



STAFF REPORT

AGENDA NO: 10a

MEETING DATE: January 21, 2020

To: Honorable Mayor and City Council

Date: January 21, 2020

From: Margaret Glomstad, Parks and Recreation Director – (650) 558-7307

Subject: Adoption of a Resolution Approving the Parks Master Plan

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt a resolution approving the Parks Master Plan.

BACKGROUND

Parks and Recreation Department staff and MIG, Inc. have been working on developing the City's first Parks Master Plan (PMP) to help guide future planning, policy, and development of the City's parks and recreation system. The PMP sets the framework for decision-makers in the planning, maintenance, development, and/or rehabilitation of Burlingame's parks and recreation facilities. It also provides a systematic and prioritized approach to the implementation of parks and recreation projects.

The City Council and the Parks and Recreation Commission have long supported a robust system of parks and open space lands in the city. This commitment has been affirmed and strengthened in the Healthy People Healthy Places Element of the City's new General Plan. The General Plan calls for the City to "provide a diversity of City-owned parks, recreation facilities, natural open spaces, and public gathering places citywide, and ensure that every Burlingame resident lives within one-half mile of such a resource" (Goal HP-4). The PMP is an implementation item in the General Plan Update (HP-4.1).

However, the City of Burlingame is largely built out and is expecting continued population growth. Continuing to provide abundant open spaces, parks, and recreation facilities is an ongoing challenge.

DISCUSSION

Recreation Trends

Understanding both national and local trends in parks and recreation was a critical early step in the PMP process. Increasingly, the relationship between public health/wellness and outdoor recreation (including trail-based activities like walking, jogging, and bicycling) is part of the national and local dialogue. The importance of connecting with nature in a world where children and adults are increasingly disconnected from the natural world is another topic that resonates both nationally and

locally. Also, the importance of universal design that includes recreation experiences for all ages and abilities is gaining traction on the national level and within the local Burlingame community. The significance of these topics to both the City and the people of Burlingame are reflected through key planning policies and goals in the Envision Burlingame General Plan Update and inform recommendations in the PMP.

Community Engagement

Initial planning tasks for the Parks Master Plan began in March 2018 and focused on engaging the Burlingame community to identify priorities and values that would guide the PMP. The various community engagement methods listed below provided valuable data and insight into how residents currently use the parks and recreation system and were used to inform strategic direction and recommendations for the PMP.

Methods of community engagement included:

- Kick-off meeting and parks tour with City staff
- Stakeholder interviews (City staff, Commissioners, business owners, field user groups, special interest groups, school representatives, and PTA representatives)
- Pop-up surveys (Summer 2018: 300+ participants, eight events throughout Burlingame)
- Mapita online survey (May – July 2018: 500+ participants)
- Master Plan Advisory Team Meeting (October 22, 2018)
- Community Workshop (November 7, 2018: included participatory feedback exercises)
- Statistically valid phone survey (November 29, 2018 - December 9, 2018)
- Master Plan Advisory Team Meeting (November 26, 2019)

The community engagement initiatives surfaced some key trends, highlights, and community priorities, including:

- Community members highly appreciate access to nature and wildlife, beautiful scenery, running and biking trails, and would like to expand this access.
- Current recreation programs are very high-quality, diverse, and highly appreciated by participants.
- Park improvement priorities include addressing barriers, improving restrooms, improving park seating/shade, and expanding off-leash dog areas.
- Facility and amenity priorities include trails, dog parks, water recreation, and playgrounds.
- Recreation program priorities include adventure activities, large community events, and performing arts.
- Bayfront priorities include improving walking and biking trails, waterfront access, and activities.

The statistically valid phone survey confirmed the findings, including the following:

- Residents highly value parks and recreation.
- Residents are generally satisfied with the programs and facilities that the City offers.
- The highest community priorities include:
 - Trails for running, walking, biking
 - Additional nature trails and wilderness areas

- Expanded recreation program for kids, adults, and seniors
- Universally designed play areas
- Additional restrooms
- Additional sports programs
- Additional art programs
- Bayfront recreation was important, but not the highest priority among residents polled.

Mapping and Analysis

To supplement the community input and team observations, the project team conducted research, mapping, and analysis to identify system-wide parks and recreation needs and opportunities. This needs assessment included a review of parks and recreation system existing conditions, park service, and watershed analysis, and began a process of identifying opportunity areas, including sites within Burlingame's potential growth areas and parts of the city that are currently underserved by parks.

The key findings that have emerged from the community engagement activities, mapping exercises, and needs analysis provided the foundation for the PMP document framework. The PMP document has five sections.

1. Introduction

The introduction defines a parks master plan, sets the context, describes the process and input, and provides an overview of the document.

2. Needs and Opportunities

The Needs and Opportunities section describes the existing park system and services as well as national and regional trends, explains the community priorities based on the community input, and introduces the 10-minute walk analysis.

3. Vision and Guidelines

The Vision and Guidelines section introduces the goals and describes the Park System Concept of Hubs and Clusters, park-links, and Park Design Guidelines.

4. Strategies and Recommendations

The Strategies and Recommendations present the recommendations for each goal and offer possible locations and strategies to achieve the goals desired by the community.

5. Implementation

The Implementation section describes the criteria to help facilitate the decision-making process, defines funding sources, and suggests an action to prioritize projects/initiatives dependent on future funding, opportunities, and partnerships.

Staff will use the document as part of each park's renovation to help inform the process, educate the committee about the community-wide interests, and ensure a wide variety of options throughout the park system. It will also be used by architects of new development projects to design new parks reflecting the community's interests and needs.

It is important to note that not all of the proposed ideas and opportunities presented in the PMP will come to fruition, and the PMP is not "set in stone." The City needs to remain flexible, nimble, and

open to other opportunities, trends, and community needs as they arise over the next eight to ten years. Also, the park-link concept, as proposed in the PMP, will need to be incorporated into the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan for further development and implementation.

The PMP will be a document that guides decision-makers for the next eight to ten years to improve the park system as the community envisions it today. At the end of this time, staff recommends an update of the PMP to stay relevant and up-to-date on community needs and national and regional trends.

The Parks and Recreation Commission reviewed the PMP on December 19, 2019, at their regularly scheduled meeting. After discussion, the Commissioners requested that public art be added to the downtown park area recommendations on page 71 and that the location of Benito Triangle be added to page 73. Those additions have been included in the attached document, along with a few typographical corrections noted by Commissioners.

At the completion of the discussion, the Commissioners in attendance unanimously approved the PMP and recommended approval by the City Council.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with the approval of the Parks Master Plan document. However, City staff will be returning to Council at a future meeting with possible funding options, as noted in Chapter 5, as part of an overall review of City Impact fees.

Exhibits:

- Resolution
- Draft Parks Master Plan