

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: JEN SANTOS, PARKS DEPUTY DIRECTOR, TRANSPORTATION
AND PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION AND
MASTER PLAN FOR ROSELAND CREEK COMMUNITY PARK

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Transportation and Public Works Department that the Council, by resolution: (1) adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration, including the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, for the Roseland Creek Community Park Master Plan; and (2) adopt the Roseland Creek Community Park Master Plan, which includes, paved pedestrian and bicycle trails, community garden or outdoor classroom, nature center, and parking, picnic areas with single use barbeques, parking, children's play areas for ages 2-5 and 5-12, restroom building, sport court, fitness stations, irrigated turf area, two pedestrian bridges, crosswalk, looped walking paths and interpretive signage.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The proposed Roseland Creek Community Park Master Plan (Park Master Plan) provides a comprehensive master plan that includes myriad park amenities reflective of the community's collective input. The Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to analyze the potential environmental impacts associated with adoption of the Park Master Plan and implement mitigation measures to reduce all potential impacts to less than significant levels.

BACKGROUND

Roseland Creek Community Park (Park) is identified as an approximately 19.50-acre community park site in the Santa Rosa 2035 General Plan and the Recreation and Parks Business and Strategic Action Plan. Roseland Creek Community Park is located in the southwest quadrant of the city of Santa Rosa and is bisected by Roseland Creek towards the southern portion of the Park. The Park site is across Burbank Avenue from Roseland Creek Elementary School and is otherwise surrounded by residential

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subdivisions and one rural residential lot and planned multi-family housing.

Roseland Creek Community Park consists of four land parcels with the following addresses and assessor's parcel numbers (APN), listed from the northern parcel to the southern parcel;

- 1027 McMinn Avenue, APN # 125-252-004
- 1360 Burbank Avenue, APN # 125-252-002
- 1370 Burbank Avenue, APN # 125-252-003
- 1400 Burbank Avenue, APN # 125-331-001

The land for Roseland Creek Community Park was acquired from individual landowners with funding from the Southwest Area Park Development Impact fees and from the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District's (SCAPOS) Matching Grant Program. As part of the Matching Grant Program, the SCAPOS has imposed the following conditions on the Park land:

- The 1027 McMinn Avenue and 1360 Burbank Avenue properties are the two most northern parcels totaling 10.93 acres and were acquired together through a SCAPOS Matching Grant Agreement for acquisition in 2011. These properties are referred to in the Matching Grant Agreement (Agreement) as Phase 1B. The Agreement also required a conservation easement over the Phase 1B lands limiting non-permeable improvements to 5% or less of the Phase 1B land. The Agreement also required the City to: (a) improve Phase 1B by March 2021 with the pathway that connects McMinn Avenue to Burbank Avenue and then across Burbank Avenue, to Roseland Creek Elementary School, (b) develop formal entrances with signage on both the east and west property boundaries and (c) list the Park on the City's website. The City has not complied with the requirement to develop the pathway to date, as such action is pending Council approval of the Master Plan and environmental analysis (Mitigated Negative Declaration). City staff maintain the site to the expectations of the City and of the SCAPOS Conservation Easement and the SCAPOS monitor and report on the condition of the Park annually for compliance with the SCAPOS Agreement and Conservation Easement requirements.
- The 1400 Burbank Avenue property is the southernmost Park parcel containing approximately 5.96 acres and was acquired through a SCAPOS Matching Grant Agreement in 2011. This parcel is referred to as Phase 1A from the SCAPOS Matching Grant Agreement (Agreement). The Agreement also required a conservation easement over the Phase 1A lands; the conservation easement limits non-permeable improvements to 20% or less of the Phase 1A parcel land. City staff maintain the site to the expectations of the City and of the SCAPOS Conservation Easement and the SCAPOS monitor and report on the condition of the park annually for compliance with the SCAPOS Agreement and Conservation Easement requirements.

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- The 1370 Burbank Avenue property located in the southern portion of the Park was more recently purchased in 2018 by the City and is awaiting final reimbursement through the SCAPOSD Matching Grant Agreement. This parcel is referred to as Phase 1C from the SCAPOSD Matching Grant Agreement. Reimbursement to the City from the SCAPOSD for acquisition of this approximately 2.61-acre parcel also requires a conservation easement and recreation covenant which are in negotiations now. Finalization of the easement and covenant are pending Council approval of the Master Plan and environmental analysis (Mitigated Negative Declaration).

