



## **Staff Report**

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### **PRIORITY CALENDAR**

Honorable Chair and Commissioners:

#### **Summary**

Priority calendar items are special projects beyond the scope of day-to-day service that require significant staff effort and are placed on the City Council agenda for action. The priority calendar process allows Council to clearly state their priority projects for study, allows staff to prioritize workload, and reduces the disruption from issues arising throughout the year. The process allows greater ability to effectively plan the workload and improve accountability for delivering projects that are on the calendar.

Council has directed the Parks and Recreation Commission to provide input annually into the priorities for the Parks and Recreation Department. This staff report and meeting presentation provide the opportunity for input into the priority calendar for the Department.

#### **Background**

In October, 2001, Council adopted the following general process:

- ◆ A Council Member could introduce an Item 9 (an item not on the agenda) at any time
- ◆ Item #9's meeting the threshold for priority calendar issues (or other major projects requested by Council or the City Manager) would have a Project Description Form (PDF) developed and be added to a "proposed" list as they are suggested.
- ◆ Council reviews the proposed list as well as pending items twice a year.
- ◆ Council would review and approve the "revised" master list to see that the proposed timelines and scopes are appropriate.
- ◆ *For Item 9's that are time sensitive*, a vote by a majority of the Council can request that it be moved "out of order" (before the biannual review). A majority vote would lead to staff developing a PDF and a report to Council with any other relevant background information such as impact on workload.
- ◆ If, after being presented the PDF and background, the Council wanted to move forward with the item prior to the biannual priority-setting, it would require a majority (three votes) to request staff proceed with the study.

The criteria used for priority calendar items is studies or implementation activities that -

- ✓ Require at least 40 hours of staff time

- ✓ Are one-time in nature
- ✓ Have been directed by Council or the City Manager through specific action, including the budget
- ✓ Do not reflect the routine provision of City services
- ✓ Are mandates imposed by the state or federal government, or other funding agencies
- ✓ Are major capital improvements

The first priority of staff is the daily provision of quality services to the community, so the ability to take on special projects is limited. In order to ensure that issues are captured, while recognizing the limited resources available to undertake priority calendar studies, a “below the line,” category of projects was created. These are items that are not expected to be started at the time they are proposed. PDFs are created for these issues, with the descriptions and estimated hours/cost, but the milestones are not detailed. These items are not acted on, but are kept on the master list for the next biannual review by Council. Should Council desire that staff address an issue earlier than proposed, other projects might need to be adjusted or additional resources secured.

### **Discussion**

One of the key purposes of the Priority Calendar is to ensure Council, Commission, staff and the community are on the same page with regard to the intent of a project and what it takes to complete. As such, the PDF’s summarize the scope of the project, the estimated staff hours, the cost beyond staff time, and the major milestones and timeline. Developing the Priority Calendar is a three-step process for the City Council:

#### **First Meeting** (February 24)

- Staff reports on Priority Calendar accomplishments of the past year.
- Staff presents current list and new projects that have been proposed to date (with draft Project Description Forms), including Commission recommended rankings.
- Public input is solicited.
- Council reviews and seeks clarification on the current issues.
- Council reviews, discusses and seeks clarification the items to be ranked.
- A vote is taken to remove or modify any current item on the list.
- A vote is taken to remove or modify any new item on the list.

#### **Second meeting** (March 10)

- New PDF’s are presented (if any).
- Council is asked if they have any additional discussion on the issues.
- A vote is taken to remove or modify any current items from the list.
- A vote is taken to remove or modify any new items on the list.
- Council will then rank all the remaining new items, by department.
- Staff tabulates the results and reports back to Council.

### Third meeting (April 14)

- Staff will bring back the list of what we feel can be accomplished within each department; along with completed PDFs, milestones/timelines, and the annual Priority Calendar of when these studies and other known items will be presented to Council.

### **Commission Role**

There are three important roles for the Commissions to play in this process:

1. Review the list of current projects on the Priority Calendar
2. Prioritize projects that are NOT already on the Priority Calendar (“below the line”)
3. Propose future projects for the Council to consider ranking

In the presentation the Commission and staff will go through each of these three categories of projects and the Commission can provide input into each project.

### **Projects Currently on the Priority Calendar**

The Parks and Recreation Commissioners should first review the list of current projects on the Priority Calendar. Commissioners can recommend, and Council can direct, changes to current projects on the Priority Calendar. Should the Commission wish to have the Council direct staff to change course on the current projects (drop, postpone, expedite, etc.), a majority vote is required. Staff will ask the Commission if they would like to change course on any of the projects in the list below.

- 1. Semeria Park**
- 2. Davey Glen**
- 3. Trail Improvements**
- 4. Tree Planting Program**
- 5. Athletic Field Improvements**
- 6. Solar Energy Projects**
- 7. Cipriani Dog Park Improvements**
- 8. Parks and Open Space Master Plan**
- 9. Barrett Feasibility Study**

### **Projects Not on the Priority Calendar**

The Commission should prioritize projects that are not on the Priority Calendar, also called projects “below the line”. Each Commissioner can rank the projects from 1-5, with a “5” being the top priority. If a majority of the Commission does not think a project should be considered, then it should be dropped from the list. Commissioner rankings will be added up and the ranking sent to the Council. Staff will ask the Commissioners to either rank or drop the projects below.

- 1. Ralston Ranch Park**
- 2. Non-Profit Belmont Parks Foundation**

### **Possible Future Projects**

In addition, the Commission also has a valuable role to play in recommending future projects that are worthy of study. The Commission can discuss projects they would like to add to the list for consideration and a majority vote is required to propose new future items. The following

project has recently been introduced by Council.

- **Skatepark**

### **General Plan/Vision Statement**

- Our actions today preserve and enhance Belmont's beauty to make it even lovelier for our grandchildren.
- Our strong sense of community and enjoyment of the town's assets and activities deepen as we become better informed and connected.

### **Fiscal Impact**

Each project has a fiscal impact on the City depending upon the scope of the project.

### **Public Contact**

Posting of Parks and Recreation Commission agenda.

### **Recommendations**

#### **Projects Currently on the Priority Calendar**

- Staff recommends that all of these projects be kept on the list.

#### **Projects Not on the Priority Calendar**

- Staff recommends that Ralston Ranch Park remain below the line.
- Staff recommends that a non-profit Belmont Parks Foundation be included as part of the Parks and Open Space Master Plan

#### **Possible Future Projects**

- Staff recommends that the Commission vote to add a skatepark project to the priority calendar.

### **Alternatives**

1. Take No Action.
2. Refer back to staff for further information.

Respectfully submitted,

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Parks and Recreation Department Director