

City of Cambridge

The Public Service Committee held a public meeting on October 23, 1997, beginning at 5:45 p.m. in the Sullivan Chamber for the purpose of considering a plan for implementing a site-based management program for city parks, a recommended capital improvement plan for parks and open spaces through 2002 and a plan for augmented flower plantings in 1998.

Present at the hearing were Vice Mayor Kathleen L. Born, Chair of the Committee, Councillor Henrietta Davis, Councillor Kenneth E. Reeves, Councillor Michael A. Sullivan, and City Clerk D. Margaret Drury. Also present were Richard Rossi, Deputy City Manager; Lisa Peterson, Assistant to the City Manager; Ralph Dunphy, Commissioner of Public Works; Steve White, Deputy Commissioner of Public Works; Jill Herold, Assistant City Manager for Human Services; Paul Ryder, Director of Recreation, Human Services; Stuart Dash, Community Development Department, and several other members of the staff of these departments.

Vice Mayor Born convened the hearing and explained the purpose. She described the agenda (Attachment A) and the materials to be discussed at the hearing.

Vice Mayor Born introduced the members of the Public Service Committee and then requested that the city officials introduce themselves. She then opened the meeting with a discussion of the first item on the agenda, parks maintained by outside contract, and invited the Department of Public Works (DPW) to present information to the committee.

Mr. White stated that the Department of Public Works has several contracts. There were some problems this year. One involved timely renewal of the contracts in a year with a very heavy spring workload. There are now agreements in place for this year with a city option to renew in the spring. Contracts were put into place September 2, 1997. Some of the contracts speak specifically to particular parks; other contracts cover the maintenance of several parks. There is also some new specification language that Department of Public Works believes will better address the maintenance issues.

Commissioner Dunphy stated that Department of Public Works is very committed to a process of tightening the specs. He is interested in having a focus on the future.

Councillor Davis asked whether the specs will also apply to the non-contracted parks.

Mr. White stated that they will. He noted that the new specs request that the bidders supply much more information about the qualifications of those who will perform the work.

Deputy City Manager Richard Rossi asked Mr. Dunphy to discuss the quality control plans with regard to Department of Public Works staff work on the parks.

Mr. Dunphy stated that the proposal calls for a neighborhood park initiative that will be discussed in depth as item 3 on the agenda. He distributed a summary entitled "Neighborhood Oriented Parks Maintenance and Service" (Attachment B) and another entitled "Contract Management Quality Control" (Attachment C). Basically, there will be an increased emphasis on training and adding professional support. For park maintenance, the city will be divided into three zones, based on neighborhoods. A specific maintenance crew and supervising staff will be available and responsible for the maintenance services for all parks in specific neighborhoods. The intent is for the neighborhood to know who is maintaining their parks and how to contact them.

Mr. Rossi added that this plan calls for a staff person to provide overall direction and leadership to park maintenance.

Councillor Reeves noted that there appears to be a perception that a combination of contracted work and staff work is the best way to organize the program. This still leads to issues of who is responsible. He would like to know whether there has been an analysis of whether use of contractors is a better system than the previous system with a separate department in charge of parks.

Mr. Rossi stated that the Parks Department described by Councillor Reeves was dismantled in the late 1970s. There is now substantially more open space to be cared for by Department of Public Works staff and contractors, and even then, the old Parks Department did not take care of all the open space owned by the city, for example, the school open space.

Mr. Rossi stated that the new plan is to divide the city into zones and assign individual Department of Public Works employees who are responsible, in the manner that maintenance for the Senior Center is handled. At the Senior Center, there is an outside contract, but there is a DPW person who is known to the community, the elected officials, etc., who is there on a daily basis to make sure the contract is being performed.

Mr. Dunphy noted the importance of careful selection of interested employees, not just the person who has been there the longest.

Councillor Davis noted that the city is divided into three districts and asked what the criteria was for the division. Mr. Dunphy stated that the basic unit is the thirteen neighborhoods. Then the district divisions were made based on acreage of open space and amount of work hours spent on the parks in each area.

