CITY OF SAN JOSE
CAPITAL OF SILICON VALLEY

Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Jon Cicirelli

SUBJECT: **Columbus Park Revitalization Plan**

DATE: March 24, 2025

Approved

Date 4/2/25

COUNCIL DISTRICT: 6

RECOMMENDATION

(a) Adopt a resolution adopting the Columbus Park Redevelopment Project Mitigated Negative Declaration (File No. ER20-025), for which an Initial Study was prepared, in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act, as amended, and adopting a related Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

(b) Approve the Columbus Park Revitalization Plan.

SUMMARY AND OUTCOME

Approval will complete the revitalization plan for Columbus Park to guide the design and construction of the 9.4-acre neighborhood sports park. The redevelopment of the site will provide a range of recreational opportunities, connect neighborhoods, create an inviting public space that strengthens the sense of community, and support public health.

BACKGROUND

The City Council approved funding in October 2019 for the reconstruction of Columbus Park to accommodate soccer and other recreational activities, marking the final project funded by the Measure P Bond[1]. For many years the City faced challenges in identifying

[1] Measure P is the year 2000 vote approved Parks and Recreation Bond Initiative, which provided $228 million for parks infrastructure, and to date, 89 of the 90 original projects planned have been completed.

suitable locations for a new soccer facility. After evaluating various options, Columbus Park was identified as a potential site.

The park is currently closed and in poor condition. Revitalizing the existing park into a soccer facility is seen as an effective use of funds. Preliminary concepts suggest there is enough space for multiple soccer fields and new amenities. The project has faced delays due to site complexity, staff capacity, and agency coordination. In July 2021, the Director of Public Works authorized a service order with consultant RRM Design Group to work on the project, but the CEQA documentation was not initially included. The additional scope was added later.

ANALYSIS

Currently, the project is at the 20% design phase, with construction aimed to begin in the first quarter of 2026 with a beneficial use by the third quarter of 2027. Analysis by the Public Works Department and Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services Department indicates that Columbus Park can accommodate two soccer fields and other active recreation elements such as pickleball and basketball (See Attachment – Columbus Park Revitalization Plan map). To boost Columbus Park's usage, a regional attraction like a soccer facility is essential to draw visitors from surrounding areas, promote active living, and enhance the park's overall sense of place.

Public Works has developed preliminary designs to ensure adequate space for the soccer fields. The concept features four youth soccer fields overlaid on two adult-size soccer fields alongside a half basketball court, horseshoe pitches, pickleball courts, futsal court, play area, paseo, and parking lot.

The revitalization plan reflects community input received at three community meetings, conforms with the Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services Department (Department) Park Design Guidelines, aligns with the guiding principles within the Department's ActivateSJ Strategic Plan, and is consistent with relevant goals from the City's General Plan: Envision San José 2040.

The plan confirms the site's layout, primary features, landscape, and operational goals which will serve as the basis for construction documents to support bidding and construction of the project. Community feedback highlighted the need for recreational goals and safety concerns be addressed and also emphasized the importance of offering both active and passive activities and programming that caters to a range of ages. As a condition of the Measure P Bond, the conceptual plan emphasizes the soccer facilities as a primary feature.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

Approval of the Columbus Park revitalization plan will allow the project to proceed with construction documents. Design development is expected to be completed in fourth quarter of 2025, with construction beginning in the first quarter of 2026, and finishing in the third quarter of 2027.

Future City Council actions will seek authorization to vacate Spring Street between West Taylor and Asbury Street, and authorization to award the construction contract for the work.

The park planning process commenced with an assessment of ActivateSJ, see Table A below.

Table A – ActivateSJ

Guiding Principle	Goal Statement	Opportunity / Approach
Stewardship	We take care of what we have and invest for the future.	Recreational features, landscaping and furnishings will be selected with consideration of available maintenance funding, prioritizing durability and longevity.
Nature	We protect, preserve and promote natural areas for all people.	Trees with large canopies and native landscaping are incorporated into the site design to offer essential shade and contribute to ecological health.
Equity and Access	We embrace people of all ages, cultures and abilities.	To ensure equitable access and inclusivity for all, the site plan incorporated Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant entries to the park, as well as diverse recreational facilities including pickleball courts, soccer fields, half basketball courts, play areas, and accessible seating options to provide recreational options for all ages and abilities.
Identity	We aim to be a premier parks, recreation and neighborhood services system	The design creates a space that fosters community pride, promotes active living, and enhances the park's overall sense of place within the neighborhood.
Public Life	We promote community spaces for a safe, fun and healthy San José	The Master Plan calls to accommodate a variety of activities and support community gathering events using the different sports courts, play area, soccer fields, and paseo.

COORDINATION

This project has been coordinated with the City Attorney's Office, City Manager's Budget Office, Airport Department, Planning Building and Code Enforcement Department, and Public Works Department.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

This memorandum will be posted on the City's Council Agenda website for the April 15, 2025 City Council meeting.

The revitalization plan carefully balances the objectives outlined in the Measure P Bond, with the Department's operational goals within its available resources, and reflects community-preferred options and concerns. The community was made aware of the project and community meetings with a mailer, including a project overview and a short survey. Residents within 0.25 miles radius of the park location received the mailer and survey. Staff initiated community engagement by providing project background, goals, and objectives, and reflecting upon the public feedback from the survey. This was shared at Community Meeting #1 in August 2021. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meetings were held remotely, via Zoom webinar. Subsequent Community Meeting #2 focused on presenting revised exhibits from Community Meeting #1.

Community Meeting #1 (Zoom webinar)
Project introduction, background, and perspective sketches, including layouts for the paseo, picnic area, horseshoe and pickleball courts, and sports field, were shared with the community based upon survey feedback and alignment with City policies, goals, and best practices for park development. There were 47 attendees.

Community Meeting #2 (Zoom webinar)
The refined concept was shared with design details and options for consideration. Attendees were encouraged to ask questions and provide feedback. There were 31 attendees.

The refined concept provides the following:

- Park layout featuring two soccer fields and potential softball overlay;
- Playground;
- Paseo with shaded seating and tables beneath a row of trees;
- Horseshoe pitches, pickleball courts, futsal courts, and a half basketball court; and
- Design features like perimeter fencing to visually define the park and provide a barrier along surrounding streets.

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION AND INPUT

No commission recommendation or input is associated with this action.

CEQA

Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Columbus Park Redevelopment Project, File No. ER20-025.

PUBLIC SUBSIDY REPORTING

This item does not include a public subsidy as defined in section 53083 or 53083.1 of the California Government Code or the City's Open Government Resolution.

/s/
Jon Cicirelli
Director, Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services Department

The principal author of this memorandum is Willa Mui, Associate Landscape Designer, Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services. For questions, please contact willa.mui@sanjoseca.gov or (408) 887-3028.

ATTACHMENT: Columbus Park Revitalization Plan Map

Attachment

COLUMBUS PARK REVITALIZATION PLAN

SAN JOSE, CA.

0' 20' 40' 80' 120'

SCALE 1" = 40'