



CITY OF MENIFEE

SUBJECT: Parks Ad Hoc Council Sub-Committee Update

MEETING DATE: April 17, 2024

TO: Mayor and City Council

PREPARED BY: Rebekah Kramer, Assistant to the City Manager

REVIEWED BY: Jonathan Nicks, Deputy City Manager

APPROVED BY: Armando G. Villa, City Manager

RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. Receive an update from the Parks Ad Hoc Council Sub-Committee; and
2. Provide direction to staff regarding initiation of a fiscal impact and sustainability study to evaluate the feasibility of the City providing maintenance and recreation services in the Valley-Wide Recreation and Park District Landscape Maintenance Districts located within the Menifee city limits.

DISCUSSION

Background

Valley-Wide Recreation and Park District ("Valley-Wide") is government agency owns and/or maintains streetscapes, retention basins, recreational facilities, and over 80 parks in the eastern portion of Menifee, Hemet, San Jacinto, Beaumont, and unincorporated areas of Riverside County including Winchester and French Valley. Within the Menifee city limits, Valley-Wide's service area includes streetscapes, retention basins, recreational facilities, and 24 parks on the east side of Interstate 215. Both the City and Valley-Wide receive special tax district revenues from residents' property tax assessments to maintain and operate their facilities. There are three Landscape Maintenance Districts ("LMDs") located in the City of Menifee that fall within the Valley-Wide service area. Those LMDs were established prior to the City's incorporation in 2008.

Since incorporation, the City has placed a high value on local oversight and the operation of Menifee's public parks, recreational facilities, streetscapes, and retention basis. As such, in 2016, the City submitted an application to the Riverside Local Agency Formation Commission ("LAFCO") to detach those facilities from Valley-Wide and annex them into the City of Menifee. While LAFCO conditionally approved the City's application in August 2017, the City was unable to meet all the detachment conditions within the established 12-month implementation period.

LAFCO's conditions included:

- A requirement for the City to pay \$500,000 to Valley-Wide to address the financial impact of the detachment; and
- Initiation / approval of a property tax assessment vote; establishment of a joint powers agreement to jointly administer the existing LMDs and levy assessments; or use of the City's General Fund revenue to support the LMD operations and maintenance costs.

The three Valley-Wide LMDs located within Menifee's city limits include Menifee North, Menifee Parks, and Menifee South, as shown in the attached Valley-Wide LMD Map. The Menifee Parks LMD is contained entirely within the city limits and includes [Wheatfield Park](#) and [Community Center](#), [Menifee Gymnasium](#) (shared with Bell Mountain Middle School under a joint use agreement between Menifee Union School District and Valley-Wide), and [Lago Vista Sports Park](#). The Menifee North LMD contains two County of Riverside owned facilities that are operated and maintained by Valley-Wide including the [Marion A. Ashely Community Center](#) and [Eller Park](#). Approximately twenty percent of the Menifee North LMD and six percent of the Menifee South LMD boundaries are located outside of the city limits. An updated boundary area review would be required to confirm the exact acreage of each of these LMDs, accounting for any growth that has occurred since the last update was completed in 2018.

With continued growth and development occurring throughout the City, parks and recreation services must be continually assessed to ensure the service needs of our community are met. Since the LAFCO detachment / annexation application was filed in 2016, the City's revenues have more than doubled and the City has established a proven record of providing parks maintenance and recreation services for the Menifee parks located on the west side of Interstate 215.

The unification of Menifee parks and recreation services has been identified as a priority in both the City's Strategic Plan and the Park Master Plan. With this in mind, the City Council established the Parks Ad Hoc Council Sub-Committee ("Committee"). The Committee is charged with working with City staff to gain a greater understanding of the issues related to a possible detachment / annexation of the 24 parks located within the Menifee city limits that are owned and/or operated by Valley-Wide and identify opportunities for partnership with Valley-Wide to better serve the needs of the community. Mayor Bill Zimmerman and Councilmember Lesa Sobek are the City Council's appointed representatives on the Committee.

Since being established, the Committee has worked with staff to review the City's 2016 LAFCO application, legal requirements for detachment / annexation, and available options to meet the park and recreation service needs of the community. As a next step, a fiscal sustainability study to evaluate the feasibility of annexing a portion or all of the Valley-Wide LMDs into the City would need to be completed. Once this analysis is complete, it would be presented to the Committee and the Parks, Recreation, and Trails Commission for review followed by a report to the City Council for consideration. Should the City Council decide to move forward with a detachment / annexation process for any or all of the Valley-Wide LMDs an application would need to be filed with LAFCO following the steps outlined in the attached procedural diagram.

STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVE

Community Engagement and Social Infrastructure

FISCAL IMPACT

Completion of a fiscal impact and sustainability study to evaluate the feasibility of providing maintenance and recreation services in the Valley-Wide LMDs located within the Menifee city limits is estimated to cost \$60,000. The actual cost would be determined following the completion of a request for proposal and selection process. The adopted fiscal year 2023/2024 operating budget for the City Executive Office includes funding for anticipated special projects such as the proposed feasibility study in Account No. 100-4111-52855, Consulting Services.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Menifee Parks Map
2. Valley-Wide LMD Map
3. LAFCO Procedural Diagram