Councillor Davis requested backup material on how the divisions were made.

Mr. Rossi noted that the work hours are greater for the parks with the highest usage.

Vice Mayor Born asked whether each district has the same balance of contracted-out and Department of Public Works managed parks.

Councillor Reeves noted his interest in seasonal plantings and stated that he would like more of an opportunity to have input on the specifics of the design planning for the plantings.

Mr. Dunphy stated that the Department of Public Works plans to hire a trained landscape person with horticultural training to supervise this.

Mr. Rossi noted that there will always be a diversity of opinions about particular plantings. What the City can do is put in place a reasonable process with opportunity for citizens and officials to have input on the proposal.

Councillor Reeves stated that he continues to have a concern about how well outside contractors can do. He does not believe that Mt. Auburn Cemetery could be as beautiful today without committed, involved, full-time staff.

Mr. Rossi noted that outside contractors have huge pieces of equipment that the City does not have. The idea will be to have the city employees do the things they can do best. He noted Danahy and Lechmere Parks as two parks that work extremely well and both with dedicated city employees and competent contracts. Lechmere also has a committed citizen group. Mr. Rossi stated that the Mt. Auburn Cemetery has 35 horticulturalists on staff.

Vice Mayor Born stated that she believes these plans represent a big step forward. She then invited public comment.

Paula Cortez, Bigelow Street, asked about the low-bid requirements. Mr. Rossi said that the city is required by law to contract with the lowest responsible bidder. Ms. Cortez stated that she sees a lot of incompetent contractors working at city sites.

Mr. Rossi stated that this is why the Department of Public Works has worked on devising more detailed and demanding specifications for contracts.

Dana Gallup, 385 Broadway, stated that he is a resident and a landscape contractor. There are problems with contractors. The Cambridge contractors do a better job because they live here and have more of a vested interest in the city. He stated that it is not really the specs; it is the qualifications and interest of the contractors that is determinative. Perhaps there should be incentives. Up to now, poor performance has not been an issue that the City has tackled; he has not seen contractors kicked off the job; the issue has always been a cost issue of getting the lowest bidder.

Mr. Rossi disagreed and stated that the City has cancelled contracts in the past based on poor performance. Mr. Rossi stated that the City has a responsibility to insist on a level of quality and get it for the best price.

Councillor Reeves said that he has a issue of contractors bringing lots of white workers from Lynn to work in neighborhoods where there are Cambridge residents, persons of color, who wish that they had the job.

Mr. White stated that there are many contracts that are working well.

Bruce Houghton, 107 Lakeview Avenue, stated that he wants to commend the Department of Public Works for moving to a system of community-based management. He is the fields manager for Cambridge Youth Soccer (CYS), which makes enormous use of the fields. CYS involves over 1300 kids; Pop Warner has another 200-300. This is a lot of wear and tear on the fields. The City should be very proud of the use of its parks and the opportunity provided to the children. However, the reality is that more field space is needed.

Shippen Page, 174 Lakeview Avenue, stated that he is the president of CYS, and he introduced Ann Strong, a board member. He stated that CYS is seriously underrepresented in East Cambridge. He urged the committee to look as a whole at the kids who are playing sports in Cambridge. Mr. Page stated that site-based management is critical to these fields. He urged consideration of a sod-based maintenance.

Ann Strong, 44 Cottage Street, stated that Cambridge ranks low nationally in terms of public open space per capita, and that there is very little unbuilt space left in the city. There are 7,000 kids in the city; there needs to be a recreation open space master plan with consideration of adding small playing fields in areas of city with the least playing fields, 02139 and 02141. She urged consideration of moratorium of building on lots capable of being turned into playing fields.

Gerry Bergman, 82 Elm Street, stated his support for the plan for neighborhood oriented maintenance of parks. He said that neighbors would like to know who to go to for park issues. He stated that he is disappointed not to see any plan to increase the amount of active play area. At the last City Council meeting, Community Development Department stated that the neighborhood was no longer interested in the LinPro site for open space. That is not true.

