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PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: June 7, 2018

Subject

Citywide Parks and Recreation System Master Plan

Recommended Action

Invite public input on elements of the Citywide Parks Recreation System Master Plan, including potential park and recreation improvements and concepts for renovation of Memorial Park, and provide direction.

Background

A master planning process is underway for Cupertino's citywide parks, open space and recreation system. In December 2017, the Parks and Recreation Commission ("Commission") reviewed a scoping matrix for potential major facilities that could be added to our system.

On February 28, 2018, the City Council and Commission conducted a joint meeting and reviewed potential "big moves." "Big moves" are community needs or desires that are major facilities or buildings, or have significant budget, staffing or parkland/spatial impacts. They include major improvements to existing parks; new or expanded buildings and facilities; land acquisition for parks, trails, and natural areas; and nature investment. The city's larger parks were evaluated for their compatibility as sites for potential "big moves."

On May 17, 2018 the Commission hosted a special workshop-style meeting to invite further community input on potential "big moves" and other improvements to our recreation system, as well as on Memorial Park. Memorial Park is the city's largest and busiest park. Its central location is anchored by the Quinlan Community Center, the Senior Center, and the Sports Center. It enjoys a unique role and setting, and is the only venue that can host our largest festivals and special events. It has been suggested as a location for various potential Big Moves. Three preliminary concepts provided ideas for a range of improvements, to help invite public feedback and discussion about how Memorial Park can best serve our community (see Attachment A).

Discussion – Public Input

Potential major projects noted as "big moves" and discussed in the scoping matrix are a result of a wide community input process which was launched in spring 2016. Feedback has been received via public workshops, 'intercept' booths at festivals, stakeholder interviews, citywide surveys, the master plan Advisory Group, the project website and email address, and ongoing

public presentations to the Commission. Results of input are evaluated and summarized in a range of documents available on the project website, www.cupertino.org/parksmmp. Below is some of the key feedback received.

Intercept Events

Intercept events were held at festivals during spring and summer 2016, where input by hundreds of residents was received. Results are described in more detail in Appendix B of Attachment B to the June 1, 2017 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting materials, labelled Community-wide Survey Summary, Final Draft.

- The top major facility that participants desired to add was a Year-round Aquatic Center, followed closely by a Performing Arts Center for Theater/ Dance/Music, and a Multi-use Gymnasium. Next in popularity a Maker Space scored well, as did a Fine Arts Studio and Gallery. There was some interest in a Gymnastics Center. There was low interest in another community center, a relocated teen center, and additional meeting rooms.
- The consistent highest scoring amenities to add or enhance were Access to Natural Open Space, and Park Trails & Pathways. Next highest were Playgrounds, Sport Courts, and Community Gardens. The next level of interest included Athletic Fields, Fitness/Exercise Spaces, and Picnicking. There was lower but clear interest in Dog Areas.
- Among recreation programs to add or enhance, the top items were Special Events, followed by Aquatic Programs and Nature & Environmental Programs. The next most popular were Performing, Visual & Cultural Arts and Youth Sports & Fitness; and Adult Sports & Fitness. Categories scoring just below these included Adult Sports & Fitness; Before & After School Programs; and Classes for Lifelong Learning; however all received a reasonable amount of interest.

Summer 2016 Survey

A community-wide survey was conducted in summer 2016. The complete results are provided in Attachment B to the June 1, 2017 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting materials, Community-wide Survey Summary, Final Draft (see Attachment B to this report for the summary portion only). Its results echoed those received via the intercept events and other types of stakeholder input.

- Access to Natural Open Space, and Park Trails and Pathways, continued to be the top desires for amenities. A second tier of interest included Playgrounds, Sport Courts, Athletic Fields, Picnic Areas, Community Gardens, and Fitness spaces. Dog areas received lower interest.
- For adding major recreation facilities, a higher percentage of survey respondents weighed in as “Neutral” on this topic (vs. strongly favor, favor, or oppose). The top desired facilities in order were a Year-round Aquatic Center and a Performing Arts Center, followed by a Multi-use Gym, Maker Space, and Fine Arts Studio/Gallery. Scoring lower were a relocated Teen Center, Gymnastics Center, conference/meeting space, and another community center.
- Regarding adding or enhancing recreation programs, there was interest in all options and little opposition to any. Nature and Environmental Programs scored highest, but all options received over 50% support.

Overall Themes

In the overall outreach efforts through spring 2017, the consistent strong themes and goals that emerged from our community revolved around 9 key areas:

- Nature Experience
- Trails & Connectivity
- Park and Facility Access
- Social Gathering & Celebration
- Extraordinary Play
- Recreation Variety
- Youth & Teen Empowerment
- Welcoming Places & Services (aka Parks & Rec Hospitality)
- Uniquely Cupertino

See the Community Outreach and Vision Summary presented to Commission on June 1, 2017 for additional information, and the presentation to City Council on September 19, 2017. Three additional themes were added based upon continuing input:

- The Arts
- Partnerships
- Cultural Diversity

The icons below represent these key themes.



