



**THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO  
TO THE PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD**

DATE ISSUED: January 16, 2020 REPORT NO. 101

ATTENTION: San Diego Regional Park Improvement Fund Oversight Committee  
Agenda of January 16, 2020

SUBJECT: Proposed Fiscal Year 2021 Regional Park Improvement Fund Budget –  
Allocation Recommendations

**SUMMARY**

Should the San Diego Regional Park Improvement Fund Oversight Committee approve the recommendation to allocate \$3.5 million of anticipated funding from Mission Bay lease revenue to the following seven (7) regional park improvement projects in the Proposed Fiscal Year 2021 Budget:

- Balboa Park Air and Space Museum Roof Replacement, CIP# ABT00001
- Balboa Park Comfort Stations, CIP# AGF00005
- Chollas Lake Improvements, CIP# L18001
- Coastal Access Improvements, CIP# AGF00006
- Cowles Mountain Comfort Station Improvements, CIP# B20055
- Cowles Mountain Service Road Reconstruction, CIP# AGE00001
- EB Scripps Park Comfort Station Replacement, CIP# S15035

**Director's Recommendation** – Approve the recommendation to allocate \$3.5 million of anticipated funding in the Regional Park Improvement Fund for the Proposed Fiscal Year 2021 Budget.

**Fiscal Impact** – It is anticipated the RPIF will receive \$3.5 million from the lease revenue generated in Mission Bay Park for allocation in to various eligible capital projects in Fiscal Year 2021. If the Oversight Committee approves these allocations, they will be presented to the City Council for approval as a part of the Mayor's Proposed Fiscal Year 2021 Budget.

**Water and Energy Conservation Status** – Not applicable.

**Environmental** – The transfer of funds will not result in any direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical changes in the environment and is therefore not subject to CEQA pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15060(c)(2).

**BACKGROUND**

The San Diego Regional Park Improvement Fund (RPIF) is one of two capital improvement project funds to receive Mission Bay Park lease revenues from leaseholds in Mission Bay Park.

The other fund is the Mission Bay Park Improvement Fund. The two funds were established by voter approval of revisions to the City Charter, Article V, Section 55.2 (Charter) and became effective July 1, 2009, Fiscal Year (FY) 2010. On November 8, 2016, voters approved amendments to the Charter language (Measure J) with those amendments going into effect on December 19, 2016.

Per the 2016 amended Charter, RPIF is derived from the first \$3.5 million available or 35%, whichever is greater, of the excess revenue received over a threshold amount of \$20 million in Mission Bay leasehold revenues. The first \$20 million of Mission Bay leasehold revenues goes into the City's General Fund and may be used for any municipal purpose. In FY 2020 the RPIF is anticipated to receive \$3.5 million per the Charter distribution thresholds.

The purpose of the RPIF is to support capital improvement projects within the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for San Diego Regional Parks, as identified in the City Charter or by City Council Ordinance. San Diego Regional Parks include Balboa Park, Chicano Park, Chollas Lake Park, Mission Trails Regional Park (MTRP), Otay Valley Regional Park (OVRP), Presidio Park, San Diego River Park, Torrey Pines City Park, open space parks, and coastal beaches along with contiguous coastal parks. The San Diego Regional Parks Improvement Fund Oversight Committee (Oversight Committee) is responsible for reviewing proposals for the use of RPIF. The Park and Recreation Board serves as the Oversight Committee.

## DISCUSSION

In FY 2013, the Department introduced a proposed five-year plan for future fund allocations. Allocating RPIF over a five-year period identified a number of advantages over a year to year allocation approach by:

- Allowing higher dollar projects to be initiated while still leaving funds for smaller projects with shorter timelines.
- Providing stability and transparency to identify potential eligible projects for future RPIF allocations.
- Providing clarity on project priorities and sound reasons for allocation recommendations.
- Allow funding to be reallocated as necessary to promote project progress and manage the fund balance while being cognizant of overall project goals during the five-year period.

The RPIF cannot be expected to address all the needs within the regional parks identified in the Charter. It can be used to move high priority projects forward and will most certainly be used to leverage funding from other sources. For example, the RPIF allocated to the Sunset Cliffs Natural Park Hillside Improvements in 2012 and 2016 encouraged the California Coastal Conservancy to award \$800,000 in grant funding to the City to fully fund the construction of the entire project.

As part of the City's cash management program, the Department routinely approaches the Oversight Committee with requests to reallocate RPIF funds to projects that are entering their next phase, including awarding of a construction contract. Department staff tracks projects that contributed RPIF funding to other projects. Oftentimes, staff will recommend restoring funding back to these donor projects via the five-year period so as to ensure construction



funding to arrive in the project at the time it is needed, normally after the project is anticipated to receive its permits.

#### RECOMMENDED ALLOCATIONS

Department staff recommends \$3,500,000 of the RPIF be allocated to several existing CIP projects and to allow the initiation of new CIP projects in the FY 2021 CIP. The projects listed below are initial recommendations based on current needs, the five-year plan objectives, and current understanding of project costs. The Department may suggest adjustments to future year allocation recommendations depending on the successful completion of projects that were previously funded by RPIF. The recommended allocations will be added to the City's CIP and recommended to the City Council when the Mayor's Proposed Fiscal Year 2021 Budget is released in April 2020.

