

CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
FROM: JEN SANTOS, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, PARKS  
TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT  
SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT FOR SOUTH DAVIS  
NEIGHBORHOOD PARK – (CEQA EXEMPT)

AGENDA ACTION: PUBLIC HEARING AND RESOLUTION

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RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Transportation and Public Works Department that the Council conduct a public hearing, and thereafter by resolution, adopt the Master Plan Amendment for South Davis Neighborhood Park to include playground areas, picnic tables and barbeque areas, game tables, walking paths, updated sidewalks, a renovated basketball half-court, security lighting, fitness stations, native planting areas, and space for future activities.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the proposed South Davis Neighborhood Park Master Plan Amendment is to provide an updated park master plan that includes the neighborhood's desired park amenities based on their input through public meetings and surveys and to design and construct a new play area.

BACKGROUND

South Davis Park is a designated 1.34-acre Neighborhood Park located at 712 South Davis Street within the Olive Corby Neighborhood in Southwest Santa Rosa. The park shape is unique - very narrow and linear - and is bisected by the end of Earle Street and the entry/exit for the Highway 101 pedestrian-only over crossing. To the East, the park is bordered by a 20+ foot solid corrugated metal fence along the northern portion of the park and a masonry block wall along the southern portion of the park, which separates the park from Highway 101. To the West, the park is bordered by South Davis Street and a long-established residential neighborhood with narrow streets. To the North, the park is bordered by Highway 12, and to the South is South Dutton Avenue.

While the 2035 General Plan anticipates that residents within a half-mile will utilize a

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neighborhood park, the use of this park is likely greater as the SMART rail line, Highway 101, and Highway 12, separate the neighborhood from other parks. Even without the rail line, the closest parks are not within convenient walking distance at well over a half-mile distance through narrow streets, some without sidewalks, or underneath Highway 12.

The park was acquired prior to 1964 as part of the Caltrans right-of-way construction for Highway 101. It has gone through a variety of changes and updates over the years, including installation of the fencing along Highway 101 in 1977, as part of the construction of the pedestrian overpass. In 1988, the South end of the park was updated – sidewalks, curbs and gutters were installed, as well as plantings and irrigation. In 2001, playground equipment was added. The playground contains play areas for ages 2-5 years and 5-12 years along with a separate swing area. The remainder of the park contains mature landscaping, numerous Redwood trees, irrigated lawn, picnic tables, benches, temporary trash receptacles, half-court basketball, and wooden bollards along South Davis Street. The original Park Master Plan was completed in 2003. Some of the community members who were part of the 2003 master plan process were also a part of the 2022 master plan amendment process.

In 2021, Santa Rosa was awarded \$285,291 from the California State Parks' Per Capita Grant Program to revitalize the playground area at South Davis Neighborhood Park. The Grant funds removal and replacement of the swings and the play equipment for youth ages 2-5 and 5-12, including playground surfacing, to bring the playground area into compliance with current California Playground Safety Regulations and building codes related to equal access. As part of this process a minor Master Plan Amendment is necessary. Public engagement is part of the planning and design process.

On January 11, 2022, Council approved Agreement Number F002376 with Carlile Macy to provide landscape architectural and engineering services for the South Davis Neighborhood Park Master Plan Amendment.

On March 24, 2022, City staff, in conjunction with design consultant, Carlile Macy, conducted the first in a series of public meetings with the community from the South Davis Park area. Three additional meetings were held on April 9, June 15, and September 10, 2022. At each meeting, the previous public comments collected were analyzed and presented in support of the updated proposed Master Plan Amendment.

Design consultant, Carlile Macy, assisted City staff with a detailed review of the master planning process, and summaries of all input received in support of the Master Plan Amendment at the December 14, 2022, Board of Community Services (BOCS) meeting. The BOCS recommended approval of the South Davis Master Plan Amendment to Council.

### PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

On June 29, 2021, the City Council, by Resolution No. RES-2021-115, approved submittal of a grant application to the State of California Department of Parks and Recreation Office of Grants and Local Services Per Capita Grant Program for the revitalization of the playground area at South Davis Neighborhood Park and authorized the Assistant City Manager to accept the grant and execute related documents.

On January 11, 2022, the City Council, by Resolution No. RES-2022-006, approved a Professional Services Agreement, between the City of Santa Rosa and Carlile Macy, Inc., of Santa Rosa, CA, in an amount not to exceed \$204,822.

### ANALYSIS

A Master Plan Amendment is needed to engage the neighborhood to update and bring the current park amenities up to current standards. Design consultant, Carlile Macy, worked in conjunction with City staff and the community to prepare graphics and provide research regarding opportunities and constraints to update South Davis Neighborhood Park.

The following public meetings were held to solicit feedback from the community regarding their desired park amenities:

- March 24, 2022: Virtual Community Meeting #1 and online survey
- April 9, 2022: In-person Community Meeting #2 and paper survey at the park
- June 15, 2022: Virtual Community Meeting #3 and online & paper survey
- July 14, 2022: In-person Meeting with the South A/Earle Street Neighborhood
- September 10, 2022: In-person Community Meeting #4 and online & paper survey at the park
- October 27, 2022: Park Input Day – received feedback on playground equipment, games, and activities from 250+ students and teachers at Luther Burbank Elementary School
- December 14, 2022: Board of Community Services meeting

At the first and second community meetings, participants were provided with the history of the park and neighborhood, an explanation of what a master plan is, the goals and objectives of the project and the schedule to achieve them, basic information about the opportunities and constraints of the park site, and where project funding comes from. Participants provided feedback via a poll and public comment during the meetings. The community most appreciates the playground equipment and mature trees throughout the park and would like to see more games, events and activities incorporated into the park. Their goals for the park are for it to be safe, clean, and well-maintained.

