

**Meeting Date:** 4/5/2016

**Report Type:** Consent

**Report ID:** 2016-00404

**Title:** Pilot Program for Attended Public Restroom Project

**Location:** Citywide

**Recommendation:** Pass a Motion authorizing the Department of Parks and Recreation to develop a Request for Proposals for a six month pilot program for an attended public restroom project.

**Contact:** Shannon D. Brown, Operations Manager, (916) 808-6076, Department of Parks and Recreation; Emily Halcon, (916) 808-7896, Homeless Services Coordinator, Office of the City Manager

**Presenter:** None

**Department:** Parks & Recreation Department

**Division:** Park Operations

**Dept ID:** 19001311

**Attachments:**

1-Description/Analysis

2-Background

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**City Attorney Review**

Approved as to Form  
Sheryl Patterson  
3/30/2016 3:33:06 PM

**Approvals/Acknowledgements**

Department Director or Designee: Pamela Sloan - 3/30/2016 10:42:43 AM

## Description/Analysis

**Issue Detail:** The City is faced with competing challenges of providing public restrooms and protecting the public health and safety of the community. Despite efforts to clean and maintain public restrooms on a regular basis, the facilities are increasingly vandalized and the toilets are backed-up, causing flooding. The facilities are often occupied overnight and used for illicit activities and violent crimes have occurred. Many of these incidents resulted in restrooms being permanently closed, only open for events, or otherwise restricted for use. The City is interested in piloting a six month program similar to the Pit Stop Program in San Francisco, targeting communities heavily impacted by homelessness where there are not public facilities or parks with restrooms available. The proposed pilot program would use a portable flushing toilet facility on a trailer that can be moved where needed. The facility would have two toilets, two sinks, and receptacles for garbage and sharps disposal. The program would require an attendant to monitor use and clean and restock the facility.

**Policy Considerations:** In general, the City has been focusing all funding for homeless programs to support “housing first” activities aligned with Sacramento Steps Forward (SSF). This proposed pilot program is complementary in that it recognizes that such activities take significant time to fully develop and launch. The pilot program aims to provide relief to the community while such housing activities are being established. The attended restroom program would be initially authorized in one location for up to six months, allowing staff to fully evaluate the impact and efficacy of such a program. If successful, the intention is to establish a limited term program, to be phased out as permanent housing programs are brought on line.

**Economic Impacts:** None.

**Environmental Considerations:** The portable restroom facility to be located in an area on a temporary basis is exempt from environmental review under the CEQA Guidelines section 15311(c).

**Sustainability:** None.

**Commission/Committee Action:** None.

**Rationale for Recommendation:** The City has been supporting SSF in their efforts to provide permanent housing to people experiencing homelessness in Sacramento. With the City’s support, SSF has been placing clients into permanent housing through the Coordinated Entry System based on vulnerability. While these efforts are producing good results, in the City’s 2015 report on the cost of homelessness, it was estimated that the City spends over \$7 million annually addressing the impacts of homelessness, including the cost of cleaning up human waste from encampments and along City streets.

**Financial Considerations:** Based on estimates from San Francisco’s Pit Stop Program and research on the cost of janitorial staff in Sacramento, staff estimates that a six month pilot program to rent the facility and provide attendants and supplies will cost approximately \$100,000. The City will solicit an external organization to operate the facility, and the responses to the Request for Proposals will allow for refinement of the program costs.

**Local Business Enterprise (LBE):**The City's 5% LBE participation requirement will be included in the request for proposals awarded by the City.

**Background:**

The City of Sacramento is interested in piloting an attendant portable restroom program similar to the Pit Stop Program in San Francisco, which targets communities heavily impacted by homelessness where there are not public facilities or parks with available restrooms. The program uses a portable flushing facility with two toilets, sinks, garbage, and sharps disposal.

The Pit Stop Program is operated and managed by the San Francisco Department of Public Works in partnership with the San Francisco Clean City Coalition. There are eleven Pit Stops throughout that city, which provide toilets, sinks, needle disposal and dog waste stations. A paid attendant subcontracted through a local non-profit, that provides transitional employment opportunities for low-income people exiting shelters, treatment programs and the criminal justice system, staffs each Pit Stop. The Pit Stop Program provides both permanent self-cleaning toilets and portable toilets located in highly impacted parts of the city. Attendants monitor usage of the toilets to insure safety, clean and re-stock the toilets, and generally keep the area around the toilet facility clean. The City of San Francisco notes that the attendants at the Pit Stop make “all the difference in the world” and that, without them, the public toilets would likely be dangerous and unsafe, and not usable for the public.

The City of Sacramento’s restroom program would be one portable toilet facility in one location available for up to 10 hours daily, with an attendant responsible for ensuring appropriate use and continued cleaning and stocking of supplies. The City would contract with an external organization to provide attendants. Solicitations for an independent organization to operate a six month pilot program will allow the City to both determine the most cost-efficient way to provide public restrooms and measure the impacts to the community. Should this effort be successful, it could be considered for continuation on an on-going basis and/or expansion into other parts of the City.