



**REPORT TO MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL**

AGENDA ITEM

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR  
AND CITY COUNCIL

DATE: October 7, 2008

SUBJECT: Cemetery John Deere Compact Tractor Purchase

**Report in Brief**

Over the past year staff has been engaged to complete the Cemetery grading and sod project. The purchase of a small tractor would give staff the ability to use a small front end loader in addition to the modified mower currently in service for the preparation and installation of turf. This purchase would provide additional resources to complete this project in a timely manner.

This tractor is recommended to help accelerate the installation of new sod at the Woodland Historic Cemetery. The current equipment being used has been adapted to the project however it is not an efficient method for preparing the surface for the project. There are sufficient funds included in the project budget to fund this purchase and the tractor would be used to support cemetery operations following completion of the project.

Staff recommends that the City Council approve the purchase of a John Deere Compact Tractor for the Cemetery.

**Background**

In November 2001 the City Council approved the development of a Cemetery Master Plan. In September 2002, City Council adopted the Master Plan. The Master Plan evaluated both site and financial needs required to enhance and maintain the Cemetery's viability. Among the site improvement recommendations of the Master Plan were:

- ✓ Roadway conversion from traveled route to additional plots
- ✓ Reconstruction certain roadways with asphalt surfacing
- ✓ Replacement of the entire irrigation system
- ✓ Replanting of high lot plots with groundcover
- ✓ Relocation of "Avenue of Flags"
- ✓ Landscaping at entryways
- ✓ Columbarium infrastructure

All these recommendations, and more, have been completed with the \$1.5M Cemetery Revitalization Program construction project completed in the spring of 2007. In order to install the necessary systems and roadways, the existing turf (mixed weeds and Bermuda grass) was killed or died. On July 10, 2007 Council approved the revision of the Project Program Summary Sheet (PPSS) for the Cemetery Revitalization Program to include \$343,000 from the Quimby fund to complete the turf renovation. The cost estimate for turf replacement includes labor and materials to level soil grades, adjust at-grade markers, and install 16± acres of ornamental turf sod.

The site grading and soil preparation is being performed by seasonal City staff with sod purchased and installed by a sod contractor. Over the past year staff has experienced challenges to complete the project in a timely manner due to the lack of a proper equipment to complete the job. The ability to use a small front end loader in addition to the modified mower currently in service would allow for more flexibility at grading the surface and the preparation for the installation of turf.

### **Discussion**

Staff could continue to work diligently grading, leveling head stones and preparing the soil sod with the existing equipment. However, under the current work plan with existing equipment and staff vacancies it could take another year or more to complete project. With the purchase of the new tractor the project could be completed by next spring. The tractor would also support operation of the cemetery following completion of the project. Some of the advantages of purchasing the tractor include:

- It will allow the use of the tractor as both box scraper and tiller (with the attachment) at the same time.
- The bucket will allow movement of soil and debris without utilizing additional fulltime personnel.
- Avoids use of large backhoe which does additional peripheral damage to work area in the Cemetery.
- Will allow for better utility of part time staff.
- Future use beyond first year: The ability to dig a grave with a much smaller piece of equipment instead of a large backhoe that creates secondary damage to areas around grave sites. In wet weather and in tight locations like high-lots it would reduce the resulting damage of a large backhoe and the time involved in the damage repair.
- Irrigation repair and other small projects in both parks and ball fields would also benefit from the time savings.

### **Fiscal Impact**

There is no General Fund impact by purchasing the \$12,849 tractor since the funding is through the Cemetery Master Plan construction project. The short and long term fiscal impact for purchasing the tractor shows an \$11,151 savings in the first year considering the rental cost of the tractor would be

approximately \$24,000. The projected fixed asset replacement cost of tractor over 15 years is \$19,435 and the repair cost is estimated at \$2,500 a year. It is estimated the tractor will save approximately \$2,500 in staff hours at the Cemetery each year for the next 14 years.

**Alternative Courses of Action**

1. Approve the purchase of the John Deere Compact Tractor for the Cemetery.
2. Cease further consideration of this purchase and direct the work diligently utilizing the existing equipment.

**Recommendation for Action**

Staff recommends that the City Council approve Alternative No. 1

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