



DATE: September 9, 2020

AGENDA ITEM # 3

TO: Parks and Recreation Commission

FROM: Donna Legge, Recreation & Community Services Director

SUBJECT: Bocce Ball Courts Donation

RECOMMENDATION

Continue discussion and forward a recommendation to City Council to accept or not accept the conditional offer of \$50,000 by December 31, 2020, from the Los Altos Legacies and Rotary Endowment Fund to build two bocce ball courts in Grant Park

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 (Attachment A).

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 would serve the greater population for the least amount of space that is a valuable commodity given the limited acreage (45 acres) the City of Los Altos has available as parkland.

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 the PARC recommend to City Council to 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 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, provides an update on an increased offer of \$50,000 from the Legacies and Rotary (Attachment B). As outlined in the letter, the Legacies is committing \$30,000 to be accepted prior to December 31, 2020. If the City does not accept the offer by that date, the conditional offer will expire.

Staff recommends that the PARC forward a recommendation to City Council to accept or not accept the conditional offer of \$50,000 by December 31, 2020, from the Los Altos Legacies and Rotary Endowment Fund to build two bocce ball courts in Grant Park.

Attachments:

- A. Bocce Ball Location Options & Estimate
- B. July 2020 Donation Offer Letter from Legacies

Location Options for Bocce Ball Courts at Grant Park

Possible locations within Grant Park sufficient in size to accommodate two side by side bocce ball courts and ancillary space; width of 30 feet and length of 85 feet.

Location A – Front of Grant Park

Pro: Visible from street

Con: Area too narrow for two bocce ball courts, may conflict with tree drip and root zones

Location B – Front of Grant Park, perpendicular to Holt Avenue

Pro: Visible from street, sufficient space for two bocce ball courts

Con: Area a portion of the courts may conflict with tree drip zones resulting in higher level of maintenance

Location C – Front of Grant Park, parallel to Holt Avenue

Pro: Visible from street, sufficient space for two bocce ball courts

Con: A portion of the courts may conflict with tree drip zones resulting in higher level of maintenance, may require site grading work to address storm water drainage

Location D – Front of Grant Park, parallel to Grant Park Lane

Pro: Visible from street, sufficient space for two bocce ball courts

Con: Requires the removal of three trees and the relocation of the storage shed; a portion of the courts may conflict with tree drip zones resulting in higher level of maintenance

Location E – Located between the classroom and multipurpose room wings

Pro: Close proximity to senior center

Con: Requires the removal of four trees and the relocation of one storm drain inlet; insufficient space for two bocce ball courts

Location F – Rear portion of Grant Park, adjacent to the Newcastle Drive entrance to the park

Pro: Sufficient space for two bocce ball courts

Con: Pedestrian pathway would need to be rerouted to accommodate new courts; Area a portion of the courts may conflict with tree drip zones resulting in higher level of maintenance

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Project Budget

Design:	\$10,000
Construction:	\$38,000
Printing/Misc.	\$1,500
Contingency:	\$7,425
Total:	\$56,925

Attachment B

To: The Los Altos Parks and Recreation Commission.

2 July 2020

From: King Lear, representing the Los Altos Legacies Board.

Subject: Gift offer (now \$50K total) for outdoor recreation (bocce ball courts) in Grant Park for south Los Altos seniors, equivalent to that provided at Hillview Park.

1. The Need:

The City of Los Altos has designated two parks to host senior activities: Hillview Park and Grant Park. Hillview Park has had outdoor recreation facilities (two bocce ball courts), enjoyed by seniors for almost 20 years. The courts hosted outdoor fun, social, and physical activities for men and women. Most players are in their 80's. Based on this positive experience two bocce ball courts are included in the community center project.

Grant Park has no outdoor recreation appropriate for seniors.

2. The Proposal:

Los Altos Legacies in December 2017 voted to offer \$10K to help pay for bocce ball courts in Grant Park. The offer was made verbally to Manny Hernandez. In 2019 the offer was increased to \$20K. In December 2019 the board increased the offer to \$30K and set an expiration date of 12/31/2020. If the City does not accept the offer by that date, the offer expires.

In December 2019 the Los Altos Rotary Endowment Fund board offered the City \$20K for bocce ball courts in Grant Park. The total offer is thus \$50K. The gift might cover the total cost of the project, given the current economy. LAREF has not set an expiration date for their offer, so far.

The board members of these charitable funds have no self-interest in making these offers. 50 years of fun, sun, and social benefits for seniors at Grant Park is the only goal.

Although the key beneficiaries are seniors, the bocce ball courts can be used by all ages. A nine year-old girl can be on a team with her 90 year-old great grandfather.

3. The study by staff, Dave Brees:

The study estimated the cost to be \$57K for two courts with benches, equivalent to the planned courts beside the new community center. No shade structures were included in this cost estimate. A number of potential sites for the courts in Grant Park were listed. One site ("D" in the report) is within line of sight of the senior

lounge front door and could connect with a straight path and gate. The Deodora trees would provide a nice setting and partial shade for courts and benches. Site “D” has no current or planned use other than the temporary storage shed. Some smaller Deodora trees would be removed leaving the three largest Deodora trees to fill in the open space.

Bocce ball courts are actively used by seniors if there is a nearby senior center. The courts draw new seniors to the center and the center draws seniors to the courts. The center manages reservations, holds the equipment, and hosts after-game socializing. Nearby restrooms are also required for success. This connection with a senior center is the reason the offers are specified for Grant Park.

4. Action by the Parks and Recreation Commission:

To accept the offer from Los Altos Legacies, the City Council must place the offer on their agenda and vote prior to the expiration date of 12/31/2020. If the Commission wishes to impact this decision it needs to forward a recommendation in the near future.

The Senior Commission supports adding bocce ball courts to Grant Park to benefit seniors.

5. What about a potential Grant Park Master Plan?

If the City accepts \$50K to address an unmet need now, and if the City agrees to locate the facility in a space not in use and unlikely to be used (such as location “D”), then there would be no impact on a future plan. Neither land nor money would be taken from other potential improvements.

This logic assumes the storage shed is temporary while the new community center is being built. It also assumes that any future plan for Grant Park will continue to include programming for seniors.