

DATE ISSUED:	July 13, 2017	REPORT NO: 102
ATTENTION:	Park and Recreation Board Agenda of July 20, 2017	
SUBJECT:	Children's Park Improvements General I Neighborhood of the Downtown Commu	- creation and a second s

SUMMARY

<u>Issue</u> – Should the Park and Recreation Board approve of the proposed Children's Park General Development Plan?

<u>Director's Recommendation</u> – Recommend approval of the proposed Children's Park General Development Plan (GDP).

<u>Other Recommendations</u> – The following groups have reviewed and considered the proposed project. Actions taken and recommendations made by these groups are listed under Discussion below.

Downtown Community Planning Council Civic San Diego Board of Directors

<u>Fiscal Impact</u> – There is currently \$3,600,000 in the City of San Diego ("City") Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Budget for design and construction of the park improvements. An additional \$800,000 in Downtown Floor Area Ratio (FAR) Bonus Payment Program funds have been allocated for the preparation of construction documents. It is currently estimated that another \$1,200,000 in unidentified funds will be necessary to complete construction.

<u>Water and Energy Conservation Status</u> – The proposed Project complies with all water and energy conservation guidelines contained in Council Policy 200-14.

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Environmental - Development within the Downtown Community Planning area is covered under the following documents, all referred to as the "Downtown FEIR": Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the San Diego Downtown Community Plan, Centre City Planned District Ordinance, and 10th Amendment to the Centre City Redevelopment Plan, certified by the former Redevelopment Agency ("Former Agency") and the City Council on March 14, 2006 (Resolutions R-04001 and R-301265, respectively); subsequent addenda to the FEIR certified by the Former Agency on August 3, 2007 (Former Agency Resolution R-04193), April 21, 2010 (Former Agency Resolution R-04510), and August 3, 2010 (Former Agency Resolution R-04544), and certified by the City Council on February 12, 2014 (City Council Resolution R-308724) and July 14, 2014 (City Council Resolution R-309115); and, the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Report for the Downtown San Diego Mobility Plan certified by the City Council on June 21, 2016 (Resolution R-310561). The Downtown FEIR was adopted prior to the requirement for documents prepared under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to consider a project's impacts related to greenhouse gas emissions. The effect of greenhouse gas emissions on climate change, and the subsequent adoption of guidelines for analyzing and evaluating the significance of data, is not considered "new information" under State CEQA Guidelines Section 15162 triggering further environmental review because such information was available and known before approval of the Downtown FEIR. Nonetheless, development within the Downtown Community Planning area is also covered under the following documents, all referred to as the "CAP FEIR": FEIR for the City of San Diego Climate Action Plan (CAP), certified by the City Council on December 15, 2015 (City Council Resolution R-310176), and the Addendum to the CAP, certified by the City Council on July 12, 2016 (City Council Resolution R-310596). The Downtown FEIR and CAP FEIR are both "Program EIRs" prepared in compliance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15168. Improvements to Children's Park were anticipated by the DCP. The environmental impacts of the project were adequately addressed in the Downtown FEIR and CAP FEIR; the project is within the scope of the development program described in the Downtown FEIR and CAP FEIR and is adequately described within both documents for the purposes of CEQA; and, none of the conditions listed in Section 15162 exist. Therefore, no further environmental documentation is required under CEQA.

BACKGROUND

Children's Park_was originally built in 1995 and was designed by Peter Walker, a prominent landscape architect. The design for the park was a study in geometry. The plan featured a circular pond ("Civic Pond") that included a fountain composed of a square array of raised copper poles topped with spraying sprinkler heads. The Civic Pond is bifurcated by the Martin Luther King Promenade and the Trolley/railroad tracks. The park contained a series of circular mounds of grass laid out in a grid pattern and a square of limestone benches bisecting the pond and park. A grove of densely planted Canary Island pine trees formed an urban forest, and a double row of Italian Cypress trees lined the park frontages along Front Street and First Avenue.

