



## Legislation Text

---

**File #:** 20-058, **Version:** 1

---

*Report Prepared by: Michelle Reid, Recreation Supervisor*

**SUBJECT:** Approval of Department Name Change and Fee Schedule Modification

### REPORT IN BRIEF

Considers the approval of department name change and fee schedule modification.

### RECOMMENDATION

**Recreation and Parks Commission** - Adopt a motion approving the department name change and fee schedule modification.

### DISCUSSION

In the last 10 - 12 years, the Parks and Community Services Department has experienced transfers of the Code Enforcement Division and the Merced Community Action Network (MCAN) contract. The MCAN contract provided graffiti removal throughout the City. Much of the work of Code Enforcement and MCAN relates to community development or services, neighborhood cleanup, and beautification, all of which contribute to the "Quality of Life," in Merced.

The citizens do not always understand how "community services" relates to park development and recreation programming. As a result, staff fields calls and inquiries for social and health services, reducing time they are able to spend expanding current programming for the community.

Additionally, most parks throughout the City have the "Parks and Recreation" label on their stone markers, including the regional parks, such as McNamara Park, Rahilly Park, and Applegate Park, as well as Applegate Zoo. The differing names has occasionally caused confusion for the public when trying to locate the offices or contact staff by phone.

As a result, staff is requesting the department name be officially changed from "Parks and Community Services" to "Parks and Recreation" effective July 1, 2020.

The Parks and Community Service fees were last updated on June 2, 2008. Since then, California minimum wage has increased six times, rising from \$8.00 per hour in 2008 to \$13.00 per hour in 2020. The minimum is set to increase to \$15.00 per hour by 2022. The result will be an hourly rate for part-time staff that has nearly doubled since the last department fee increase.

Rising minimum wage coupled with increasing costs to provide public recreation services makes it necessary for the Parks and Community Services Department to increase a number of fees for programs and services to reduce its strain on the City's General Fund.

While the department does its best to recruit volunteers for special events, youth sports and other services, extra staff are required for nearly all programs and activities. Full-time staff members oversee regular and after-hour activities, but at least two part-time staff members are needed at each function to assist with a growing number of participants and attendees.

One example of a much-needed increase is in the Summer Playground Program. Currently, participants pay \$25 per week to attend camp from 8:00 AM to 12:30 PM. Children are provided free-play time, organized activities, arts and crafts, visits from the Mobile Library and a free lunch daily. The hourly fee collected for one child to attend for all five days of the week is roughly \$1.11. The average hourly rate for part-time staff is \$14.20, a difference of \$13.09 per hour. The Summer Playground Program is one of the most popular, highly attended youth services provided by the department.

Contracted services have also increased in cost, widening the gap between revenue and expenses. Staff has been notified by multiple contractors that in 2020 they will likely need to increase their charges to the department to remain competitive and maintain revenue.

Consequently, staff recommends a modification to the fees approved in 2008. The attached fee schedule addresses the proposed modifications and increases. If approved, the revisions would become effective with the name change on July 1, 2020.

A public hearing must be held and Council approval is necessary for changes to take effect.