



Agenda Report

19-1353

Agenda Date: 11/19/2019

REPORT TO PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

SUBJECT

Presentation and Action on Central Park Master Plan Update and Draft Ordinance in accord with City Charter section 714.1

BACKGROUND

The City of Santa Clara's fifty-two-acre Central Park was designed in the early 1960's. The community park was built over several phases with federal, state and local funding. Since 2000, there have been various projects proposed that would improve, enlarge, or replace different park and recreational assets and facilities in the park, including the Library, International Swim Center (ISC), Community Recreation Center (CRC), Lawn Bowls, Tennis Center, Parks Maintenance Yard, Arbor Center and Playground, and a Creek Spur Trail.

In October 2017 Gates & Associates was contracted to assist the City with a Central Park Master Plan Update ("Plan"). The focus of the plan is to create a coherent vision that will integrate and guide Central Park's future improvements by establishing a set of principles, community supported priorities, and appropriate professional design criteria. The plan helps to address issues such as how the City should maximize green space within the park, improve access, circulation and parking, and design or include new park facilities and recreation elements that serve all ages, abilities and interests.

Community input was solicited from October 2017 to March 2018 and included a review of existing studies and park data, hosting community input meetings and events, conducting an online survey, interviewing stakeholders and soliciting Commission input for Council recommendation. Through the community engagement process, the public had opportunities to identify how they use and interact with Central Park and its elements, what functions well or not, and which park amenities are priorities to keep, change, or add.

On March 20, 2018 the Parks & Recreation Commission recommended the Council approve the Central Park Guiding Principles. On August 28, 2018, Council reviewed and approved the guiding principles and directed staff to continue the planning process and return with a conceptual design, cost, and phasing recommendation. The first draft was presented to the public at a workshop on April 30, 2019. Gates and Associates received feedback and worked with staff and Currie and Brown to refine project cost estimates.

On October 19, 2019, at their Regular Meeting the Parks & Recreation Commission initiated a formal review of the Central Park Master Plan Update (Attachment 1) and the document was posted and available on the City website for public comment, and an online survey was posted on "Open City Hall" from October 24 to November 12, 2019. The survey provided an additional opportunity for the public to provide comment on the Plan phasing and projects. The survey and Plan were advertised

through E-notify and newsletter.

DISCUSSION

At their November 19, 2019 meeting, the Park & Recreation Commission will receive a presentation from the City consultant Gates & Associates (Attachment 2), receive public input, and discuss a recommendation that the Plan be approved by Council. In addition, the Commission will review an draft ordinance submitted for compliance with Measure R (see City Charter section 714.1) (Attachment 3).

The Master Plan identifies 14 projects to be completed over a 20-year period in three phases: years 1-5, 6-10 and 11-20. Prioritization criteria was used to determine the phasing of the projects. While individual projects are described in the Plan, there are also considerations that apply generally to the park as a whole. Every project will address common elements, including meeting current codes and standards, and upgrade of utilities as necessary, improved lighting and signage, as appropriate. Projects involving over 10,000 square feet of impervious surface will need to incorporate storm water management per State of California requirements such as C-3, CEQA, and project specific needs or unanticipated items that may be identified at time of design, construction and/or funding approval. For example, some program service numbers, square footage of program spaces, and parking needs may change based on project approval, design constraints/opportunities, and/or final design alternative selected.

Master Plan Projects

Year 1-5 Projects

1. Arbor Center Area
2. Park Entry at Kiely/Kaiser
3. Saratoga Creek Connector Trail (West)
4. Aquatic Center Planning & Design

Year 6-10 Projects

1. Aquatic Center Master Plan and 50-Meter Multi-Use Pool (Phase 1)
2. Pavilion Area Renovation
3. Tennis Courts & Saratoga Creek Connector Trail (East)
4. Lake Renovation
5. Maintenance Yard
6. New Aquatic Center (Phase 2) - Continued Design

Year 11-20 Projects

1. New Aquatic Center (Phase 2) Construction
2. CRC Renovation and Gymnasium
3. Event Lawn Area
4. Fatjo Field Improvements
5. Multi-Use Club House and Lawn Bowls Improvements

MEASURE R

The recommendation for changes to the existing Central Park 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 Central Park Master Plan Update includes schematic design changes that may be considered as “substantial building, construction, reconstruction, or development” of the existing park. The approval of the proposed schematic design will require an ordinance in order to comply with Measure R that will be introduced by reference and recommended for the Council’s consideration. 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 Central Park Master Plan Update and introduce the 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 organization or administrative activity that will not result in direct or indirect changes in the environment. If any “projects” included in the Central Park Master Plan are exempt or are proposed that qualify as a project under CEQA, then an Initial Study of Environmental Impacts or other appropriate clearance, such as a Negative Declaration (ND), Mitigated Declaration (MND) or Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be generated at the time of the project’s consideration by City Council. In cases where potential environmental impacts were addressed in a previous Declaration certified and approved (such as a ISC-CRC Project CEQA2015-01189 (IS/MND) on September 20, 2016) then an amendment may be appropriate.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact for the current action. However, project cost estimates are identified in the Central Park Master Plan, and these will be included for consideration by Council in the City’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Budget as they are prioritized or new funding becomes available over the life of the Plan. Currently, the City does not have funding available for the Master Plan projects except for the initial Magical Bridge All Inclusive Playground. Sources of funding will depend upon several factors that will vary based on the actual project, funding constraints, and nexus to funding sources, and may include: developer contributions; Quimby Act/Mitigation Fee Act fees; City Capital Project Reserve; potential property tax or bond measures; corporate and individual donations; and, state, local and foundation grants.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public Contact was made by posting the Park & Recreation Commission agenda on the City’s official-notice bulletin board outside the 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>](mailto:clerk@santaclaraca.gov) [<mailto:clerk@santaclaraca.gov>](mailto:clerk@santaclaraca.gov) or at the public information desk at any City of Santa Clara public Library.

In addition, the Central Park Master Plan was developed and reviewed publicly from October 2017 through November 2019 through a series of community workshops, open house, Parks & Recreation Commission Meetings, special events, Council briefing as discussed in the Master Plan, and on-line surveys, initial survey had over 600 participants and the final survey posted on "Open City Hall" from October 24, 2019, through November 12, 2019 which had 394 visitors (240 responses) with 12.0 hours of public comment.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommend that Council approve the Central Park Master Plan including the Schematic Design Update and project phasing and Introduce an Ordinance in accordance with City Charter section 714.1.

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

Approved by: James Teixeira, Director of Parks & Recreation

ATTACHMENTS

1. Central Park Master Plan Update
2. Central Park Master Plan Commission Presentation
3. Draft Ordinance approving the Central Park Master Plan Schematic Design Update in accord with City Charter Section 714.1