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Over the course of time, the park's trees matured and created a dense, somewhat secluded area. In addition, the Italian Cypress created a wall that prevented views into the park. In recent years, the irrigation system was turned off due to the drought and the grass mounds became dirt. The mounds were then removed to improve sight distances into the park and the urban forest was thinned in order to provide more light into the park. However, due to the passive design of the park and lack of amenities to attract visitors, the park remains highly underutilized and is largely frequented by Downtown's transient population.

Therefore, the surrounding community, the City Parks and Recreation Department, and CivicSD desired to design and construct enhancements to the park to provide a variety of additional uses which will attract a much larger, diverse population to the park. In 2015, a group of citizens submitted a petition to the Downtown Community Planning Council (DCPC), requesting an off-leash dog park area be included in any future park improvements, and on June 17, 2015, the DCPC voted 21-1 to recommend that CivicSD strongly consider the inclusion of an off-lease dog area in the Project.

DISCUSSION

In September, 2016, CivicSD hired the Consultant to solicit community input and prepare a GDP for the Project. The Consultant held the first public workshop in the Community Concourse on November 16, 2016 to solicit information from the surrounding community. Public notices were mailed out to all property owners within a 500 foot radius of the park (exceeding the City requirement for a 300 foot radius) in order to gather input from as many of Marina residents as possible. The program prioritization from the community included:

- Multi-purpose Open Space
- Playground/Tot-lot
- Fenced off-leash dog park
- Improved lighting
- Interactive water feature
- Vendor building with restroom
- Picnicking & Seating
- Retain Civic Pond
- Reduce Civic Pond

There was also a significant number of people opposed to the inclusion of an off-leash dog area, and requested that any such area be located as far south as possible (suggestions included an area between the railroad tracks and Harbor Drive south of the Civic Pond).

With this information the Consultant prepared and presented two plan alternatives at the second public workshop held on February 28, 2017 at the New Children's Museum. The following is a summary of the comments received:

- Concept Plan #2 (similar to the current Preferred GDP) had a slightly higher preference.
- Maintenance and security were concerns.

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- Improvements to lighting were requested.
- Comments were split on removing more trees and preserving more trees.
- Slight preference for the restroom/vendor building including potential for beer and wine sales.
- Slightly more people were in favor than opposed to the off-leash dog park.
- Numerous residents living directly north of the park felt the dog park was too close to Island Avenue.

With this information, the Consultant prepared and presented the Preferred GDP at a third public workshop on April 25, again at the New Children's Museum. This third workshop was also a meeting of the DCPC Public Space Subcommittee. The Preferred GDP received generally favorable reaction as summarized in the attached meeting summary in Attachment B.

On May 17, 2017, the DCPC voted 16-3 to recommend the Park & Recreation Board approves the proposed GDP for the Project.

<u>Project Description</u> – The Preferred GDP proposes a variety of new park amenities in order to fully activate the park. The Project proposes to retain the Civic Pond and thin the urban forest to accommodate new walkways, play areas, off-leash dog park and vendor building. Whenever possible, Canary Island Pine trees will be protected in place to maintain the urban forest. The plan provides for improved lighting, public art and six distinct areas in order to activate the park throughout the day with a variety of users. The six distinct areas include the children's play and picnic area, open space turf, restroom/vendor building, off-leash dog park, adult exercise area, and an elevated walkway over the Civic Pond. The design improves site access and views with new walkways crossing the site near the four corners of the park, and the existing double row of Italian Cypress trees will be replaced with canopy trees along Front Street and First Avenue allowing better site lines into the park for security and light access.

Children's Play and Picnic Area - The children's play area is approximately 8,640 square feet and located in the northwest corner of the park. The design goal is to complement the urban forest and to create a space that feels more natural. A variety of play components for different age groups will activate the space. Equipment will range in heights to elevate the user and to mimic the idea of a tree fort in the woods. The play area is surrounding on the north, west and east sides with a simple metal rail fence and low planting in order to provide safe ingress and egress points for families and children, but allowing for clear site lines into the park.

