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REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

BOARD MEETING DATE: September 27, 2006

TITLE: **GREAT PARK COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN**


Interim Chief Executive Officer

RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. Approve the Great Park Comprehensive Master Plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On October 26, 2006, the Great Park Board approved the Preliminary Master Plan in concept and directed staff to submit the Plan to the City of Irvine for regulatory review.

The Master Plan received a unanimous recommendation of approval from the Community Services Commission on June 20 and was approved by the Planning Commission on August 2, 2007. Following Planning Commission approval, the Design Studio has adjusted the Preliminary Master Plan, incorporated changes from the City approval process, and produced a Comprehensive Master Plan for Board approval.

The Comprehensive Master Plan is a complete vision for the Great Park and represents a holistic design concept that was developed in coordination with the public, stakeholders, and the City of Irvine. The Comprehensive Master Plan merges the ideas documented in the Preliminary Master Plan with the specific details approved in the Master Plan. The Plan continues to illustrate the ideas and aspirations for the Great Park while acknowledging the specific components that have been approved through the Master Plan review process.

Staff recommends that the Board approve the Great Park Comprehensive Master Plan.

STATEMENT OF THE ISSUES

Issue 1: Task Three - Great Park Master Plan

On October 26, 2006, the Great Park Board approved the Preliminary Master Plan in concept and directed staff to submit the Plan to the City of Irvine for regulatory review. The Preliminary Master Plan is described in Task Two of the Design Studio's contract work program as the design process to refine the competition plan to a Preliminary Master Plan through the preparation of design studies to address specific issues

outlined in the Critical Issues Assessment followed by the selection of preferred alternatives. The Preliminary Master Plan was prepared as a vision statement that established the framework for the overall park design. The Plan is future-oriented and illustrates key design concepts as well as potential features and programming opportunities. It shows the Master Designer's vision for the Orange County Great Park unconstrained by the City's General Plan and zoning intensity standards and previous environmental analysis.

Task Three of the work program is the submittal of the Plan for review and approval by the relevant public agencies. Following agency approval, the Design Studio team was required to adjust the Preliminary Master Plan, incorporate changes, and produce a Comprehensive Master Plan for Board approval.

The Master Plan represents the design intent of the Great Park Design Studio. Essential components of the Plan include the sustainability goals adopted by the Great Park Board as well as the ecological backbone and "living laboratory" concepts brought forward by the Design Studio. The Master Plan reflects the precise boundary of the City property as defined by Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 17008 as well as the current regulatory framework of the City of Irvine. The Master Plan received a unanimous recommendation of approval from the Community Services Commission on June 20 and was approved by the Planning Commission on August 2, 2007.

Approval of the Master Plan moved forward the overall park design for the Orange County Great Park. Following Planning Commission approval, the Design Studio has adjusted the Preliminary Master Plan, incorporated changes from the City approval process, and produced a Comprehensive Master Plan for Board approval.

Issue 2: Task Five - Comprehensive Master Plan

In accordance with Task Five of the Agreement for Master Design Services, the Design Studio developed a Comprehensive Master Plan. The Comprehensive Master Plan takes the concepts presented in the Preliminary Master Plan which was presented to the Board of Directors in October 2006, and merges them with the Planning Commission approved Master Plan. The Comprehensive Master Plan is a complete vision for the Great Park and represents a holistic design concept, as developed in coordination with the public, stakeholders, and the City of Irvine.

The Preliminary Master Plan (PMP) integrated the many ideas and aspirations of the park. The PMP described a framework for these concepts to relate to one another and provided a spatial context to the Great Park, highlighting the true opportunity the Great Park holds for the local and regional communities and beyond. It set the framework for the Master Plan, a document that further details many of the features presented in the Preliminary Master Plan.

The Master Plan defined and located many of the concepts envisioned on the Preliminary Master Plan, while being sensitive to the City's land use regulations and previous environmental studies. Through the City's discretionary review process, those features that fit within the City's regulatory framework and the previously certified Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the Great Park were approved.

The Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP) merges the ideas documented in the Preliminary Master Plan with the specific details approved in the Master Plan. The CMP continues to illustrate the ideas and aspirations for the park while acknowledging the specific components that have been approved through the Master Plan review process. It is important to the Design Studio that all of the Preliminary Master Plan ideas – including those that were not ultimately included in the approved Master Plan – continue to be considered and reviewed as part of the on-going design process. To that end, the Comprehensive Master Plan continues to perfect those concepts with more clarity and definition.

