



Council Agenda Report

Item 6d

Department: Parks and Recreation
Cost Center: 7001
For Agenda of: 10/19/2021
Placement: Consent
Estimated Time: N/A

FROM: Greg Avakian, Parks & Recreation Director
Prepared By: Devin Hyfield, Recreation Manager and Aleah Bergam, Parks and Recreation Analyst

SUBJECT: MITCHELL PARK PER CAPITA GRANT PROJECT UPDATE

RECOMMENDATION

1. Approve a Resolution entitled, "A Resolution of the City Council of the City of San Luis Obispo, California, approving an amendment to the Mitchell Park Per Capita Grant Project and related budgetary appropriations; and
2. Authorize the Finance Director to return any remaining Quimby Funds to fund balance upon project completion.

DISCUSSION

Background

In 2018, the State of California invested in the largest grant funding for critically underserved communities with the passage of Proposition 68: California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act. Recognizing the need for underserved communities to have equitable access to outdoor recreation facilities, the bond also provides funds for new parks and rehabilitation of current parks that will help attract new and diverse visitors.

On October 20, 2020, Council authorized staff to submit a project proposal to apply for a grant to revitalize Mitchell Park with new amenities, such as pickleball courts and authorized the Assistant City Manager to execute the necessary grant documents and appropriate the grant funds into the Parks and Recreation Department's budget upon grant award, Resolution No. 11179 (Attachment B). Staff received notice in December 2020 that the project was approved, and the City was awarded a contract with State Parks for \$177,952 in per capita grant funding to be spent on Mitchell Park pickleball courts. The full proposed project budget was estimated to be more than the grant award, and additional funding in the amount of \$32,048 was approved and appropriated by Council from the Parkland-in-lieu fund (Quimby) for a combined project budget of \$210,000.

Preliminary Project Selection

Staff reviewed feedback from multiple public outreach meetings surrounding the update to the Parks and Recreation Blueprint for the Future to determine project scope for this grant application. Throughout the public outreach process, the community expressed desire for more activities within downtown parks and identified a lack of inventory of pickleball courts. Mitchell Park is a centrally located park and is utilized as a gathering place near downtown. In addition, City staff and members of the Parks and Recreation Commission have received concern from the public regarding the condition and low activation of the park. Staff proposed installing pickleball courts with the Per Capita Grant funding which would activate the park and provide more multi-generational recreational opportunities for members of the community to help address public concern.

Mitchell Park Community Workshops

Parks and Recreation staff hosted a virtual community workshop on May 19, 2021, to discuss the proposed project at Mitchell Park and show community members the draft site plans of the pickleball courts. Approximately 20 members of the public provided feedback regarding the location of the pickleball courts and the potential addition of other amenities within Mitchell Park. Overall, the public did not support the installation of the two pickleball courts and expressed ideas for other passive amenities to revitalize the park such as the installation of shade structures at the BBQ seating area, bocce courts and chess tables. The public expressed the importance of maintaining the integrity of the park for social gatherings, special events, open green areas, and rallies. There were also concerns regarding the impact to the parking lot reserved for SLO Senior Center members as well as surrounding neighborhoods if pickleball courts were to be installed.

Staff hosted an on-site community workshop on September 16, 2021, to discuss and finalize the proposed project update. Staff utilized visual aids with examples of a variety of passive recreational amenities and incorporated an on-line survey for the public to provide input on specific types of passive recreational amenities to replace the pickleball courts. 25 community members attended the workshop and 58 responded to the survey. The results of the workshops and survey demonstrated that the public is in support of the installation of chess/checker tables, bocce ball courts, shade structures and stage installation at the social gathering area, additional benches, interactive educational signage, and pathway safety lighting.

Previous Council or Advisory Body Action

On October 20, 2020, Council authorized staff to submit a project proposal to apply for a grant to revitalize Mitchell Park with new amenities, such as pickleball courts and authorized the Assistant City Manager to execute the necessary grant documents and appropriate the grant amount into the Parks and Recreation Department's budget upon grant award (Attachment B).

On February 2, 2021, Council authorized Resolution No. 11218 (Attachment C) authorizing initiation of project planning and design for pickleball courts at Mitchell Park and Appropriating Project Budget with the expectation for staff to continue to conduct community outreach prior to final design

On July 7, 2021, staff presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission and made recommendations regarding moving forward with pickleball courts at Mitchell Park or revising the project application to include passive recreational amenities, as suggested by the community at the public outreach meetings. Commissioners recommended not moving forward with pickleball courts and advised staff to conduct an additional public meeting to determine specific alternative recreational amenities. Staff presented September public workshop and survey results summary at the October 6, 2021 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting and will provide Council with the recommendation and draft minutes of the meeting via Council Correspondence.

Policy Context

The City's Charter under Section 804 allows City Council to amend or supplement the budget by motion adopted by majority vote of the council. The project budget is not recommended to change, but rather project scope and title will need to be amended by Council Resolution. Partial funding for this project comes from fees imposed by the Quimby Act within the subdivision Map Act (Cal. Gov. Code § 66477), which requires the fees be used for developing new or rehabilitating existing neighborhood, community parks, or recreation facilities that serve the specific subdivision paying the fees.

Public Engagement

Staff have conducted two public outreach events, (May 19 and September 16, 2021), as well as an on-line survey. The public have expressed their desire for passive recreational amenities and to maintain the integrity of the park for social gatherings, special events, open green areas, and rallies. The majority of the public in attendance at the public engagement meetings were not in support of pickleball courts.

CONCURRENCE

The Public Works Department concurs with this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The California Environmental Quality Act does not apply to the recommended action in this report, because the action does not constitute a "Project" under CEQA Guidelines Sec. 15378.

FISCAL IMPACT

Budgeted: Yes
Funding Identified: Yes

Budget Year: 2021-22

Fiscal Analysis:

Funding Sources	Total Budget Available	Current Funding Request	Remaining Balance	Annual Ongoing Cost
General Fund				\$2,000
State	\$177,952	\$177,952	\$0	
Federal				
Fees				
Other: Quimby Parkland-in-lieu Fund	\$32,048	\$32,048	\$0	
Total	\$210,000	\$210,000	\$0	\$2,000

The City has received a signed contract with State Parks for \$177,952 in Prop 68 Per Capita funding for the Mitchell Park Pickleball Court project. If Council approves the project modifications, staff will re-submit the project application. Staff has already worked with State Parks to ensure the updated scope still satisfies the grant requirements so there should be no issues re-submitting the grant application. Staff would like to keep the budget of \$210,000 and will return any un-used funding to the Parkland-in-lieu fund. Maintenance for the proposed passive recreational amenities is minimal, and staff only anticipates \$2,000 in on-going annual operations and maintenance costs once the amenities are constructed. This can be accommodated for within the current fiscal year budget.

ALTERNATIVES

1. The City Council could request additional information or analysis from staff.
2. The City Council could deny the amendment to the Mitchell Park Grant Project forfeiting the grant award.

ATTACHMENTS

- A – Draft Resolution adopting new project scope for Mitchell Park Grant Project
B – Resolution No. 11179 (2020 Series)
C – Resolution No. 11218 (2021 Series)