



## MEMORANDUM

Date: September 1, 2015  
To: Park District Oversight Committee  
From: Michael Shiosaki, Planning and Development Division Director, 4-0750  
David Graves, Strategic Advisor, 4-7048  
Subject: Major Projects Challenge Fund

### **Abstract**

**Investment Initiative Title and Reference Number:** 4.2 – Major Projects Challenge Fund

**Scope:** This fund could support improvement(s) to parks and/or park facilities city-wide

**Schedule:** Funding becomes available in 2016; the first award could take place in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter of 2016 in small increments to fund planning and outreach, design and permitting work in advance of any construction funding.

**Budget:** \$1.6 Million per year

### **Requested Committee Action**

Attached are draft criteria by which Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) staff would review funding requests. SPR staff requests the committee's review and input on the draft criteria and your recommendation to move forward with the process outlined below to award funding in relatively small increments (\$20-50,000) in 2016 for planning and outreach, design and permitting.

### **Staff Recommendation (if applicable)**

SPR staff recommends that the attached draft criteria be established as the basis for screening the requests for planning and outreach, design and permitting funding to be awarded in 2016. The final criteria, scoring and weighting of criteria to be used for the larger construction funding will be reviewed and finalized by the Park District Oversight Committee (DOC) in 2016. The final criteria will be used for the review of any request for major project funding from the Major Projects Challenge Fund.

### **Investment Initiative Description and Background**

**Current Situation:** The City is often asked to provide financial support to capital development or improvement projects that focus on parks and recreation, for which there is little or no City funding available, and interested communities don't have enough funding to cover the total cost of the project.

**Solution:** This Challenge Fund will provide City funding to:

- Major project(s) on SPR owned property and/or SPR owned facility and
- An identified capital need and a high degree of community support or involvement.
- Leverage community-generated funding for the renovation of Parks' facilities where other City funding is unavailable
- Assist diverse communities and organizations that lack resources for a match.

**Anticipated Key Outcome:** Renovated, expanded, or upgraded parks and park facilities, funded through a combination of City and community-generated funds.

The purpose of the Major Project Challenge Fund is to provide a funding match, to fund a "major project" that is not otherwise covered by an identified Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) fund source. While not specifically defined, it is envisioned that a "major project" is a significant improvement or renovation to an existing SPR owned building or facility. SPR will manage the project. It is not a collection of small projects or a simple building repair such as a new roof. Merely being expensive doesn't necessarily make it a major project – it should significantly expand the life and usability of the subject facility such that it provides more opportunities for people to make use of the facility. The initial idea is that the money would go to one project every year or one project every other year, with some amount of money available for planning and design to get a project ready for a subsequent funding round. However, it may be that the best use of the fund will be to support one or two significant improvement projects over the first six years. Until SPR receives the first round of requests for planning/design funding, it is hard to know. To that end, SPR would like to target \$300K in 2016 for planning and design funding and \$100K for staff support to help applicant(s) get projects ready to submit for construction funding and identify matching dollars in subsequent years.

### **Key Issues**

One of the most critical components of this funding process will be the outreach to underserved and underrepresented communities. The second critical component will be staff support to enable these communities to effectively navigate the funding process. Third will be identification of the match; some communities may have easier access to dollars with which to provide a match. Other projects may have limited access to matching dollars so the match may have to be more flexible and include such things as a lower percentage of funding match or in-kind services. Being creative on the type and timing of the match will be important to ensure equity across all project proposals. Finally, providing planning and design money in advance of funding a construction project will also be an important component of this process.

### **Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement Strategies or Implication**

We will have to go beyond our standard outreach and meeting format to target outreach to the traditionally underserved and underrepresented communities. As an example, rather than holding meetings and expecting people to come to our meetings, we will attend standing meetings that are held by various community groups. We'll have to be creative with our outreach and find different ways to engage the communities to let them know that there may be dollars available to make improvements to a park or park facility in their neighborhood.

### **Budget and Financial Impacts**

There is dedicated funding available and a portion of it could be used to cover staff time to work with applicants and the District Oversight Committee. As noted above, SPR is requesting \$300K in 2016 for planning and design funding and an additional \$100K for staff support to help applicant(s) get projects ready to submit for construction funding and identify matching dollars in subsequent years.

## Timeline

### **Major Project Challenge Fund – Proposed Timeline**

- **July – September 2015** – Development of Draft Process and Criteria
- **August 2015** – Presentation to Division Directors
- **September 8, 2015** – Presentation to District Oversight Committee
  - Draft Screening Criteria
  - Strategy for 2016
- **October 13, 2015** – Presentation to District Oversight Committee
  - Finalize screening criteria and strategy for 2016
- **September – December 2015** - Staff Development of outreach strategy and On-line materials
- **January – March 2016** – Public Outreach (may include workshops or information sessions for potential proposals)
- **March 2016 – Proposal Letters Due**
- **April – May 2016** – Staff review of applications
- **June 2016** – District Oversight Committee review and recommendation to Superintendent
- **July 2016** – Funds awarded to project. Projects will be managed by SPR.

### **Additional Information**

David Graves, AICP  
Strategic Advisor  
Seattle Parks and Recreation  
[David.Graves@seattle.gov](mailto:David.Graves@seattle.gov)  
(206) 684-7048

### **Project Web address (if applicable)**

Project website will be created

### **Attachments/References**

None