



CITY OF LONG BEACH

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

333 WEST OCEAN BOULEVARD • LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA 90802

August 9, 2005

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Authorize the City Manager to develop and recommend a financing structure to provide funds to acquire and develop new open space in underserved areas of the City as identified by the Open Space Element of the General Plan and Strategic Plan of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine. (Districts 1, 4, 6 and 7)

DISCUSSION

The population density in Long Beach is about 9,149 persons per square mile, making the City a dense urban area; more so than cities like Baltimore, Detroit and Los Angeles. This population density, which is concentrated in the North, South and West Park Districts (Target Districts) of the City, as defined in the Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan) of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine, has created a critical lack of adequate open space for residents (Exhibit A – Population Density Map). In Long Beach there are currently 5.8 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. The Strategic Plan also states that this is substantially below the average of 13 acres per 1,000 residents of 25 other comparable urban cities (Exhibit B – Comparison of Park Resources). Comparably, within the Target Districts there is an average of only 1.6 acres per 1,000 residents versus 16.7 acres in the East Park District. To develop additional open space within these impacted areas, staff is recommending a strategy to acquire existing, underutilized properties and convert them to parkland, as well as make substantial improvements or expansions at existing parks.

The majority of the Target Districts are designated as Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) eligible. For many years, the City has utilized CDBG funding for park facility improvements and recreational programming in these underserved neighborhoods. Such programs include after-school and weekend recreation programs in school facilities, teen and youth centers and mobile recreation programs. While these initiatives have helped, additional funding is needed to address the significant lack of parkland and open space in these impacted areas. To this end, City staff is recommending the use of bond financing to generate funds that will be used to acquire and develop new open space and make substantial improvements or expansions at existing parks within the impacted areas of the City.

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
August 9, 2005
Page 2

This letter was reviewed by Assistant City Attorney Heather Mahood on July 28, 2005 and Budget Management Officer David Wodynski on August 1, 2005.

TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

Approval is requested at this time to take advantage of a favorable bond market.

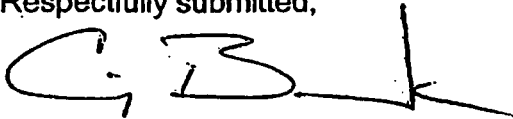
FISCAL IMPACT

Staff is requesting City Council approval to develop a financing structure that may use bond financing to generate funds for the acquisition and development of new open space. Once developed, a specific action plan will be submitted to the City Council for authorization and approval. The initial concept includes utilizing CDBG funding for debt service payments on a new park bond. There is no impact to the General Fund as a result of the requested action.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Adopt recommendation.

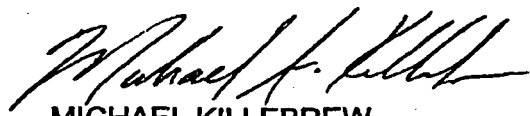
Respectfully submitted,



CRAIG BECK
Acting Director of Community Development

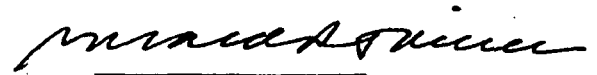


for PHIL HESTER
Director of Parks, Recreation and Marine



MICHAEL KILLEBREW
Director of Financial Management

APPROVED:



GERALD R. MILLER
CITY MANAGER

DSW:dsw

Attachments: Exhibit A – Population Density Map
Exhibit B – Comparison of Park Resources