**NATURE
EXPERIENCE**



**TRAILS &
CONNECTIVITY**



**PARK & FACILITY
ACCESS**



**SOCIAL GATHERING
& CELEBRATION**



**EXTRAORDINARY
PLAY**



**RECREATION
VARIETY**



**YOUTH & TEEN
EMPOWERMENT**



**WELCOMING
PLACES & SERVICES**



**UNIQUELY
CUPERTINO**



THE ARTS



PARTNERSHIPS



**CULTURAL
DIVERSITY**

Summer 2017 Survey – vision & goals questionnaire

A citywide survey was conducted during summer 2017. It focused on confirming the community's vision, goals and the dozen overarching themes for the master plan noted above, and clarifying what the implementation of them could mean. Over 1,200 people participated. The complete results were provided in Attachment A to the September 7, 2017 materials for the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting. A summary of the questionnaire responses was provided as Appendix A (provided here as Attachment C).

The results re-confirmed the community's sentiments that Nature, and Trails & Connections, are the top two priority themes, followed closely by Variety of Recreation Opportunities, and Recreation Access. Youth & Teen Empowerment and Welcoming Places & Services were next, ranking over 60% favorable ratings. The top 4 descriptors for the city's parks and recreation system included safe; friendly/welcoming; bikeable/walkable; and natural.

Several questions provided responses that relate to planning for major facilities. Questions allowed selection of 2 choices among 6-8 options, so any option receiving >40% was quite high. In response to the question, "How should parks and recreation facilities reflect Cupertino's unique character and identity?", the top choice was:

- 45% - 'Integrate local history, art, culture and natural resources in parks and facilities.'

In response to the question, "How could Cupertino support The Arts in parks and recreation?", the top 2 picks were:

- 45% - 'Develop a cultural, fine and performing arts center with elements such as an indoor theater, kiln room, classrooms and program space for music, dance and programs'
- 46% - 'Increase visual, performing and fine art programs, events and festivals.'

In response to the question, "How should Cupertino's cultural diversity influence parks and recreation services?", the top 2 picks were:

- 55% - 'Identify and provide recreation facilities that support diverse cultural interests, such as tai chi space and cricket pitches'
- 43% - 'Provide more multicultural festivals, events and programs.'

In response to the question, "What could Youth or Teen Empowerment look like in Cupertino parks and recreation?", the top 2 picks were:

- 40% - 'Connect youth and teens to volunteer opportunities and internships'
- 27% - 'Consider a new café-style activity center for teens which could include maker/incubator spaces and other programming themes.'

In response to the question, "How should extraordinary play opportunities be provided?", the top choice was:

- 50% - 'Encourage play for all age groups, including children, teens, adults and seniors.'

It is worth noting that the participants were “self-selected,” and do not accurately represent the city’s demographic makeup. Mature adults 65+ are over-represented at 25%, as are women at 57%. Among self-identified ethnic groups (for which the ~biannual Community Tracking aka “Godbe” Survey categories were used), Caucasians are over-represented at 45% and Asian-Chinese and Asian-Indian groups under-represented at 15% and 12% respectively. However, the ‘mixed-race’, ‘other’, and ‘no answer’ responses for this question totaled 19% which is relatively high, versus 4-6% totals in Godbe surveys.

Summer 2017 Survey – recreation activity data

Results of the 2017 questionnaire were presented in the above-referenced report as a compilation of all responses. One question invited responses regarding which of 50 recreation activities are pursued by the respondent’s household members. The overall results were previously provided as Table 14 in Attachment C. Those results have been further evaluated, and broken down across several types of categories such as age, residency, households with children age 18 or younger, and ethnic self-identification (see Attachment D).

The “All” category of respondents, as noted above, over-represents and under-represents certain demographic groups. Within the individual breakdown columns, many do not include enough respondents to ensure reliable representation of the particular demographic. However, the results do show a snapshot of the self-selected respondents, and of the activities pursued within their households.

Teen Commission Input May 9, 2018

The Teen Commission reviewed aspects of these topics on May 9. They discussed the Big Moves previously presented to Parks and Recreation Commission and Council. Their input on Big Moves included to consider youth interests in selecting major new facilities; sports are important and adding a swimming facility is desirable; look at opportunities to partner with developers to provide new facilities; a teen center/teen space and maker space are compatible and would work well together; the teen center would be more successful at a location such as a school, library or popular teen destination; the Sports Center would benefit from full-size gym; basketball courts are lacking in Cupertino and should be added—this is a popular activity including among youth (schools do offer basketball); tennis courts appear fairly available as there are many at the Sports Center and at the high schools; perhaps some tennis courts could be turned into basketball; indoor badminton is lacking and is needed.

Their input regarding the future of Memorial Park was general since concepts presented on May 17 had not yet been published. Their general input included enhancing Memorial Park’s active uses; considering where a pool would go if this is a good location; avoid driving through the park to access new facilities or new parking; the ponds should be repurposed and would make nice additional green space; consider asking the Fine Arts Commission to weigh in on renovating the pond space; consider removing and repurposing some of the unwatered berm areas.

