



City of Rialto

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FOR Economic Development Committee [August 12, 2021]

TO: Economic Development Committee Members

FROM: Michael Tahan, Interim Public Works Director

Cemetery Maintenance Procedures and Schedules

BACKGROUND:

The City of Rialto operates and maintains a Cemetery located at 200 N. Willow Ave. The Rialto Cemetery has been a peaceful resting place for many families since the late 1800's. Tall trees, green turf, and peaceful surroundings make it a destination during one's time of need.

ANALYSIS/DISCUSSION:

City Council expressed concerns at the May 11, 2021, City Council meeting, when staff requested authorization to release bids for the Rialto Cemetery Rehabilitation Project, City Project No. 210209. City Council requested to have more discussions and information on the Cemetery maintenance and operations, as well as potential expansions.

Burial Process

The Public Works Superintendent outlined the current step-by-step burial process when family member wishes to place a loved one in the Rialto Cemetery:

- Step 1.** The family members of the deceased will contact the Treasury Department to schedule a walk-through.
- Step 2.** The Treasury Department schedules an appointment between the family members and the Parks Maintenance staff to look at available plots at the Cemetery.
- Step 3.** When the family members select a plot, the Parks Maintenance staff will contact the Treasury Department and provide the location and plot number chosen.

- Step 4.** The Treasury Department sends an e-mail to Parks Maintenance to confirm the burial date, section, row, and plot number.
- Step 5.** Parks Maintenance staff digs the selected grave site one day prior to the burial and covers the site with plywood for safety. If the burial is scheduled on a Monday, staff will dig the grave site the previous Friday. Graves are dug one day prior in the event there are any issues such as equipment failure, cave-in of soil, irrigation lines found in the grave site, etc.
- Step 6.** Parks Maintenance staff installs the concrete vault the morning of the burial unless it is a double vault. Double vaults are installed the day the grave is dug one day prior.
- Step 7.** Parks Maintenance staff prepares the grave site area with a lowering device, artificial grass, canopy, and chairs.
- Step 8.** After the burial ceremony ends, the casket is lowered into the concrete vault and the lid placed on top of the vault.
- Step 9.** The mortician signs all the legal documents.
- Step 10.** The grave site is covered with dirt, the area is compacted, and grass seed installed.
- Step 11.** Parks Maintenance staff adds the deceased's name to the plot location on the Cemetery maps and contacts the Treasury Department to ensure cemetery maps and Treasury maps have the same information.

Maintenance Schedule

The Public Works Superintendent outlined the current maintenance program at the Cemetery:

- Mowing schedule:
 - Every Wednesday during spring and summer months.
 - Every other Wednesday during winter months.
- Flower/ headstone cleanup:
 - Every Wednesday first thing in the morning. Unless it is a new burial, then it will be cleaned up the following week.
- Tree trimming:
 - Performed on an as needed basis.
- Hedge trimming:
 - Bi-monthly by the City's current landscape contractor.
- Irrigation schedule:
 - Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday during the summer months.
 - Monday, Wednesday, Friday during the fall and winter months.
 - Off during rainy days.

The irrigation is scheduled to come on at 10:00 PM and runs until around 2:00 AM. Irrigation system is inspected monthly for regular maintenance and repairs are done on an as needed basis.

Current Deficiencies

The City Council and Staff have expressed concerns regarding current Cemetery deficiencies at the

July 13, 2021 City Council meeting. The Public Works Superintendent has developed an action plan to address these concerns and outlined below:

