



splash pad, shaded picnic areas, golf course, boat house, boat launch, fishing pier, band shell, rose garden, lawn bowling, the Izaak Walton clubhouse, and acres of pastoral open space. Mature heritage Montezuma cypress trees outlining the lakes are a notable feature in the park.

Fairmount Lake was created in 1904 within the floodplains of the Santa Ana River. The larger Lake Evans and smaller Brown Lake were later developed in 1924 creating the park's 3-lake system that is in place today. The lake system is part of the city's watershed and stormwater drainage network. Springbrook Wash (also known as the University Wash) carries runoff from the northeastern portion of the city and enters the Fairmount Park Lake system from the northeast near Market Street. Stormwater then passes through the lake and through the park to flow into the Santa Ana River to the west. Sediment and silt carried by stormwater settles in the lake bottom, reducing the water-holding capacity of the lake and reducing the depth of the lake. This has negative impacts on the lake's health and prevents recreational use of the lake for boating activities. The shallow depth, poor circulation, and excess nutrients may be contributing factors leading to algae blooms.

The lake was last dredged in 2007 and before that in the 1980s. During the 2007 dredging, approximately 20,684 cubic yards of sediment was removed from Fairmount Lake, and 72,113 cubic yards was removed from the larger Lake Evans.

## **DISCUSSION:**

On May 24, 2024, the Council awarded Bid No. 8083 in the amount not-to-exceed \$1,063,750. The Notice to Proceed was issued on October 22, 2024. During the dredging, some unforeseen circumstances arose, and the process of suction dredging had to be altered to excavation dredging. This process was more expensive and time consuming. On Tuesday, April 8, we were notified by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife that our permit to allow suction dredging was amended and we could continue to dredge the lake at Fairmount Park utilizing this process and not the excavation dredging that we reverted to while suction dredging was disallowed. The substitute dredging practice severely compromised the process, which left the City with additional work costing approximately \$500,000. These facts were discovered after the deadline to meet the Sunshine Ordinance and forward approvals through the standard process.

The project's progress was delayed due to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) requirements, who initially required us to dredge the lake using a slow and expensive mechanical method of dredging which hindered the work in progress. The lake cannot remain in the current state. The immediate need is to prevent the expensive and time-consuming demobilization and remobilization, which would imperil the City's ability to successfully dredge Fairmount Park to protect public health. This work is of urgent necessity to preserve life, health, and property.

In 2024, an outbreak of botulism in the lake caused the death of dozens of ducks on the lake. The dredging work will restore water depth in the lake, improving water quality to avoid further endangerment to wildlife. The work is now urgent and must be completed prior the weather getting hotter, to avoid the shallow water and hot temperatures which create an environment for botulism.

On April 8, 2025, a notice was received CDFW that the use of hydraulic dredging will be allowed to further continue the work. The contractor currently has equipment still on site and if forced to deploy and then reinstate all equipment, the city will incur additional cost. This project is of the essence and must be completed before an upcoming project funded by Riverside County Flood Control District that will re-engineer the University Wash (the storm drain/arroyo that feeds into the lake system) to reduce flooding related road closures in Fairmount Park during rain

events. The project is already in progress and ongoing. Further delays in the dredging process will hinder the timeline on the University Wash impacting the completion of the project resulting additional issues. Therefore, we are requesting a Change Order to complete the dredging of the lake and avoid any further hazards to wildlife and habitat. Additionally further delays in the lake dredging will result in activity closures such as; sailing classes, pedal boats and other recreational activities in the lake.

The recommendation is in accordance with the City Charter Section 1109. Public works contracts which states “Such contracts likewise may be let without advertising for bids if such work or supplies or materials shall be deemed by the City Council to be of urgent necessity for the preservation of life, health or property, and shall be authorized by resolution passed by at least five affirmative votes of the City Council and containing a declaration of the facts constituting such urgency.” Additionally Purchasing Resolution section 1104 (b) states that “Any Change Order which causes the contract price to exceed the authorization in section 203 hereof, if the Contract and/or Purchase Order was not previously approved by the Awarding Entity”

The Purchasing Manager concurs that the recommendation to approve the change order is in compliance with Purchasing Resolution No 24101 Section 1104 (b) and the City Charter Section 1109.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

The work contributes to the “Arts, Culture and Recreation” priority of the Envision Riverside 2025 Strategic Plan, which aims to provide diverse community experiences and personal enrichment opportunities for people of all ages.

The work contributes to goals 1.3, to improve parks, recreational amenities, open space, and trail development, and fulfill critical lifecycle and facility maintenance needs, and goal 1.4, to prioritize safety at parks, trails, arts, cultural and recreational facilities.

1. **Community Trust** – The Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department is entrusted to be stewards of the natural and recreational resources within our City’s park lands. This project is needed to improve the health of the lake and restore its capacity as part of the City’s watershed and drainage system. The project will also restore lake depth to allow the return of recreational boating at Fairmount Lake.
2. **Equity** – Fairmount Park is considered a regional park and serves the entire Riverside community. The park amenities are open to everyone.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – The competitive procurement of services for this project is in accordance with Purchasing Resolution No. 24101 Section 508. Funds will be used from the Regional Park Fees account.
4. **Innovation** – This project improves the changing lake environment by using a modern low-impact method to dredge sediment and restore capacity and recreational uses for the community.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – This project addresses the present need to remove sediment from the lake to improve lake health and restore recreational boating opportunities, without compromising the ability of the community to enjoy the lake in the future.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The total fiscal impact of this report is \$638,750. This includes the change order amount of \$500,000 and contingency amount of \$138,750. Staff recommend modifying the fund source of the already approved project contingency funding of \$138,750 from the General Fund to the Regional Park Special Capital Improvement Fund, given recent council action to withhold General Fund contingency amounts for several projects to help address the current year budget deficit. Upon Council approval, a supplemental appropriation of \$638,750 will be recorded in the Regional Parks Special Capital Improvement Fund, Fairmount Lake Dredging project expenditure account to be created by the Finance Department at a later date as indicated in the table below.

Per City Resolution No, 21308, Regional Park funds are to be used for the acquisition and improvement of regional parks and reserves. Regional Park funds can be used for the planned capital improvements at Fairmount Lake.

Prepared by: Alisa Sramala, Principal Park Project Manager  
Approved by: Pamela M. Galera, Parks, Recreation and Community Services Director  
Certified as to  
availability of funds: Kristie Thomas, Finance Director/Assistant Chief Financial Officer  
Approved by: Kris Martinez, Assistant City Manager  
Approved as to form: Jack Liu, Interim City Attorney

Attachments:

1. Power Point Presentation