Since the 1370 Burbank Avenue acquisition in 2018, the SCAPOSD and the City mutually agreed that it would be best to have one easement and one recreation covenant over the entire Park site, rather than three separate conservation easements, because the City now owns all the Park parcels. Thus, the SCAPOSD and the City are in the process of combining the conservation easements and recreation covenant into a single easement agreement.

The City provides regular updates to the SCAPOSD regarding the Master Plan and environmental review progress. The current Master Plan includes minor updates requested by the SCAPOSD and meets the requirements of the three conservation easements and recreation covenant.

The Master Plan will guide the type and placement of assets on the site as funding becomes available, and aid the City in applying for grants to improve the site. The details of type of surfacing and furnishings for the Park are not yet determined but will comply with the requirements set forth in the SCAPOSD Conservation Easement, including limits on permeable surfaces and compliance with all state and local codes and regulations.

On February 28, 2017 Council approved an Agreement Number F001375 with David J Powers & Associates (DJP), Inc, San Jose, CA to provide environmental analysis for the proposed Roseland Creek Community Park Master Plan.

On February 28, 2017, Council approved an Agreement Number F001374 with Design Workshop Landscape Architects, Inc., of Tahoe, NV to provide a master plan and 30% design and engineering plans for Roseland Creek Community Park. Design services included assisting the City with preparation of the Master Plan and neighborhood meetings and workshops as needed.

Roseland Creek Community Park requires a community developed and Council approved master plan in order to construct the Park with amenities as desired by the community. The Master Plan, in turn, requires environmental analysis to determine any environmental impacts and identify mitigation required for future Park development.

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Upon Council approval of both the Mitigated Negative Declaration and the Master Plan, and as future funding becomes available, the City may move forward with future development of the Park as approved in the Master Plan, SCAPOSD conservation easements and recreation covenant.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

Council previously reviewed this item on January 14, 2020. As a Public Hearing, Council received a staff presentation regarding approval of a Master Plan and Mitigated Negative Declaration. As part of the public comment period, a citizen submitted a separate Park plan option for Council. Council asked that staff utilize the plan prepared by the citizen to solicit further feedback regarding the future Master Plan amenities. Staff conducted a meeting where the citizen's plan was presented on March 4, 2020 and further met with community members through a series of listening sessions held by Council Member Alvarez (District 1). More details are provided in the analysis section of this staff report.

ANALYSIS

Design Workshop and DJP worked in conjunction with each other, the city and the community to prepare graphics and provide research regarding opportunities and constraints at Roseland Creek Community Park.

The following public meetings, including Board of Community Services (BOCS) were held to solicit feedback from the community regarding their desired Park amenities;

- 2009 – 2010: 5 Community Workshops between 2009 and 2010
- February 10, 2010: BOCS
- 2015: 4 Community Workshops
- July 22, 2015: BOCS
- August 26, 2015: BOCS
- September 16, 2017: Community Workshop
- October 7, 2017: Roseland Binational Health Fair
- December 2, 2017: Community Workshop
- February 28, 2018: BOCS
- March 28, 2018: BOCS (received recommendation for Council approval)
- March 22, 2019: Sheppard Elementary
- April 17, 2019: Roseland Prep High School
- May 5, 2019: Roseland Cinco de Mayo
- June 6, 2019: Chelsea Gardens Senior Community
- July 10, 2019: SW Santa Rosa Health Action meeting
- August 8, 2019: Land Paths Garden celebration

In addition to the above meetings, all Roseland Annexation and Santa Rosa/Sebastopol Road Specific Plan meetings were attended by City Park staff. Feedback was received

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and incorporated into the Master Plan during these events. The Master Plan was also presented at various Community Advisory Board (CAB) annual open house meetings to solicit feedback regarding the planned amenities.

City staff held five community meetings between 2009 and 2010 and developed a park improvement concept that was submitted as a draft master plan to the SCAPOSD for acquisition of the Park site parcels. The summary from those meetings shows a distinction between community members who wanted very little to no development and those that wanted more intensive activities.

