

TO: PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

FROM: DAREN ANDERSON DEPARTMENT: COMMUNITY SERVICES

DATE: DECEMBER 18, 2018

SUBJECT: BAYLANDS COMPREHENSIVE CONSERVATION PLAN

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Parks and Recreation Commission (Commission) discuss and provide feedback on the Byxbee Concept Plan (Attachment A).

BACKGROUND

The purpose of the Baylands Comprehensive Conservation Plan (BCCP) is to develop goals, policies, prioritized action steps, and best management practices to holistically manage the Baylands Nature Preserve over the next 15 years and beyond. The BCCP will provide staff, the Parks and Recreation Commission, and the City Council will with clear direction on how to manage the Baylands using an ecosystem-based approach that will help guide the protection of the preserve’s habitat, wildlife, and natural resources; ensure that stewardship and access to nature-friendly recreational opportunities are available for park visitors to enjoy the Baylands now and in the future; and help the City manage the Baylands in a way that allows the preserve to thrive in the face of challenges such as sea level rise and climate change.

DISCUSSION

The consultant used feedback from the stakeholder group to create a conceptual design plan for Byxbee, which includes two options for the Byxbee parking lot. The plans were reviewed by the stakeholder group at the November 29, 2018 community meeting, and have been circulated to the wider stakeholder advisory group via email. The following is a brief summary of stakeholder feedback received to date on the Byxbee concept plans:

- Stakeholders strongly preferred Byxbee parking lot concept 2 with 45-degree parking and one-way circulation. There was a suggestion for adding an area for long vehicles (school buses, etc.) to park, which can be incorporated into concept 2.
- One stakeholder would like to leave the poles in at Renzel Wetlands as potential nesting habitat for birds. On the other hand, some stakeholders fear leaving the poles may make habitat for birds that may prey on the endangered salt marsh harvest mouse.
 - Suggestion – the poles for bird habitat would be better placed near the duck pond, which can be addressed as a recommendation in the Action Plan.
- Some stakeholders wanted more seating/benches to be available along the trail between the west side of Byxbee and the former ITT site/Renzel Wetland. Other stakeholders explained that the trail is a heavily used wildlife corridor, and that all

seating she be removed from this area over concerns that wildlife could be disturbed by human presence. They also suggested to adding shrubs to increase areas of coverage and habitat.

- The benches can be moved to other areas of the park, and the shrub area can be included on the plan.
- One person wanted to know if it was feasible to add stairs for an exercise loop.
 - Public Works staff have advised that due to the rate of settlement on the former landfill, stairs would be difficult to maintain in a safe condition.
- People general liked the number and distances of the proposed trail loops. A number of people did not see the value in having ‘maintenance only’ trails on Byxbee; they commended that if the trails will not be removed, they should still be accessible to visitors.
- The Burrowing Owl Habitat Areas from the 2015 Interim Plan should remain in this plan for if/when implementation gets approved.
- There wasn’t interest in adding a shade structure. Several stakeholders suggested that improving wind protection would be more helpful.
 - Suggestion - increase vegetative islands around seating areas to serve as wind breaks.
- People general liked the number and locations of proposed benches
- There are concerns about the effect of increased salinity due to the proposed hydrological connections between the Renzel Wetlands and the Remnant Marsh.
 - Discussion - the area already appears to have high salinity levels; it looks like an alkali sink community. Before making any changes to the landscape, the area will be evaluated for potential impacts.

The consultant used the feedback from the Commission and stakeholder to create the ITT Final Concept Plan (Attachment B).

NEXT STEPS AND TIMELINE

- Draft Art Overlay – Stakeholder Review – Dec 2018
- Final Art Overlay – Jan 2019
- Draft Action Plan – Stakeholder Review – Jan 2019
- Draft Byxbee Plan – Stakeholder Review – Dec 2018
- Draft BCCP – Stakeholder Review – Feb 2019
- Stakeholder and public meeting/presentation

- Park and Recreation Commission Presentation
- City Council Meeting Presentation
- Public Art Commission Presentation
- Final BCCP – Mar 2019

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Byxbee Park Concept Plan

Attachment B: Former ITT/Renzel Wetlands Final Concept Plan