



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Jon Cicirelli

SUBJECT: ST. JAMES PARK DESIGN UPDATE

DATE: May 28, 2019

Approved

Date

6-6-2019

COUNCIL DISTRICT: 3

RECOMMENDATION

Accept the Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services' report and presentation on the status of the St. James Park Design Project.

OUTCOME

This report and presentation provides an opportunity for the Neighborhood Services & Education Committee to review the status of the St. James Design Project.

BACKGROUND

St. James Park (Park) is a historic 7.6-acre park. As noted in the 2002 Master Plan Update, it is historically one of the most important public spaces in downtown San José, with the boundaries dating to at least 1848. A number of notable events took place at St. James Park throughout US History, including speeches from presidential candidates, social gatherings, and civic events. The Park is listed in the National Register of Historic Places as part of the St. James Square National Register Historic District. It is also listed as part of the City of San José's St. James Square Historic District.

On November 10, 2015, the Mayor and Council approved the St. James Park Revitalization Strategy, which included the establishment of a St. James Park Capital Vision. Included in this strategy was the direction to work in parallel, and together with, the Levitt Pavilion project. The Levitt Pavilion project is a partnership with the Levitt Foundation, a non-profit that provides capital funding support to build a multi-use structure that would host free outdoor music events throughout the year. City staff advanced the strategy through selection of a design consultant using the City's procurement process, combined with a Design Competition component. The

Competition took place during the summer of 2016 with final presentations taking place publicly on October 15, 2016.

On January 23, 2017, the Mayor and Council accepted the St. James Park Design Competition Jury's recommendation to select CMG Landscape Architecture's submission as the winning design. Council also adopted a resolution authorizing the City Manager or his designee to negotiate and execute \$2.5 million to support the environmental review process, design and community outreach efforts related to St. James Park. Concept design activities were conducted from February 2017 through October 2017. Twenty-five percent design was conducted from late 2017 through September 2018.

In addition to the long term changes to the Park, the Department has been engaging in activation activities to enhance everyday use of the park. These activities have been occurring from approximately Memorial Day to Labor Day since 2014.

ANALYSIS

CMG Landscape Architecture completed 25 percent construction documents and submitted them to the City on October 3, 2018. The proposed renovation includes the Levitt Pavilion, lawn, restrooms, picnic pavilion, dog parks, playgrounds, water features, and a café. The plan envisions closing North Second Street to through traffic, while maintaining light rail service.

City Staff from Public Works, Department of Transportation, Police Department, Fire Department and Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services Department have reviewed the drawings, as well as with various stakeholders such as Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority and Friends of Levitt Pavilion San Jose.

Based on the 25 percent construction documents, the current cost estimate for the renovation of the Park is approximately \$63.9 million, with \$48.4 million in construction costs, and \$15.5 million required for soft costs such as: project management, design consultant fees, permitting, artwork, and other fees and services.

David J. Powers and Associates was engaged through a Master Agreement to prepare an Environmental Impact Report for the proposed project that complies with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The CEQA for St. James Park Design is currently in development. Public Circulation of the Draft Environmental Impact Report is anticipated in late August 2019 with the report being finalized by end of year 2019.

City staff has been meeting monthly since June 2018 with the Friends of Levitt Pavilion San Jose and the Mortimer and Mimi Levitt Foundation to coordinate a tri-party agreement with the City of San José. This agreement will define the capital construction contributions of each party and the ongoing operations and maintenance responsibilities.

The St. James Park Advisory Committee continues to meet monthly and has recently added new community members. This Committee works with staff on topics of critical importance to the Park and serves as an advocate and advisor to the City's work.

As a part of the St. James Advisory Committee, a governance subcommittee has been formed to discuss the long term governance of the Park. This subcommittee has been tasked with reviewing previous studies of governance models, reaching out to other Levitt Pavilions, and reviewing new models of governance to determine the best fit for St. James Park. The studies include long-term operations, maintenance, and funding strategies.

Activation programming will continue in 2019 with the following activities planned:

- Lunch time art and craft activities – Monday through Thursday
- DOGA – Second and Fourth Sundays
- Wine & Crafts – June 11th, July 16th and August 13th
- Viva Nights – Every Tuesday's from 6 – 8 p.m.
- Saturday Night Concert Series (6 – 8 p.m.) – June 8th and 29th; July 6th, 13th, 20th and 27th; August 17th
- Starlight Cinema – July 13th and 27th; August 3rd and 17th from sunset until ~9:45 p.m.
- Yarnbombing Day – June 8th

In 2019, the number of events has been increasing over previous years to engage the community more frequently in the park.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

Staff will report on the St. James Park Design Project to City Council in fall 2019.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

City staff meets monthly with the St. James Advisory Committee, to discuss the St. James Revitalization Strategy. As noted above, the St. James Governance subcommittee meets monthly to discuss the long term governance of the Park. Additionally, staff has held seven public presentations and outreach meetings, and conducted an online survey to receive additional feedback from interested stakeholders. City staff conducted an informational presentation to the Historic Landmarks Commission February 6, 2018 with positive response from the Commission.

COORDINATION

This memorandum has been coordinated with the City Manager's Budget Office and the City Attorney's Office.

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION/INPUT

The Parks and Recreation Commission heard the St. James concept plan at its November 1, 2017 meeting. The Commission had concerns about parking and transportation within the Park. Ultimately, Commissioner Mandair moved to accept the Concept Design, but requested that staff include an operational plan that addresses parking and transportation in the project development. The motion carried. (7-1-2). Noes: Dougherty Absent: Cron and Flores.

FISCAL/POLICY ALIGNMENT

No fiscal or policy considerations at this time.

COST SUMMARY/IMPLICATIONS

Funding was previously appropriated for completion of the 25% design and EIR work. At this time, reserves of \$7.05 million have been established for future design and construction work, suggesting a funding gap of \$56.85 million. Staff will return to Council in fall 2019 with a recommendation on future design and funding scenarios to support the recommendation.

CEQA

Not a project, File No. PP17-09. Staff reports, assessments, annual reports, and informational memos that involve no approvals of any city action.

/s/
JON CICIRELLI
Acting Director of Parks, Recreation and
Neighborhood Services Department

For questions, please contact Nicolle Burnham, Deputy Director, at (408)793-5514.