

Contact:
Kate Drago
Public Information and Outreach Supervisor
Foothills Park & Recreation District
(303) 409-2525
kate@fhprd.org

For Immediate Release– June 25, 2008

Community's message to Foothills: Do less with less.

At a regularly scheduled board meeting on Tuesday, June 24 the Foothills Park & Recreation District's Board of Directors discussed a document providing operating expenses and revenue projections through 2013. At two previous board meetings, staff and Board members came to a consensus on assumptions that were built into the financial forecast including flat or diminishing revenues and increasing expenses. Executive Director Ronald Hopp stressed, "This financial planning tool demonstrates what the impact of the failed mill levy vote has on our services. These projections also contain items that we should be doing, but obviously will probably not be able to accomplish." The working document projects a \$4.6 million shortfall in 2009 with ever increasing deficits in years to follow.

Had the mill levy passed on May 6, 2008, an additional \$2.8 million would have been added into the Foothills budget. Foothills would have used those additional dollars to fund capital improvement needs and increasing operational expenses. The District has a working list of capital repair needs nearing \$30 million. Hopp said regarding the failed mill levy, "Let me try to summarize what I think the voters' message is: the voters want us to do less with less. This is very unfortunate as we have excellent parks, excellent recreation facilities, excellent recreational trails, excellent programs, excellent events and excellent staff. Obviously and unfortunately, things will be changing."

With the results of the projected financial picture, staff plans to move forward with implementing changes to operations. Hopp has directed staff to indefinitely freeze all current job vacancies except those most critical to enhancing revenue streams. Collectively, six vacancies exist in parks, facilities and marketing. Hopp announced he would assume responsibility of the vacant marketing and community outreach manager position using current staff in place and assistance from a marketing committee of staff members. Staff has also been directed to identify any potential revenue sources and service level reductions that can be implemented immediately.

Hopp ended the board meeting with the following statement, "The community has sent a clear message to Foothills Park & Recreation District. The community wants us to develop efficiencies, enhance revenues and be proactive and creative in terms of

- MORE -

Release, page 2

how we operate. We will do that – we will continue to leave no stone unturned in order to try to resolve our financial issues. Unfortunately, based upon our thorough assessment of our financial condition, it will be extremely difficult to overcome this kind of shortfall without doing less with less. We will need to cut services, not improve our facilities, not replace aging equipment, not improve our parks or replace playgrounds, not build more trails, not make significant improvements to our golf courses and not increase our program offerings. In today's society where quality of life is so important in the lives of our children and families, this is unfortunate.”

Foothills Park & Recreation District board meetings are held the second and fourth Tuesday of each month beginning at 7 p.m. at the Peak Community & Wellness Center (6612 S. Ward St.). For board meeting information, visit www.ifoohills.org.

###

Foothills Park & Recreation District, founded in 1959, serves a 28 square mile area of unincorporated Jefferson County generally bounded by Hampden Avenue south to C-470 from Sheridan Boulevard west to the Dakota Hogback. The District operates the Ridge Recreation Center, the Edge Ice Arena, Lilley Gulch Recreation Center, the Peak Community and Wellness Center, four outdoor swimming pools, Indoor Sports Arena, Foothills Golf Course complex, Meadows Golf Course, and 70 park sites totaling more than 2,400 acres and including four regional parks, 42 neighborhood and community parks and 24 greenbelts. In addition Foothills manages six regional trail corridors for public use, which, combined with park trails, total more than 31 miles. For more information visit www.ifoohills.org , or call (303) 409-2100.