William Jones, Essex Street, stated that the parks are in better shape than they have been in 50 years.

Councillor Sullivan asked whether when the MDC redoes the Charles River basin area, there will be additional open space. Mr. Rossi said that there is a plan for open space. He does not know whether there could be a playing field in the space they are planning.

Councillor Davis noted the opportunity for soccer fields on top of the sewage treatment sites in East Cambridge and Magazine Beach. Another possibility is for another field at Magazine Beach by re-aligning the existing fields.

Vice Mayor Born then invited a presentation on the Capital plan. (Attachment D) Mr. Rossi explained the document. There is a \$5.5 million shortfall between the cost of the "wish list" and the identified sources of financing.

Lisa Peterson stated that the five year plan is a very fluid document, in which priorities must be balanced. The plan addresses what is already in the inventory; there is not yet an acquisition plan. It especially addresses "C," "D" and "F" rated parks. There is also a preventive park maintenance and playground structure replacement program to allow enhancements to parks that are not listed for major overhauls.

Mr. Rossi noted that the Morse and Fitzgerald renovations are being funded through the state school improvement funds at a ninety percent reimbursement rate. Also, the golf course renovations are paid for out of fee revenue taken in from users of the golf course.

Councillor Davis stated that Dana Park, the King School play area and Sacramento Field are all dustbowls. Mr. Rossi said that there is an interim plan to install sprinklers, etc. There must be a longer process to plan for renovations.

Councillor Davis asked about the King School. Paul Ryder stated that the problem is with the small grass area that is overused by 500 kids; the equipment is fine. Mr. Rossi said that the ultimate solution is probably a more appropriate play surface, but there are not funds for a big renovation unless some other project is postponed.

Councillor Davis asked about Sacramento Field. Mr. Dunphy stated that this is a sod issue. There is irrigation.

Councillor Sullivan stated that he would give the King school a D or an F, because the play space is not just the two spots where the play equipment exists.

Ann Strong, 44 Cottage Street, stated that the King dirt patch would be a good place to try the astro turf that is being used in urban areas. Mr. Rossi agreed that something different from the existing ground cover is needed.

Brian Cashman, 136 Banks Street, stated that he lives across from the Corporal Burns playground and asked whether the plans for that park includes the building. Mr. Ryder stated that the plans call for demolishing the building. Mr. Cashman stated that this is a very sensitive issue for the neighborhood. Mr. Ryder stated that the cost of renovating the building would increase the costs significantly.

Councillor Sullivan asked about the prospective timelines. Mr. Ryder stated that there will be more community process regarding the design, including what should happen to the building.

Clorinda Spinella, 41 Bowdoin Street, asked if there is in place a mechanism for private contributions for park improvements. She stated that she believes neighbors could generate matching dollars in private contributions. She suggested looking into "grass cones" a new technology for planting grass which results in a very strong grass surface. She also suggested looking into depressing parking and putting open space over it.

Gerry Bergman, 82 Elm Street, asked how Maynard moved from an "F" to a "C". Ms. Petersen stated that the recent inventory did not include the roof and the interior space. There is nothing there except blacktop. It could be a typographical error. Mr. Bergman stated that the new Fletcher school playground is wonderful and congratulated the City for its successful efforts.

Bill Bates, Interim Director of Health, Physical Ed and Athletics, stated that there is a tremendous groundswell in the community for an athletic stadium with a track and full facilities. The families involved in track and football are largely an undeserved community. Mr. Bates stated that the other issue on the agenda is increasing opportunities for girls in sports.

Councillor Davis suggested a follow up meeting on the issues of site management and flowers.

Vice Mayor Born then moved to the issue of utilization of playing fields. Mr. Ryder distributed a report; and summarized the information. He described the permitting process. Youth programming is done first; then city-run adult programs. Adult use is quite limited. With regard to adult unpermitted use, after illegal use at Russell Field this spring, the Police Department now has a copy of the permits and they now know what games are not legal. The other parks which have had some similar problems are Hoyt and Donnelly. Again, the Police and Recreation Departments are working together more closely.

