



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

DATE ISSUED: July 6, 2011 REPORT NO: 11-107
ATTENTION: Council President and Members of the City Council
SUBJECT: Grant Application Submittal for Wightman Street Neighborhood Park

REQUESTED ACTION:

1. Authorize the Mayor or his representative to make an application to the State of California for an amount not to exceed \$2,500,000 in Statewide Park Development and Community Revitalization Program of 2008 grant funds for the completion of the Wightman Street Neighborhood Park.
2. Authorize the Mayor or his representative to take all necessary actions to secure funding from the State of California for the completion of the Wightman Street Neighborhood Park.
3. Authorize the Chief Financial Officer to accept an amount not to exceed 2,500,000 if the grant funding is secured.
4. Authorize the Chief Financial Officer to establish a special interest bearing account for the grant funds.
5. Authorize the Chief Financial Officer to increase the Fiscal Year 2012 Capital Improvement Program Budget in CIP No. S-00767 in an amount not to exceed \$2,500,000 for the construction of the Wightman Street Neighborhood Park, upon receipt of a fully executed grant agreement.
6. Authorize the Chief Financial Officer to appropriate and expend an amount not to exceed \$2,500,000 from CIP No. S-00767 for construction of the Wightman Street Neighborhood Park, contingent upon receipt of a fully executed grant agreement.
7. Authorize the Chief Financial Officer to certify that the City will have sufficient funds available to complete the project, prior to commencement of any work on the project included in the application, should the grant be awarded.
8. Authorize the Chief Financial Officer to certify that the City will have sufficient funds to operate and maintain the project.

9. Authorize the Mayor or his representative to certify the City has reviewed, understands, and agrees to the General Provisions contained in the contract shown in the Grant Administration Guide.

10. Authorize the Mayor or his representative to conduct all negotiations, sign and submit all documents, including, but not limited to applications, agreements, amendments, and payment requests, which may be necessary for the completion of the Project.

11. Authorize the Mayor or his representative to certify that the City agrees to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, ordinances, rules, regulations, and guidelines in the execution of the grant agreement.

12. Authorize the Mayor or his representative to certify the Project is consistent with the City of San Diego General Plan and all other applicable planning documents.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the requested actions.

SUMMARY:

On November 7, 2006, California voters passed Proposition 84, the “Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006”. The Statewide Park Program will award grants on a competitive basis for the creation of new parks and recreation opportunities in proximity to the most critically underserved communities across California. The creation of new parks in neighborhoods is given priority. The City was successful in the first round of Proposition 84, Statewide Parks Program grant opportunities, with a grant award for the Home Avenue Park.

The Wightman Neighborhood Park project fully meets the intent of the Statewide Park Program to finance the development of parks, recreation areas, and facilities in neighborhoods currently least served by park and recreation providers. By any measure, the Mid-City area of San Diego where the Wightman Street site is located is in dire need of parks and the associated educational and recreational opportunities that come with them. This is a rare opportunity to create a new park in this high-density, urban neighborhood. Therefore, staff feels that this grant application is highly competitive in relation to the grant criteria. The grant application guide is attached for further information.

On April 2, 2007, City Council Action R-302498 authorized the development of a park on city owned land at 5304 Wightman Street as well as approved the addition of the Wightman Street Park to the FY2007 CIP program, including an allocation of \$686,000 in Special Park Fees. The proposed park design includes the implementation of the City’s Chollas Creek Enhancement Program adopted by the City Council on May 14, 2002 for that portion of Auburn Creek (tributary to Chollas Creek), which is adjacent to the site.

The park features include, but are not limited to:

- Restoring wetland and transitional biological habitats
- Interpretive exhibits
- Improving the drainage channel

- Installing a wood rail fence to deter the public from entering the adjacent creek
- Restoring the area of the creek and 20' setback to a more natural riparian condition
- Providing a curving, decomposed granite trail
- Planting large native riparian trees and installing boulder groupings for informal seating
- Providing a central lawn area for open play

The park will be maintained by the City of San Diego Park and Recreation Department. Materials, equipment, and designs will be selected to help minimize maintenance and replacement costs.

Wightman Street Neighborhood Park will contribute to the population-based park acreage requirements set forth in the City's Progress Guide and General Plan and implements the recommendations found in the 1998 Mid-City Communities Plan (pps 96-98).

If the City is successful in the grant award, the project can be constructed in approximately 24 to 30 months of the date that funding is secured. Maintenance costs for this neighborhood park would be requested in the budget year after completion, which at this time is estimated to be FY 2016.

FISCAL CONSIDERATIONS:

To date, \$686,000 in Mid City Park Development funds have been encumbered for the development of the site. An additional \$2,500,000 is estimated to complete construction of the park.

If approved, this Council action will authorize a grant application for the necessary \$2,500, 000 for park construction.

The City Attorney's office confirms that state grant terms require the City to certify that it has or will have the funds to operate and maintain the park once it is completed and that the City will be obligated to maintain the park for at least 30 years. The State's certification requirement does not include a specific level or dollar amount for project maintenance.

The Park and Recreation Department has included maintenance of the Wightman Street Neighborhood Park in future budget plans. The Mayor's Five Year Financial Outlook issued April 19, 2010 includes expense for planned new facilities; a portion of the expense included new parks expected to be opened in the next five years. Per the Proposed FY 2012 CIP budget, Wightman Street Neighborhood Park will have an operating budget impact of approximately \$11,000 annually.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL and/or COMMITTEE ACTION:

- April 2, 2007 – City Council Action R-302498 authorized the development of a park on city owned land at 5304 Wightman Street and approved the addition of the Wightman Street Park to the FY2007 CIP program, including an allocation of \$686,000 in Special Park Fees.
- September 16, 2008 – City Council Action R-304140 denied an appeal of the environmental review process for the Wightman Street Park project and confirmed the

Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND no. 149112) for the development and construction of the new neighborhood park on the Wightman Street site.

- September 16, 2008 – City Council Action R-304141 approved the General Development Plan associated with Wightman Street Neighborhood Park.
- April 6, 2010 – City Council Action R-305731 rescinded the denial of Wightman Street CEQA appeal approved through Resolution R-304140 and rescinded the certification of the Mitigated Negative Declaration and adoption of the associated Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program approved through Resolution R-304141.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH EFFORTS:

The Wightman Street Neighborhood Park General Development Plan (GDP) was developed based on extensive community input received during a variety of community meetings in 2007 and 2008, including a series of three (3) publically noticed workshops at the closest recreation center, Colina del Sol Recreation Center, approximately one mile from the proposed park site. All meetings were held by the City's sanctioned park advisory committee, the Colina del Sol Recreation Council. The meetings were held during a four month time frame and based on the public input, the design alternatives were revised until a final proposed GDP was approved on November 28, 2007. There was additional public input at the City's Park and Recreation Board's Community Parks II Area Committee and Design Review Committee meetings. The final public meeting, the City's Park and Recreation Board, was held on July 17, 2008. The final GDP was adopted by the Park and Recreation Board and was overwhelmingly supported by a unanimous vote. The primary focus of the overall adopted design is for the neighborhood park to encourage activities to develop strength and agility, and maximize play areas for children.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND PROJECTED IMPACTS:

Key stakeholders for this project include property owners and residents in Council District 7 in the mid-city area.


Stacey LoMedico
Originating Department