

**TO:** Parks and Recreation Commission  
**FROM:** Public Works  
**DATE:** 1/26/2021  
**SUBJECT:** Boulware Park Renovation Project

## **RECOMMENDATION**

No action to be taken. Staff will present the Draft Boulware Park Plan to the Commission for input.

## **BACKGROUND**

Capital improvement funding of \$495,000 was approved by the City Council in 2017 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 Birch Street property, adjacent to the existing Boulware Park and owned by AT&T was put up for sale. In fall 2019, the City finalized the purchase of the Birch Street property and began a community-based design process to determine how the existing Boulware Park and the Birch Street property would be developed as one park.

All materials presented to the community and Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) in prior meetings can be viewed at the project web site at [www.cityofpaloalto.org/boulwarepark](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/boulwarepark)

The first community meeting was held on Saturday, November 9, 2019 at the park. The goal of this first 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 ranking them on preference and priority. The facilities presented were drawn from existing facilities found in Boulware Park and facilities that were highlighted in the Parks Master Plan process 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 the 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. Survey results can be reviewed in Attachment B.

Input from the community and survey as well as an initial draft park plan were presented to the Parks and Recreation 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 a dog park, the removal of a section of Ash Street to combine the two parcels of land, a restroom 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 improvement 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 park 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 design options were presented to the community and printed plans off the options were provided for the community to provide their direct input on the plans. This was done by both writing on the plans as well as the use of sticky notes.

Refer to Attachment C for photo images of three draft park plans and community input.

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

The overall park plan includes the following amenities (bolded amenities are found in the current Boulware Park):

- Inclusive playground (**both tot & children**)
- **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 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 community supports the approval of funds for the Fiscal Year 2022 budget cycle to develop the full park as soon as possible, citing that the Ventura neighborhood is the most populated neighborhood in Palo Alto with limited open park space and that future development would increase the size of the community around the park. As well the investment the city made in 2019 to purchase the parcel of land from AT&T and the fact that the current Boulware Park is up for renovations with playgrounds and other park amenities past their life expectancy of 15 plus years.

### **Renovation Strategy:**

Staff is aware that the budget of \$495,000 for the original scope of the project is not sufficient to develop the newly added parkland and renovate the existing park. Staff is in the process submitting funding request for Capital Improvement Project for Fiscal Year 2022 to cover the full renovation of the park and the newly acquired AT&T property. The current funding of \$495,000 would be utilized for the design and construction drawing development of the project. The strategy is to develop plans in preparation to go out to bid in summer 2021 and start renovation/construction of the project in late summer 2021

when funds become available. Funding is determinant on the Council approval of the Fiscal Year 2022 budget. Total park construction cost is estimated at \$3.4M

## **DISCUSSION**

Staff requests input from the commission on the potential facilities for the park, and the preliminary draft park plan (Attachment A). Information gathered from the community meetings, on-line surveys and Parks and Recreation Commission meetings will guide which facilities would be included in the draft park layout plan, which will be reviewed by the community at the second phase of outreach.

## **NEXT STEPS**

- PRC Meeting #2 - Plan Review: January 26, 2021
- PRC Meeting #3 – Recommendation of Park Improvement Ordinance (PIO): Spring 2021
- City Council - Adoption of the PIO: Spring 2021
- Bid Document Preparation: Spring/Summer 2021
- Project Bidding: Spring/Summer 2021 (if funded)
- Council to Approve Contract: Summer 2021
- Project Construction: Summer/Fall 2021 (anticipated 90 day construction period)

## **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 Preliminary Park Plan

Attachment B: Community Survey Responses

Attachment C: Option Plans with Community Input (from Community Meeting #2)

## **PREPARED BY**

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