



Legislation Text

File #: 2021-0374, **Version:** 1

To: Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): Regional Parks

Staff Name and Phone Number: Scott Wilkinson 707-565-2734

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisorial District(s): First

Title:

Larson Park Master Plan

Recommended Action:

Adopt a resolution of the Board of Supervisors approving the Larson Park Master Plan Update and authorize the Director of Regional Parks to file a Notice of Exemption (NOE) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). (First District)

Executive Summary:

Larson Park is an important neighborhood park nestled in the vibrant Springs neighborhood north of Sonoma. The park has extensive deferred maintenance and needs facility upgrades and renovations. Before renovating individual park features, Regional Parks engaged the community in a master planning process to determine if the mix of uses was still appropriate, or whether there was a desire for a new vision for the park to better serve the current and future needs of the community. Through the process of meeting with neighbors and stakeholders, it became clear that rather than a wholesale re-design of the park, the community is happy with the current uses, and communicated a unified desire to maintain them, while upgrading and renovating the facility and park amenities throughout.

The proposed Master Plan serves as a guide to develop construction drawings, and to support fundraising for project implementation. Regional Parks anticipates funding will include a combination of grants, community fundraising, Parks for All Measure M, and major maintenance funding.

Discussion:

Background:

Larson Park is located at 329 DeChene Avenue in Fethers Hot Springs, in unincorporated Sonoma County referred to as "The Springs." The park service area includes Agua Caliente and Boyes Hot Springs neighborhoods and is approximately 0.15 miles west of Highway 12. The park is comprised of two separate assessor parcels (158-056-021 and 158-056-059) totaling approximately 7.5 acres. The northern boundary of the site is aligned with a small seasonal tributary to Sonoma Creek named Pequeño Creek, with Sonoma Creek forming the border to west. The creeks lend a great deal to the character of the park and provide valuable natural open space and habitat within an otherwise developed residential area.

The park was originally developed and maintained by the Valley of the Moon Park and Recreation District. In 1987, the District was dissolved as the existing tax base became unable to support the ongoing operational budget of the District with the high cost of maintaining active recreation facilities. A County Service Area (CSA) was formed to continue local park services to the area previously served by the district that includes Larson Park. Subsequently, Sonoma County Regional Parks has been administering the CSA, and managing the park.

The Master Plan proposes to address the deferred maintenance of park infrastructure, improve the recreational and play features, increase the overall safety and sense of security in the park, and protect the riparian areas of Sonoma and Pequeño Creeks.

The park uses and general layout under the proposed Master Plan will remain very similar to that of the existing park. The only new uses include four dedicated pickle ball courts to be developed in place of one tennis court, leaving three tennis courts instead of four, a new permanent restroom building, and a new picnic area. Several of the existing uses are to be enhanced including the play area, soccer field, community garden and the picnic area on west side of the park. The ball field is to be renovated within its current footprint.

Regional Parks anticipates engaging the community in order to develop more detailed designs for specific features of the park such as the play area and site furnishings. Art installations such as murals and sculptures as well as are anticipated to be included in the renovated park, as well as possibilities to integrate artistic elements and details into aspects of park the paving, fencing and other structures where appropriate. See Attachment 2, Master Plan document for the plan graphic, and complete description of all proposed improvements.

Public Participation Summary:

Regional Parks hosted a series of three public workshops in order to develop a vision for the updated Master Plan. The discussions and feedback at the workshops provided good insight into the issues and opportunities facing the park, and resulted in a better understanding of the current and future needs of the community.

The first workshop was held at the La Luz meeting hall, and the second and third meetings were held in the multi-purpose room on the Flowery School campus adjacent to the Larson Park. All three meetings were conducted with English to Spanish translation service as necessary. In addition to the public workshops, an online survey was made available through the Regional Parks' website. The responses generally supported the discussions and feedback received during the workshops. See Attachment 2, Master Plan, and Appendix C for a complete overview of the process.

CEQA analysis:

The project consists of renovations and improvements of an existing public park. The uses remain essentially the same and the development footprint unchanged. The project will not impact the adjacent riparian areas, and will not result in the removal of any healthy, mature, scenic trees and will not result in cumulative impacts or significant effects to scenic or historical resources. The project area is not located on a site that is included on the lists compiled pursuant to §65962.5 of the Government code or within any wetland, officially designated scenic area, or officially mapped area of severe geologic hazard. The project is exempt under CEQA Guidelines sections 15301, 15302, and 15304.

Prior Board Actions:

September 1, 2020 received the County of Sonoma Capital Project Plan 2020-2025, including subject Larson Park project.

August 6, 2019 by Resolution No. 19-0317 approved application for Statewide Park Development and Community Revitalization Grant Funds, round three.

May 10, 2011, Board authorized the Chair to execute a license agreement between Nuestra Voz and the County of Sonoma to construct, operate and maintain a community garden at Larson Park.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 20-21 Adopted	FY21-22 Projected	FY 22-23 Projected
Budgeted Expenses			
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures			
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources			

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

There is no fiscal impact to this item.

Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll Classification)	Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)	Additions (Number)	Deletions (Number)

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

None.

Attachments:

1. Resolution
2. Larson Master Plan Document
3. Larson Master Plan Report

4. Larson Park Renovation Master Plan
5. Notice of Exemption

Related Items “On File” with the Clerk of the Board:

None.