



Agenda Item C.2
DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEM
Meeting Date: March 3, 2021

TO: Chair and Members of the Parks and Recreation Commission

FROM: Jaime Valdez, Interim Neighborhood Services and Public Safety Director

CONTACT: JoAnne Plummer, Parks and Recreation Manager

SUBJECT: Stow Grove Park Considerations for Design Phase

RECOMMENDATION:

Consider a recommendation requesting City Council to direct staff to prepare conceptual documents for the renovation of the Stow Grove Park, in its entirety, which may be phased for future projects.

BACKGROUND:

In 2015, the Multi-Purpose Field at the north end of Stow Grove Park was identified as needing renovation through the priorities listed in the adopted Recreation Needs Assessment. Understanding that the community values this park, the public outreach efforts launched with a survey asking questions that were inclusive of the entire park, providing information for future phases. The survey was released on Tuesday, October 20th and comments were received through Monday, November 16, 2020. The results of this survey were provided to the Parks and Recreation Commission at their meeting of December 2, 2020.

The initial outreach process resulted in an astonishing community response with over 750 completed surveys received. The data obtained in this process confirmed the community's affinity for this treasured park location. The responses verified that there are many elements of the park in need of improvement.

DISCUSSION:

The City's adopted Recreation Needs Assessment identified a lack of available athletic fields for use by youth sports organizations. To address the deficiency, two field renovation projects were identified and placed as Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Projects #9074 and #9075 in the City's CIP budget. These two projects include the northern field at Stow Grove Park (9074) and the field at Evergreen Park (9075).

In addition, the City of Goleta added a new multi-purpose field with the development of Jonny D. Wallis Neighborhood Park and renovated the multi-purpose field behind the Goleta Valley Community Center in 2019.

The field renovation tentatively planned to improve the existing facility at Stow Grove Park would include new turf, irrigation, replacement and/or improvement of existing amenities, etc. However, since the primary access to Stow Grove Park comes from the parking lot located on North La Patera Lane, additional accessibility improvements will be required. Updating the field has triggered mandated upgrades to the parking lot, the creation of an accessible pathway from the parking lot to the field, the play features and possibly the restroom facility.

As the results of the survey are analyzed along with other documents, included but not limited to the Parks Master Plan, the Recreation Needs Assessment and the City's ADA Transition Plan, it appears that there are needs to address many of the same features for the remaining areas of the park. An example is the accessibility from the parking lot to the rest of the park. If the focus is on the improvements to the parking lot only for the renovation of the northern field, there may be a need to address the parking lot during the next phase as accessibility is needed for the rest of the park as well. In other words, each subsequent project may require additional adjustments to the parking lot.

Staff is requesting the Commission consider supporting a recommendation to City Council to direct staff to prepare conceptual documents for Stow Grove Park Renovation, for the entire facility, which could be phased for future projects. This process would require the solicitation of Requests for Proposals for a Landscape Architect to develop a conceptual plan to address deficiencies in the entire park, which could be separated into phases for construction as funding is available. Once the final conceptual plan is supported by the Parks and Recreation Commission and approved by the City Council, construction documents will be prepared for the phase recommended for improvement. This holistic approach to the park's improvements will allow for a plan to be developed, with the public's input, addressing needs for this facility. Understanding what will be modified in this park, even on a conceptual level, will also allow the City of Goleta the opportunity to explore grants and other funding opportunities for future phases.

It is important to note that many of the surveys received have requested that the park remain the same—very “natural”. The recommendation before the Parks and Recreation Commission is not to create a brand-new Stow Grove Park, but to plan for future accessibility, efficiencies and more that will allow the community, of all abilities, to enjoy this beautiful space for years to come.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The cost to develop a conceptual plan for just the northern field, addressing the associated ADA improvements can cost \$40,000 - \$50,000, while a conceptual plan for the entire park will likely range from \$75,000 - \$100,000. These are just rough estimates from two different landscape architecture firms and amounts are contingent on the number of public meetings, amount of survey work needed, and extent of environmental documents required. It is unrealistic to estimate the costs associated with the creation of construction documents, construction itself or construction management, as those are all directly related to the scope of the project, which is undefined at this time.

In the City's Capital Improvement Project Program, Project #9074 has \$490,000 of approved budget for FY 20/21. Utilizing existing funds to create a conceptual plan for the entire park will require additional appropriation of funds in the future but will eliminate potential wasteful spending redesigning/reconstructing of a space multiple times as future phases are constructed.

Reviewed By:



Jaime Valdez
Interim Neighborhood Services
and Public Safety Director

ATTACHMENTS:

A. Stow Grove Park Survey Amenity Priority List Results

ATTACHMENT 1

Stow Grove Park Survey Amenity Priority List Results

STOW GROVE PARK SURVEY AMENITY PRIORITY LIST RESULTS

ATTACHMENT A

TYPE OF RECREATION AMENITY*	ALL PRIORITIES	TOP 3 PRIORITIES
Additional Bathrooms	228	132
Benches	308	79
Bird Watching	191	94
Drinking Fountains	165	54
Fitness Equipment	107	46
Group Picnic Areas	243	100
Individual Picnic Areas	328	140
Landscaping	255	103
Open Turf	172	55
Parking Lot	103	27
Play Equipment	250	178
Recreation/Sports	151	62
Redwoods	504	412
Sand Volleyball	92	38
Security	174	77
Signage	35	5
Sports Fields	129	45
Tree Plantings	367	200
Walking Paths	473	255
Other: (See List Below)	107	74

A Park Ranger Presence	Frisbee Golf	Ninja Course
Access from Cathedral Oaks	Gardens	No Dogs
ADA Paths for Wheelchairs	Gopher Control	Old Wooden Fort
Add Shade over Play Structure	Horseshoe Pits	Paved Walking Path
Additional Parking	Interesting Plants	Pickleball Courts
Address the House	Keep it as a Neighborhood Parks	Protecting Redwoods
Basketball Courts	Keep it Natural	Restroom Upgrade
Bike Racks	Leave the Park as it is	Running Trails
Butterfly Watching	Mirrors in Bathrooms	Skate Park
Campsites	More BBQ Areas	Small Stage Area
Community Fruit Orchard	More Events	Splash Pad
Community Garden	More Native Plants	Tennis Courts
Covered Garbage Cans	More Sports Fields	Update Play Equip. for adults
Dog Poop Bags	More Trees	Water Bottle Refill Stations
Fenced in Dog Park	Natural Sanctuary	

*The top four priorities are bolded in the numerical columns