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(213) 202-2633 FAX (213) 202-2614

April 23, 2019

Honorable Paul Krekorian, Chair
Budget and Finance Committee
City Clerk, City Hall Room 395
Los Angeles, CA 90012

ATTN: Andrew Choi, Legislative Assistant

RE: Department of Recreation and Parks Fiscal Year 2019-20 Budget

Dear Chairman Krekorian & Honorable Councilmembers:

On November 16, 2018, our Department submitted its proposed Fiscal Year 2019-20 (FY' 19-20) budget request of \$273.640 million to Mayor Garcetti in alignment with our strategic goals, the City's Sustainability pLAN and the Mayor's specific visions for Recreation & Parks (RAP).

On April 18, 2019, the Mayor released his proposed budget with \$264.850 million allocated for RAP. This healthy allotment allows us to maintain current core service and staffing levels (\$6.7 million) and provides additional funding to expand City-wide equitable programming and to address critical maintenance needs.

The Mayor's proposed budget also allocates \$3.9 million for increased utility and refuse collection costs, \$0.5 million to continue one Bulky Item Illegal Dumping (BIID) cleanup crew, and \$7.6 million for the following enhanced services:

- New and Expanded Facilities - \$2,464,000
- Universal Play/Youth Sports Expansion, SWIM LA and Adaptive Sports - \$2,348,000
- Data and Asset Management - \$700,000
- HVAC Assessment - \$1,123,000
- Fire Life and Safety - \$300,000
- Brush Clearance - \$250,000
- Citywide Pump Crew - \$150,000
- Maintenance for Basketball Courts - \$160,000
- Expanded Operating Hours - Campo De Cahuenga - \$78,000

Additionally, the Mayor's proposed budget allocates \$9.75 million in Capital Improvement Expenditure Program (CIEP) funding for park improvements:



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- North Hollywood Park - \$1,000,000
- Pio Pico Library Pocket Park - \$2,000,000
- Rancho Cienega Sports Complex - \$3,250,000
- Various Recreation Park Facilities - \$3,500,000

This budget is a strong statement of support for RAP and importantly allows us to begin looking at the future of equitable sports and fitness programs through our Universal Play program which removes the barrier of cost to participate in sports and fitness programs.

Universal Play – RAP looks forward to continuing to further expand Universal Play to additional sites throughout the City, beyond the seven pilot sites. Program participation has doubled within the (7) pilot sites and as more sites are added, additional recreation and maintenance staffing will be needed to successfully support the program. It is critical we look to reduce RAP's salary saving rate to allow for existing positions to be filled and begin preparing for additional sites to be phased in the future.

Senior Program – RAP currently operates 29 senior centers City-wide offering quality health and wellness programs, activities, and special events. Although, we've made great strides in the last two years to implement the Mayor's Executive Directive on Purposeful Aging, we need to do more to serve our senior citizens.

There are currently 34 sites offering multiple activities for the mental, social and physical well-being for seniors. And only 17 sites have a dedicated Recreation Facility Director for Senior Programs. Directors at other centers have to perform double duties managing both senior and recreational programs. We respectfully request reconsideration of the request of \$175,000 for three (3) new Recreation Facility Directors authorities to improve staffing levels for our seniors and to expand and enhance senior recreational programming.

Bus Services Youth Program – Every year, RAP provides approximately 1500 bus trips, serving approximately 90,000 youth. More than 93% of the bus trips are for day camps and the remaining for aquatics and sports programs. The cost for bus services has near doubled in recent years. We respectfully request reconsideration of the requested \$500,000 to allow the Department to continue providing affordable camp programs to youth, especially those from urban impact/low income areas.

Homeless Abatement – RAP devotes significant resources to addressing homeless encampments in our parks. Our current budget has direct costs for unbudgeted homeless cleanups, exceeding \$900,000 year to date. The Mayor's proposed budget allocates funding to continue one BIID crew, however we respectfully request reconsideration of the requested \$559,000 and seven (7) positions for one additional crew for clean-up of homeless encampments in our parks to address needs in every council district where the needs are greatest.

Brush Clearance - The Mayor's Proposed Budget includes an increase of \$250,000 in RAP's Contractual Services Account for the Citywide Brush Clearance Program. RAP greatly appreciates the support for this critical request however, it should be noted that RAP submitted this request prior to the higher-than-average rain events experienced in the Los Angeles area this winter. This higher amount of precipitation has already resulted in an above average

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volume of weeds and unwanted vegetation throughout the park system. Concurrently with the wet winter, due to ongoing human health and environmental concerns, RAP drastically scaled back its use of the herbicide RoundUp in City parks beginning in November 2018. As such, the FY'19-20 Citywide Brush Clearance Program budget may prove to be inadequate. RAP staff will closely monitor the program and will report to City Council mid-year should additional resources be required to meet these season's brush clearance requirements in City parks.

Thank you for your continued support of Recreation and Parks and for your time and attention to our request. We look forward to discussing our budget with you further and remain inspired for the good things to come. Please contact me at (213) 202-2633 should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



MICHAEL A. SHULL
General Manager

MAS:ndw

Cc:

Honorable Councilmembers
Barbara Romero, Deputy Mayor of City Services
Zachia Nazarzai, Office of the Mayor
Sharon Tso, Chief Legislative Analyst
Richard H. Llewellyn, Chief Administrative Officer
Terry Sauer, Office of the City Administrative Officer
Jay Shin, Office of the City Administrative Officer
Board of Recreation and Parks Commissioners
Anthony-Paul Diaz, Esq., Executive Officer & Chief of Staff, RAP
Noel Williams, Chief Financial Officer, RAP