



DATE: October 14, 2020

AGENDA ITEM # 3

**TO:** Parks and Recreation Commission

**FROM:** Donna Legge, Recreation & Community Services Director

**SUBJECT:** Bocce Ball Courts Donation

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Receive updated information and forward a recommendation to City Council to defer acceptance or not acceptance of revised offer of \$40,000 from the Los Altos Legacies and Rotary Endowment Fund to build two bocce ball courts in Grant Park

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### **BACKGROUND**

Prior to programs being vacated from the Hillview Community Center (Hillview) in March 2019, there was an average of 56 participants that utilized two bocce ball courts on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, on an informal, drop-in basis. After Hillview closed [and prior to the COVID -19 Shelter-in-Place Orders], an average of 20 bocce ball participants, each week, utilized available courts at Cuesta Park located in the city of Mountain View – 2.4 miles or a 5-minute drive from Grant Park.

The Los Altos Legacies representative King Lear spoke during the public comment portion of the Senior Commission meeting on October 7, 2019, proposing to fund the development of two permanent bocce ball courts at Grant Park with a \$20,000 contribution. In addition, King spoke during the public comment portions of the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting on October 16, 2019 and the City Council meeting on October 22, 2019.

During the public comment portion of the Senior Commission meeting on December 2, 2019, King announced that the Los Altos Rotary Club Endowment Fund (Rotary) matched the Legacies' donation of \$20,000, proposing a \$40,000 donation for new bocce ball courts at Grant Park.

Per the current Donation Policy, any contribution made to the City of Los Altos valued to be greater than \$10,000, the acceptance (or not) of the contribution shall be placed upon the agenda of the City Council for its consideration. A letter to the donor(s) shall be sent following the Council's action, informing the person(s) of the Council's decision. Due to the nature of the offer, staff recommended that the Parks and Recreation Commission, as well as the Senior Commission, review the donation proposal and forward both recommendations to City Council.

At its regular meeting of December 11, 2019, the PARC recommended that the Senior Commission review the bocce ball proposal first and share their recommendation with the Parks and Recreation Commission at a future meeting.

On January 6, 2020, staff presented an analysis of the proposal to the Senior Commission, including six optional locations for placement in Grant Park with an estimated cost of \$56,925. This includes public outreach, Commission and City Council meetings, design, construction, grading, drainage, and a contingency. The estimate was based on the cost of the two courts being built at the new Los Altos Community Center. Additional costs may be incurred for surveying and soil testing. The estimate does not include shade structures.

The Senior Commission recommended to form a Bocce Ball Subcommittee to evaluate the issues pertaining to bocce ball courts being proposed in Grant Park.

At its regular meeting on February 3, 2020, the Senior Commission continued its discussion of the Bocce Ball proposal. Several of the following recommendations were made:

1. Locate the proposed bocce ball courts appropriately in Grant Park
2. Facilitate a survey to determine interest in bocce ball and other activities
3. Dissolve the Bocce Ball Subcommittee previously established
4. Accept the proposal of building Bocce Ball Courts at Grant Park
5. Continue discussion of the Bocce Ball Court proposal at the next Senior Commission meeting on the March 2, 2020

At its regular meeting of March 2, 2020, the Senior Commission continued its discussion of the Bocce Ball proposal and recommended that the bocce ball courts be included in a greater [Grant Park] master plan process.

## **DISCUSSION**

A regular discussion by the PARC includes exploring amenities that can be flexible and multi-use and can serve the greater population for the least amount of space. Parkland is a valuable commodity given the limited acreage (45 acres) the City of Los Altos has available.

Based on the number of park and facility amenities that have been identified in the City's existing Parks Plan and Capital Improvement Program at Grant Park, staff is recommending that City Council engage a landscape architect/park planning consultant to prepare a Grant Park Master Plan to include a comprehensive public process to determine short and long-term priorities for existing and desirable park amenities in Grant Park.

At its regular meeting of July 8, 2020, the PARC appointed Commissioners Dailey, Morris and Yeh to serve on a Grant Park Master Plan Subcommittee to evaluate Grant Park and conduct a preliminary needs assessment, working with staff if/when a recommendation for a consultant is deemed appropriate.

Recent correspondence from King Lear, shares the following update:

The Los Altos Legacies board has decided to go back to our original letter offer of \$20K with no expiration date. Both charitable fund offers are now back to being the same for a total of \$40K [including \$20K from the Rotary Endowment Fund].

The bocce idea was excellent, timely, and generous a year ago and may be a good idea in the future. But now we have a continuing pandemic and other issues complicating life for the City. There is a reduction in city revenues, a large hit on our city recreation programs and fees, staff has to plan on moving into the new community center, and we are electing three council members. Bocce is a low priority compared with all this.

In a year or so when it is clear if and how senior programs will be staffed at Grant Park, then the City can check in with us, if you are interested in the bocce gift idea. It is possible that the gift amount could be increased above \$40K total, depending on the estimated project cost.

King further advised staff/PARC to table the issue until sometime later, probably in 2021 when the recreation department finds a new normal or when a Grant Park Master Plan is completed.

Staff recommends that the PARC forward a recommendation to City Council to defer acceptance or not acceptance of revised offer of \$40,000 from the Los Altos Legacies and Rotary Endowment Fund to build two bocce ball courts in Grant Park, until the Grant Park Master Plan.

Based on the PARC recommendation regarding the bocce ball donation, staff will prepare a report for City Council that will include the recommendations from the Senior Commission and Parks and Recreation Commission regarding their respective recommendations for bocce ball as well as the pursuit of Grant Park Master Plan.