



AGENDA SUMMARY PAGE

CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF: SEPTEMBER 20, 2006

DEPARTMENT: Leisure Services
DIRECTOR: BARBARA JACKSON

Consent Discussion

SUBJECT:

Report on Leisure Services 2006 Citizen Interest Survey on public parks, programs and recreation amenities - All Wards

Fiscal Impact

- No Impact Augmentation Required
- Budget Funds Available **Dept./Division:**

Amount:
Funding Source:

PURPOSE/BACKGROUND:

The Department of Leisure Services staff has worked with a consultant company to prepare a leisure survey for the citizens of Las Vegas. The survey was administered to a randomly selected population of citizens during Fiscal Year 2005/2006. The information obtained from the survey will be used to guide capital improvement projects over the next three to five years. The MIG company representative will report on the results of the survey including key and general findings, as well as ward findings.

RECOMMENDATION:

Report only; no action required.

BACKUP DOCUMENTATION:

1. Survey Report
2. Submitted at meeting - Copy of written comments from Tom McGowan
3. Submitted after meeting Copy of PowerPoint presentation

Minutes:

No motion required. A report was given.

DR. BARBARA JACKSON, Director of Leisure Services, noted that the Citizen Interest Survey was conducted prior to the redistricting that occurred in June 2006; however, staff is very confident that the ward boundary changes do not inhibit the responses received, as they represent all of the constituents of the City. The response rate was very good, with an overall response rate of seven percent. The information obtained is going to enhance the ability of Leisure Services to make decisions internally, especially with the new capital improvement process. She indicated that DR. BRYAN SCOTT, with More, Isofano and Goldman (MIG), was present to give a

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presentation on the findings of the survey that was conducted. DR. SCOTT has over 25 years of experience in comprehensive community development, with an emphasis in parks and recreation planning.

DR. SCOTT reported that the results of the survey showed clearly that the City of Las Vegas community has a strong need for parks, both active and passive recreational activities, as well as indoor and outdoor recreation needs. MIG conducts about a dozen park and recreation surveys a year in cities throughout the Western United States, and it was clear, from comparing the results, that the citizens of Las Vegas are using recreation facilities more than citizens in other cities. The local community expressed a strong desire for the City to maintain and improve the existing facilities before expanding new facilities, with a strong response for providing basic amenities in parks, such as trails, playgrounds, basketball courts. There was also a higher interest in expanding programs; concerts, fairs and festivals, arts and crafts and indoor swimming. Because of the work of the Leisure Services staff and volunteers in obtaining responses, MIG is confident in the results of the survey.

MR. SCOTT then went over the detailed PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which is made a part of the minutes.

As a result of the findings, COUNCILMAN WOLFSON asked DR. JACKSON what she intends to do in order to make improvements. DR. JACKSON answered that she is already planning a day retreat with her senior and mid-level managers to assess what the department is doing and to define the future direction of the department. She has also scheduled a series of departmental meetings to disseminate this information. This plan will become a part of the department's planning strategy and goals, as well as the marketing efforts, noting that she is in the midst of recruiting a marketing supervisor.

MAYOR GOODMAN asked if eminent domain has to be used to acquire land for parks. CITY MANAGER SELBY replied that BLM land is primarily used.

MAYOR GOODMAN requested the findings on the citizens' support of a tax increase to fund more park amenities. MR. SCOTT indicated that the indicators are very strong, which he would forward to the Mayor.

COUNCILMAN BROWN asked MR. SCOTT if the City is on the right track, compared to other cities, with how it is focusing its budget dollars and capital investments. MR. SCOTT answered that the citizens were surveyed, but MIG did not conduct an analysis of the programs; therefore, he was not prepared to give a comparison.

COUNCILMAN BROWN stated that the recreation dollars are shrinking, so he asked MR. SCOTT for his perspective on the recreation industry. Are cities refocusing efforts or are they continually rebuilding. MR. SCOTT answered that there is a real split between central cities, which are struggling to maintain their facilities, and suburban jurisdictions, which are growing rapidly in population and building a lot of new facilities. Las Vegas, with its rapid changing

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population, is a different dynamic. It is doing a remarkable accomplishment with the demographic changes it is experiencing, and staff is really on top of trying to align investments with the desires of the citizens.

COUNCILMAN BROWN said this is wonderful. However, his concern is that the City is starting to see ballot initiatives and property tax rollbacks, which might require cuts in recreation activities. He would like to determine how the City can plan, in anticipation of budget constraints. He asked MR. SCOTT to ponder on possible recommendations to anticipate for pressures in cutbacks. MR. SCOTT indicated that one of the complications with designing the survey was determining City limits, compared to the economy and where people live. Hence, his two recommendations for strengthening the future of parks and recreation would be to directly link system development charges and development investment and funding for services through Leisure Services, and to develop a regional partnership with other municipalities to share the resources.

TOM McGOWAN, Las Vegas resident, requested a copy of the report of the survey.