



COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
Inter-Departmental Correspondence
Parks



Date: August 15, 2016
Board Meeting Date: September 20, 2016
Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors

From: Marlene Finley, Parks Director

Subject: **Measure A** Funding for the Fair Oaks Beautification Association's Mini-park Proposal

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution authorizing **Measure A** mini-park funding through a memorandum of understanding between the County of San Mateo and the Fair Oaks Beautification Association to fund one-time basketball court improvements, and three years of annual maintenance costs for the basketball court, and a playground located in unincorporated North Fair Oaks in the amount of \$45,000.

BACKGROUND:

The County's Mini-park Policy, adopted by the Board of Supervisors on May 19, 2015, Resolution No. 073780, established the definition, goals and policies for the need, acceptance, requirements and management of mini-parks. It serves as a guiding document for County Park's efforts to manage future adopted or created mini-parks in the County. The policy defines a mini-park as a specialized facility that is smaller than five acres located within a neighborhood, walkable and/or in close proximity to residents, parking and other densely populated areas, and that serves a concentrated population or specific groups such as children, seniors and visitors.

The Fair Oaks Beautification Association (FOBA), a 501(c)3 non-profit neighborhood organization, submitted a Mini-park Proposal. FOBAs stated mission is to improve the quality of life for residents of the North Fair Oaks neighborhood. For the past 25 years, FOBAs primary activities have involved planting and caring for over 400 street trees, installing traffic calming devices for safer streets, building and maintaining parks, playground and pocket park, organizing events and social gatherings, coordinating a community garden project, and producing a neighborhood newsletter called "Avenues."

DISCUSSION:

Unincorporated North Fair Oaks (NFO) comprises a total area of 1.25 square miles and is home to approximately 15,000 residents. It has the highest density population of any community in San Mateo County. Over 50% of the residents are renters, often in complexes without backyards, making it difficult to get outside to play, picnic or socialize. Studies show that residents with convenient access to a park are more likely to use parks for recreation and physical activity, resulting in health benefits including a reduced risk for heart disease and cancer, both of which are leading causes of death in NFO.

The playground in FOBAs proposal is located at the intersection of Fair Oaks Avenue and Edison Way in a mixed commercial and residential neighborhood. According to the State Parks Fact Finder, there are 6,713 people living within a half-mile of the playground. The playground has a basketball hoop, two play structures, a tire swing, sand play, grassy meadow and two seating areas, and is used for community events and neighborhood gatherings. FOBA and NFO neighbors designed and built the playground over a Hetch Hetchy aqueduct with license authorization by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC). FOBA raises funds to pay landscapers and uses volunteers to maintain the play areas.

FOBAs Mini-park Proposal requested five years of annual operating support at \$10,000 per year for the playground and a nearby Pocket Park at the intersection of Bay Road and 18th Street, and a one-time grant of \$15,000 to upgrade the basketball court at the playground. FOBA states that its goal is to ensure on-going funding to maintain the playground and Pocket Park before making improvements or adding other facilities. The Mini-park Policy allows for the “construction of a park facility,” so capital improvements at the playground such as the basketball court are eligible for funding.

Parks staff recommends that the County award FOBA \$10,000 annually for three years for operating support of the playground and Pocket Park and that \$15,000 be awarded for improvements to the basketball court, for a total of \$45,000. The cost for County Parks to maintain these two parks for the public would far exceed the contributions FOBA is requesting to help them continue to provide these amenities. For comparison, Friendship Park in North Fair Oaks has annual operating expenses exceeding \$15,000 per year. As County contract specifications limit the term of agreements to three years, Parks staff recommends three years of funding rather than the five years requested by FOBA.

The Parks and Recreation Commission reviewed the proposal at its August 4, 2016 meeting and recommended that the Board of Supervisors approve Parks staff's recommendation. If approved by the Board, staff would then prepare a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the County and FOBA. Under such a future MOU, FOBAs responsibilities would be to renovate and maintain the basketball court, maintain any licenses or permits with private landowners and the SFPUC, maintain the landscaped areas including trees, conduct any state mandated playground inspections, maintain signage and kiosks, open and close playground gates, provide garbage

service and continue to organize community events and activities and programs. The FOBA playground and Pocket Park would remain the sole responsibility of FOBA and not be considered County Parks' responsibility.

County Counsel has reviewed and approved the resolution as to form.

The resolution contributes to the 2025 Shared Vision of an Environmentally Conscious Community as it provides recreational services to an underserved community in unincorporated San Mateo County.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE(S):

Measure	FY 2016-17 Actual	FY 2017-18 Projected
Number of residents to have continued access within .5 miles to local recreation services in unincorporated North Fair Oaks	6,713	6,713

FISCAL IMPACT:

On March 17, 2015, the Board adopted the **Measure A** allocation plan for the FY 2015-17 budget, which included funding for mini-parks. There are sufficient **Measure A** funds appropriated in the Parks Department's FY 2016-17 Approved Recommended Budget for this purpose. There is no impact on the General Fund.