

THE BOTTOM LINE

NORTHERN INLAND RECREATION DISTRICT

MAY 14, 2010

Summary

The City of Willits, (City), offers many recreational opportunities for its residents. However, non-residents do not contribute to the cost of maintaining or improving the various facilities. The expenses are paid through the City's general fund.

A voter initiative to create a recreational district would allow the costs of operating the many facilities to be shared throughout the community.

Methods

The Grand Jury interviewed elected officials, management, and staff, and reviewed documents, including City Council agendas and the 2009-2010 final budget.

Background

The creation of a recreation district has been discussed in the community for the past 20 years and does not currently exist.

Findings

1. Recreational facilities include: baseball/softball fields, soccer fields, a skate park, swimming pool, tennis courts, Recreation Grove Park, and Bud Snyder Park.
2. Only 30 to 45% of recreational users live within the city limits.
3. The current recreation and swimming pool budgets indicate the following expenses for:
 - playground equipment and recertification,
 - swimming pool maintenance,
 - resurfacing the tennis courts,
 - fencing,
 - security,
 - landscaping,
 - maintenance of the parking areas for city recreational facilities.
 - irrigation,
 - utilities,
 - portable toilets,
 - garbage collection,
 - maintenance of tools and equipment,
 - vehicle usage,
4. The swimming pool operation has a budgeted expenditure of \$58,878 and an

- income of \$23,600.
5. The 2009-2010 recreational budget shows an income of \$2,000 from the rental of buildings and grounds.
 6. The 2009-2010 recreational and swimming pool budgets show a net cost of:
 - \$161,999 for public works park maintenance,
 - \$35,278 for the swimming pool operation.
 7. Formation of a recreation district could save the City approximately \$195,000 in maintenance and other expenses.
 8. Residents within the city limits of Willits currently bear the entire expense of the recreational facilities located within the City limits.
 9. A recreational district community support group, (group), came before the Willits City Council to pursue Proposition 84 funds to rebuild the City pool and to add other facilities.
 10. The City Council voted to allow the group to go forward without any City staff time or funding.

Recommendation

The Grand Jury recommends that:

1. a collective effort be made by various agencies, including a recreational district community support group, to develop a Recreation District with the direction of the Local Area Formation Commission, (LAFCO). The district, at a minimum, would include Brooktrails, Willits, and their spheres of influence. (All Findings)

Discussion

The recreational district community support group is responsible for writing the initiative for the November 2010 election. The estimated cost for the formation of the recreational district is \$25,000 to \$30,000.

Required Responses

Willits City Council (All Findings; Recommendation 1)

Local Area Formation Commission (All Findings; Recommendation 1)

Requested Responses

Brooktrails Township Board of Directors (All Findings; Recommendation 1)

Recreational District Community Support Group (All Findings; Recommendation 1)