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Corporate Plan Output: Parks Plans and Policy Statements	

The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on progress in addressing problems identified around Washington Reserve and the pending resource consent application.

Following a meeting on 23 April 1999, which was attended by skaters, business owners, staff, police and some Councillors, a working group was set up to address problems identified at the meeting. At the same time, the minutes from the meeting were distributed to those present together with business and landowners who were not present. Some of the recipients added further comments to the spreadsheet (tabled).

Issues raised included:

1. Access and use of railway corridor by people and the subsequent occurrence of graffiti and broken windows.
2. Use of Washington Way and car parks by skaters.
3. Difficulty in parking in Washington Way
4. Graffiti and behaviour in Washington Reserve
5. Skaters feeling threatened in the park.
6. Activity is incompatible with business area and should be removed.

Positive comments received from some business owners included:

1. Fewer antisocial problems since the facility has been there
2. The facility needs to be bigger
3. Facility has put Washington Way on the map
4. Some business has come their way because of the facility.

The working group met for the first time on 28 June and discussed how some of the problems could be addressed.

The following action points were agreed upon:

1. That a letter be written to Tranzrail encouraging staff to address the accessibility and use of the railway corridor and light tower by young people. Improved fencing was suggested.
2. That Parks Rangers be rostered on for the following two weeks (the school holidays) to highlight supervision of the park to skaters and to reduce the likelihood of any problems during that time.
3. That the employment of an ACE worker be investigated for the Christmas holidays.
4. That the fence between Washington Reserve and the railway line be increased in height and the area in front of it be planted.
5. That lighting be installed as soon as possible.
6. That the resource consent process be initiated.

All of these points have been actioned, apart from proceeding with the lighting contract. With the release of the Christchurch City Plan the reserve has been rezoned Open Space 2 for which the proposed light poles need a resource consent. It has been recommended that this be dealt with as part of the resource consent for the entire facility.

A planner has been commissioned to co-ordinate and prepare the application for resource consent for the rest of the development. Prior to this process all businesses and landowners will be written to, outlining the action taken following the working group meeting and mentioning that the Council will be applying for resource consent in the next couple of months.

The fence between the reserve and the railway line has been doubled in height and the area in front of it mounded and planted. The stockpile of fill that sat in the corner near the overbridge has been removed as it was starting to collect rubbish and look untidy.

Park Rangers supervised the skaters every afternoon during the school holidays and behaviour was generally very good. The honorary park warden for Washington continues his presence at the reserve during the weekends and has collected a large number of letters from the skaters requesting the construction of Stage 2 as soon as possible as the existing facility is overcrowded at times and some skaters are becoming bored with it. He has also spoken to some business owners and has collected the cards of about 15 businesses in the area who are, on the whole, happy with the facility.

The lack of parking in Washington way mainly occurs during weekly working hours. Peter Atkinson from the City Streets Unit has responded to the problem by suggesting that a P60 restriction could be placed on the south side of Washington Way for six car parking spaces. Comment from the businesses in the area should be sought to establish whether this is adequate.

The Committee is reminded that a strategy for skating and freestyle cycling is being prepared by the Parks and Leisure Units. Sarah Wylie, a researcher who has been involved in a number of Council recreation projects has been commissioned to complete the project. This will identify more sites for skating which should spread the load of skating activity across the city.

CONCLUSION

The Parks Unit is proceeding with the resource consent application. The timeframe for this will be determined at a meeting with the planner and Council staff on Monday 2 August 1999. In the meantime, the working group will continue to monitor and reduce problems if and when they arise, to improve the management of the park. It is envisaged that the working group will meet again before the end of August.

Parks Unit staff will request that City Streets staff notify businesses of options for potential parking restrictions in Washington Way, so that their comments regarding parking problems are addressed in the best possible way.

Chairman's

Recommendation: That the information be received.