- Dry/Dead Turf Areas - The Superintendent has directed Staff and landscape contractor to repair and/or install additional irrigation lateral lines to provide full coverage in the interim of replacing the irrigation with the paving project. Staff is also reseeding turf areas and placing sod rather than grass seed after a recent burial.
- Maintenance - The Superintendent and Staff met with the Landscape Maintenance Contractor to express the City Council displeasure with their performance. The Contractor has assured Staff that these issues will be correct immediately. Staff has already seen improvements and continues to monitor their performance.
- Holes to Graves - Park Maintenance Staff surveyed the entire Cemetery and located three holes. Two of those holes were gophers and one was a small sink hole approximately 15 inches deep. In the bottom of the sink hole was a Styrofoam cup, giving the appearance of concrete. On 7/14/21 no odors were found.
- Headstone Adjustments - This bi-annual project was scheduled for fall of 2020, but postponed due to the Pandemic and the paving/irrigation replacement project. Once the irrigation portion is completed, the Superintendent would direct Park Maintenance Staff to adjust the Headstones. If the Headstone adjustments were made prior to the irrigation installation, it is highly likely that the Contractor would easily move machinery over the level headstones, causing more cracking and damage. A better alternative is to wait for construction to be completed, and then make the adjustments. The Superintendent has also instructed the Landscaping Maintenance Contractor, and City Staff, to when at all possible not drive machinery or vehicles over headstones during maintenance activities.
- Plot Markers - The repainting of the plot markers on curbs was also postponed as it is in the plans and specifications for the pavement replacement project.
- Plot Alignment - The Cemetery has never had a quality plot marking system. The Superintendent recommended either a GIS based system or concrete corner plot markers, so visitors can find their loved ones with ease. The request was denied due to available budget and string line/measuring tape was used, as it was in the entire Cemetery. The older plots are misaligned, but some have been in place since the early 1900's and cannot be moved. The headstones are all installed by an outside company selected by the Treasury Department.
- Burial Procedures - It was brought to Staff's attention that there was a complaint regarding the Burial Procedures. Public Works is researching how neighboring City Cemetery's perform this task, along with obtaining quotes from companies who specialize in this service.

Cemetery Paving Rehabilitation & Sidewalk Project:

The existing facility drive aisles have out-lived the asphalt design expectancy and are in need of rehabilitation. Included in the deficiencies are areas where ponding occurs further eroding the existing pavement and flooding the easterly boundary of adjacent Bender Park.

The cemetery welcomes the public during all hours with an ungated entry from Willow Street property frontage. Frontage improvements will enhance pedestrian safety by providing ADA compliant sidewalk to facility. The newly paved internal roads, upgraded curbing, and drainage/irrigation upgrades will provide a stable pavement surface free of standing water nuisance for visitors to move around the grounds.

TKE Engineering Inc. supported the City and provided design plans for paving rehabilitation, repair

and/or replacement of rolled concrete berms, irrigation line repair, on-site drainage facilities, and off-site sidewalk on Willow Street. Curb cuts and pedestrian ramps for the off-site mid-block crosswalk on Willow Street are also included in design.

Previously designed irrigation sprinkler system plans were reviewed by TKE for constructability and found to be sufficient to advertise with the pavement construction. City maintenance staff previously expressed a desire to centralize the irrigation timing system to a single controller. The plan set may potentially be modified for this change. A rough order magnitude (ROM) cost for the irrigation system is \$400,000.

The Engineering Estimate for the paving rehabilitation project design plans is \$326,300 and includes the following construction items and quantities.

- Construct PCC Curb Ramp 2 EA
- Construct PCC Type E Rolled Curb 540 LF
- Construct 4" Thick PCC Sidewalk 1,092 LF
- Construct 2" Thick Asphalt Concrete Pavement Overlay 100 SF
- Construct 3" Thick Asphalt Concrete Pavement 100 SF
- Construct 4" Thick Crushed Aggregate Base 100 SF
- Construct 1.5" Thick Asphalt Concrete Pavement Overlay 575 TONS
- Construct 1.5" Thick Asphalt Concrete Pavement 575 TONS
- Furnish and Install "Assembly C" Sign and Post 2 EA
- Install Striping and Legends (gravesite location) 1 LS
- Grade Existing Ground to Drain 60 SF

Cemetery Contract/Outside Vendor:

Public Works Staff is exploring contracting out the Cemetery operations and maintenance to an outside contractor that specializes in handling Cemetery operations.

Staff have reached out to Inland Memorial Inc. and Montecito Memorial Park and Mortuary to evaluate the option of contracting out the Cemetery operations and maintenance services.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

All cemetery post-burial requests such as installing vases, addressing headstone issues, marking graves for headstone installations, etc., are received as work orders from the Treasury Department.

Historically, the weekly Landscaping Maintenance has been provided by a City Contractor and funded by the Parks Maintenance Division budget, Account No. 010-500-7304-2011.

As per City Council direction, staff has added one full time employee fully dedicated for the daily maintenance of the cemetery. This position has been added to the Fiscal Year 2022 budget funded by the Cemetery Account No. 630-500-7110-1000.

Additionally, the Cemetery Paving Rehabilitation & Sidewalk Project is included in the Capital Improvement Budget. Funds in the amount of \$643,448 for the Rialto Cemetery Rehabilitation & Sidewalk Project, No. 210209, are budgeted and available in the Capital Projects Fund, Account No.

300-500-7302-3001-210209.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff requests that the Economic Development Committee provide feedback and recommendation to staff.