



Memorandum

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Mayor Chuck Reed

**SUBJECT: DONATED SERVICES FOR
PARKS MAINTENANCE**

DATE: 09-20-07

Approved Chuck Reed Date 9/20/07

RECOMMENDATION

1. Confirm existing Prevailing Wage Policy language for parks maintenance: "City maintenance projects of a routine, recurring or usual nature for the preservation, protection and keeping of City owned buildings, structures and ground facilities, where work is performed pursuant to contracts to which the City is a party and which exceed the contractual amount of \$1,000.00."
2. Direct staff to administer the policy so that private sector entities that donate services for parks maintenance do not have to pay prevailing wages if the City is not paying for the work and the jobs of regular City employees are not eliminated as a result of the donation.
3. Amend the Policy to make clear that it excludes work performed by volunteers or volunteer coordinators.
4. Direct staff to include public/private partnerships for parks maintenance for all new parks as part of the analysis to be brought forth by the City Manager's Structural Deficit Team.

BACKGROUND

Our budget shortfall for next year is expected to be \$25 million. That means our ability to maintain our parks will decrease and our neighborhoods will suffer if we continue with business as usual. Our parks are the centers of communities, places for families to meet each other and form bonds that help them thrive in our city.

Over the last nine fiscal years, the City has significantly reduced parks maintenance (measured by the level of park maintenance staffing compared to the quantity of developed park acreage that is maintained). In FY 1997-98, 124 Full Time Equivalent Positions were available to maintain 870 developed park acres; currently, 118 FTEs are available to maintain 1,023 acres. Nine acres are maintained per FTE position and nearly 30 percent increase in acres to maintain for each funded parks maintenance position.

Consequently, the level of service has eroded over the last nine years. Park maintenance is performed on a route basis. Staff performs only priority tasks such as trash removal, biweekly

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mowing, and play equipment safety checks. Previously, staff serviced parks on a daily basis and this has decreased across the park system. As a result, park concerns have increased. Between FY 1999-2000 and 2005-06, the volume of park concern calls increased by 65 percent. Our parks need help and the potential for community stewardship is priceless.

We have companies that want to maintain our parks. This is a tremendous opportunity to invest in our city. Let's figure out how to make it happen. If San José wants to remain a family-friendly city, it is important that the City cultivate partnerships with the public, from businesses to non-profits, to the neighbors who live near parks.

New public parks that are built as part of new housing developments can be maintained by the property owners or association. Every dollar saved in one of those parks will help us maintain another park elsewhere in the city. City workers will be able to focus their efforts and improve the level of service for our parks.