



CITY OF VENICE

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Development Services Department

Memorandum

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Planning Commission

SUBJECT: Planning Commission Review of Draft Parks Master Plan

DATE: September 12, 2016

On August 2, 2016 and August 16, 2016, Planning Commission reviewed the draft Parks Master Plan (PMP). The Planning Commission review was limited to higher level policy matters in the PMP that were related to the ongoing update of the comprehensive plan. The following comments are intended to assist City Council in its review of the PMP.

1. Acreage / LOS – The Planning Commission decided to retain the existing comprehensive plan level of service standard of seven acres of parkland per 1,000 population. The Planning Commission did not agree with the PMP recommendation to limit the level of service standard to “developable parkland”. In reaching its decision on this matter the Planning Commission noted the difficulty in differentiating developable and non-developable parkland, and felt that “non-developable” parkland like the beaches should be accounted for as parks for the purpose of calculating level of service.
2. Private Recreational Facilities – The PMP did not analyze or provide any data and analysis for private recreational facilities in residential communities or acknowledge these facilities for addressing park/recreational needs for citizens residing in these communities. The Planning Commission consensus on this issue was a concern that the PMP ignores this significant contribution provided by private developments for the purpose of a city wide parks master plan. Ignoring this contribution could result in erroneous conclusions and recommendations from the Plan.
3. Maintenance with emphasis of Quality instead of Quantity – Related to the Planning Commission discussion on level of service, the Planning Commission felt strongly that the plan should focus on maintenance and enhancement of existing facilities with much less emphasis on needing additional acreage for parks. In doing so, the Planning Commission recognized that new sources of funding that were not specifically identified in the plan would need to be identified. During this discussion the current interlocal agreement with Sarasota County was discussed and the Planning Commission felt the agreement should be revisited to address maintenance shortfalls in City parks maintained by the County.

4. One-Quarter Mile Policy – The Planning Commission discussion on this issue resulted in a consensus to remove the distance element for the purpose of a level of service standard. This is consistent with the Planning Commission's recommendation to remove the one-quarter mile policy from the comprehensive plan. In coming to this consensus there was discussion about access and transportation to facilities being more readily available diminishing the need for the distance element.