SUBJECT: CONSIDER INITIATING AN EVALUATION OF CITY SPORT FIELDS USAGE, CAPACITY, AND NEEDS

SOURCE: Parks and Leisure Services Department

COMMENT: A member of the City Council has requested City Council discussion of undertaking a study of the current use and capacity of the City’s sports fields. It is understood that the interest is towards determining the need for planning new fields, or possible reconfiguration of existing sports fields and park lands. At present the City maintains six softball diamonds, two each at Zalud Park, Hayes Field, and the Sports Complex. The City also has an arrangement with the Porterville School District for a lighted softball diamond at Pioneer School. Similarly, the City has arranged with Burton School District for use of two lighted baseball diamonds at Burton School. The City’s Municipal Ballpark has one lighted adult baseball diamond, and the Sports Complex has eleven soccer fields and three football fields. Other sport fields exist throughout the community on school grounds.

An updated evaluation of the use and capacity of the City controlled sports fields would be beneficial when the process is initiated to update the City Parks Master Plan, which will be done in conjunction with the General Plan Update process. A needs study would also provide information for this future planning process, and should consider the potential for further partnerships with school districts for use of other sports fields.

Staff has contacted one consultant with expertise in preparing this type of evaluation. It is estimated that such a study, which includes a five year projection of needs, can be completed in approximately four months at a cost of approximately $5,000. The funding for this effort is recommended to be from General Fund Reserves.

RECOMMENDATION: City Council discuss initiating an evaluation of city sport fields use, capacity, and needs, and provide direction to staff.

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