Between 2010 and 2014 no work or outreach was performed for the Master Plan due to lack of park planning staff. In 2015 community meetings began again for the Master Plan to check in with the community to determine whether there was still interest in the 2010 plan or whether there was any interest in updating the 2010 Plan. Meetings in 2015 included providing information to the community about existing and planned nearby parks and amenities and a summary of all comments and actions taken in 2009 and 2010.

The community was also provided with basic information regarding the site opportunities and constraints. Early versions of the Master Plan included amenities such as a walking trails that looped through the park and adjacent to the creek, pedestrian and bicycle trail, playground and picnicking with a restroom building nearby, nature center with restrooms and parking, a Pomo interpretive village, outdoor classroom, two pedestrian bridges and interpretive signage. The first master plan version also included items such as constructed wetlands/vernal pools and overlooks into Roseland Creek.

The Master Plan was modified eight more times through community and stakeholder feedback, site investigations, and environmental review. For example, the Citywide Creek Master Plan (CCMP) already has a plan for restoration of Roseland Creek, thus the creek area was removed from the Master Plan and a reference to the CCMP was added to eliminate duplication. Vernal pools and wetlands have been determined through environmental analysis to not exist on-site and were therefore removed from the Plan.

In asking community members about the intensions regarding concepts for the Pomo interpretive village, community input suggested the village should be picnic areas with a Pomo tribal theme. Tribes that have registered with the city to be notified for any and all developments are the Federated Indians of the Graton Rancheria (FIGR) and the Lytton Rancheria of California (LRC). The FIGR had interest in meeting to discuss the Master Plan. Upon meeting, FIGR expressed no interest in having a "Pomo village" and suggested any reference to "Pomo village" not be included in the Park. When asked what amenities the FIGR would like to see at the Park, the request was for fire (barbeques), water (outdoor sink), picnicking, parking for access for elders, proximity to restroom and identification of all native tree species along the southern side of Roseland Creek. The LRC reviewed the Master Plan and had no comments.

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Although Dry Creek Pomo Rancheria (DCPR) is not registered with the city to be notified of development, interest from a resident who claimed to be connected to this tribe requested the “Pomo village” concept remain in the Master Plan. Thus, the DCPR was contacted by City staff and no reply was received.

The Master Plan continued to develop, and in meeting with the City Traffic Engineering team it was requested that the crosswalk to Roseland Creek Elementary school shift south so that students crossing Burbank Avenue would only have to cross vehicles one time entering the school grounds. Adjusting the crosswalk will provide a safer route to school for students. Also, as part of the Roseland Area/ Sebastopol Road Specific Plan the community desired a rural aesthetic which eliminated the requirement for traditional sidewalks along Burbank Avenue. Therefore, the path of travel for pedestrians utilizing the eastern side of Burbank Avenue is redirected through the Park. Traditional curb, gutter and sidewalks are required along the portion of the Park adjacent to McMinn Avenue.

Throughout the entire Park master planning process, the pedestrian and bicycle trails, nature center and parking were consistently the most agreed upon amenities within the community. There are community members that would like the Park to be mostly undeveloped and open space or preserved. There are also community members that would prefer a large sports fields or an arena for soccer, baseball and softball, pump track, bicycle racing and similar uses.

Providing access to a natural passive environment in an urban setting along with minor active uses will provide a mostly passive combination that is inclusive to the community-wide desires.

Each community meeting involved the following outreach strategies or combinations thereof;

- Direct mail postcard to residents (8447) and property owners (3254) in the southwest quadrant of Santa Rosa
- Eblast to residents who attended 2015 Roseland planning meetings and opted to subscribe to Roseland notifications
- Eblast to Santa Rosa residents who subscribe to Recreation & Parks e-Newsletter
- Eblast to Neighborhood Services contact list
- Notification/advisory to local media contacts
- Facebook Event Page on Santa Rosa Recreation & Parks and Community Engagement Facebook page
- Featured in Rec & Parks e-newsletter
- News Flash on santarosarec.com and srcity.org
- Social media posts, including NextDoor, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter
- Calendar listings on local media outlets

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- Flyer distribution at Roseland Community Center
- Onsite postings at future park property

Upon direction received from Council at their January 14, 2020 meeting, staff conducted another meeting with the community on March 4, 2020 at Cook Middle school. The presentation was developed by the City's Marketing and Outreach staff and Community Engagement staff who brought in Qi Consulting to assist with hosting and connecting attendees. It was recommended that the citizen plan be presented, and the city provide a presentation consisting of information from Planning and Economic Development, Transit, Water, Bicycle and Pedestrian staff and Parks staff regarding the future of Roseland.

