

DATE ISSUED: April 24, 2002

REPORT NO. 02-094

ATTENTION: Natural Resources and Culture Committee
Agenda of May 1, 2002

SUBJECT: Standardized Designs and Community Review for Comfort Stations

REFERENCE: City Manager Report 01-0253, Issued November 20, 2001

SUMMARY:

Issue - Should a Council Policy for standardized designs and an abbreviated community review process be adopted for Park and Recreation facility comfort stations?

Manager's Recommendation - Recommend approval of Council Policy (see attachment 1) for standardized designs and an abbreviated community review process for Park and Recreation facility comfort stations.

Other Recommendations - None.

Fiscal Impact - A savings of both time and money depending for each standardized comfort station built.

BACKGROUND

On June 13, 2001, Councilmember Scott Peters requested Councilmember Byron Wear, Chair of the Land Use and Housing Committee, to have a hearing to determine if it would be possible for the Park and Recreation and the Engineering and Capital Projects Departments to design two or three acceptable comfort stations with acceptable fixtures that various communities could then select. This request was subsequently referred to the Committee on Natural Resources and Culture. On November 28, 2001, the Committee on Natural Resources and Culture passed a motion directing staff to return with:

- A. Minimal number of standardized comfort station designs which would become a regular selection menu for the Communities consideration, taking into account functionality, maintenance, safety, and other issues of concern.
- B. An abbreviated and targeted committee review process under which the standardized comfort station selection menu would be reviewed by the affected community prior to construction process.

HISTORY

Currently the Park and Recreation and the Engineering and Capital Projects Departments solicit community input for the unique design of each comfort station being built. The effort is meant to assure that all of the community needs, including safety, aesthetics, and uses are addressed.

This process is sequential and generally begins with presenting a conceptual design to a Recreation Council and then progresses through an Area Committee, a Community Planning Group/Town Council, the Subcommittee for the Removal of Architectural Barriers, the Design Review Committee, and the Park and Recreation Board. In addition, for projects along the coast line, the process often includes a Coastal Commission hearing. Any of these committees may approve the project as presented, approve it with changes, or may recommend changes and request a second presentation prior to approval and moving to the next committee. These committees are of an advisory nature, with the exception of the Coastal Commission. The current design charette, and community input process takes several months and a portion of the projects' funds.

The current process makes use of architectural consultants to propose a conceptual design of the comfort stations. The architects study the proposed location, the neighborhood characteristics and the surroundings, and predetermine possible impacts of the new building. Based on their professional expertise and findings they design a conceptual plan which harmonizes with the neighborhood and other park amenities. The internal components are standardized to be vandal resistant and reduce maintenance requirements. The architect's conceptual plan is also coordinated with any art component that may become part of the building.

The current public input process allows suggested changes to the proposed conceptual plan. Many of the suggestions are included in the design. The suggestions that are not, in most instances, are addressed to the satisfaction of the committees, as demonstrated by their vote in favor of the project. In addition to the public input, the Design Review Committee, which is composed of a number of architects from private firms, provide input on the proposed architectural features of the project including color, texture, materials, components, location, landscaping, etc.

DISCUSSION

The proposed changes are intended to establish standardized designs for park and recreational area comfort stations, as well as a standardized process for selecting, altering, and adopting those designs. Modifications and additions to existing comfort stations will continue to be developed in accordance with the typical park development process. In addition, comfort stations requiring unique designs may be identified in the Capital Improvement Program, and will be processed in accordance with the typical park development process.

The proposed review process for the standardized design of comfort stations will be conducted as follows: At the neighborhood level, review by that neighborhood's designated recreational advisory group, such as its Recreational Council, its Citizens' Advisory Council, or an adjacent Recreational Council in the case of a neighborhood which has not yet formed its own Recreational Council, will be deemed sufficient approval of the design in cases where one of the Council's pre-approved designs is selected. The only modifications that may be made to the pre-approved design consists of minor deviations or modifications for operational functionality, maintenance, safety, and to ensure conformance to and compliance with all current Uniform Building Codes, Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, known as the California Building Standards Code, the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) requirements, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), then Council

review and approval is not required. Any other deviations will require City Council review and approval to waive the standardized comfort station design.

In the event a neighborhood wishes to propose modifications, or a unique design for its comfort station, or that a neighborhood wishes to incorporate works of art into the design, Council review and approval shall be required. In such a situation, the designated recreational advisory group would approach the Councilmember for its district and request that the proposed design variance be docketed for Council review and approval. Requests to implement non-standard designs for comfort stations must be made in conjunction with a modification to the Capital Improvement Program budget that will provide the additional funds necessary for the design, management and construction associated with the new design. In such cases the approval process would follow the typical park development review process.

Five recently completed comfort stations, and “off the shelf designs” for comfort stations that meet Park and Recreation design guidelines are recommended for the standardized designs. In addition to off the shelf designs, these existing City comfort stations provide two design types for passive recreation areas, two for athletic areas and one for coastal areas. The smallest of these is the Lake Murray comfort station. This comfort station provides four unisex / family restrooms and a small storage area for maintenance and cleaning supplies. The floor plan and elevations are shown as Design A in Attachment 2. The Ski Beach comfort station provides twice as many fixtures, but is divided into the typical male and female areas and includes a small storage area for maintenance and cleaning supplies. The floor plan and elevations are shown as Design B in Attachment 2. The Carmel Valley and Scripps Ranch-Spring Canyon Comfort Stations are typical of facilities provided adjacent to sports fields. Each design provides eight fixtures divided evenly between the male and female sides, storage for maintenance and cleaning supplies, storage for sports groups, and a concession area. The floor plans and elevations are shown as Design C and Design D in Attachment 2. The fifth design is the Fanuel Street Comfort Station (also built at South Shores in Mission Bay Park). This facility provides ten family restrooms, storage for maintenance and cleaning supplies, and exterior showers with a large sand trap. The floor plans and elevations are shown as Design E in Attachment 2.

Attachment 3 shows an estimated range of total project costs for the new design, the standardized designs, and some of the benefits of the two methods. The greatest savings will be realized in consultant fees. Typical design fees for comfort stations range between \$40,000 and \$60,000 depending on the size and complexity of the proposed facility. These fees provide professional architectural, civil engineering, structural engineering, mechanical engineering, and electrical engineering services for the conceptual design, community presentations, development of construction documents, permitting, and construction support. Implementation of standardized comfort station design, and modified community review process is expected to streamline the design and input process by several months. This in turn will reduce cost to the project for consultant fees, city staff time, and construction. The magnitude of these savings could be in 5% to 10% range depending on design complexities and other site considerations.

ALTERNATIVE(S)

1. Continue using unique designs and the current community input process for all comfort station designs.

2. Approve some or all five standard designs with modifications.

Respectfully submitted,

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APPROVED:

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LOVELAND/AO

Note: The attachments are not available in electronic format. Copies of the attachments are available for review in the office of the City Clerk.

Attachments: 1. Proposed Council Policy
2. Proposed standardized Comfort Station Designs
3. Estimated range of project savings