Mr. Rossi stated that the city has had extreme pressure over the years to allow use by private schools, semi pro baseball, etc, and has successfully prioritized city and youth programs.

Vice Mayor Born asked whether the balance between baseball and soccer use is appropriate. Mr. Ryder stated that he believes that it is and that there is a fast growing girls softball program. He stressed that youth programming has first priority.

Mr. Ryder stated that it is possible to shift uses around to get the time out needed to re-sod and maintain the fields. It takes cooperation of the Recreation Department, Department of Public Works and the users. It was done successfully with a soccer field at Danehy Park this year.

Gerald Bergman noted the use of the park space by a large evangelical church and asked for some careful thought on the issue.

Bruce Houghton, Lakeview Avenue, stated that an acquisition program is essential. The growth of girls softball means that they will want Raymond Park, and there are 10 CYS soccer teams playing there. Without an acquisition program, there will be more kids who want to play than there is space for. He suggested thinking about Alewife, where there is good transportation and available space.

Mr. Rossi stated that the acquisition prices are astronomical. Negotiating with the MDC is a better possibility.

Vice Mayor Born thanked all those present for their attendance. The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

For the Committee

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kathleen L. Born', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Vice Mayor Kathleen L. Born
Chair

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 23, 1997**

AGENDA

- (1) Parks Maintained by Outside Contract
- (2) Capital Improvement Recommendations for Open Space through
FY2002
- (3) Plan for Implementing "Site Based" Management Program for Parks
- (4) Flower Planting Program
- (5) Analysis of the Permit Users of the Parks
- (6) Information on the Open Space Committee
- (7) Information about Planting Plan Outside of Schools

MEMO

NEIGHBORHOOD ORIENTED PARKS MAINTENANCE AND SERVICES

The concept for the Public works organization for the Neighborhood Oriented Parks Maintenance and Services consists of the following and is based on the 13 established neighborhoods in the City. The basic premise of this concept is that a specific maintenance crew and supervisory staff will be available and responsible for the maintenance services for all the parks in specific neighborhoods. The crews and supervisory staff will take ownership of the parks and make the necessary coordination with other staff agencies and neighborhood organizations concerned with the neighborhood parks and services. Supervisory staff will be available at neighborhood meeting to address any concerns and to report on maintenance items to the neighborhoods. The posting of the supervisory and maintenance crew names and contact numbers will be made available in each park and by maintenance information brochures for each neighborhood. The intent is for the neighborhood to know who is maintaining their parks and how to contact them.

-District's 1,2,and 3

District 1 consists of Neighborhoods 1-5

District 2 consists of Neighborhoods 6-9

District 3 consists of Neighborhoods 10-13

The concept includes a dedicated crew to each District. The responsibility of the crew includes all maintenance services for the parks in the District. Tasks include mowing, pruning, marking of fields, tot lot maintenance, litter, turf maintenance, irrigation system maintenance, flower planting and maintenance, pavement's, fencing, play equipment, netting, lights, and water facilities.

Each crew will consist of three skilled craftsmen, three laborers, one working foreperson, and a District Supervisor.

The District Supervisor will report to the Parks Division Manager. The Supervisor will be responsible for the maintenance services for all parks in the District to include the supervision of the contractors performing contractual maintenance. The supervisor

will also be available to meet and coordinate with other staff agencies and neighborhood groups on the maintenance and use of park facilities in the neighborhood. We anticipate that when a neighborhood meeting is conducted that a supervisor from DPW Parks will be present and accountable.

We are strongly committed to the Neighborhood Oriented Parks Maintenance and Services organizational concept and firmly believe it will provide the level of maintenance services and community process desired by all. We look forward to the completion of the organizational change process and are completely confident that this system can be in place, and working, well before the 98 parks season.

C

CONTRACT MANAGEMENT QUALITY CONTROL

CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

At present maintenance contracts are managed by the Parks Division managers, Highway Forepersons, and Inspectors. These management personnel supervise the contractors in the performance of the duties required by the task in the contracts. The specification of the maintenance task and the frequency drive the quality control.

