

COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
PARKS DEPARTMENT

DATE: October 3, 2019

To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Peggy Jensen, Interim Parks Director
Subject: Letter of Support for CuriOdyssey's proposed Physics Play Area

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the Letter of Support for CuriOdyssey's proposed Physics Play Area.

BACKGROUND

CuriOdyssey is a not-for-profit science museum and accredited zoo that is located within the County's Coyote Point Recreation Area. Through educational programs, interactive exhibits, and a wildlife center, CuriOdyssey helps children develop the tools necessary to understand the changing world.

CuriOdyssey is able to connect kids with nature through daily public animal feedings and educational programs led by the museum's Animal Ambassadors. Moreover, the museum offers a range of hands-on programs designed for school and group educators in the sciences, as well as programs for the general public that help visitors explore, discover, and interact with nature and natural phenomena.

DISCUSSION

In collaboration with Magical Bridge Playgrounds, the proposed Physics Play Area will be designed to serve people with varied levels of physical and mental abilities, and will allow CuriOdyssey to be more inclusive in who it serves.

To further help children understand how science is involved in everyday life, CuriOdyssey seeks to construct a Physics Play Area. Proposed improvements include an in-ground carousel, disk swing, net spinner, tot area, and a slide. The scientific concepts that will be demonstrated include the disk swing moving like a pendulum; the carousel displaying the concept of centripetal force; and children learning about gravity by throwing spinning balls. All of these improvements help children learn physically and intuitively about scientific concepts.

This proposed Physics Play Area truly enhances CuriOdyssey's value as a regional destination. In accordance with the Commission's request during the June and August meetings, the Department presents the attached letter of support for CuriOdyssey's proposed Physics Play Area.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no net County cost for this.