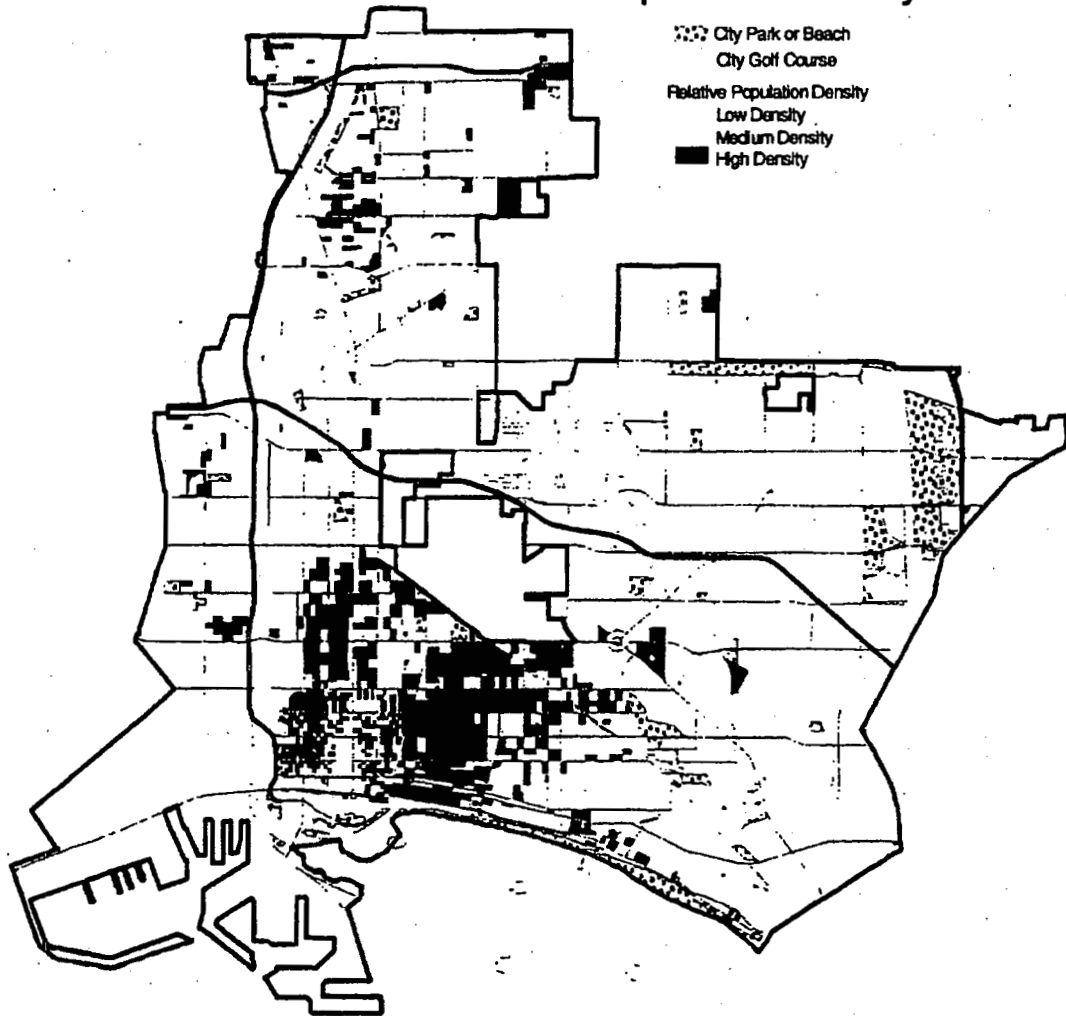


Strategic Plan
Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine

Exhibit 12

LONG BEACH DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION, AND MARINE
Population Density

City of Long Beach
Population Density 2000



Source: Long Beach Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine 2001 Maps of Parks, Facilities, and Service Areas

This high level of population density increases the need for park space. Given this density, families have limited yard space in which to recreate. In addition, there is an increased need to escape the pressures of urban life and to order to relieve these overcrowded conditions.

The high level of population density also makes it more difficult to develop and maintain park space, given the high demand for land area. Competing needs including housing, commercial space, and even public services vie for the limited space available.

