

**PRC Recommendations to BOCC
Park and Recreation Budget**

Item No.

Description

Comments

- 1 Parks and Facilities in poor condition should be addressed as soon as possible.
Reinvestment (Deferred Maintenance) Budget
requires a substantial increase
until all existing parks and facilities are in good to excellent condition.
Additional priority is necessary for lighting and artificial turf for children's sports fields

\$5,000,000
Increase to Manager's Budget

PRC PRIORITY NUMBER ONE

- 2 Land Acquisition
Land Designated for children's sports fields should be prioritized

\$3,400,000
Increase to Manager's Budget
(Assumes \$11,400,000 is moved
from the CIP Budget)

Manager's Budget	35,000,000		35,000,000
CIP	11,400,000		
Subtotal	46,400,000	OR	
	3,600,000		15,000,000
Total	50,000,000	Total	50,000,000

Goal is \$50,000,000 total for Land Acquisition

- 3 Expand programming for seniors, youth activities

\$300,000
Increase to Manager's Budget

- 4 Expand routine maintenance (operational & day to day) budget to ensure
underserved areas are not overlooked
Bridges gap between limited Reinvestment Budget (Deferred Maintenance)
and waiting 5 years for CIP funding

\$3,000,000
Increase to Manager's Budget

- 5 Safety - Addition of park rangers and
Allied Security contracted services is necessary.
Park Rangers are under Park and Recreation Budget. Safety using Allied
Security and Charlotte Mecklenburg police are under Asset and Facilities Budget

\$900,000
Increase to Manager's Budget

- 6 Staff Positions for
1. Management Analyst
2. Technical Analyst
3. Park Planner - Community Engagement

\$300,000
Increase to Manager's Budget

\$12,900,000
Total Increase over
Manager's Recommended Budget

P&R Budget Talking Points

Open - We're very appreciative of the BOCC's prioritization of the Park and Rec department as evidenced by the increases to 2024's numbers in the proposed budget. After careful review and consideration, we'd like to propose the following increases in the following broad categories.

A) Capital Reinvestment - As park and rec's portfolio of properties has grown thanks to the leadership of the county and department team's, the need for capital reinvestment and maintenance has increased as well. Fixing what we have has become more expensive. Further, we need to update some of our parks to reflect the shifting needs of a growing public, whether it be for more walking trails, ball fields, lights, etc. We think the current budget needs to be increased to reflect the increased costs associated with maintaining and reinvesting in our existing parks. We propose a \$5M increase in the proposed budget to reflect these needs.

B) Land acquisition - They aren't making any more of it. We recognize that the current recommended budget, in total, is \$3.6M lower than the \$50M allocated in the past, and we'd like to see that number held firm. This would help address one of the main complaints we see from the community - not enough space. *[Insert statistic on acreage per individual the county keeps shooting for].*

C) Expand programming for seniors and youth - At our meetings, we have the benefit of hearing from P&R staff who develop, implement, and oversee programming at various P&R facilities, including our rec centers. The amount and variety of programming is astonishing. The need, however, is massive. Working families depend on this sort of programming to bridge the gap between school dismissal and getting home from work. Seniors depend on this programming for nutrition and overall wellness. At risk youth depend on these programs for safe, constructive outlets for their energy. These are just a few examples. The P&R staff in this area are like too little butter spread over too much toast - they need more funds to meet the community's needs. We therefore propose an increase of \$300k in this area.

D) Routine & day-to-day maintenance - Our P&R staff have a flexible approach to addressing minor problems that arise in our P&R facilities every day. This is different than the Capital Reinvestment budget I mentioned earlier. This is the lumber supply to fix broken benches, the hardware costs to fix a broken toilet, etc. The folks on the ground need more money to meet these needs. We're asking for a \$3M increase in the proposed budget to address these needs.

E) Safety - We are firm in our belief that our parks, as a whole, are safe spaces for our community. However, there is a perception in the community that some of our park spaces are not. To better combat this perception and respond to the needs of a growing community, we propose that an additional \$900k be committed to park safety measures. We think P&R staff can use these increased funds to marshal the appropriate resources to combat the perceived issues.

F) P&R Central Staffing - We are aware that park and rec central staff has requested increased funds for three additional administrative positions not reflected in the proposed budget. Currently, our executive staff members at the P&R department wear many hats and have many responsibilities. These jobs would ease the burden on the executive staff and allow them to focus on the core responsibilities of their job descriptions. We've got good people - we need to invest in those good people. We therefore request \$300k in order to fund these positions.

Summary - In our role as a liaison between the community, P&R staff, and the BOCC, the PRC believes the foregoing increases are needed to bolster the excellent work done by our P&R staff.