The management of the contracts within the department is the responsibility of the Parks Division. Preparation of the contracts for bidding, coordination of the awards, management of the execution of the contract in accordance with the specifications and conditions, and payment approvals are completed by the Division.

QUALITY CONTROL

Emphasis will be placed on training of all parks personnel in specific areas of responsibilities and task. Individuals will be trained in the maintenance of parks to include turf maintenance, shrubs care and pruning, tree pruning, irrigation systems and repair, maintenance of play areas, maintenance of sports areas, playground equipment repair, pavement surfaces, play surfaces, walk ways, fence repair, pest control, and other open space tasks as required.

Additionally, training requirements for supervisors and inspectors that will be managing contracts will include training on specification adherence and performance, contract general conditions, special conditions, schedules, work plans, work area safety, proper equipment use, product use, testing, sampling, payments, claims, and over all contract management requirements.

Quality control will be assured by the daily inspection of the contractors work in the field by park supervisors and inspectors.

OPEN SPACE, RECREATION & BEAUTIFICATION

	FY98 5-YEAR CAPITAL BUDGET		OPEN SPACE PLANNING RECOMMENDATION		SHORTFALL BASED ON RECOMMENDATION
FY98					
Corporal Burns Playground(D)	\$ 600,000		\$ 600,000		
City Hall Annex Landscaping	\$ 110,000		\$ 110,000		
Significant tree program	\$ 25,000		\$ 25,000		
Beautification @ Traffic Islands/City Buildings	\$ 40,000		\$ 40,000		
CDBG Funds	\$ 95,090		\$ 95,090		
Riverside Press Park (\$30K)					
Golf Course renovations	\$ 40,000	Golf Course Revenues	\$ 40,000	Golf Course Revenues	
Preventative Park Maintenance Program	\$ 100,000		\$ 100,000		
Lindstrom Field/Morse School Tot Lot (B)		with Morse School Renovation		with Morse School Renovation	
Danehy Water Play Feature		private donation/Danehy Capital		private donation/Danehy Capital	
Wilder/Lee(C)	\$ 60,000		\$ 60,000		
City Hall Landscaping		Bond		Bond	
Total:	\$ 1,070,090		\$ 1,070,090		
FY99					
War Memorial rehabilitation	\$ 3,500,000	Bond	\$ 3,500,000	Bond	
Gately Youth Center improvements	\$ 1,000,000	Bond	\$ 1,000,000	Bond	
Russell Field (C)	\$ 3,500,000	Bond	\$ 3,500,000	Bond	
West Cambridge Youth Center	\$ 35,000		\$ 35,000		
Significant Tree Program	\$ 25,000		\$ 25,000		
Beautification @ Traffic Islands/City Buildings	\$ 40,000		\$ 100,000		\$ 60,000
Preventative Park Maintenance Program	\$ 100,000		\$ 75,000		\$ (25,000)
Playground Structure Replacement			\$ 75,000		\$ 75,000
Accessibility Improvements			\$ 50,000		\$ 50,000
CDBG Funds	\$ 95,090		\$ 95,090		
Golf Course renovations	\$ 40,000	Golf Course Revenues	\$ 40,000	Golf Course Revenues	
Longfellow School Playground (D)			\$ 250,000		\$ 250,000
Library Park Tot Lot (F)			\$ 200,000		\$ 200,000
Donnelly Field (D)/Gold Star Mothers Pool			\$ 2,000,000		\$ 2,000,000
Larch Road Playground (D)			\$ 175,000		\$ 175,000
Total:	\$ 8,335,090		\$ 11,120,090		\$ 2,785,000

