DATE: May 8, 2008

TO: Supervisor Don Gage, Chairperson
    Supervisor Pete McHugh, Vice-Chairperson
    Housing, Land Use, Environment, & Transportation Committee (HLUET)

FROM: Lisa Killough
    Director

SUBJECT: Status Report on the Martial Cottle Park Master Plan Project

RECOMMENDED ACTION
Accept status report from Parks and Recreation Department on Martial Cottle Park Master Plan project.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS
There is no fiscal impact on the County General Fund or Park Charter Fund as a result of this action.
As part of the Board-approved FY2007 Parks Capital Improvement Program, Park Charter funds in the amount of $250,000 were allocated to the Martial Cottle Park Master Plan and environmental review project account number 710-MAR-M00035. On June 6, 2006, the Board approved a grant funding agreement with the Santa Clara County Open Space Authority (Authority), whereby the Authority provided $150,000 towards the master plan project and $300,000 towards Phase I improvements for the park from the County's allocation of the 20% Funding Program. The total available budget for the Martial Cottle Park Master Plan and environmental review project is $400,000.

As part of the County Executive's recommended FY2009 budget to the Board, the Parks Department is recommending $20 million in capital reserves for the implementation of Phase I improvements for the approved master plan. $4.5 million of the $20 million reserve funding will be allocated towards the preparation of design and construction documents for Phase I improvements.

**CONTRACT HISTORY**

On March 18, 2008, the Board of Supervisors approved a Professional Services Agreement (PSA) with Design, Community and Environment (DC&E) for the Martial Cottle Park Master Plan and environmental review project. Previously, on March 20, 2007, the Board approved a PSA with Wallace, Roberts and Todd, Inc. (WRT) as the initial lead consultant firm for the master plan and environmental review project. The Parks Department will work with DC&E in completing the remainder of the planning and environmental review project.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

The County Parks and Recreation Commission considered this item on April 2, 2008 (see Attachment A for the staff report to the Commission). The Clerk of the Board Office will present a separate transmittal to the Housing, Land Use, Environment and Transportation (HLUET) Committee regarding the Commission's action on this agenda item.

At the April 2, 2008 HLUET meeting, Supervisor Don Gage directed the Parks Department to provide an update of the Martial Cottle Park Master Plan project to the HLUET Committee.

Since receiving Mr. Walter Cottle Lester's generous property donation in 2004, the Parks Department has been working closely with the Donor, the California State Parks Department and other major stakeholders in planning and developing the 287.54-acre Martial Cottle Park ("Park") in south San Jose. The property's deed restrictions and Donor's Vision stipulates that the property be developed, operated and maintained as a joint County-State facility and that it
will be "exclusively used as a public historical park that informs and educates the public about the agricultural heritage of the Santa Clara Valley, as exemplified by the Martial Cottle family, dating from the 1850s to the 20th century."

As required by the Joint Powers and Operating Agreement between the County and State (October 28, 2003), the County Parks and California State Parks Departments have engaged in this collaborative planning process for the Park. Under this agreement, the County assumes the lead role and responsibility in completing a public participatory planning process with desired outcomes that include a Master Plan, State General Plan, environmental review and compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Master Plan, General Plan and CEQA documents are intended to guide future long-term development of the park improvements, as well as the operations and management of the entire park facility that includes the County and State-owned lands. Since the property transfer agreement reserves full control over a 32-acre Life Estate area for Mr. Lester's residence and use during his lifetime, the Life Estate area is excluded from the current detailed planning and programming process.

Since April 2007, the Parks Department has facilitated a public participatory planning process that involves agency coordination and community outreach through project committees and members of the public. Furthermore, the public has been engaged throughout the planning process at the regular Task Force and TAC meetings, community workshop, the County Parks and Recreation Commission meeting and via the Department's project web site. To date, the Parks Department has facilitated five Project Team meetings, three Task Force meetings, two TAC meetings, and a community workshop that was well attended with approximately 155 participants.

The Department has completed and shared several major deliverables with these project committees and the public for their review and input, including a Draft Resources Inventory report, Draft Opportunities and Constraints analysis for the Park, Draft Vision, Goals and Objectives, Draft Program Elements, and proposed Parkland Classification for the State and County-owned portions. These planning documents and discussions are summarized as part of the Final Draft Program Document for the Martial Cottle Park Master Plan (see Attachment B).

