

6. RIVERLEA RECREATION AND RIVERLEA ESTATES RESERVE

General Manager responsible:	General Manager City Environment
Officer responsible:	Transport and Greenspace Manager
Author:	Mary Hay, DDI: 941-5410

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the Board's approval to proceed to detailed design and construction of the Riverlea Recreation and Riverlea Estates Reserve development proposals identified for the 2006/07 financial year and to approve the concepts for the remaining development proposals.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. Riverlea Recreation and Riverlea Estates Reserve are local parks at Riverlea, adjacent to Stewarts Gully. Riverlea Recreation was previously known informally as Cricket Pitch Park and was the reserves contribution from the Riverlea subdivision. It contains an open space area and previously contained a swing, which was removed in 2004 for safety reasons. Riverlea Estates Reserve was previously known informally as Pine Park and was gifted to Council with the agreement no buildings are erected on it. It previously contained a number of pine trees and it is now a wilderness-type area that abuts the Waimakariri Stop Bank.
3. One of the objectives for the Riverlea Recreation and Riverlea Estates Reserve upgrades was to recognise that each reserve has its own unique character. The Project Team developed a concept for Riverlea Recreation that provides a balance between the informal open space play area, and the playground, BBQ area, seating and basketball half court. The perimeter of the reserve and play facilities is softened with landscaping and it is proposed to provide a footpath through the reserve, adjacent to the proposed playground and paved area. The concept for the development of Riverlea Estates Reserve is to enhance the existing wilderness feel of the area and provide a mix of exotic and indigenous vegetation. These developments will be staged as funding will allow.
4. In June 2006 a publicity pamphlet, which included two initial concept plans, was distributed to the local community and stakeholders (refer attachments 1 and 2). The concept plans included the following proposals:

Riverlea Recreation

- Playground – swings, slide and a junior and intermediate play item
- Park signage and post and cable fencing
- Specimen tree planting – exotic and native
- Seating and picnic tables – two each
- Asphalt footpath
- Perimeter, amenity and screen planting
- Paved area with BBQ and seating
- Basketball half-court.

Riverlea Estates Reserve

- Signage and post and cable fencing
- Specimen tree planting of informal Arboretum – exotic and native
- Seating – two park benches
- Perimeter planting adjacent stop bank
- Amenity groundcover planting
- Native planting of mounds.

5. As the funding allocation for the 2006/07 financial year is limited to \$55,000 and the draft development proposals require a total funding of approximately \$230,000, the community was asked to rank the proposals in order of preference. To assist the community in making this choice, the Project Team suggested that the following development proposals could be prioritised:

Riverlea Recreation – development proposals

- Playground (slide, junior play item, intermediate play item)
- Signage and post and cable fencing
- Specimen tree planting.

Riverlea Estates Reserve– development proposals

- Signage and post and cable fencing
- Specimen tree planting of informal Arboretum.

6. The consultation received a 19% response rate. Community feedback was generally very positive. The consultation outcome and Project Team responses are summarised in attachments 3 and 4.
7. The feedback from the community was supportive of the ranking suggested by the Project Team in paragraph 5, above.
8. The key issues raised in consultation relate to:
 - Facilities - some opposition to the basketball half court, request for toilets
 - Access and Parking – more entrance points sought, request for more parking near Riverlea Estates Reserve
 - Various transport related requests.
9. The initial concept has been amended in response to community feedback and the preferred options are appended as attachments 5 and 6. These options best satisfy the objectives of the project and have good community support. Construction of the playground and fencing is scheduled to be implemented prior to Christmas 2006. The planting will be implemented in the 2006/07 planting season, between April and June 2007.
10. There were two options considered for the upgrade to Riverlea Recreation and Riverlea Estates Reserve:
 - (a) Staged development proposals for each park.
 - (b) Status quo – no change to the park.
11. The preferred option, (a) Staged development proposals for each park, best satisfies the objectives of the project and is consistent with feedback received through community consultation.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

12. The Council has previously agreed that no buildings be erected on Riverlea Estates Reserve.
13. The proposed upgrade to Riverlea Recreation and Riverlea Estates Reserve is programmed in the Greenspace Unit's capital budget, for construction over the 2006/2007 financial year – specifically, \$55,000.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Shirley/Papanui Community Board:

- (a) Approves the plan in attachment 5 (amended 14 August 2006), in order to proceed to implement the development proposals for Riverlea Recreation, as funding will allow.
- (b) Approves the implementation of the playground (including a slide, 'Jungle Cube', 'Spinner Bowl' and 'Junior Rocker'), park signage and post and cable fencing, and specimen tree planting at Riverlea Recreation in the 2006/07 financial year.
- (c) Approves the plan in attachment 6 (amended 14 August 2006), in order to proceed to implement the development proposals for Riverlea Estates Reserve, as funding will allow.
- (d) Approves the implementation of park signage and post and cable fencing, and specimen tree planting of the Arboretum at Riverlea Estates Reserve in the 2006/07 financial year.

CHAIRPERSON'S RECOMMENDATION

That the staff recommendations be adopted.