\$1M in Expenditure Plan for '02

	FY98 5-YEAR CAPITAL BUDGET			OPEN SPACE PLANNING RECOMMENDATION			SHORTFALL BASED ON RECOMMENDATION	
FY00								
West Cambridge Youth Center Site Acquisition	\$	2,700,000	Bond	\$	2,700,000	Bond		
Significant Tree Program	\$	25,000		\$	25,000			
Beautification@Traffic Islands/City Buildings	\$	40,000		\$	100,000		\$	60,000
Preventative Park Maintenance Program	\$	100,000		\$	75,000		\$	(25,000)
Playground Structure Replacement				\$	75,000		\$	75,000
82 Pacific Street *	\$	95,090	CDBG Funds	\$	95,090	CDBG Funds		
Golf Course renovations	\$	40,000	Golf Course Revenues	\$	40,000	Golf Course Revenues		
Park Renovations (To Be Determined)	\$	290,000		\$	290,000	Peabody \$250K, Maple Ave. \$40K		
Rindge Field (C)			Fitzgerald School Renovation			Fitzgerald School renovation		
Fitzgerald School Tot Lot (C)			Fitzgerald School Renovation			Fitzgerald School renovation		
Peabody School (D)								
Maple Ave. Tot Lot (D)				\$	200,000		\$	160,000
82 Pacific Street (B) *				\$	354,910		\$	354,910
Raymond Street Park (C)				\$	450,000		\$	450,000
* Pacific Street Park will be funded using both CDBG funds and money from the General Fund (\$450,000 total).								
Total:	\$	3,290,090		\$	4,405,000		\$	1,074,910
FY01								
West Cambridge Youth Center	\$	5,000,000	Bond	\$	5,000,000	Bond		
Significant Tree Program	\$	25,000		\$	25,000			
Beautification@Traffic Islands/City Buildings	\$	40,000		\$	100,000		\$	60,000
Preventative Park Maintenance Program	\$	100,000		\$	75,000		\$	(25,000)
Playground Structure Replacement				\$	75,000		\$	75,000
CDBG Funds	\$	95,090		\$	95,090			
Golf Course renovations	\$	40,000	Golf Course Revenues	\$	40,000	Golf Course Revenues		
Park Renovations (To Be Determined)	\$	290,000		\$	290,000	King School \$300K		
Luisitania Field (D)			Water Revenues			Water Revenues		
Kingsley Park			Water Revenues			Water Revenues		
Maynard School (C)				\$	150,000		\$	150,000
Lowell School Park (D)				\$	250,000		\$	250,000
Dana Park (C)				\$	250,000		\$	250,000
Franklin Street Park (D)				\$	150,000		\$	150,000
King School Playground (C)				\$	10,000		\$	10,000
Total:	\$	5,590,090		\$	6,510,090		\$	920,000

	FY98 5-YEAR CAPITAL BUDGET		OPEN SPACE PLANNING RECOMMENDATION		SHORTFALL BASED ON RECOMMENDATION
FY02					
Significant Tree Program	\$ 25,000		\$ 25,000		
Beautification@Traffic Isalnds/City Buildings	\$ 40,000		\$ 100,000		\$ 60,000
Preventative Park Maintenance Program	\$ 100,000		\$ 75,000		\$ (25,000)
Playground Structure Replacement			\$ 75,000		\$ 75,000
CDBG Funds	\$ 95,090		\$ 95,090		
Golf Course renovations	\$ 40,000	Golf Course Revenues	\$ 40,000	Golf Course Revenues	
Park Renovations (To Be Determined)	\$ 290,000		\$ 290,000	Glacken \$750K	
	\$ 1,000,000	Bond			\$ (1,000,000)
Glacken Field (B)			\$ 460,000		\$ 460,000
Paine Park (C)			\$ 200,000		\$ 200,000
Agassiz/Alden Park (C)			\$ 250,000		\$ 250,000
Bergin Park (C)			\$ 200,000		\$ 200,000
Sleeper/Rev. Williams Park (C)			\$ 250,000		\$ 250,000
Alberico Park (C)			\$ 250,000		\$ 250,000
Total:	\$ 1,565,090		\$ 2,285,090		\$ 720,000
Grand Total:	\$ 19,850,450		\$ 25,390,360		\$ 5,499,910

PLANTING PLAN FOR AREAS AROUND THE SCHOOLS

Jim Conry, Director of Management Services for the Schools, is unable to make the Public Service Committee meeting. The following information about current planting plans around each school is based on a phone conversation with Jim Conry.