Open Space Turf – The open space turf area is approximately 10,000 square feet and is directly south of the children's play area creating a flow of play between the two spaces. The lawn follows the shape of the existing limestone benches and surrounds the Civic Pond allowing for informal play, picnicking and relaxation.

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Elevated Walkway – The elevated walkway extends into the Civic Pond following the existing line of limestone benches and bisects the fountain sprays. The plan calls for an open stainless steel accessible walkway above the water line which will give the user a feeling of walking on a bridge through the pond. Modifications will be made to the existing fountain sprays to accommodate the walkway and pedestrians.

Vendor/Restroom Building – The vendor/restroom building is located adjacent to the Civic Pond near First Avenue. The proposed building is approximately 1,000 square feet in size and will accommodate a vendor, storage for the park, and two public restrooms with attendant booth. The restroom doors will be slightly raised to allow for proper security. An attendant will monitor the restrooms for the entirety of the park's hours of operations. The exterior architecture mimics the geometry of the park and incorporates natural wood, metal and stone-like elements that complement the urban forest. A covered seating area adjacent to the building will give users views of the park and pond.

Off-Leash Dog Park – The off-leash dog park is approximately 6,000 square feet with a low fence and double gate secure entrance near Island Avenue. The plan calls for the preservation of the existing trees and the addition of benches for patron seating. The dog park is not separated into small and large dog areas due to its size. The dog park is located at a minimum of 110 feet away from the closest existing residence along Island Avenue. Low plantings surrounding the dog park to create a buffer from the adjacent residences.

Adult Fitness Area – The adult fitness area is approximately 1,400 square feet and adjacent to Island Avenue. This area will be comprised of outdoor exercise equipment designed for adults on a decomposed granite pad.

<u>Project Budget</u> – The Preliminary Cost Estimate for the GDP is \$4,435,707 for construction costs. Staff has estimated the overall Project budget, including construction document preparation, permitting, construction management services, and staff time to total \$5.6M. Under the PFFP, the estimated Project cost is listed at \$3.6M, which as discussed earlier in the report is being allocated through the CIP Budget. The \$3.6M is the most CIP money that can be expended on the Project without amending the PFFP (either through the reallocation of money from other identified park, street, or fire station projects in the PFFP or by increasing the overall PFFP budget, which would require a new development impact fee analysis). The \$3.6M budget was based on preliminary cost estimates prepared in 2010 for an alternative preliminary park design.

There is a \$2M gap and there are two options to fully fund the project, one is to use DIF Funds or to use Downtown FAR Bonus Payment Funds. The City Council established the FAR Bonus Payment program to allow new development within the Centre City Planned District to increase their project floor area through payment of funds into the Program. This fund can supplement DIF and other funds for public parks and enhanced public right-of-way projects within Downtown. Staff will be exploring which funding sources they recommend and will present this information to the CivicSD Board once construction cost estimates are better defined. Page 6 Children's Park Improvements GDP June 13, 2017

<u>Project Schedule</u> - Staff is preparing a Request for Qualifications ("RFQ") to select a design consultant to prepare the construction documents for the Project once the GDP is approved by the Park and Recreation Board and Department. CivicSD has allocated \$800,000 in Downtown FAR Bonus Payment Funds for the preparation of construction documents. The following is a tentative schedule for the Project:

Task	Completion Date	
RFQ for Consultant Team	January 2018	
Construction Document Preparation	October 2018	
Permitting and Bidding	March 2019	
Construction Complete	March 2020	

<u>CONCLUSION</u>: The Project to provide enhancements to Children's Park is a highly anticipated project for this neighborhood park with broad support in the community. The development of the GDP is the first step in the design process that will establish the overall concept for the park. Based on the public input and support from the DCPC, staff recommends that the Park and Recreation Board approves of the GDP.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Brand Senior Planner/Landscape Architect

Brad Richter Vice President, Planning

Attachments: A – Preferred GDP B – Summary of Public Workshop #3 C – DCPC Minutes - May 17, 2017

cc: Council District (3)

Concurred by:

Tarrett

Reese A. Jarrett President



Children's Park San Diego, CA July 20, 2017



SONNIDT DEATON GROUP, INC.



