

TO: PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

FROM: PUBLIC WORKS

DATE: JULY 27, 2021

SUBJECT: BOULWARE PARK RENOVATION PROJECT (CIP PE-17005) – PARK IMPROVEMENT ORDINANCE

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Parks and Recreation Commission (Commission) recommend that City Council adopt and approve a Park Improvement Ordinance (Attachment A) authorizing the renovation of the playground and park amenities at Boulware Park (Exhibit A).

BACKGROUND

In 2017, the City Council approved the Capital improvement funding of \$495,000 to address park maintenance needs in fiscal year 2018. The renovation included infrastructure, accessibility, and maintenance improvements. The project was postponed to fiscal year 2019 due to budget constraints. During that period, the adjacent property located at Birch Street and owned by AT&T was put up for sale. In an effort to add new parkland to the Ventura neighborhood, one of the densest populated neighborhoods in the city, and one having limited open space, the city pursued the purchase of the parcel. Upon finalizing the purchase of the land in 2019, the city re-engaged the community-based design process to determine how the existing Boulware Park and the newly purchased property would be developed into one contiguous park. The land was also adopted by City Council as dedicated parkland in 2019, shortly after the purchase.

Community Outreach Process

All materials presented to the community and the Parks and Recreation Commission in prior meetings can be viewed at the project web site at www.cityofpaloalto.org/boulwarepark

On November 9, 2019, the first community meeting was held at Boulware Park. The goal of this meeting was to allow the community the opportunity to provide input on what park facilities should be considered in the renovation and expansion of Boulware Park.

The community was requested to provide input on different park facilities and ranking them based on preference and priority. The facilities presented were drawn from existing facilities at Boulware Park and facilities that were highlighted in the Parks Master Plan to be considered as part of all park renovation projects. Attendees at the community meeting were asked to place sticker dots next to their desired facility choice, and to prioritize the choices. These facilities included:

Existing Facilities at Boulware Park

- Playground
- Basketball Court
- Group Picnic Area
- Open Turf Area

Master Plan Park Facilities

- Restroom
- Dog Park
- Community Garden
- Loop Walking Path
- Adult Fitness
- Pickle Ball
- Shaded Seating Areas
- Habitat/Native Planting
- Security Lighting

Upon completion of the first community meeting, an on-line version of the facility survey was released for those who could not attend. A total of 62 community members responded to the survey.

Input from the community and survey as well as an initial draft park plan were presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission (Commission) for review and input on January 28, 2020. The Commission stressed the importance of aligning the proposed park plan with the recommendations of the North Ventura Coordination Plan and expressed support for the initial draft plan including support for a dog park, the removal of a section of Ash Street to combine the two parcels of land, a restroom room closer to the playgrounds and limiting built park facilities along the edge of Matadero Creek for potential creek restoration.

A second community meeting was held on February 27, 2020. This was a joint meeting with the North Ventura Coordination Plan. As the closest adjacent park to the proposed redevelopment area, Boulware Park is important in providing open parkland to the area. Along with long term consideration of the larger development including creek restoration, connection to the park and overall park use the community was presented three draft plan options of the overall park design for input. The draft park design combines both the existing parkland and newly purchased AT&T property as well as a portion of Ash Street. The design options and included facilities were developed from input from the first community meeting and guidance from the Parks Master Plan. Each of the three designs were presented to the community to provide their input. This was done by both writing on the printed copies of the plans as well as the use of sticky notes.

A third community meeting was held on December 7, 2020 via web cast at 11am and 6pm to review the draft park plan layout. Based on the three previous options, input concerning the North Ventura Coordination Plan, Parks Commission and community input a final draft plan was presented.

The overall park plan includes the following amenities (bold items are existing park amenities that are found in the current Boulware Park):

- Inclusive playground (**both tot (2-5) & children (5-12)**)
- **Basketball Court**
- Restroom
- Dog Park
- Turn around Drop-Off
- **Open Turf Area**
- Loop Pathway
- **Picnic Area**
- **Shaded Seating Area**
- Bocce court
- Covered picnic area
- New head-in and accessible parking stalls along Lambert Ave.

Environmental amenities included in the overall design include:

- Runoff filtration gardens
- Native habitat gardens
- Net increase of 20 trees

The plan was supported by the community who attended the meeting including the locations of the proposed site amenities, the location of the restroom closest to the playground, the added head in parking along Lambert and the removal of the section of Ashland Street. The community was also supportive of leaving a proposed 65' setback of built structures along the creek for future creek restoration.

The Commission was presented the proposed park plan and community feedback on January 26, 2021. Community comments at the Commission meeting expressed support of the overall park plan design and for the addition of native plants. The Commission was supportive of the park design and the flexibility it provides for future restoration of Matador Creek. The Commission also expressed support for funding and implementing the renovations project as soon as funding was available.

DISCUSSION

Staff requests the Parks and Recreation Commission recommend that Council adopt a Park Improvement Ordinance for the proposed improvements at Boulware Park, per the Exhibit B attached.

FUNDING

Capital improvement funding of \$495,000 was approved by City Council in 2017 to address park maintenance needs in the 2018 fiscal year. To cover the costs of developing the new parkland and renovation of the existing park, including incorporating a segment of Ash Street into the park area the City Council approved an additional \$2.7 million dollars for the

expanded project in fiscal year 2022. Total Capital improvement funding for the project is \$3.2 million.

NEXT STEPS

- City Council Adopt PIO: Fall 2021
- Bid Document Preparation: Fall/Winter 2021
- Project Bidding: Spring 2022
- Council to Approve Contract: Spring 2022
- Project Construction (120 Days): Summer 2022
- Construction Completion Fall 2022

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The proposed recommendations are consistent with Policy C-26 of the Community Services element of the Comprehensive Plan that encourages maintaining park facilities as safe and healthy community assets; and Policy C-22 that encourages new community facilities to have flexible functions to ensure adaptability to the changing needs of the community.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Draft Park Improvement Ordinance
Exhibit A: Draft Park Improvement Plan

PREPARED BY

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