

CITY OF OAKLAND

FILED
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
OAKLAND

AGENDA REPORT

2008 MAY 29 PM 3:06

TO: Office of the City Administrator
ATTN: Deborah Edgerly
FROM: Public Works Agency
DATE: June 10, 2008

RE: **A Report and Options from the Public Works Agency on the Costs of Assuming Maintenance from Caltrans for the Mandela Parkway Landscaped Area**

SUMMARY

The Mandela Parkway was constructed after the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake destroyed the elevated Cypress Freeway (constructed in 1957) along Interstate 880 that bisected West Oakland. The Parkway median, as well as landscaped areas on both sides of Mandela Parkway, is 1.3 miles long, varies from 60 to 100 feet in width, contains 16 acres and includes almost 600 trees.

When the Parkway landscaping project was completed by Caltrans in 2005, the City took responsibility for hardscape maintenance (including lighting, electricity costs, trash removal, fixture maintenance and graffiti abatement). Caltrans has been responsible for landscape maintenance (including gardening, mowing, litter removal, irrigation repair, water, and tree maintenance) through a three-year Plant Establishment Period (PEP). The City is slated to take over full maintenance of the median in August 2008. Maintenance of the smaller section of the Parkway (not part of the original project) from 32nd Street to Norton at the Emeryville border was turned over to the City on April 17, 2008.

Caltrans currently spends approximately \$235,400 annually for landscape maintenance.

- \$180,000 per year for their landscape maintenance contract
- \$14,400 for management costs
- \$35,000 annually for water
- \$6,000 annually for replacement and repair due to on-going vandalism

In addition, the City currently spends approximately \$120,500 per year for hardscape and lighting maintenance.

Item # _____
Public Works Committee
June 10, 2008

Beginning in September 2008, after the PEP expires, the estimated additional annual maintenance costs to the City (including gardening, mowing, litter removal, irrigation repair, water, and tree maintenance) would be approximately \$321,600.

- \$193,000 per year in labor for park maintenance staff
- \$22,600 for park equipment
- \$50,000 for tree staff and equipment
- \$35,000 for water
- \$15,000 for materials such as replacement plants, mulch, and fertilizer
- \$6,000 for vandalism

One time equipment costs would be \$101,000. The additional costs reflect the staff hours and equipment needed to perform the additional maintenance functions at the level presently performed by Caltrans. Based on Caltrans' and the City's experience with vandalism, there would also be an additional \$6,000 in replacement and repair due to on-going vandalism. Funding options are listed under Key Issues and Impacts.

The proposed additional staffing would consist of one Gardener Crew Leader and 1.5 FTE (three part-time park attendants). The City Council had asked staff to discuss hiring any new staff from West Oakland. The Office of Personnel Resource Management will prepare a report addressing that issue.

FISCAL IMPACT

Current Caltrans Costs

Caltrans currently pays a private contractor through the original construction contract to perform the PEP for Mandela Parkway. Regular maintenance includes mowing the turf, edging, and trash and debris removal within the medians. This work takes two laborers eight hours each per week or 16 hours total with a pickup truck, mower and edger. Additionally Caltrans has been replacing trees and plants and making irrigation repairs as necessary. One gardener does this work for eight hours per week. Site maintenance by Caltrans, which includes maintenance planning, site problem solving, agency and public communication, and contract administration, ranges from two to eight days per month. The chart below shows a breakdown of annual costs:

Chart A

Current Annual Landscaping Maintenance Costs - Caltrans	
Contract	\$180,000
Caltrans staff	14,400
Vandalism	6,000
Utilities	35,000
TOTAL	\$235,400

Current City of Oakland Costs

The City currently spends \$120,500 annually at Mandela Parkway for hardscape maintenance.

The current City costs for litter pick-up, graffiti and illegal dumping removal are approximately \$68,000 annually.

Labor and equipment costs for maintaining the 261 lights along the parkway lighting are approximately \$15,000 annually; and energy costs approximately \$23,500 this year for a total electrical cost of \$38,500.

Since it was completed, Mandela Parkway has experienced vandalism such **as theft of metals** including bollards, copper wire and Tesco electrical panels for a total replacement cost of approximately \$14,000 annually. Stolen backflow preventers were replaced by Caltrans. The vandalism has tapered off recently due in part to the Oakland Police Department's efforts to curtail local recycling thefts.

Chart B

Current Annual Hardscape Maintenance Costs			
	Electrical	KOCB	Total
Labor	\$13,000	\$56,000	\$69,000
Equipment	1,000	12,000	13,000
Material	1,000		1,000
Vandalism	14,000		14,000
Utilities	23,500		23,500
TOTAL	\$52,500	\$68,000	\$120,500

No additional funding was set aside for these hardscape costs when they were handed over to the City three years ago and have been managed with existing staff and funding. This results in a reduction of median maintenance services in other areas.

Future City Costs

For a similar level of service to Caltrans, the costs to the City for landscape maintenance would be \$193,000 for labor. This includes one Gardener Crew Leader and 1.5 FTE part time park attendants and labor costs for tree trimming, equipment operation and irrigation repair.

Because of the size of the Parkway, staff proposes establishing a new maintenance “Hub” which would include the entire Parkway from 8th Street to Emeryville as well as the adjacent Memorial Park. The Parkway would be the 5th largest public landscaped site in Oakland and similar in size to Arroyo Viejo park.

Equipment would cost \$22,600 annually for the lease which covers the maintenance and service on a truck and trailer, trimmers, blowers, edgers, a mower and minor tools. There would also be a one-time purchase cost of \$101,000 up-front for this equipment.

Plant and growing materials would cost \$15,000 per year.