- ***Balboa Park Air and Space Museum Roof Replacement, CIP# ABTooooo1***  
***\$625,000 for the FY 2021 CIP Budget***  
Air and Space Museum Roof Replacement provides for the repair of the roof, repainting the exterior of the building, installation of new exterior lighting, and switchgear upgrade for the Air and Space Museum. The recommended \$625,000 for this project will be enough to complete design as \$265,000 in RPIF was previously identified for this project.
- ***Balboa Park Comfort Stations, CIP# AGFo00005***  
***\$625,000 for the FY 2021 CIP Budget***  
This project provides for the design and construction of improvements/replacements for the following comfort stations in Balboa Park: Spreckels Organ Pavilion, South Palisades, Casa del Prado Theater, and Morley Field. The recommended \$625,000 for this project would add a fifth location at Spanish Village and should enable the completion of design and construction as the RPIF would supplement the \$4.3 million of capital outlay funding that was previously identified for this project.
- ***Chollas Lake Improvements, CIP# L18001***  
***\$300,000 for the FY 2021 CIP Budget***  
This project will continue the design for improvements such as providing electricity to a newly installed ranger station, adding security lights to the parking lot and comfort station, enhancing the youth fishing programs by improving the health of the aquatic environment for fish and other wildlife, making accessibility upgrades to the comfort station and parking lot, and improving other park amenities. The first priority project is to provide electrical service to the park which will allow extended use of the park and provide a higher level of security. Phase I design began in Fiscal Year 2019. The recommended funding allocation of \$600,000 of RPIF for Fiscal Year 2021 will allow the project to complete the design phase.
- ***Coastal Access Improvements, CIP# AGFo00006***  
***\$850,000 for the FY 2021 CIP Budget***  
San Diego beaches are a regional asset and significant tourist attractions. Ensuring the public has safe access to the beaches and lifeguards have direct access to address emergencies is a high priority for the City. In the past, RPIF has been allocated to replacing and repairing coastal access at seven locations from Ocean Beach to La Jolla. These

allocations have made significant progress in addressing the City's highest priority sites. Winter storms could cause further damage and ultimately access closure. The recommended funding allocation of \$850,000 of RPIF for Fiscal Year 2021 is proposed to be allocated to the Bermuda Avenue project to complete the design phase (\$200,000) and the Old Salt Pool project to complete design and construction (\$650,000).

- ***Cowles Mountain Comfort Station Improvements, CIP# B20055***

***\$425,000 for the FY 2021 CIP Budget***

The Cowles Mountain trail is one of the most popular hikes in San Diego county with thousands of hikers and trail runners using the trail on any given weekend. The comfort station at the trail head off Golfcrest Drive was originally constructed in 1991 and although it received an overall "good" rating in a 2014 condition assessment, it is not compliant with current accessibility requirements, and several of the major components of the structure were rated poor in the conditions report. Due to its high use and limited capacity, this comfort station could be upgraded or replaced with a prefabricated type structure. The recommended \$425,000 funding allocation will initiate the design of the new structure which will be based on standardized comfort station designs.

- ***Cowles Mountain Service Road Reconstruction, CIP# AGE00001***

***\$425,000 for the FY 2021 CIP Budget***

This project would provide for the design and reconstruction of the service road at Cowles Mountain. Currently the road is eroded and needs improvements to address damage caused by storm water runoff. The service road is the only access way to Cowles Mountain antennas. Department staff traverse this service road several times a week to empty multiple waste containers that serve the hikers on the nearby Cowles Mountain trail. The recommended \$425,000 funding allocation will initiate the design process for the road.

- ***E.B. Scripps Park Comfort Station Replacement, CIP# S15035***

***\$200,000 for the FY 2021 CIP Budget***

This project provides for the design and construction of a replacement comfort station located in E.B. Scripps Park adjacent to La Jolla Cove. The project also includes the demolition of the existing comfort station and installation of associated path of travel improvements. The project's preliminary design was initiated through community efforts. The design was completed in Fiscal Year 2019. Construction began in Fiscal Year 2020 and is anticipated to be completed in Fiscal Year 2022. The recommended funding allocation of \$200,000 of RPIF for Fiscal Year 2021 will allow the project to complete the construction phase.

Attachment A lists many of the RPIF eligible projects within the City's regional parks along with the projects that are proposed to receive RPIF funds over the next five years. This list of projects is by no means exhaustive, and staff will continue to evaluate and update the project list as circumstances warrant.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

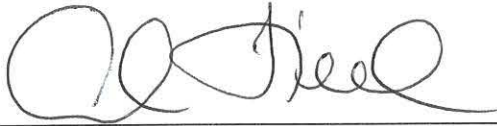
The Department recommends approval of \$3.5 million from Mission Bay lease revenue to the Regional Park Improvement Fund Proposed Fiscal Year 2021 Budget as outlined in this report.



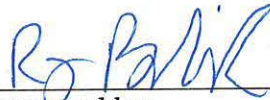
ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve the recommendation to allocate \$3.5 million of anticipated funding to the Regional Park Improvement Fund Proposed Fiscal Year 2021 Budget.
2. Do not approve the recommendation to allocate \$3.5 million of anticipated funding to the Regional Park Improvement Fund Proposed Fiscal Year 2021 Budget.
3. Recommend alternative allocations to specific eligible capital projects.

Respectfully submitted,



Approved by:  
Andrew Field  
Director  
Parks and Recreation Department



Prepared by:  
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Parks and Recreation Department