BACKGROUND ON RIVERLEA RECREATION AND RIVERLEA ESTATES RESERVE

14. Riverlea Recreation and Riverlea Estates Reserve are local parks at Riverlea, adjacent to Stewarts Gully. Riverlea Recreation was previously known informally as Cricket Pitch Park and was the reserve contribution from the Riverlea subdivision. It contains an open space area and used to contain a swing, which was removed in 2004 for safety reasons and replaced in 2006. Riverlea Estates Reserve was previously known informally as Pine Park and was gifted to Council with the agreement no buildings are erected on it. It previously contained a number of pine trees and it is now a wilderness-type area that abuts the Waimakariri Stop Bank.
15. The objectives for the Riverlea Recreation and Riverlea Estates Reserve development proposals were:
 - To create development proposals for the two reserves that are endorsed by the community and Community Board
 - To recognise that each reserve has its own unique character and ensure that this is enhanced by the development proposals
 - Seek community opinion on which proposals are a priority
 - If the community identifies a playground as a priority, use the community's preferred type of play equipment, to install a small local playground that is safe and accessible
 - Identify and implement the agreed proposals for the 2006/2007 financial year
 - Seek funding for implementation of the remainder of the development proposals.
16. The Project Team developed the following proposals to meet these objectives:

Riverlea Recreation

- Playground – swings, slide and a junior and intermediate play item
- Park signage and post and cable fencing
- Specimen tree planting – exotic and native
- Seating and picnic tables – two each
- Asphalt footpath
- Perimeter, amenity and screen planting
- Paved area with BBQ and seating
- Basketball half-court.

Riverlea Estates Reserve

- Signage and post and cable fencing
- Specimen tree planting of informal Arboretum – exotic and native
- Seating – two park benches
- Perimeter planting adjacent stop bank
- Amenity groundcover planting
- Native planting of mounds.

17. It is intended that the development of the Riverlea reserves will be staged. In total, the proposals will require funding of approximately \$230,000. As the current funding for the 2006/07 financial year is \$55,000, the above proposals need to be prioritised to determine which proposals will be implemented this year.
18. The community was advised that no further funding has been allocated at this stage and that funding would be sought for the remainder of the proposals in due course. To provide some assistance to the community in making this choice, the Project Team suggested some development proposals that could be prioritised. These were:

Riverlea Recreation – development proposals

- Playground – slide, junior play item, intermediate play item (swings already installed)
- Signage and Post and cable fencing
- Specimen tree planting – exotic and native.

Riverlea Estates Reserve– development proposals

- Signage and post and cable fencing
- Specimen Tree Planting of Informal Arboretum – exotic and native.

19. In June 2006 a publicity pamphlet was distributed to approximately 160 residences, absentee owners and key stakeholders. This pamphlet included a summary of the proposals, two initial concept plans (refer attachments 1 and 2), and a feedback form. The Project Team sought feedback from the community to help determine which proposals would be implemented first. The approximate cost of each proposal was itemised on the concept plans and the feedback form asked that the respondent rank each proposal in order of importance. Feedback was also sought on the type of play equipment to install.
20. The consultation received a 19% response rate (31 responses). Community feedback was generally very positive. The consultation outcome and Project Team responses are summarised in attachments 3 and 4. The key issues identified relate to:
- Facilities - some opposition to the basketball half court, request for toilets
 - Access – more entrance points sought
 - Parking - request for more parking near Riverlea Estates Reserve
 - Various transport related requests, e.g. street names, bus turning, speed bump.
21. The Project Team considered the feedback from consultation and revised the concept plan in the following way:
- Riverlea Recreation**
- Relocated the basketball half court
 - Provided additional access points
 - Relocated the fence on the eastern boundary of the reserve into the road reserve to increase the usable park area and decrease corner cutting.
- Riverlea Estates Reserve**
- Provided an additional seat
 - Provided additional access points.
22. The feedback from the community indicated support for the proposals that were suggested by the Project Team for implementation in the 2006/07 year. That is:
- Riverlea Recreation**
- Playground – ‘Jungle Cube’ was preferred as the intermediate play item. ‘Spinner Bowl’ and ‘Junior Rocker’ were both popular as junior play items
 - Park signage and post and cable fencing
 - Specimen tree planting – exotic and native.
- Riverlea Estates Reserve**
- Signage and post and cable fencing
 - Specimen tree planting of informal Arboretum – exotic and native.
23. In response to the mixed feedback about the basketball half court the Project Team considered an alternative location that is more centrally located and is therefore a greater distance from the properties adjoining the park. This new location was distributed to the residents that adjoin the park, for comment. The new proposed location was supported by all respondents, including those that opposed the original location.
24. The recommended development proposals are included as attachments 5 and 6. These plans best satisfy the objectives of the project and have good community support. Construction of the playground, park signage and post and cable fencing is scheduled to begin before Christmas 2006. Tree planting will proceed between April and June 2007, in the winter planting season.

OPTIONS

25. There were two options considered for the upgrade to Riverlea Recreation and Riverlea Estates Reserve:
- (a) Staged development proposals for each park. This option is most favoured by the community, who support the development of these reserves. The pathway proposal will improve access for those with impaired mobility. Playground, youth recreation facility and community barbecue will foster community cohesion. Social and environmental benefits from landscaping. The fencing will assist the protection of a Council asset.
 - (b) Status quo - no work completed in the Riverlea reserves. This option would not meet community expectations and would not improve access for mobility impaired.

PREFERRED OPTION

26. The preferred option, (a) staged development proposals for each park, best satisfies the objectives of the project and is consistent with feedback received through community consultation.