The cost for water is \$35,000 per year. As the project is transitioned to reclaimed water the water cost would be less but the cost of additional fertilizer and other compensations for the increased salts would balance the savings.

Mandela Parkway has 595 trees. Caltrans has replaced dead trees and performed their first pruning. Oakland tree maintenance estimates that another 0.5 FTE or \$50,000 per year will be required to replace, prune and nurture the trees.

Chart C

Additional Annual Landscaping Maintenance Costs			
	Parks	Trees	Total
Labor	\$193,000	\$50,000	\$243,000
Equipment	22,600*		22,600
Material	15,000		15,000
Vandalism	6,000		6,000
Utilities	35,000		35,000
TOTAL	\$271,600	\$50,000	\$321,600

*plus a one time equipment cost of \$101,000

Total City Costs after August 2008

Chart D

Total Future Annual Landscaping Maintenance Costs					
	Parks	Trees	Elect.	KOCB	Total
Labor	\$193,000	50,000	13,000	56,000	312,000
Equipment	22,600*		2,000	12,000	36,600
Material	15,000				15,000
Vandalism	6,000		14,000		20,000
Utilities	35,000		23,500		58,500
TOTAL	\$271,600	\$50,000	\$52,500	\$68,000	\$442,100

*plus a one time equipment cost of \$101,000

Note: Electrical and KOCB costs are currently being absorbed into their respective budgets.

BACKGROUND

The 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake caused the collapse of the elevated Cypress Freeway Structure. Because this corridor was a major link in the I-880 system, a Cypress Freeway Replacement Project was immediately proposed. After analyzing several alignment alternatives and preparing an EIS/EIR, a new freeway route within the Southern Pacific Railroad corridor along the perimeter of the West Oakland community was adopted. After the removal of the damaged freeway structure, the superseded freeway corridor became the unimproved median of Cypress Street, which was renamed Mandela Parkway.

Caltrans, the City and the Community Advisory Committee worked together to create a plan to eliminate blight and benefit the surrounding community.

Community Support

Members of the West Oakland community have been an integral part of the planning and implementation of the Mandela Parkway project since before its inception. They have taken the step to formalize the community stewardship of the Parkway by creating the “Friends of Mandela Parkway” (FOMP) to raise funds and awareness to help maintain the Parkway. The City formally commended FOMP in a November 16, 2004 Resolution #78931 “for their leadership and community spirit in undertaking this important effort.”

FOMP members meet the first Saturday of the month at 10:00 a.m. at Mandela and 8th Street for their monthly walk through of the Parkway. The “punch list” they develop of landscaping and hardscape issues is routed to the appropriate departments to resolve the issues.

In addition to FOMP, the Parkway is actively supported by numerous users, especially dog walkers. "Mutt mitt" dispensers for dog waste have been added in two locations along the Parkway and four litter containers have been added adjacent to the Parkway for dog waste and trash.

KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS

Options for Funding to Maintain Landscaped Areas

No funding for the on-going maintenance of Mandela Parkway has been identified. The options for maintaining the current service levels are as follows:

1. The City could identify new funding.
Pluses: The Parkway could continue to be maintained at current service levels.
Minuses: There is currently a shortfall in the LLAD budget and no funding source has been identified.
2. The City could continue to contract with the current landscaping vendor, with City Council waiver of bids/proposals, to maintain the Parkway. The current landscaping contractor would provide those services for \$9,800 per month or \$117,600 per year, less than they are currently charging Caltrans.
Pluses: The current contractor has three years of experience in maintaining the Parkway and is cost effective.
Minuses: Funding would need to be identified for the contract. In addition, funding would need to be identified for the \$35,000 water cost and the \$6,000 vandalism-related costs.
3. The maintenance of the Parkway could be absorbed into the current maintenance workload.
Pluses: There would be no additional cost except for utilities.
Minuses: The service levels that the City could provide with its existing resources would greatly reduce the level of maintenance. The turf would be mowed less frequently and would not be edged. Weeds would not be removed regularly. Irrigation repairs would be made less frequently. Trees would not be trimmed regularly and dead trees and plants would not be replaced. There would also be reduced service to other Hubs in West Oakland as staff is allocated to the Mandela Parkway maintenance.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: Mandela Gateway provides landscaped open space which is attractive to businesses locating in the area.

Environmental: The Mandela Gateway project was designed and constructed using energy saving lighting and native plant materials. Maintaining the project will insure that the project's sustainable environmental opportunities are sustained.

Social Equity: Mandela Gateway provides major social benefits to generally disadvantaged West Oakland including fresh air, recreation space, as well as area to congregate, sit and walk.

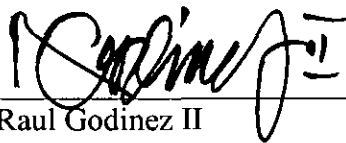
DISABILITY AND SENIOR CITIZEN ACCESS

Mandela Parkway was designed and constructed with provision for disability and senior citizen access. Maintaining the parkway at current service levels will continue to provide optimum access.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council accept this informational report and give staff direction on maintenance funding options listed in the Key Issues and Impacts section of this report.

Respectfully submitted,

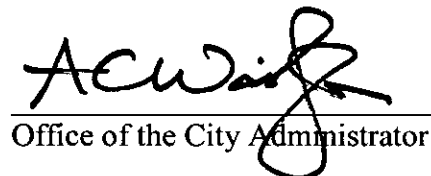


Raul Godinez II
Director, Public Works Agency

Reviewed by:
Brooke A Levin, Assistant Director
Public Works Agency

Prepared by:
Jocelyn Combs, Special Assistant
Public Works Agency

APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO THE
PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE:


Office of the City Administrator

Item # _____
Public Works Committee
June 10, 2008