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Title:	Consideration of the Westwood Oaks Park Master Plan Update, Playground Schematic Design Options, and Draft Measure R Ordinance				
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Attachments:	1. Westwood Oaks Park Existing Master Plan Diagram, 2. Westwood Oaks Park Playground Schematic Design Options Presentation, 3. Measure R Draft Ordinance				

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
11/16/2021	1	Parks & Recreation Commission	Continued	Pass

REPORT TO PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

SUBJECT

Consideration of the Westwood Oaks Park Master Plan Update, Playground Schematic Design Options, and Draft Measure R Ordinance

COUNCIL PILLAR

Enhance Community Sports, Recreational and Arts Assets

BACKGROUND

Westwood Oaks Park, located at 460 La Herran Drive, was dedicated in 1961. The 1.75-acre neighborhood park is bounded by La Herran Drive to the east and residential properties to the south, west and north. The existing park contains a playground, perimeter pathway, open grass area, recreation building, restrooms, basketball court, picnic area with BBQ, landscaping and various park amenities (Attachment 1).

Since 2014, the City has prioritized rehabilitation of older playgrounds to meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) requirements, and improvement to meet new needs and funding guidelines. The City's 2017 Facility Condition Assessment (Kitchell CEM) indicated that the current Westwood Oaks Park site and playground were in "critical" condition and the park building was in "poor" condition. Based on prioritization, the FY2021/22 Capital Improvement Project budget allocated funding for a Westwood Oaks Park Playground Rehabilitation Project.

In July 2021, Council approved a contract with Gates and Associates, Inc. (Consultant) to complete project Phase 1 design work which will develop a site-specific Master Plan and playground schematic design including site assessment and community input on the preferred park elements.

At the September 2021 Regular Park & Recreation Commission Meeting, the Consultant introduced the existing Westwood Oaks Park site conditions and the intended Project scope that would create a unique, family friendly and inclusive neighborhood park environment and welcome residents of all ages and abilities. The Commission reviewed the Project design principles that include: understanding the current use of Westwood Oaks Park, implementing research based best practices for play and inclusionary/universal design, accommodating additional community use, addressing asset lifecycle maintenance costs, supporting the City's sustainability and age-friendly goals, addressing adjacent concerns where feasible, and complying with potential playground equipment grant guidelines.

Community Engagement Process

The information gathered from the community is used to inform the update of the existing park site Master Plan and the recommendation for the Westwood Oaks Park Playground Rehabilitation Project schematic design. On September 25, 2021 from 10-11 a.m. a community workshop was held at the park site and was attended by over 50 persons. Input was collected from the neighborhood on their recreational needs, as well as to explore "themes" for the playground design. An on-line survey conducted from September 22, through October 11, 2021 had 226 completed responses which provided over 11.3 hours of public comment. The public stated that the top three Westwood Oaks Park elements used are the loop path (70%), play area (67%), and quiet seating areas (43%). Respondents thought it was very important/important to renovate the playground (77%), to maintain the grass meadow (74%), to repair the loop path (66%), to upgrade the drinking fountain (58%), and to improve park lighting (55%). In remaining, descending priority order, less than 50% thought it very important/important to improve the picnic/BBQ area (44%), add fitness stations (41%), and provide additional seating (41%). A strong majority (66%) of respondents were very opposed/opposed to converting the basketball court into a pickle ball court. The public preferred a "tree house" theme play area and favored elements of play: slide "C" (60%), spinner "B" (63%), and swing "C" (41%). Over 57% of respondents reported visiting the park frequently or very frequently; and 45% of respondents are in the 35-49 age group, followed by 37% aged 50 and older.

DISCUSSION

The design Consultant will make a presentation to the Parks & Recreation Commission on the update to the Westwood Oaks Park Master Plan (Attachment 1) with particular focus on the park playground. The presentation will include multiple playground design options (Attachment 2) that meet the City Parks & Recreation Department's design criteria, meet code compliance requirements, and address the public input to date. The Commission will ask clarifying questions, listen to public comment, and formulate a motion to select and recommend one of the options with/without modification(s), or provide direction for additional changes.

Measure R Compliance

The recommendation for approval of an update to the Westwood Oaks Site Plan may be subject to Measure R. In November 2016, voters passed Measure R, which added Section 714.1 Protection of Parkland and Public Open Space to the City Charter. Measure R prohibits selling, leasing, or otherwise disposing of parkland for a period of one hundred eighty (180) days or more, and also prohibits its use from changing, being abandoned, or discontinued without such sale, lease, disposal or changed use having first been authorized or ratified by a two-thirds majority vote of the electorate during a general municipal election for that purpose. Measure R also prohibits changes in park use for over 180 days without a majority vote of the electorate and substantial building, construction, reconstruction, or development upon dedicated parkland except pursuant to ordinance subject to referendum. The referendum process is set forth in the Elections Code.

The Westwood Oaks Park Master Plan Update and the Playground Schematic Design, if approved, will include changes to the existing park that may be considered as "substantial building, construction, reconstruction, or development." The approval of the proposed site Master Plan, playground schematic design and subsequent park rehabilitation project will require an ordinance in order to comply with Measure R that will be recommended for the Council's consideration to be introduced by reference. It does not include a sale, lease, disposal, or change in use requiring a majority vote of the electorate. Therefore, staff recommends that the Commission recommend that Council approve the Westwood Oaks Master Plan Update, preferred playground schematic design and introduce an ordinance (Attachment 3) to ensure compliance with Measure R. The ordinance will be introduced at one meeting and return to Council at a second meeting for adoption in accordance with City Charter sections 808 and 812.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The action being considered does not constitute a "project" within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378(b)(5) in that it is a governmental organizational or administrative activity that will not result in direct or indirect changes in the environment.

FISCAL IMPACT

The Capital Improvement Project budget for FY2021/22 includes an allocation in the amount of $1,149,800 for the Westwood Oaks Park Playground Rehabilitation Project. The Project scope includes Phase 1 outreach and design, and Phase 2 which includes project administration, permitting including mobilization, general conditions, bonding, escalation, insurance, and City Project administration. Westwood Oaks Park maintenance and operations activities are included in the Parks & Recreation Department's operating budget.

COORDINATION

This project is being coordinated with the Department of Public Works and the Parks & Recreation Department.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Commission agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall Council Chambers. A complete agenda packet is available on the City's website and in the City Clerk's Office at least 72 hours prior to a Regular Meeting and 24 hours prior to a Special Meeting. A hard copy of any agenda report may be requested by contacting the City Clerk's Office at (408) 615-2220, email clerk@santaclaraca.gov <mailto:clerk@santaclaraca.gov> .

RECOMMENDATION

Recommend that Council approve an updated Westwood Oaks Park Master Plan, a preferred Playground Schematic Design, and Measure R compliant draft ordinance.

Reviewed by: Dale Seale, Deputy Director
Approved by: James Teixeira, Director of Parks & Recreation

ATTACHMENTS

1. Westwood Oaks Park Existing Master Plan Diagram
2. Park Playground Schematic Design Options Presentation

3. Measure R Draft Ordinance

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