



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

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Pedal Boats Could Return to Fairmount Park Lake by Late Summer

City Council approved contract to dredge the lake to remove sediment and restore earlier depth

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – Pedal boats could return to Fairmount Park Lake late this summer after the City Council approved a contract to dredge the lake to remove sediment, making the lake once again deep enough for boating.

“Pedal boating on a summer day in Riverside is a sublime experience,” Mayor Patricia Lock Dawson said. “I look forward to seeing Riverside families enjoying the lake through this fun activity that showcases one of our city’s biggest assets.”

Fairmount Park has been Riverside’s signature park since it was established in 1898, with acreage added over the years. It was master planned by landscape architecture firm Olmsted Brothers, whose father designed Central Park in New York and is considered the father of landscape architecture.

The park now includes lakes, playgrounds, a water play splash pad, shaded picnic areas, golf course, Stewart Boathouse, boat launch, fishing pier, band shell, rose garden, lawn bowling, the Izaak Walton clubhouse, and acres of open space.

Fairmount Lake was created in 1904, with the larger Lake Evans and smaller Brown Lake developed in 1924. The lakes are part of a stormwater drainage network that absorbs runoff from the northeastern portion of the city. As the stormwater passes through the lakes into the Santa Ana River, sediment and silt settle in the lake bottom, reducing the depth of the lake and leading to algae blooms.

During the last dredging in 2007, about 20,684 cubic yards of sediment were removed from Fairmount Lake. The current project will remove about 26,000 cubic yards of sediment from Fairmount Lake, restoring the lake’s depth and allowing for the return of recreational boating.

“This work will result in a healthier lake that will be an even greater resource for Riverside residents,” Mayor Pro Tem Steve Hemenway said.

Midcal Dredging of Riverdale, near Fresno, was the lowest responsible bidder for the \$925,000 contract, which will be funded with money from the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

The Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Department will continue to seek funding to dredge Fairmount Lake and the other two lakes on a more regular basis as part of routine maintenance.