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MEMORANDUM

DT: December 27, 2012
TO: Mayor and City Councilmembers
TH: Darin Atteberry, City Manager *DA*
Wendy Williams, Assistant City Manager *Wew*
FR: Marty Heffernan, Director of Community Services *MJH*
RE: Mowing Along Paved Trails

At the December 11th Council Work Session a Councilmember questioned the need to mow the grasses and brush along the paved trail system. The Parks Department has been occasionally mowing along the trails for many years, initially in response to complaints from citizens and as a method of weed control. Runners using the gravel paths next to the trails have also requested mowing for safety reasons as the path can become narrow with overhanging brush. Parks mows the trail in Cathy Fromme Prairie because of rattlesnakes. Dogs have been bitten by rattlers and mowing along the trail provides an extra measure of safety.

In the online trail questionnaire 31% of respondents indicated mowing along the trails was important or very important, 39% said mowing was somewhat important and 30% said mowing was not important. Parks has curtailed trail mowing during tough financial times and received complaints from trail users.

Parks spends \$3,000 to \$4,000 annually to mow the trails. They mow only when needed and simply cut a 3 foot swath on each side of the trail. Newer trail sections have been planted with low growing grasses that do not need to be mowed very often. These low growing grasses will continue to be planted along future trails.