Issue 3: Revisions to the Preliminary Master Plan

Since the Preliminary Master Plan was not limited by the City's General Plan and zoning intensity standards and previous environmental analysis, the City applied those constraints during the discretionary review process. In approving a master plan, the Planning Commission is required to find that the project is consistent with the City's General Plan and zoning and does not cause significant or potentially significant impacts to the environment, significant or potentially significant on-site or off-site traffic impacts, or impacts to or the introduction of sensitive uses not previously considered within the site. During the course of the City's review process, the Design Studio revised the Master Plan to fit within both the City's regulatory framework and the project description from the 2003 Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the Great Park General Plan amendment.

The review process changed the park design concept shown in the Preliminary Master Plan in the following three areas:

1. The Great Park Design Studio had included within the Preliminary Master Plan park concepts for the potential land additions that the City may receive from Heritage Fields following approval of an Amended Overlay Plan. Since the Amended Overlay Plan has not yet been initiated, these additional park concepts were removed from the Master Plan.
2. The Great Park Design Studio assumed public-private partnerships (as envisioned in the Griffin Structures report) for the development of numerous facilities in the Sports Park as shown in the Preliminary Master Plan. Many of these facilities were not considered as part of the previously certified FEIR for the Great Park. In addition, the Board has not yet considered whether to proceed with public-private partnerships or potential lease opportunities for certain

features that may be included within the Sports Park. For these reasons, the water sports/wave park, skateboard park, indoor soccer facility, and retail components were removed from the Master Plan. In addition, the Field House was reduced in size from 60,000 square feet to 26,000 square feet to be consistent with maximum square footage allowed by the City's adopted land use intensity standards.

3. The Great Park Design Studio included an amphitheater site overlooking the lake in the original Competition Plan. The Critical Issues Assessment (Task One) determined that optimal alignment and sun orientation should be considered as part of the design process. The Assessment also included examples of various facilities that could be considered as comparisons, from the Greek Theater (6,100 seats) to the Hollywood Bowl (18,000 seats). The Preliminary Master Plan also included an amphitheater site as an anchor at one end of the Cultural Terrace. The Board has not yet defined their concept for an amphitheater in terms of size, type of venue, scope of operations, or potential operating partner. This type of facility was not included in the Master Plan since it has not been adequately defined and was not analyzed in the previously certified FEIR.

Although these facilities were not included in the approved Master Plan, the Design Studio continues to include them as potential ideas or concepts in the Comprehensive Master Plan. Whatever final decisions are made by the Board regarding possible public-private partnerships or other development opportunities within the Sports Park, either within the context of the Griffin Structures report or other development options, the Design Studio believes that it is important for the Sports Park to be integrated seamlessly into the Great Park as a whole.

All of these features remain viable options for the Board's consideration. As the Schematic Design phase moves forward, the Board will have the opportunity to consider these or other features for enhancements to the approved Master Plan, pursuant to a process that is being brought forward to the Board for approval in a separate Board agenda item (Agenda Item 4). This recommended process includes significant Board input and could result in recommendations on priority uses for additional feasibility studies. These studies will identify additional entitlements or analyses that may be required, potential funding sources for the use, and site layouts as well as business plan and operational issues. Board direction will be sought on whether to move forward to include the selected features into an enhanced Master Plan.

Changes to the approved Master Plan may trigger the City of Irvine's discretionary review process. It is likely that many uses and features will fit within the City's current Master Plan approval and will result in either no additional City approvals or minor modifications to the Master Plan. Some uses will require that additional analyses be prepared, such as supplemental traffic impact analysis or other environmental assessments. Those uses are also likely to require additional City review by the Community Services Commission or the Planning Commission, depending on the

application type and the level of impact. As part of the uses and features analysis, the discretionary application process will also be outlined.

FISCAL IMPACT

The costs of Task Three (\$1,558,053) and Task Five (\$1,159,928) are included in the existing contract with the Great Park Design Studio. Approval of the Comprehensive Master Plan does not authorize the expenditure of additional funds for any programs or activities contained therein.

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Attachment:

Comprehensive Master Plan (under separate cover)