



CITY OF SAN MATEO

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Agenda Report

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TO: City Council
FROM: Alex Khojikian, City Manager
PREPARED BY: Parks and Recreation Department
MEETING DATE: March 3, 2025
SUBJECT:
Central Park Playground Improvements Project – Appropriation and Award of Contract

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a Resolution accepting a \$10,000 donation from the San Mateo City Parks and Recreation Foundation and authorize an appropriation of the donation for the Central Park Playground Improvements Project ("Project"); award a construction contract to Suarez & Munoz Construction, Inc. for the Project in the amount of \$8,485,784, with a contingency in the amount of \$1,272,868, for a total amount of \$9,758,652; and authorize the Parks and Recreation Director to execute the contract, in substantially the form presented and to approve change orders within the contingency amount.

BACKGROUND:

On February 20, 2024, at a special City Council study session, RRM Design Group, the design consultant, and staff provided a progress update for the Project. The presentation recapped the Project's goals, objectives, and extensive community outreach effort. The presentation also covered the robust design decision making process used to establish the Project's design vision that led to the selection of the Adventure Village design alternative by the community. Staff reviewed the Project's available budget of \$13.2 million, comprised of Park-In-Lieu and Park Impact Fees and how the Project's estimated total costs of \$13.4 million may exceed the budget amount. Staff recommended with proceeding with the Project with options for cost reduction, and to solicit bids for the complete Project as currently designed and include a series of "bid alternates" to give the City a menu of options to reduce cost once the actual construction cost is known. Council approved Staff's recommendation with the following directives:

1. Maintain the Project's proposed design integrity, keep unique core main items to ensure and preserve Central Park's status as a "flagship" destination.
2. Retain a "2-5 year-old" play area and associated fencing.
3. Data from the bid phase should be used to guide value engineering decisions regarding the Project's design.
4. Potential value engineering should be made in a balanced, responsible and thoughtful manner.
5. Cost of improvements made now are worthwhile investments for Central Park's future and the City of San Mateo.

On September 6, 2024, competitive sealed bids for the Central Park Playground Improvements Project were received and opened. All bids came in over budget.

On October 7, 2024, City Council adopted Resolution No. 91 (2024) rejecting all bids and authorized staff to negotiate a lower contract price via value engineering the project design with the low bidder, Suarez & Munoz Construction, Inc. (SMC). SMC was the lowest responsive, responsible bidder with a complete and accurate bid package, as well as

excellent references for the construction of playground improvements for Central Park. Value engineering is a systematic approach to provide necessary functions in a project at the lowest cost by substituting materials and methods with less expensive alternatives, without sacrificing functionality.

During the remaining months of 2024, city staff, RRM Design Group and SMC value engineered the original bid documents to yield significant construction cost reductions while maintaining the integrity of project design. Value engineering includes the following cost reduction items:

1. Relocated and simplified “2-5 year old” play area, thereby:
 - a. Reducing the overall project area;
 - b. Reducing laborious manual excavation below the existing trees;
 - c. Reducing the amount of new lighting;
 - d. Reduced and simplified the amount of fencing around the “2-5 year old” play area; and
 - e. Reducing operational maintenance cost and effort.
2. Changed restroom from a pre-engineered to a prefabricated building, thereby reducing cost and labor to install the restroom;
3. Relocated the restroom and removed the fabric trellis around the Bunya Bunya tree;
4. Reduced cost of the picnic shelter by:
 - a. Simplifying the roof style, the structural design and support columns; and
 - b. Changing brick paving at picnic shelter to concrete;
5. Replaced the Ornithopter (Bird) play element with a lower cost piece of play equipment;
6. Lowered the Science Fiction Town play element to ground level;
7. Removed the Net Tunnel play element and reduced the surrounding boardwalk;
8. Converted the piped stormwater drainage system to a passive stormwater infiltration system;
9. Reduced amount of costly synthetic turf and Poured-In-Place resilient safety paving to Engineered Wood Fiber surfacing; and
10. Removed all original Bid Alternate options. Incorporated the Picnic Area and Entry Obelisks (formerly Bid Alt. #1) into the base bid scope of work.

The value engineering effort reduced SMC’s original bid amount of \$11,532,000 to \$8,485,784, which amounts to a \$3,046,216 reduction in construction costs. Based on the above, Staff recommends award of a construction contract to SMC in the amount of \$8,485,784. Staff also recommends establishing a 15 percent contingency reserve in the amount of \$1,272,868 to address any unanticipated items that may arise during construction, for a total construction budget amount of \$9,758,652.

BUDGET IMPACT:

The Project currently has an available budget of \$13,265,586. An appropriation of \$10,000 from the San Mateo City Parks and Recreation Foundation in tribute to former Parks and Recreation Director Shelia Canzian’s service and retirement to the Project would augment its project budget to \$13,275,586. There are sufficient budget funds for the Project to cover the negotiated construction cost, contingency reserve, prefabricated restroom, project construction consultants, construction administration and other project related costs.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

An Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) was prepared for the Central Park Master Plan, which includes the Project, and approved in 2018. The IS/MND concluded that the Project would not have any significant effects with the incorporation of mitigation measures that have been included in the Project’s Conditions of Approval to ensure compliance during project implementation. In addition, the City Council’s authorization of the requested budget appropriation is not a project subject to CEQA review, because it consists of a government fiscal activity which does not involve any commitment to any specific project which may result in a significant physical impact on the environment. (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(4).)

NOTICE PROVIDED

All meeting noticing requirements were met.

ATTACHMENTS

Att 1 - Proposed Resolution – San Mateo Parks and Recreation Foundation Donation

Att 2 - Proposed Contract

LINKS

A complete copy of the proposed Contract, inclusive of all the Contact Documents, may also be found here:

[Central Park Playground Renovation | San Mateo, CA - Official Website](#)

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