Play Pyramid by Richter Spielgeräte



Fitness Equipment



Site Lighting (Steel Posts with Wood Pattern)



Flexible Turf Area



Picnic Table (Wood or Aluminum)



Climbing Structure by Richter Spielgeräte



Log Benches (With and Without Backs)



Bioretention Planting Areas



Dog Park



Table and Chairs at Vendor Plaza



Twin Swing Set by Richter Spielgeräte



Shade Structure



Suspended Walkway



Circular Tree Grate



Waste Receptacle (Wood or Aluminum)

Children's Park San Diego, CA July 20, 2017





SCHMIDT DESIGN GROUP INC.

GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN PRECEDENCE IMAGE BOARD



Canary Island Pine Pinus canariensis



Foxtail Agave



Firecracker Island Snapdragon Galvezia speciosa 'Firecracker'



Spice Bush Calycanthus occidentalis

TREES SUCH AS:

Botanical Name Fraxinus angustifolia 'Raywood' Pinus canariensis Washingtonia robusta

SHRUBS SUCH AS:

Botanical Name Agave attenuata Carissa macrocarpa Rhamnus californica 'Eve Case' Common Name Raywood Ash Canary Island Pine Mexican Fan Palm

Common Name Foxtail Agave Natal Plum Eve Case Coffeeberry



Mexican Fan Palm (Existing) Washingtonia robusta



Eve Case Coffeeberry Rhamnus californica 'Eve Case'



Lavender Lavandula spp



Dune Sedge Carex pansa

PERENNIALS SUCH AS:

Botanical Name Dianella tasmanica 'Variegata' Galvezia speciosa 'Firecracker' Heuchera spp. Lantana montevidensis Lawandula spp. Liriope spp. Rosmarinus spp. Common Name Variegated Dianella

Firecracker Island Snapdragon

Heuchera species Purple Trailing Lantana Lavender species Liriope species Rosemary species



Raywood Ash Fraxinus angustifolia 'Raywood'



Natal Plum Carissa macrocarpa



Purple Trailing Lantana Lantana montevidensis



Canyon Prince Wild Rye Leymus condensatus 'Canyon Prince'

BIOSWALE PLANTS SUCH AS:

lotanical Name	
Calycanthus occidentalis	
arex pansa	
eymus condensatus	
Canyon Prince'	

Common Name Spice Bush Dune Sedge Canyon Prince Wild Rye

GRASSES & GROUNDCOVER SUCH AS:

Botanical Name Baccharis pilularis 'Pigeon Point' Miscanthus sinensis 'Adagio'

Common Name Dwarf Coyote Bush

Miscanthus sinensis 'Adagio' Dwarf Maiden Grass Sesleria autumnalis Autumn Moor Grass

Children's Park San Diego, CA July 20, 2017



CHMIDT DESIGN GROUP, INC.

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VENDOR & STORAGE BLDG. - FLOOR PLAN & ELEVATIONS

Children's Park San Diego, CA April 25, 2017



Schmidt Disign Group, inc. where $u = u^{-1/1-\alpha_1}$, $v = u^{-1}$





EXTERIOR TILE WALL TREATMENT

EXTERIOR EXPOSED CMU WALLS



EXPOSED STEEL

COUNTERTOPS

VENDOR & STORAGE BLDG. - MATERIAL BOARD



SCHMIDT DISTON GROUP, INC.



Children's Park San Diego, CA April 25, 2017



GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Children's Park San Diego, CA July 20, 2017





GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Children's Park San Diego, CA July 20. 2017



SCHMIDT DESIGN GROUP, INC.

BALANCING ARTISTIC EXPRESSION IN DESIGN WITH ENVIRONMENTAL SENSITIVITY



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Children's Park Community Meeting #3 Meeting Report

Meeting Location:	The New Children's Museum		
Meeting Date:	04/25/2017		
Meeting Time:	6:00 - 8:00 PM		
Project:	Children's Park		

Meeting Purpose

The purpose of the Community Workshop was to obtain feedback on the Draft General Development Plan. The meeting consisted of a presentation of the design and supporting imagery to the DCPC Public Spaces Committee. This was followed by an approximately hour-long question and answer period from the committee and community.

