



Request for City Council Committee Action From the Department of Public Works

Date: June 3, 2009

To: Honorable Donald Samuels, Chair Public Safety & Regulatory Services Committee

Subject: **MPD Mounted Patrol Horse Barn Facility**

Recommendation: Receive & File

Previous Directives:

- January 23, 2009 – City Council authorized staff to continue discussions with the Minnesota State Fair Board regarding the feasibility of a Mounted Patrol Horse Barn Facility at the State Fair Grounds.
- December 12, 2007 – Resolution 2007R-645 of the City Council Adopting the MPD Mounted Patrol Horse Barn Facility (MPD04) in the 2008-2012 Five-Year Capital Program.

Prepared by: Paul Miller, Sr. Project Manager – PW Property Services, 673-3603

Approved by:

Tim Dolan, Chief, Minneapolis Police Department

Steven A. Kotke, P.E., City Engineer, Director of Public Works

Presenters: Paul Miller, Senior Project Manager – PW Property Services
Janee Harteau – Inspector - Minneapolis Police Department

Reviews:

Permanent Review Committee (PRC):	Approval	NA	Date
Civil Rights Affirmative Action Plan	Approval	NA	Date
Policy Review Group (PRG):	Approval	NA	Date

Financial Impact:

Action is within the Business Plan

Other financial impact: All capital funds by private fundraising sources. Long-term stabling costs should not exceed existing levels. MPD reductions in staff time and transportation costs due to reduced travel distance and travel efficiencies.

Community Impact

Neighborhood Notification: Not Applicable

City Goals: A SAFE PLACE TO CALL HOME: The Mounted Patrol is a proven key to enhancing the Minneapolis Police Departments ability maintain crowd control and reduce crime thereby increasing the safety and confidence of the citizens and visitors to Minneapolis.

Comprehensive Plan: Not Applicable

Zoning Code: Not Applicable

Background/Supporting Information

Beginning in 2008, conversations between the City Coordinator and the Minnesota State Fair Board resulted in the State Fair expressing interest in the possibility of locating a Mounted Patrol Horse Barn Facility on the State Fair Grounds. The State Fair was in the early planning stages for significant capital improvements to its Horse Annex and Judging Arena facilities, and felt that a Mounted Patrol partnership could be considered as part of these improvements. The State Fair Board directed their staff to continue discussions with the City of Minneapolis supporting the potential for partnerships (including the University of Minnesota, the City of St. Paul, and the Minneapolis Park Board) and analyzing the feasibility of a Mounted Patrol Horse Barn Facility at the Minnesota State Fair Grounds. On January 23, 2009, City Council directed staff to continue discussions with the State Fair supporting the potential for partnerships and to analyze the feasibility of that location for a Mounted Patrol Horse Barn Facility.

To date, the State Fair Grounds remains the preferred site for the Mounted Patrol Facility by the Minneapolis Police Department, and the Property Services Division. The Public Works Water Treatment and Distribution Site located at Marshall St. N.E. and 37th Ave. N.E. remains an alternative; however a full feasibility study would need to be completed in order to move forward at that site.

MPD Mounted Patrol at the State Fair – Project Update

Project Team Meetings

In January 2009, an initial meeting was held, to discuss each party's interest in regards to a Mounted Patrol Facility located on the State Fair Grounds: to describe basic needs of a Mounted Patrol Facility, to identify potential partners for future collaboration, and to outline "next steps" for further discussion.

The meeting concluded with the establishment of a Project Team including: Brian Hudalla, Kay Cady, Steve Polk, and Mark Goodrich of the State Fair, Paul Miller, Insp. Janee Harteau, and Lt. Ray Witzman from the City of Minneapolis.

Feasibility – Outdoor Space Requirements

An over-riding issue was determined to be a clear definition of the various exterior space requirements for horses stabled at a Mounted Patrol Facility and the potential availability of those types of spaces at the proposed site.

Experts in horse facilities with the State Fair and the UofM Extension Office were consulted on these requirements. Specifically, **outdoor space requirements** for horses include provisions for daily "turn-out" space (exercise paddock) and the potential need for "dedicated pasture" space. Depending on how the facility is planned to be operated, the amount of outdoor space required can vary from ½ to 1 acre per horse. The amount of space necessary to meet the requirements is considerable given that the MPD currently has 12 horses, requiring 6 to 12 acres, and potential

partners could add another 12 horses to the facility requiring another 6 to 12 acres, for a total space requirement of up to 24 acres.

Although the State Fair Grounds covers a large amount of property, the availability of any sizable portion of land that could be committed to meet outdoor space requirements does not exist. Virtually all of the State Fair Grounds is utilized for various events over the course of the year, especially during the State Fair itself, and including the recent commitment of numerous parking lots to the UofM for football tailgating. The Project Team discussed the potential for the “dual use” of the many State Fair parking lots as turn-out space; however the negative impacts for both parking lots and turn-out space are significant. The maintenance costs required to convert the function of these spaces on an event by event basis would be cost prohibitive.

The outdoor space requirement for horses remains an unresolved issue. Without access to adequate outdoor space, the feasibility of a Mounted Patrol Facility at any location (including the Public Works Water Treatment and Distribution Facility) remains in question.

Recent Events

On May 19, 2009 the State Fair Board informed City staff that they have halted their capital fund raising campaign for the Horse Annex and Judging Arena, and have opted instead to invest in a short-term fix (up to five years) to the existing facilities. Until the current economic situation improves, the State Fair does not intend to continue capital planning in this area. This change in capital planning strategy puts the Mounted Patrol Project at the State Fair in doubt for the foreseeable future. The State Fair Board also reiterated their position, that they do not have property available that could be committed for use as “dedicated turn-out” space for horses.

The State Fair Board did state that if outdoor space requirement issues could be resolved offsite, they would continue to express interest in a long-term plan envisioning a State Fair/Mounted Patrol Facility. This would require that the MPD Mounted Patrol Unit put off plans for a permanent Mounted Patrol Facility until such time that the State Fair resumes their capital fund raising campaign (up to five years).

Cost Benefit

It has always been assumed that the operational costs of a Mounted Patrol Facility built for the MPD would not exceed the existing costs related to transportation and boarding at the Zurah Shrine Ranch in Maple Plain. However, given the current situation with the State Fair, and the requirements for outdoor space that would affect any potential location, operational costs of a new facility could be much different than previously assumed. Therefore a comprehensive analysis of cost benefit for a Mounted Patrol Facility should be completed before further decisions are made.

Next Steps

The key unresolved issues affecting feasibility of a Mounted Patrol Facility include: the potential location for a facility (either at the State Fair, or the Public Works Water Treatment and Distribution Facility), the requirements for outdoor spaces for horses, and a comprehensive analysis of cost benefit.

Consequently, as next steps, City staff intends to do the following:

- Determine the feasibility of a Mounted Patrol Facility at the State Fair.
- Conduct a feasibility study of the Public Works Water Treatment and Distribution Site located at Marshall St. N.E. and 37th Ave. N.E.

- Conduct a cost-benefit analysis of Mounted Patrol Operational Costs in order to compare current costs with proposed facility costs, both at the State Fair and at the Public Works Water Treatment and Distribution Facility.
- Return to Committee with the results of the feasibility studies and cost-benefit analysis.

Funding for the project planning effort related to the Mounted Patrol Facility has been included in the current service level adjustment for the Police Departments operating budget for 2009.

cc: Steven Bosacker
Frank Parisi