

MEMORANDUM

Planning Division

June 22, 2018

Lighting at Riverbend Park

At the regularly scheduled May 1, 2018 Council meeting, the Planning Division presented information regarding the potential to install lights at Riverbend Park. Following this presentation, direction was given to staff to investigate costs for lighting and to provide additional information and lighting estimates in a memo.

Proposed Lighting

If temporary lighting at Riverbend Park is proposed, a minimum of twelve large-size temporary lights are anticipated to be needed to light three (3) soccer fields at night.

The Recreation Division anticipates the largest temporary light array to be used would be equivalent to the MLT 5000 series that can be rented from Sunbelt. This type of stadium/construction lighting is approximately 30 to 35 feet in height (as shown in the graphic below).



Example Temporary Lighting Fixture (Type MLT 500)

The lights in the array shown above are directed straight out from the unit to direct the light and cannot be directed downward to minimize light spillage. Therefore, more portable lighting units would be needed to light a given area, versus fewer permanent lights which could be 70 feet in height and could have LED bulbs and be directed downward.

The Recreation Division advised that regulation soccer competitions cannot be held using

Riverbend Park Temporary Lighting

temporary lighting. Therefore, temporary lighting would only be useful for recreational teams wishing to practice after dark.

Cost of Portable Lighting versus Permanent Lighting

The Recreation Division has informed us that each of the portable lighting units would cost approximately \$15,000.00 to purchase or \$150.00 per day to rent (\$1,800 for the twelve needed to illuminate 3 playing fields). In comparison, the purchase and installation of lighting for six (6) permanent LED lights to illuminate 5 fields would be approximately \$409,000.00. This amount may be greater depending on engineering and construction costs for special foundations and electrical infrastructure required to meet the City Floodplain Ordinance.

Environmental Review

Lighting was not evaluated in the Riverbend Park and Trail Master Plan EIR due to the proximity of the park from riparian vegetation, biologically significant habitat, and the location of the playing fields within the regulatory floodway and airport approach zone.

Therefore, a Mitigated Negative Declaration evaluating lighting impacts would be necessary before lights could be installed. An estimated cost for the environmental evaluation of lighting is approximately \$40,000.00. Most likely the cost of environmental review for the placement of temporary versus permanent lighting would not be significantly different.

In order to mitigate potential adverse environmental impacts, it is anticipated the lighting would need to be LED, yellow in color, screened and directed downward. A buffer of minimum 30-feet to 500-feet from the outer dripline of riparian vegetation will be required to protect the biologically sensitive area of the riverbed. If a buffer smaller than 500 feet is proposed and approved, the number of playing fields may increase, as would the cost to rent or purchase temporary lighting to illuminate the larger area. In addition, lighting would need to be placed so it would not impede landing of aircraft at the Lompoc Municipal Airport. Temporary lighting would not be able to be screened or directed downward, be yellow, or utilize LED bulbs. On the other hand, permanent lighting would be able to be screened, directed downward and utilize yellow LED bulbs to properly mitigate the before mentioned environmental impacts.

Recommendation

If directed to move forward in conducting an environmental evaluation of temporary or permanent lighting, staff recommends the resulting draft environmental document and lighting proposal be initially reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Commission. The Parks and Recreation Commission could then make a recommendation to the City Council regarding lighting at Riverbend Park.

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