Attendees

The meeting was attended by approximately 80 people including community members, representatives from Civic San Diego (CSD), City of San Diego Park & Recreation Department, and Schmidt Design Group, Inc. (SDG).

Introductions and Opening Remarks

Kathleen Brand (CSD) thanked participants for attending and provided a brief overview of the project process.

Presentation

Glen Schmidt (SDG) provided a presentation which included a summary of the first two community workshops, historic rationale for the amenities being proposed, and a description of the Draft General Development Plan. The Draft General Development Plan is geometric in form and provided axial walkways, a children's play area, dog run, outdoor fitness, flexible turf, and a vendor building with restrooms and storage. This plan also included a walkway over the civic pond.

Committee and Community Comments

The following are major themes resulting from the feedback received.

The feedback was generally positive regarding the overall park design and amenities. Several community members spoke in favor of the dog park with a few residents requesting signs or a way in which to keep pets from relieving themselves on the open turf area. Community members requested a specific place be identified for a "pet relief" area as an option. Several questions related to park security and maintenance, hours of operation, and how to address the current challenges with the City's homeless population. Concerns were expressed over the presence of a restroom as it relates to the homeless population. Several residents questioned the need for an outdoor fitness area considering most residential towers include gyms for their residents. One community member requested that the fitness area be replaced with an outdoor ping pong table and

Children's Park Community Meeting #3 Meeting Report May 1, 2017 Page 2 of 3

game area. Comments were received requesting to preserve as many trees as possible while others would support selective removal to allow more light into the park.

The following are the verbatim notes as transcribed from the meeting.

Written Notes

- Vendor hours of operation?
- How do you address the homeless population?
- Why is dog run included now?
- How will the bathrooms be monitored?
- What is the intent with lighting?
- Other security features?
- Divide large and small dog areas?
- Alternate locations for dog run? As a part of CEQA review?
- Will Children's Museum be able to use park?
- Link water walk to MLK?
- Glad to see dog run moved south. Add landscape buffer.
- Like civic pond and children by street.
- Calling police won't work.
- No bathroom.
- Don't spend money on fitness.
- Security cameras are needed.
- Keep shrubs low/thin (no hiding places).
- Locate the dog run between tracks and Harbor Drive.
- Dog run will attract people.
- Dog run is fair.
- Support the dog run (1,090 signatures).
- Liked fenced dog run. Turf for surface?
- Who will use fitness?
 - o Replace with ping-pong/board games area.
- Do dogs stay out of rest of park? Keep them out of rest of park.
- Can folks crawl under the bathroom door after hours?
- What will the grass be?
- Designated potty area for dogs.
- How will we not mimic Horton Plaza?
 - o Address homeless.
- Preserve as many trees as possible.
- Keep trees/urban forest.
- Protect/maintain turf.
- No need for fitness.
- Bathrooms bring homeless.
- Like the dog run.
- Keep dogs off grass.
- Consider synthetic turf instead of natural turf.

Children's Park Community Meeting #3 Meeting Report May 1, 2017 Page 3 of 3

• Support removing trees to get light into park.

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• Skateboard deterrents.

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End of Meeting Report

This report, if not corrected within seven (7) days after receipt by any party in attendance, shall be acknowledged as an accurate report of the events that took place at this meeting.

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DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY PLANNING COUNCIL MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF May 17, 2017.

Call to Order: Chair Stark @ 5:18 pm.

Roll Call: Secretary Wessling noted 18 members were present, constituting a quorum.

Members Present @ Call to Order (18): Ball, Blair, Brewer, DiFrancesca, Dion, Escala, Gharabiklou, Herscovitz, King, Levine, Link, Morgan, Nauta, Potter, Radke, Stark, Ward, Wessling Late Arrival (1): Baker Members Absent (5): Gordon, Lawson, Litwak, Rowland, Wery Early Departure (2): Brewer, Levine

2. Approval of Minutes from the April 19, 2017.

Minutes were not properly posted but will be considered at the June meeting

3. Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items:

4. Elected Representative Comments:

• District 3 Chris Ward representative Brian Elliott introduced himself and noted he has been on the job for a week.

