



REPORT

THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO TO THE PARK AND RECREATION BOARD

DATE ISSUED: September 10, 2014

REPORT NO: 101

ATTENTION: Park and Recreation Board, Agenda of September 18th, 2014

SUBJECT: General Development Plan for McKinley Elementary School Joint Use Improvements

SUMMARY

Issue - Should the Design Review Committee recommend approval of the General Development Plan (GDP) for the McKinley Elementary School Joint Use Improvements?

Staff's Recommendation - Recommend approval of the proposed McKinley Elementary School Joint Use Improvements – General Development Plan.

Other Recommendations – The following groups have reviewed and considered the proposed project. Actions taken and recommendations made by other groups are listed below.

November 26, 2012 and February 27, 2013, public meetings were conducted at the McKinley Elementary School to introduce the project and gather community input and survey information in preparation of the GDP conceptual design.

On March 25, 2013 North Park Recreation Council voted to take no action at this time, as the design presented does not meet the community approval.

On May 28, 2014 North Park Recreation Council voted 3-1 recommending approval of the revised GDP Concept as presented for McKinley Elementary School Joint Use Improvements.

On July 9, 2014 Community Parks II Area Committee recommended approval of the GDP as presented for McKinley Elementary School Joint Use Improvements.

On August 14, 2014, Design Review Committee voted unanimously to recommend the approval of the General Development Plan for McKinley Joint Use Improvements with the below comments.

1. If the perimeter fence is being replaced, it should be placed on a curb.
2. Consider accessible ramps at the entries off Palm Street and McKinley Street.
3. Design a space for a future portable restroom.
4. Increase the width of the primary walkway off Felton Street to 8 ft to 10 ft.
5. Trees should be added along the south side of the site along Palm Street.
6. Provide an alternate surface at the backstop.
7. Provide a generous radius in the concrete at all walkway intersections.

Fiscal Impact – Currently the total project budget is \$179,500 for the preparation of McKinley Elementary School Joint Use Improvements – General Development Plan; funds are available from Special Park Fees Fund. Final design and construction will be funded separately by the San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD) as anticipated upon approval of GDP and funding availability.

Water and Energy Conservation Status – The plan is consistent with all water and energy conservation guidelines contained in Council Policy 200-14.

Environmental Status – The project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15303 (new construction or conversion of small structures).

BACKGROUND

McKinley Elementary School is located at 3045 Felton Street in the North Park Community; Council District 3 (attached Location Map). The proposed joint use facility is located in the southeastern quadrant of the parcel on an area currently developed with sand ball fields and asphalt blacktop areas.

This project provides for the preparation of a new General Development Plan of 2.67-acre joint use park facilities at McKinley Elementary School to supplement existing park acreage in the North Park Community which is park-deficient. The proposed GDP concept as attached features a new multi-purposed field with natural grass and decomposed granite walking path, shade trees, fence and accessibility upgrades. Other existing hard courts and children's play area located within the proposed joint use area will remain in place.

Originally, this joint use site was identified with less than 1.4 acres and standard park facilities such as a synthetic turf multi-purposed field and accessibility updates, not including the existing hard court surface. For a small size field (1.0 acre) with expected year-round recreational use, synthetic turf was initially recommended to meet the intent of having a healthy playing surface condition and a minimum down time required for maintenance. With synthetic turf, lower operation and maintenance costs can be expected. Compared to the natural grass, a small field often requires annual renovation for safety assurance and extensive maintenance and irrigation repairs that often results in field closure needed for the turf to re-grow and re-establish approximately 3 months or more annually.

During the workshop meetings and based on the collected survey data, many community members expressed a strong desire for more park space and natural park elements at this joint use location. Other community members requested to limit any potential impacts to the existing open grass area that is currently accessible to the public during school hours. Some of other members also expressed more input in having native plants and conserving water. Further discussions were also taken place involving the expected high water usage, maintenance costs and the extensive field closure typically required when using natural grass.

The Design Review Committee requested that the consultant investigate the possibility of incorporating new accessible ramps at the Palm Street (south side) and McKinley Street (east side) entries. That analysis has been completed and incorporating accessible ramps at these 2 locations is not desirable for the following reasons. Both entries are existing and utilize rock cobble walls as structural and visual elements. These walls are quite unusual for a school and are reflective of the surrounding community. During the community meetings, the public felt that the unique character of these walls needs to remain and should be compromised. Constructing ramps at both locations would severely impact the visual character of these walls. The ramps would need to be constructed within the existing chain link fence and the sidewalk. This area is fairly narrow and would require extensive walls and removal of landscaping. This would add considerable cost to the construction of the project. There will be an enhanced 8 foot wide accessible entrance on the west side off of Felton Street with associated sidewalk ramps and designated parking. This should provide adequate ADA access for the entire site.

Together with the community and members of North Park Recreation Councils, SDUSD and City staff has made modifications to incorporate additional natural landscaping features and modifications the GDP conceptual design. The revised GDP concept as attached shows many natural landscaping such as shade trees, natural grass field, decomposed granite walkway and rock wall landscaping and other various features that will promote playability and family gathering. The fence relocation and addition of rock wall near the existing lawn area are aligned along the upper edge allowing for the public to continue having access this area during and after school hours.

Based on further project scoping and partnering with the San Diego Unified School District, the final design and construction operations of this joint use park will be funded and administered by the SDUSD in the near future upon funding availability.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve the proposed GDP
2. Approve the proposed GDP with modifications
3. Do not approve the proposed GDP

Respectfully Submitted,



Samir Mahamalji, Project Officer II
Public Works Department
Arch. Engineering & Parks Division



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Public Works Department
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DVM/dvm

Attachments: Location Map
 McKinley Elementary School Joint Use Improvements GDP

PREDESIGN LOCATION MAP
**McKinley Elementary School
 Joint Use Improvements**

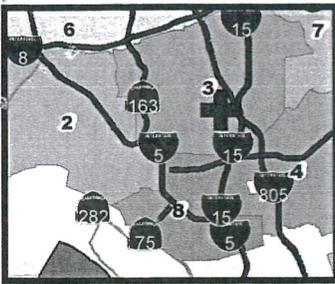


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Legend

 **Project Location**



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