During the third community meeting, three design concept plans were presented based upon the feedback received at the first two meetings. The Nature + Play concept resonated most strongly with the community with elements of the Community +

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Connection concept ranking high. The community would like to see Caltrans' corrugated steel wall replaced with a masonry block wall to match what is in the southern portion of the site, to reduce freeway noise, and to provide park users increased protection from highway accidents. The community is comfortable with selective tree removal to accommodate Master Plan amenities. Naturalistic and modern looking playground equipment are most preferred.

At the fourth community meeting, a thorough and detailed presentation was given of the draft Master Plan and the survey results from the third meeting. The community would like to see a walking path around the play areas, fencing or a seat wall used to separate the play areas from South Davis Street, games such as hopscotch, four square, an obstacle course, or similar incorporated on the basketball court or park pathways and a naturalistic playground design.

An online and paper survey was available after each of the four public meetings. The virtual meetings were recorded and available for viewing via the South Davis Park Project webpage.

Each meeting involved the following outreach methods:

- Direct mail postcard to 1,932 residents and property owners in a half-mile radius of the park (Meeting #1)
- Informational A-frame signs in the park, across the pedestrian bridge at 655 S. A Street, at nearby parks and at Luther Burbank Elementary School
- City website updated on the Main Calendar and Park Projects webpage
- City Connections articles and meeting links to 106K subscribers on nine separate dates.
- E-bulletin to 7,763 subscribers on 6/14/2022 (Meeting #3)
- Facebook posts on Recreation & Parks page and shared to TPW and City main page
- Facebook Events posted to Recreation & Parks page and shared to TPW and City main page
- Nextdoor posts targeting six neighborhoods
- Luther Burbank Elementary School Parent Square post (Meeting #3)
- Event flyers distributed by neighbors (Meeting #2), at General Plan Update meeting (Meeting #2), and by email to Luther Burbank Elementary School (Meeting #3), and interested community members (Meeting #4)
- Emails and phone calls with Luther Burbank Elementary School, Roseland CBI, and community members
- Word of mouth

Additionally, staff and the design consultant met with 12 residents of the South A / Earle Street Neighborhood to discuss their interest in incorporating the vacant, city-owned lot at 655 South A Street and the dead-end of Earle Street into the park and what improvements and amenities they would like to see. They are interested in improving

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the safety of this area by removing and maintaining the vegetation for visibility through the site, adding a natural surface trail, picnic area and native planting area, and reducing the noise level by adding a masonry block sound wall.

During the Park Input Day at Luther Burbank Elementary School, staff met with Transitional Kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade classes either outdoors or in their classrooms. Staff briefly described the park and the project and answered student's questions. Then staff asked the students specific questions related to their favorite playground design, playground equipment, game or activity and gave each student one sticky note to place on the image of their favorite playground, piece of equipment, game, or activity. Their favorite playground is modern and colorful. They want to see Twister and an obstacle course painted in the park, a zipline and ping pong tables.

The Master Plan Amendment reflects the community's desire to expand the play areas in generally the same location they are currently; add a walking path and game tables around the play area so the whole family can be actively engaged; leave the healthy, mature trees throughout the park to provide shade and connection to nature; leave most of the recreational lawn in-tact to allow for informal activities; renovate the basketball half-court to improve the playing experience; incorporate public art that reflects the history of the neighborhood; connect the north and south ends of the park with continuous sidewalk; add security lighting to increase safety; and improve and enhance the picnic areas for community gatherings. Additional amenities and improvements include fitness stations, site furnishings, native planting areas, a park monument sign, and a future activity area to be determined by the community once there is funding for implementation. All new amenities and improvements will be compliant with building codes related to the Americans with Disabilities Act.

### FISCAL IMPACT

Council approved the funding for this project on June 29, 2021, and no further action is necessary. As a reminder of Council's approval, funding to replace the park playground equipment comes from the California State Parks' Per Capita Program in the amount of \$285,291. The remainder of the project funds, in the amount of \$861,865, are available from Zone 2 - Park Development Impact Fees, Fund 09556 - South Davis Park.

### ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 - Existing Facilities and Section 15302 - Replacement or Reconstruction. Specifically, the project consists of the minor alteration of an existing public facility resulting in a negligible or no expansion in use and replacement of existing structures where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced.

### BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On December 14, 2022, the Board of Community Services received a presentation of the Master Plan Amendment process from City staff and design consultant, Carlile Macy. A thorough presentation of all collected data, summaries of community meetings and outreach, and every update to the draft Master Plan Amendment was provided to the BOCS. The BOCS received public comments, discussed the draft Master Plan Amendment, and voted unanimously in favor of the proposed Park Master Plan Amendment and recommends Council approval of the same.

### NOTIFICATION

The proposed Master Plan Amendment was noticed for Public Hearing. Notification was provided by posting two signs on site, publishing notice in a newspaper of general circulation (Press Democrat), mailing postcard notice to 1,932 surrounding property owners, electronic notice to parties that had expressed interest in the project, and bulletin board postings at City Hall and on the Parks and Recreation Department website.

### ATTACHMENTS

- Resolution/Exhibit A – Master Plan Amendment

### PRESENTER

Emily Ander, [eander@srcity.org](mailto:eander@srcity.org)