5. Chairperson's Report, Subcommittee Reports

- Communications Committee: Alex Ward reported the Committee met May 10 and stated the DCPC website is now working
- Pre-Design Committee: Claudia reported the Committee reviewed the Bahia View project (south side of Market between 14th and 15th)

Information

6. Project Updates – Brad Richter, Civic SD:

- The city is selling the property at 10th & B, Jiffy Lube
- A liquor permit was approved for the service station/car wash at Laurel & Pacific Highway
- The E. Village Green-way is moving forward with documents close to being signed

7. Manchester Pacific Gateway (MPG) Project ~ Stephanie Brown & Perry Dealy: Demolition phase started on the 8 city block area and should finish by September except for Navy Headquarters which will be last after construction of new headquarters on the site. Master Plan includes quality retail, open spaces, underground parking, museum, office space, and the U.S. Navy Headquarters for southwestern U.S. Approved by Civic and will return when ground breaking begins.

8. Luther Tower Project at Second & Beech ~ Colin Rice: Mr. Rice is a partner in the firm of RAHD GROUP that specializes in rehabilitation of existing low income housing projects financed through tax exempt bonds, tax credits, and HUD support. RAHD GROUP Has done 6 affordable housing projects in the San Diego area and the latest is Luther Tower, a 200 unit apartment building currently at market rate rentals but owners rent to

those in need. RAHDGROUP will invest \$11 million to renovate the property and then execute a 55-year affordable housing covenant with the city of San Diego. Plan to start in October.

Consent

9. 7th and A Amendment (North side of A Street between 7th and 8th Avenues) ~ Centre City Development Permit/Centre City Planned Development Permit No. 2014-18A - Design Review and Associated Permits – Cortez Neighborhood of the Downtown Community Plan Area

10. SRI Map Waiver

Motion: To accept the Consent agenda

	In Favor	Opposed	Abstain	Recuse
_DCPC	17	0	0	

In Favor: Baker, Ball, Blair, DiFrancesca, Dion, Escala, Charabiklou, Herscovitz, King, Link, Morgan, Nauta, Potter, Radke, Stark, Ward, Wessling

Opposed: 0 Abstain: 0 Recuse: 0 Action

11. Mid-Term Election: Michael Rosenbaum was unanimously elected, by secret ballot, business representative for the Gaslamp Horton Plaza neighborhood and Jason Wood was unanimously elected, by secret ballot, resident representative for the E. Village S. neighborhood.

12. Children's Park Improvements ~ Kathleen Brand, Parks & Recreation: Glen Schmidt is the Project designer with a total budget of \$5.6 million and completion expected in 2019. Major attractions are an off leash dog park, playground, picnic area, and enhanced water feature with a walkway over the water. Security is a major concern which is being addressed with better views into the park better, lighting as well as encouraging activity through design and amenities. Bathrooms to be monitored with a security person and locked doors requiring action by security person for entry.

Public Comments

In Favor: William Webb, the plan is stunning and impressed with the outreach

Gary Smith, maintenance & security

Gigi Gonzales, gathered information on the off leash dog park

Vicky Mann, in favor of a dog park

Jan Buorgois, Likes the design

Mr. Rodman

Motion: Approve the staff recommended design, made by Kay DiFrancesca, seconded by Judy Radke

	In Favor	Opposed	Abstain	Recuse
DCPC	16	3	0	

In Favor: Baker, Blair, DiFrancesca, Dion, Escala, Charabiklou, Herscovitz, King, Link, Morgan, Nauta, Potter, Radke, Stark, Wessling, Wood

Opposed: Ball, Rosenbaum, Ward,

Abstain: 0

Recuse: 0

Miscellaneous

11. Potential Agenda Items and Member Comments 12. URGENT NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Adjournment Adjourned at 7:29 PM