BACKGROUND
The 287.54-acre Martial Cottle Park ("Park") is a new urban County and State park facility in south San Jose, that is bounded by Snell Avenue, Branham Lane, Chynoweth Avenue and
State Highway 85. The park is also surrounded by residential and commercial uses, with residences immediately abutting the west side of the park. In 2004, Mr. Walter Cottle Lester transferred 151.02 acres to the County and sold 136.52 acres of the site to the State of California. The property transfer agreement also reserves full control over a 32-acre Life Estate area for Mr. Lester's residence and use. The Parks Department is working very closely with Mr. Lester and his representatives during this planning process.

To ensure an inclusive and informed master planning process, the Parks Department established three key project committees to assist and provide input on the plan, including a Project Team, Task Force and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The 30-member Project Team, consisting of County and State Parks staff, two County Parks Commissioners, the Donor's representatives, Policy Aide from the Office of Supervisor Don Gage, and staff from the Santa Clara County Open Space Authority, is responsible for working directly with the consultant team to assist in the plan development, review documents and assist with public outreach.

The Task Force is a 17-member advisory group comprised of citizens and staff from state and local agencies, whose purpose is to bring diverse ideas and perspectives of the community into the planning discussions. Members of the Task Force represent a wide range of community, agricultural and recreational groups that have an interest in the park's development, including: Office of Assembly Member Joe Coto and Assembly Member Jim Beall, City and County Parks and Recreation Commissions, County Historical Heritage Commission, Deputy Agricultural Commissioner, City of San Jose Council District 10, Santa Clara County Open Space Authority Board, VEP Community Association, members-at-large and others.

The TAC consists of representatives from many local, state and federal agencies as well as non-profit organizations that are stakeholders and potential partners in the development, regulation, and/or long-term operation of the park. The 25-member TAC provides input on technical and operational concerns that need to be addressed in the plan development and environmental review process.

As a critical first step in the development of a Master Plan and General Plan for Martial Cottle Park, the Program Document sets the stage for development of subsequent steps in the planning process that will include conceptual design alternatives, implementation plan, financial analysis and environmental review. The Program Document includes an overview of the public and agency participatory planning process, project's history, Donor's Vision, site's regional and regulatory context, agricultural heritage and importance, inventory and analysis.
of existing site conditions, recreation and interpretive trends, goals and objectives for the
master plan, potential park program elements that need to be explored further in the design
alternatives, and any opportunities or constraints associated with the development of
recreational and educational activities or associated with the conservation of natural and
cultural resources.

On February 20, 2008, County Parks staff and consultants presented a Draft Program
Document for the Martial Cottle Park Master Plan to the Task Force for public review and
consideration. The Task Force and members of the public shared the following comments that
were considered in the revision of the document:

• Pedestrian/bicycle uses via a perimeter trail that would be accessible to the residents and
  park visitors outside of the regular park hours;
• Appropriate buffers around the park's edge and within the park;
• Support of the current and future farming activities by the local neighbors;
• Educational programs associated with the agricultural production and marketing of the
  farm goods, including cooking classes, public tastings, etc.;
• Need to address future management of the existing wildlife such as the birds, red foxes,
  rodents and other urban wildlife population;
• Identification of multiple and varied potential partners to implement elements of the
  Master Plan, such as a potential tree planting program, youth-oriented agricultural
  education programs and establishment of a native plant nursery element;
• Focus on historic agriculture, farming and animal husbandry;
• Green building and sustainable design practices;
• Limiting the number of new buildings and structures in the park;
• Use of native plant materials for creek enhancements, buffers, grassy area and etc.; and,
• Support for the community gardens.

Prior to the public's review of the Draft Program Document, the County Parks Department
received technical input from the Project Team and TAC.

On April 2, 2008, County Parks staff presented the revised Final Draft Program Document to
the County Parks and Recreation Commission for their review and acceptance. The
Commission received comments from four speakers, who expressed concerns regarding future
management of wildlife such as the red foxes in the Park, consideration for a permanent
location of a native plant nursery and educational center for Our City Forest, consistency of an
off-leash dog park facility with the Donor’s Vision, future management of the Park addressing
agricultural activities and community involvement. The Commission shared their perspectives
on the project, including acknowledgement of the future park management challenges with the different user groups, need for collaboration, need for efficient water usage for the agricultural elements, and possible use of native plantings in the Park. After the public and Commission's discussions of the project and program document, the Commission unanimously accepted the Program Document.

**STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL**

No steps are required of the Clerk of the Board Office as a result of this action.

**ATTACHMENTS**

- Attachment A: Staff Report to County Parks & Recreation Commission (April 2, 2008)
- Attachment B: Cover Page for Final Draft Program Document for Martial Cottle Park Master Plan