The feedback from the Cook Middle School meeting was similar to all previous feedback received where some citizens, especially those that live closer to the Park, were interested in very little development, with the exception that they desired a Nature Center with a restroom, undeveloped trails and a parking lot. Other citizens in Roseland were interested in additional amenities including picnic tables, playgrounds, restroom near the playground, sports court, lawn, community garden, and trails.

The two plans, while graphically different, share many similarities and it was understood from the March 4th meeting that re-engaging with the community members to evaluate the similarities would be fruitful to update the Master Plan with the similarities. Around this same time Council Member Alvarez was elected to represent District 1, which includes Roseland Creek Community Park. Council Member Alvarez conducted six listening sessions with the last listening session bringing together the different community members with divergent ideas about the desired Park amenities to have a discussion to make final recommendations.

The following listening sessions were held by Council Member Alvarez to collect input about Roseland and what amenities the community members desire in the Park and for that information to be shared with staff to refine the Master Plan.

- February 11, 2021 - Cook Middle School
- February 24, 2021 – Roseland Creek Elementary Parent Group
- March 1, 2021 – Roseland Community Builders Initiative
- March 17, 2021 – Boys and Girls Club, Juvenile Hall boys group
- March 17, 2021 – Boys and Girls Club, Juvenile Hall girls group
- March 22, 2021 – Neighbor-wood group
- April 9, 2021 – Listening Session working group

The information collected from the Listening Sessions led to an updated Master Plan but more importantly it also allowed for community members to discuss with each other their desire for the Park. Community Members were engaged with each other to listen about all their desires. See Exhibit C for a list of the specific changes that occurred to

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the Master Plan as directed by all the participants in the listening sessions above since the previous Council Meeting on January 14, 2020.

The Master Plan represents the cumulation of a variety of community groups/citizens interests. Language was added to the current Master Plan to clarify that this is a community plan from community members that may not share the exact interests as each other but have been able to find common ground within this Master Plan. Each community member got to hear each other and comment and ask questions of each other. Qi Consulting was also asked to attend to help facilitate respectful conversations between community members with differing ideas about Park amenities.

A variety of interests were voiced for the park master plan amenities at the listening sessions. These changes in the community are reflected in the variety of opinions of what amenities should be included in the Park, including those that want more traditional park amenities and those that want little to no development.

The revisions to the Plan reflect clarifications made to the Plan and interests to keep most of the Park in its natural state while allowing for some traditional amenities. The Master Plan provides for more than 80% of the Park site to be left in its natural state or be restored to a more native area by special interest groups. Most of the more traditional parts of the Park that include single use picnic tables, playground, sport court area, lawn, and community garden/outdoor classroom and nature center are in the southern portions of the Park. A multipurpose trail is part of the Master Plan that allows bicycles and pedestrians to share and there is a pathway that loops the entire park with interpretive signage in at least three languages.

FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of this action does not have a fiscal impact on the General Fund. Funding for future improvements will be derived from park development impact (PDI) fees collected in Zone 2 (Southwest Quadrant).

Funding from PDI fees is available to construct the trail from McMinn Avenue to Burbank Avenue and add the crosswalk as required by SCAPOSD Agreement.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

An environmental analysis of the potential impacts to the project site based on the draft master plan was conducted with assistance from the city's consultant David J Powers & Associates (DJP). DJP started the studies necessary for the Initial Study in 2017 with the start of a full and final draft environmental analysis based on BOCS recommended approval of the draft master plan on March 28, 2018.