Flower planting and landscaping around the public schools is accomplished through a variety of mechanisms.

- (1) When new schools are constructed, landscaping is included in the project; this was the case with the Agassiz and Haggerty Schools, and will take place with the Morse and Fitzgerald Schools.
- (2) When the Department of Public Works completed street and sidewalk work around the Kennedy and Peabody Elementary Schools, additional trees were planted around the facilities at this time. Planters were also installed at the Kennedy School.
- (3) Often, the Parent Organizations at a school install and maintain flower planters at schools. This is the case at the Haggerty, Harrington, Morse, Tobin, Agassiz, Fitzgerald, Peabody. At a few schools, e.g. the Harrington and the Peabody, landscaping is a part of the students' curriculum.

School Department staff are able to clean up the outside of buildings, but are not available for landscaping. The School Department has hired a contractor to assist in the maintenance of school parks.

1998
FLOWER
PLANTING

SPRING 1998

The plan for flower planting will be implemented in the spring of 1998. The plantings will include the use of colorful annuals and perennials in each area selected. Selected areas will include all areas planted in the summer of 1997 plus gateways, Fire Stations, Lever Park, Windsor and Lincoln, and Fountain and Huron. The gateways will be planted at the same time to ensure full coverage throughout the City.

Selection of plants will be a consensus of those groups and staff agencies interested in the process. The goals of the use of color, reasonable maintenance, cost, availability and a mix of annuals and perennials will be emphasized during the process.

We anticipated that additional budgeting in the amount of \$60,000 will be required to ensure the purchase and planting is successful.

The preparation of flower beds will begin as soon as possible in the spring and will be based on weather and soil conditions. This will ensure the earliest possible planting with mature plants by early summer.

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE AND ITS MEMBERSHIP

Formed in 1988 by the City Manager, the Open Space Committee consists of representatives of the Community Development, Human Services (Recreation and Commission for Persons with Disabilities), Public Works, Water, Electrical, and Traffic, Parking & Transportation Departments. The City Manager's Office coordinates the functions of the group and chairs the committee meetings. Many other departments participate in Open Space Committee meetings as well, depending on the topic covered. These departments include: the School Department, Historical Commission, Conservation Commission, Animal Commission, Police Department. Regularly, the Committee meets with a Steering Committee to discuss recommended initiatives and procedures; the Steering Committee includes the Deputy City Manager, the Assistant City Managers for Community Development and Human Services, and the Public Works Commissioner.

The purpose of the Open Space Committee is to foster interdepartmental coordination in the planning, operation and management of the City's open space system. In this forum, planners, designers, maintenance managers and recreational programmers meet regularly to discuss and plan for the City's open space needs. Members of the Open Space Committee also hold neighborhood meetings to review design plans for park renovation projects.

Accomplishments of this committee include:

- Completion of the Federal and State 5-year Open Space Plans
- Completion of a physical inventory and evaluation of each park
- Development of design standards for equipment and furnishings
- Development of standards for new community gardens in public parks
- Implementation of a park design review process, coordinated with the community review process
- Development of annual capital recommendations for consideration during the capital budget process, and general oversight of progress on open space capital projects
- Policy recommendations on hours of operation and on dogs in tot lots
- Development of an open space sign system (in progress)
- Initiation of a park preventative maintenance program
- Work with the Public Works Department to implement the new beautification program

Committee Report #4

Cal 32
S-743

A report from Vice Mayor Kathleen L. Born, Chair of the Public Service Committee, for a meeting held on October 23, 1997 for the purpose of considering a plan for implementing a site-based management program for city parks, a recommended capital improvement plan for parks and open spaces through 2002 and a plan for augmented flower plantings in 1998.

In City Council November 3, 1997

Charter Right
exercised by
Councillor Toomey
November 17, 1997
Tabled on motion of
Vice Mayor Born
November 24, 1997
Report accepted,
Placed on file on motion
of Vice Mayor Born.