing maintenance costs for the development of a two-acre park?"

A "yes" vote shall be supportive of going through the approval process under Charter Section 612 ("Measure C") to sell the parcel for the highest and best use, and a "no" vote shall be to retain the parcel for a passive park."