



Agenda Report

19-339

Agenda Date: 3/19/2019

REPORT TO PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

SUBJECT

Consideration of Draft Report by Project for Public Spaces Regarding Mission Branch Library City Plaza Park Place Making Pilot Project

BACKGROUND

The City of Santa Clara hired Project for Public Spaces (PPS) in 2017 to introduce “Placemaking” and its principles to Council, staff, stakeholders and the general public with the goal of influencing proposed development, and advancing a strategy for place-centered improvement and activation of key public spaces throughout the city that will help to build a stronger community.

On October 19 and 20, 2018, PPS conducted a two-day site visit to Santa Clara to facilitate a Stakeholder Meeting and Community Workshop, using an approach called “Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper” (LQC). The LQC approach is based on taking incremental steps, using low-cost experiments, and tapping into local people, assets, ideas and places. The meeting and workshop focused on establishing an initial placemaking vision for the Mission Branch Library and City Plaza Park (site previously identified in 2017). Parks & Recreation Commissioners Martinez and Knaack participated. PPS prepared an initial Draft Report for feedback.

DISCUSSION

The Commission will review the Draft Report developed by PPS for a Place Making Pilot Project at Mission Branch Library and City Plaza Park. The report summarizes ideas for new programming that emphasize using the park space for Library activities and Parks & Recreation programming. Programming categories included: food, group exercise, performance, education, exhibits, and special events.

The Draft Report also presents possible park amenities and physical improvements to enhance community use of the park space. According to the City’s practices, capital project proposals should include: consideration of operational and maintenance impacts, previously identified needs in the Parks & Recreation Facility Condition Assessment report for City Plaza Park (Kitchell 2018), the need to engage additional community/neighborhood input prior to development of any capital project schematic design and cost estimate, and review project compliance with Measure R, ADA, and CEQA before review and approval.

With a focus on the LQC strategy, PPS states that the local team should review the report recommendations and think strategically about which programs and amenities are the best fit for a “first phase of a pilot project” within the capacity and funding available. Commission and community feedback on the Draft Report will be provided through the City Community Development Department to PPS. The Final Report will incorporate comments from Parks & Recreation, Library, community and City staff as needed prior to Council review.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The action being considered is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to CEQA Guidelines sections 15301 "Existing Facilities", 15302 "replacement or reconstruction", and 15303 "new construction or conversion of small structures" as the activity consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting or minor alteration of existing public facilities or topographical features involving negligible expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agencies determination.

FISCAL IMPACT

The estimated costs for the LQC ideas and more permanent park facility enhancements in the Draft Report have not been estimated at this time. LQC program ideas in the report that include consumable and shorter term materials, supplies and services would be included in the City's Departmental Operating Budget(s). Projects over \$25,000 and having an intended lifecycle of 5 or more years would be considered a Capital Improvement Project (CIP). If community partners provide financial grant support and/or the City departments mentioned in the report have funding available funding, then there would be limited fiscal impact. However, any proposed Capital Projects would need funding for design, mobilization, construction, administration, general conditions, bonding, permits, insurance, escalation, City Project administration and contingency which based on the size and scope of project, would require prioritization among existing priority projects, compete for limited available funding, and may require a budget appropriation by Council to the City's CIP Budget.

COORDINATION

This report has been coordinated with the Community Development Department and the Library Department.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Parks & Recreation Commission's 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, e-mail clerk@santaclaraca.gov or at the public information desk at any City of Santa Clara public library

RECOMMENDATION

Review the draft report, make comments on content, and provide feedback to staff prior to next Commission meeting.

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ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Report by Project for Public Spaces - Mission Branch Library City Plaza Park Place Making Pilot Project