DJP prepared an Initial Study consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act guidelines resulting in a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Roseland Creek

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Community Park Master Plan. The Initial Study includes the following sections for evaluation: Aesthetics, Agricultural and Forestry Resources, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use Planning, Mineral Resources, Noise and Vibration, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, Transportation/Traffic, Utilities and Service Systems, Mandatory Findings of Significance.

On November 18, 2019 a Notice of Intent (NOI) to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration was submitted to the Sonoma County Clerk's Office. This began the 30-day public comment period regarding the Initial Study. The NOI was available at the Sonoma County Clerk's Office and at the City's Recreation and Parks Department's project web site, email notification as well as on-site notification and email notification to all stakeholders, including Lytton and Graton tribal nations. All public comments and responses are made part of the Mitigated Negative Declaration.

The MND identified the following potential environmental impacts that could result from implementation of the Master Plan: impacts to special-status bat species from building demolition, impacts to western pond turtle from work adjacent to Roseland Creek, impacts to California tiger salamander upland dispersal habitat, impacts to nesting birds from construction and tree removal, impacts to archaeological resources, impacts from hazardous materials during building demolition and soil disturbance, and construction noise impacts. The impacts will be mitigated to a less-than-significant level through implementation of recommended mitigation measures or through compliance with existing Municipal Code requirements and/or City standards. Recommended measures are summarized in the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, attached to this staff report, specifically Exhibit B of the Resolution with detailed mitigation measures described in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP). The Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared in consultation with local, state and trustee agencies, in accordance with Section 15063 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and will serve as the environmental compliance document required under CEQA for the planned improvements and for permits/approvals required by a responsible agency.

Updates to the Master Plan graphic following public meetings and listening sessions from March 4, 2020 through April 9, 2021, were reviewed for consistency with the MND. The revisions to the Plan constitute minor project revisions that were added in response to community input and do not create new significant environmental effects or require mitigation. These revisions do not modify any of the text, analyses or conclusions set forth in the previously circulated MND. Therefore, recirculation of the MND is not required pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15073.5.

If the project is approved by City Council, a Notice of Determination (NOD) will be filed, which will be available for public inspection and posted within 24 hours of receipt at the County Clerk's Office for 30 days.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On February 10, 2010 the Board of Community Services (BOCS) received an update of the master planning process from city staff. The BOCS received public comments, discussed the draft master plan process and provided recommendations to city staff.

On July 22, 2015 the BOCS received an update of the master planning process from city staff. The BOCS received public comments, discussed the draft master process thus far and provided recommendations to city staff regarding minor updates to the plan.

On August 26, 2015 the BOCS received an update of the master planning process from city staff regarding updates requested by the BOCS at the July 22, 2015 meeting. The BOCS received public comments, discussed the draft master process and provided recommendations to city staff regarding the plan and process.

On February 28, 2018 the BOCS received an update of the master planning process after Design Workshop began assisting city staff with the Master Plan. The BOCS received public comments, discussed the draft master process and provided recommendations to city staff regarding the plan.

At the March 28, 2018 BOCS meeting, city staff presented a very detailed and thorough review of all collected data, summaries of community meetings and outreach and every update to the draft master plan. The BOCS received public comments, discussed the draft master plan and voted unanimously in favor of the proposed park master plan and recommends Council approval of the same.

At the July 21, 2021 Special BOCS meeting, city staff presented a very detailed and thorough review of all collected data, summaries of community meetings and outreach and every update to the draft master plan. All information from the Listening Sessions conducted by Council Member Alvarez were provided to the BOCS for their review. The BOCS received public comments, discussed the draft master plan and voted unanimously in favor of the proposed park master plan and recommends Council approval of the same.

NOTIFICATION

The proposed master plan was noticed for a Public Hearing. Notification was provided by posting a sign on site, publishing notice in a newspaper of general circulation, mailing notice to surrounding property owners, electronic notice to parties that had expressed interest in projects taking place, and bulletin board postings at City Hall and on the Recreation and Parks website.

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ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1- Public Comments
- Attachment 2 – DJP&A Response Memo
- Resolution
- Exhibit A- Master Plan Map
- Exhibit B- Initial Study
- Exhibit C- Summary of Master Plan Clarifications

CONTACT

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