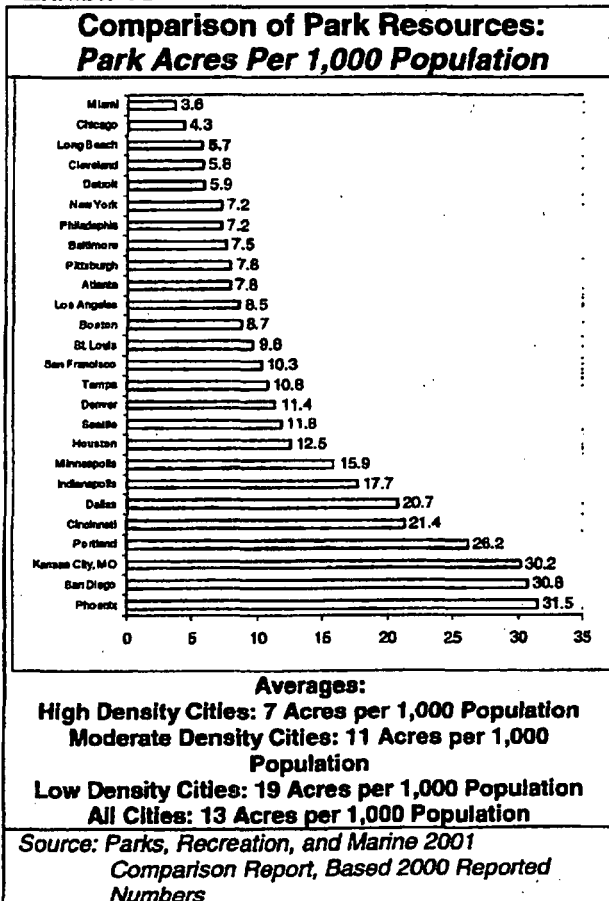


Strategic Plan
Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine

ADDITIONAL PARK SPACE NEEDED IN LONG BEACH

There are currently approximately 5.8 acres of park land within the City of Long Beach for every 1,000 residents. This includes parks, specialty facilities, beaches, golf courses, and water recreation areas, and is based on the 2000 Census population. As the following exhibit shows, this is substantially below the number of park acres per 1,000 population for many other comparable cities.

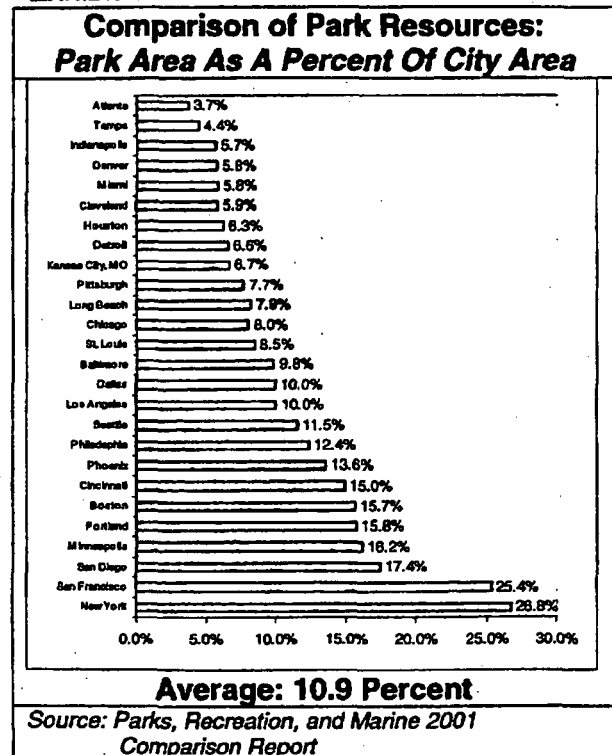
Exhibit 13



substantially below the average of 13 acres per 1,000 residents for all the cities compared, and somewhat below the average of 7 acres per 1,000 for other high density cities. It is important to note that many of these other cities have national, state, or county parks within their boundaries that serve the needs of their residents. Long Beach does not have any of these types of parks.

Long Beach also falls well below the average in park area compared to total city area. As the following exhibit shows, 7.9 percent of Long Beach is park land. This compares to the average of 10.9 percent for all the cities benchmarked.

Exhibit 14



When this comparison was completed (prior to completion of the 2000 census) Long Beach had an estimated 5.78 acres of park land for every 1,000 residents. This is

Open Space Bond Preliminary Project List

Projects**District**

15th and Alamos Open Space	6
Admiral Kidd Park Expansion	7
Armory Park Development	1
California Recreation Center Expansion	6
Chavez Water Park	1
Chittick Field Expansion	6
Daryle Black Park Expansion	6
Davenport Park (55th way) Expansion	9
Drake/Chavez Open Space	1
Homeland Cultural Center Improvements	6
MacArthur Park Facility Center Improvements	6
Martin Luther King Jr. Park Improvements	6
PE Right of Way Land Acquisition (triangles)	6
Seaside Park Expansion	1
Silverado Park Improvements	7