



City of San Diego
Council President Pro Tem Barbara Bry, First District
Councilmember Scott Sherman, Seventh District

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 15, 2020

TO: Mayor Kevin Faulconer

FROM: Council President Pro Tem Barbara Bry

Councilmember Scott Sherman

RE: City Reservoir Recreation Program

We understand these are unprecedented budget difficulties, and there are many competing interests for our very impacted revenues. This is the perfect opportunity for creative solutions that may have previously been off the table or seemed unnecessary. Our priority as a Council has always been to maintain the highest level of public service and access to public facilities such as parks, libraries, beaches, and lakes. With innovation and collaboration, we are confident that these priorities can be met.

Thank you for the staff response from the May 6th budget hearing that shows the total value of expenses and revenues for each of the lakes' recreation programs. We respectfully request further detailed breakdowns of the costs and revenues. This transparency will assist both the Council and the lake users to understand the budgetary challenges and possible solutions.

In the short-term, it is our highest priority that all the lakes reopen at some level to allow for public recreation. Our lakes should not be closed due to budget challenges even on a temporary basis. This will only exacerbate budget problems with added costs of securing the sites and stopping poaching. We understand some reduction in days and hours will be required in the short-term, but our goal should be continued operation of all public facilities including our lakes.

In the long-term, we need to ensure our lake recreation program is operationally sustainable for generations to come. This may require even more creative problem solving, and no options should be off the table if it means preserving the public's access to their reservoirs.

The passionate users of our lakes have been reaching out by the thousands, pleading that we not take away this important physical and mental health resource. Many of these users have offered up potential solutions, each of which is worthy of full consideration. Some of those suggestions include:

- 1) Charging increased fees for non-City residents at lakes, as is done with our municipal golf courses.
- 2) Charging a nominal fee, no more than \$5 a day, for parking at City lakes. Parking rates could be structured differently for City and non-City residents.
- 3) Pursue outsourcing with third parties and/or utilizing volunteers to lower costs.
- 4) Pursue a formal partnership with the County of San Diego to contribute to or assume operations of lake recreation programs outside City boundaries.

Please direct staff to evaluate these and any other options they are aware of and provide an action plan that:

- 1) Meets our short-term goal of keeping the lakes open at some level through FY 2021.
- 2) Long-term solutions for a sustainable lakes recreation program for the long-term.

We appreciate your attention to this request and look forward to collaborating with you to preserve public access to recreation opportunities at all our City lakes.

cc:

Aimee Faucett, Chief of Staff

Jessica Lawrence, Director of Finance Policy and Council Affairs

Johnnie Perkins Jr., Deputy Chief Operating Officer Public Works and Utilities

Shauna Lorange, Public Utilities Department Director