

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 15, 2013

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

THROUGH: RASHAD M. YOUNG, CITY MANAGER 

FROM: NELSIE L. SMITH, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET 

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO #21: DEL RAY CITIZENS ASSOCIATION REQUEST FOR EAST DEL RAY AVENUE POCKET PARK FUNDING

ITEM

This memorandum is in response to a request by Mayor Euille and Councilman Wilson to provide additional information regarding Del Ray Citizens Association's (DRCA) request for funding to complete the East Del Ray Avenue Park. DRCA is proposing a contribution of \$21,500 toward remaining hardscape components of the park plan and additional funds for trees. While DRCA initially requested approximately \$30,000 in City funding, staff estimates \$27,400 would be required to complete the hardscape components, bringing total project funding to \$48,900 for work associated with hardscape components of the park plan and additional trees. The \$27,400 in additional City funding is not included as part of the City Manager's Proposed FY 2014 – 2023 Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The full cost of implementing Phase II of the park plan is estimated at \$92,900 and includes automatic irrigation and a fountain; those features are not included in the proposed scope of work.

BACKGROUND

East Del Ray Avenue Park was acquired for use as Open Space in 2007. A park concept plan was developed featuring a small children's play area, rain garden, 'labyrinth' plaza, seating and pathways. Due to City-wide budget constraints at the time, a phased approach to construction was chosen, by first completing key components to make the park appealing and usable by the community. In addition, this plan accounted for volunteer and financial commitments from community partners for later phases. This community support was a determining factor in both the decision to acquire the property and in developing the park plan. DRCA has been the most prominent advocate/supporter of the park.

The first phase was completed in August 2011, and included necessary grading and stormwater infrastructure, the rain garden, water utilities, benches, shade trees and plantings, as well as the play area. Phase 1 was constructed at a cost of \$299,823 from the City's Open Space Fund. To date, capital expenditures from the Open Space Fund for the park have totaled approximately \$1.5 million. This includes the costs associated with land acquisition and other acquisition-related costs (\$1.2 million). The remaining park components (Phase II) that have not been

completed include additional benches, a water fountain, irrigation, additional plantings, new walks, and a ‘labyrinth’ plaza.

PROJECT COSTS

Estimated Costs for Phase II of the East Del Ray Avenue Park Plan

Remaining Park Components (Phase 2)	Item Cost	DRCA Funding as of 4/8/13	Remaining Costs—Unfunded
Hardscape/“Labyrinth” Plaza (incl. 3 benches)	\$47,400*	\$20,000	\$27,400
Automatic Irrigation (with new power source)	\$27,500*	--	\$27,500
Water Fountain	\$16,500*	--	\$16,500
Trees (6)	\$1,500	\$1,500	--
TOTAL	\$92,900	\$21,500	\$71,400

*These items include a 10% contingency.

Staff has been working with DRCA over time by providing cost estimates and recommending incremental improvements and efficiencies that would best fit DRCA funding. DRCA recently confirmed their funding commitment.

If City funding is NOT provided, City staff will work with DRCA to explore alternatives for the completion of the hardscape and labyrinth plaza. Along with seeking grant funding for the labyrinth, alternative materials may need to be considered, in addition to leveraging other contributions from local contractors, similar to the Miracle Field.

If Council chooses to fund up to \$27,400 to match DRCA’s contribution, this additional funding is anticipated to provide full completion of the hardscape/labyrinth plaza. In terms of construction efficiency, the hardscape elements should be done first. Additionally, future consideration will be required to fully complete the park plan, including irrigation of the site.

CITY FUNDING

The additional CIP funding request by DRCA of \$27,400 is not included in the proposed FY 2014 CIP or FY 2014 – 2023 CIP schedules. When evaluated with other CIP priorities and projects during the budget planning process, the Phase II components of this park were considered a lower priority when compared to projects addressing City-wide park safety and critical repairs.

If City Council wishes to fund this initiative, funding will be required to be identified by City Council during the add-delete process. While there are available resources in the City’s Open Space fund, those funds have been earmarked for Waterfront land acquisition. Staff does not recommend utilizing open space funds to complete this phase of the project. Additionally, staff does not recommend utilizing Capital Facilities Maintenance Program (CFMP) funds to complete this project, as those funds are designated to maintain or improve existing capital infrastructure, not to expand capital infrastructure.