Advisory Group Input May 17, 2017

The Master Plan Advisory Group met the afternoon of May 17 and weighed in on the topics that were presented at the Workshop that evening. The Advisory Group participated in the

“instant voting” exercise that was also aired with the Workshop. The results of their voting are attached (see Attachment E).

Their feedback on desired new major facilities was mixed across a range of alternatives. However, the top 2 priorities were Multipurpose Recreation Center with Gym and a Performing and Fine Arts Center, while the top single priority was the former, followed by a tie between a Performing and Fine Arts Center and an Aquatic Facility. Among smaller facilities, they preferred a small-to-mid-size theater. They preferred a large aquatic facility over a small one; a multipurpose rec center with a gym over a gym only; and were split regarding desirable size for a theater. They were interested in a variety of sport courts, both indoor and outdoor, and had highest interest in Native Plantings/Landscaping in Parks and More Natural Areas as top desires for green space and garden space.

For Memorial Park, their top choice was a tie between a ‘Mix of the Concepts’ and ‘Active & Multi-use’, followed by ‘Naturalized Civic Gathering.’ Their reason for selecting their top concept was that it has the most important facilities, and that it creates a social and activity hub.

Additional feedback received at this meeting included exploring partnerships and expanding relationships to achieve our goals; to not put “everything” at Memorial Park—to invest in other sites; to maintain existing parks and facilities; to strive for appropriate amounts of improvements and not displace existing popular facilities such as sport fields; to build flexibility into the plan since it is long-range and sports fads vary over time, we should emphasize multi-purpose flexible options; support for a Multiuse Rec Center/sport facility; and to be involved in helping address teen stress.

Commission Special Meeting – Public Workshop May 17, 2018

The May 17 Commission-hosted workshop was publicized in a variety of ways. It was posted on Next Door, Twitter, and social media platforms including YouTube and Facebook sites; posted on ‘television’ screens at city facilities; promoted on Cupertino’s City Channel; posted as News on the City website; and included in the City Calendar. Flyers and brochure stands were provided at various City facilities (such as City Hall, the Golf Course, Quinlan Community Center, Senior Center, Sports Center). Lawn signs were installed at these facilities also, as well as within Memorial Park. Flyers were posted at the along Stevens Creek Trail and at McClellan Ranch, and provided at the Library, the Teen Commission and Library Commission. Email notifications were sent to the Master Plan notification list and a variety of other potentially interested stakeholders, such as Block Leaders, Senior Center members, and people that have registered for Recreation programs and facilities. Over two dozen community members attended the workshop and actively participated. Attendees were primarily long-time residents and primarily 50+ years old.

The workshop feedback via ‘instant voting’ (see Attachment F) on desired big moves was mixed, but the top 2 were Enhance & Protect Natural Areas, and Trails. Input on potential new large facilities was also mixed, but a Performing & Fine Arts Center ranked highest, particularly when asked about the single top priority, and if a smaller facility is pursued. This group preferred a community-size pool rather than a large aquatic facility; were split regarding desirable size for a theater, and also split regarding a multipurpose rec center with a gym over a

gym only. Their priority for sport courts was outdoor courts for varied sports (badminton, bocce, futsal e.g.) and for basketball courts. This group, identically to the Advisory group, selected Native Plantings/Landscaping in Parks and More Natural Areas as top desires for green space and garden space.

For Memorial Park, their top choice during the 'instant voting' was a 'Mix of the Concepts'; the second choice was 'Active and Multi-use.' Their reason for selecting their top concept was that it has the most important facilities, creates a social and activity hub, has the best open space, and keeps the park similar to how it is now.

Attendees had the opportunity to provide individual comments on all of the Memorial Park options as well as potential major facilities and big moves via easels and displays at 8 separate stations with staff liaisons for assistance as well as via comment cards. Comments have been transcribed and are provided as Attachment G. Upon the conclusion, staff liaisons summarized input received. Thereafter, Commissioners provided additional feedback. Commissioners' input is noted in the Draft Minutes [unapproved] for the May 17 meeting (see Attachment H).

The Commission requested that this item be placed on the June 7, 2018 agenda for additional public and Commission input.

Fiscal Impact

None.

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Approved for Submission by: Christine Hanel, Assistant Director of Recreation & Community Services

Attachments:

- A – Memorial Park, Conceptual Design Draft Options, May 3, 2018
- B – Community-wide Survey Summary, Final Draft, pgs. 1-12, May 2017
- C – 2017 Vision and Goals Survey Summary, Draft, Aug. 2017
- D – 2017 Survey, Activity Participation by User Groups
- E – Advisory Group 'Voting' Input, May 2018
- F – Parks & Rec Commission Workshop, Public 'Voting' Input, May 2018
- G – Parks & Rec Commission Workshop, Public Written Input, May 2018
- H – Draft Minutes, Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting, May 17, 2018