



DATE: October 29, 2019

CATEGORY: New Business

DEPT.: Public Works

TITLE: **South Whisman Park, Design, Project 17-34 – Approve Conceptual Plan and Select Name for Park**

RECOMMENDATION

1. Approve the Parks and Recreation Commission’s recommended conceptual plan for South Whisman Park, Design, Project 17-34.
2. Select a name for the new park at Pyramid Way and Infinity Way.

BACKGROUND

The proposed 2.76-acre park site was dedicated to the City for park use by the developers of the Radius Development of 100 and 420 to 430 Ferguson Drive projects (see Figure 1 – South Whisman Park Location). In early 2019, residents began occupying the new homes.

ANALYSIS

Park Site Description

The park site is bounded by the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) light rail line on the north and public streets on the south and east; and residential townhomes are on the west separated by a private sidewalk. Small-lot homes are located on the south and new apartments under construction are on the east.

The developer has installed new sidewalks and landscaping buffers along the streets and a public path with bollard lights parallel to the VTA line. The park site is vacant and was recently graded.

Figure 1 – South Whisman Park Location



Community Meetings

Staff held two community meetings to seek input from residents about the park. At the first community meeting, held on April 25, 2019 with approximately 50 people attending, staff presented three possible layouts for the new park. All three layouts included soccer fields because previous Council discussions regarding the South Whisman Area Master Plan included fields at the proposed park. The majority of attendees opposed the soccer fields due to the lack of parking, impacts to the residents, and because other amenities like a dog park, walking paths, and a basketball court, which were more favored by attendees, would not be accommodated.

The second community meeting was held on June 20, 2019. Sixty-five (65) attendees reviewed three concepts developed for the new park, which included features and amenities based on the comments obtained at the first meeting.

Following a presentation of each concept and voting on a favorite concept, attendees selected a preferred concept with specific modifications, such as: a full basketball court instead of a half-court; relocation of exercise equipment to allow picnic tables to be closer to the open turf area; and picnic tables adjacent to the play areas (see Figure 2 – Revised Concept A).

The following is a summary of the amenities featured in Revised Concept A, which staff is bringing forward as the recommended concept:

- Off-leash dog area with shade and water fountain
- Open turf area
- Exercise equipment
- Full-size basketball court
- Restroom building (two unisex restrooms)
- Public art (selection TBD)
- Benches throughout the site
- Trees
- Picnic tables and barbecue
- 2- to 5-year-old play area
- 5- to 12-year-old play area

City policy is to include restrooms for new parks three acres or larger. Because this park is close to three acres, staff recommends including restrooms and locating the building on the perimeter of the park. Exterior lighting would be installed on the building for security.

Figure 2 – Recommended Revised Concept A



For the proposed dog areas, for safety purposes, staff recommends a fully enclosed space divided for large and small dogs. The proposed surface treatment is decomposed granite (DG). Other amenities include benches, tables, drinking fountain with a dog bowl, and a pergola that will hang over sitting areas and trees for shade.

Play areas for the two age groups will include a “post and platform” style play structure, climbers, swings, and slides. The areas will have shade canopy and some type of sculpture climber.

Staff will follow City Council Policy K-5 for the public art component, including the Visual Arts Committee selecting the artist and art. Once a park concept is approved by City Council, the Visual Arts Committee will begin its process.

Park Naming

Staff initiated the park naming process at the community meeting on June 20, 2019 and solicited responses through September 6, 2019. Staff provided the criteria for naming a new park based on City Council Policy K-17 (see Attachment 1). The policy states that a park may be named for a school on which it is located, street it is adjacent to, for a local landmark, or historical figure. Other park names will be considered only if one of the above criteria does not provide a name suitable for the park. The Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) must submit at least two names to the City Council for consideration and final name selection.

Five responses were received prior to the PRC meeting on September 11, 2019. Staff provided two suggestions because park names are often related to the street on which the park is located, and both Pyramid Way and Infinity Way are streets adjacent to the park site. Participants at the community meeting on June 20 were informed they could attend the PRC meeting and submit suggestions at the meeting. The following table lists park names that were considered by the PRC.

Proposed Names

Suggested Park Name	Relevance
Dogwood Park	“Type of tree/related to nearby Magnolia Park, and the new park has a dog park”
Woof-man Park	
Ouroboros Park <i>Uroboros Park (variation)</i>	Ancient symbol depicting a serpent or dragon eating its own tail.
Seasons Park	“Because of the weather the park will have to go through every day”
Newton Park	“In honor of Sir Isaac Newton. He is considered by many to be the greatest scientist of all time. There aren’t many subjects that Newton didn’t have a huge impact in. He was also one of the inventors of calculus – principle after many of the street names around this park”
Pyramid Park	Street Name
Infinity Park	Street Name

Research was conducted at the Mountain View Library History Center and no information was identified regarding any historical significance of the property. However, the site was occupied by Sylvania Corporation in 1953 to develop microwave tubes and the company became GTE Sylvania in 1959. In the early 1960s, GTE Sylvania was the largest employer in Mountain View with 1,570 workers. The property was sold in the 1990s.

The PRC strongly recommended the name Pyramid Park; and their second choice was Infinity Park. They chose these names to follow the naming structure of most City parks which is for way-finding purposes associated with adjacent street names.

Next Steps

After Council’s approval of a conceptual plan for the park, staff will work with the design consultants to complete final design of the project by summer 2020. At that time, staff will return to Council for approval of plans and specifications for construction.

Park construction would begin in late summer 2020 and be completed by spring 2021.

FISCAL IMPACT

A proposed South Whisman Park, Construction, Project 21-43 for \$4,860,000 is included in the current five-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) in Fiscal Year 2020-21. Project funding for Fiscal Year 2020-21 projects will be considered by the City Council in spring 2020. The current estimated total project cost is \$4,860,000 and is sufficient to design and construct Revised Concept Plan A.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), this project has been determined to be categorically exempt as a Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land, for the new park.

CONCLUSION

The conceptual design for this park utilizes the large site to create an open turf area, play areas, and barbecue and picnic opportunities. Pathways encircle the park and connect to a restroom. Amenities specifically requested by the community include a full basketball court and dog park. Staff and the community members who participated in the meetings are excited about this park and recommend the City Council approve the conceptual plan.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Provide other recommendations for the conceptual plan.
2. Select an alternate design for the park.
3. Provide other direction.

PUBLIC NOTICING

Agenda posting. Noticing for this meeting included a mailer to residents and property owners within 750', lawn signs at the project site, and an announcement on the City website.

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Attachment: 1. [City Council Policy K-17](#)

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