

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: ACQUISITION OF BLOCK PARTY TRAILER

BACKGROUND:

Maintaining strong neighborhoods and a reputation as a welcoming community has emerged as an important theme for the City Council, the Community Conversations on Diversity and the Inclusive Community Task Force. All of these groups have looked for specific actions that can be taken to strengthen neighborhoods. One specific action being taken by the Community Conversations subcommittee on strengthening neighborhoods is developing and maintaining a set of supplies to facilitate neighborhood gatherings. In some communities, this has been called a "Block Party Trailer". While that may not be the final name for this project, it will be used to simplify this description.

The committee has identified a community interest in gatherings that would allow social interaction among neighbors. While many neighborhoods, or blocks within neighborhoods, already hold these gatherings, there are also many neighborhoods that do not. By reducing the logistical challenges associated with obtaining tables, chairs, outdoor games, barricades and similar materials, it will be easier for neighborhood groups to hold these gatherings. With some assistance in obtaining City permits and additional promotion of the concept, the subcommittee felt there could be a substantial increase in these types of positive events.

The subcommittee has proposed raising funds for the "Block Party Trailer". Operation of the trailer would become the responsibility of City departments with Parks and Recreation offering a reservation system, and Police or other departments delivering the trailer to the site of the event. Since the reservation system is already in place and Police already visit many of the scheduled block parties in the City, there will be very limited ongoing costs. Insuring and licensing a trailer, and possibly replacing worn out equipment would be the main on-going costs. The proposal includes an opportunity for City and community information to be included as a part of the trailer. In addition to City publications, this will allow groups like the Human Relations Commission, Breaking Down the Barriers and others to reach out to the community. In fact, those groups have agreed to assist in helping to organize or facilitate some of the initial events.

The cost for this initial trailer is approximately \$8,000. If approved, donated funds will be used to purchase the trailer. The trailer will be maintained by the City with expenses expected to be replacement of consumables and occasional replacement of games and other materials.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Authorize the purchase and operation of a “Block Party Trailer” to facilitate neighborhood interactions.
2. Do not approve the purchase and operation of a “Block Party Trailer”.

MANAGER’S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Strengthening neighborhoods continues to be one of the City Council’s high priority goals. This initiative has the support of groups in the community and aligns well with existing efforts to support and strengthen neighborhoods.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, thereby approving the purchase and operation of a “Block Party Trailer” to facilitate neighborhood interactions.