

## **CITY OF REDONDO BEACH**

### **Budget Response Report #15**

**June 4, 2019**

#### **Question:**

*What improvements have been made to Wilderness Park and what funding is included in the FY 2019-20 Budget and Capital Improvement Program for improvement projects in Wilderness Park?*

#### **Response:**

The FY 18-19 Capital Improvement Program Budget included \$100,000 for improvements at Wilderness Park, including repair of the upper pond. At their meeting on February 20, 2018, the City Council received a Budget Response Report detailing the cost estimate to repair and maintain the upper pond as well as a broad estimate to install a water feature at the site of the former lower pond.

To date the repairs to the Upper Pond have been completed and an updated regular maintenance schedule is being performed by a professional vendor. Additionally, the Public Works Department has removed the antiquated and non-functioning pathway lighting and has identified a solar-powered pathway light that will be tested for operation during the summer. These solar pathway lights may be installed using Public Works and Community Services maintenance and operations funds as part of the proposed FY 2019-20 Budget.

The South USC Alumni of the South Bay performed a service day to update and improve the landscaping at the exterior entry to the Park. The South Bay Parkland Conservancy has held a series of service days to plant native species, weed and clear, and hold educational events with local students and subject matter professionals.

The proposed FY 2019-20 CIP includes an appropriation of \$150,000 to address needed improvements to the park. One of the most urgent needs is an improvement to the water irrigation and distribution systems in the park. Fire protection water pressure and capacity are below current standards. In addition, water pressure for irrigation needs throughout the park should be optimized. Envisioned improvements include upgrades to electrical service needed to supply power to new or rehabilitated booster pumps to better circulate water through the park. Replacement of the pipe network may also be necessary to provide appropriate infrastructure for fire protection (larger pipes and hydrants) and irrigation (new areas and low flow systems). Funding for longer term projects, such as a feasibility study of a lower pond area water feature, may be available as a secondary priority.

Also included in the proposed FY 2019-20 CIP is an appropriation of \$250,000 to perform renovations to restroom facilities in the City's various regional parks. A portion of these funds will be used to improve the Wilderness Park restrooms.

At the April 23, 2019 Strategic Planning session, members of the City Council inquired regarding the status of a potential restoration project to recreate a water feature or pond in the location of the former lower pond. The area in the northern corner of the Park, referred to as the lower pond, is currently an earthen area surrounded by large rocks, trees and plants. The former pond at this location was drained several years ago due to water seepage from the pond into the adjoining neighborhood, which threatened to destabilize the ground under nearby homes and thereby posed a significant risk of liability to the City. The pond's pumping system was also in disrepair and the water body was a breeding ground for mosquitos.

A new pond or water feature would require the installation of concrete and lining to create an impermeable underlayment for a main water body as well as an underlying concrete trough for a stream that would feed into a pond. It should be noted that a new water body would be recommended at a depth of no more than 18 inches. Any greater depth would require a minimum 5 foot fence or similar safety barrier as per current Building Code. Any new water feature or amenity structures would require an engineering and geotechnical study, as well as the use of heavy equipment into a remote area of the park. Following consultation with contractors experienced with this type of work, the budget level estimate for the restoration of the site of the former lower pond is approximately \$475,000. A maintenance contract would be similar to that used for the Upper Pond at approximately \$20,000 per year. Please note this is a preliminary estimate and would require both an engineering design and constructability review to determine a more accurate figure and does not include possible ADA required costs.

A new water feature at the location of the former lower pond will likely force the installation of ADA compliant pathways from the parking lot to the new water amenity as per ADA and Building Code requirements. There is a small chance that improved access to the upper pond would be viewed as sufficient, but an outside analysis would be required to determine if the upper pond would be considered an equal public amenity, under the law.