



REPORT

THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO TO THE PARK AND RECREATION BOARD

DATE ISSUED: January 7, 2021 REPORT NO: 102

ATTENTION: Park and Recreation Board
Agenda of January 21, 2021

SUBJECT: Mission Gorge Neighborhood Park General Development Plan (required by
Planned Development Permit No. 632544 and Site Development Permit No.
632545 for the Shawnee Project).

SUMMARY

Issue – Should the Park and Recreation Board recommend approval of the General Development Plan?

Director's Recommendation – Recommend approval of the proposed General Development Plan

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

The Allied Gardens Community Recreation Group (CRG) recommended approval by vote of 8-1 in favor.

Fiscal Impact – Developer is responsible for costs of the park operation/maintenance requirements, as stipulated in the Shawnee approved permit conditions (discussed below) and per a subsequent developer-City Operations and Maintenance agreement.

Water and Energy Conservation Status – The proposed GDP and subsequent construction documents will comply with all water and energy conservation guidelines contained in Council Policy 200-14.

Environmental – This activity (Mission Gorge Neighborhood Park General Development Plan) has been reviewed for consistency with and is covered by the following certified environmental documents:

1. Revised Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Shawnee/CG7600 Master Plan Project (Project No. 174988/SCH No. 2010111074) certified by San Diego City Council Resolution R-307717 on October 2, 2012; and
2. Final EIR for the San Diego River Park Master Plan (Project No. 121886/SCH No. 2009041036) certified by San Diego City Council Resolution R-308195 on May 20, 2013.

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Mission Gorge Neighborhood Park GDP

Report for Jan. 21, 2020 Parks and Rec Board meeting

This activity is a subsequent discretionary action that is not considered a separate project for purposes of CEQA review pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15378(c) and 15060(c)(3). Pursuant to CEQA Section 21166 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15162, there is no change in circumstance, additional information, or project changes to warrant additional environmental review for this action.

BACKGROUND

Reference City approvals: Planned Development Permit No. 632544 and Site Development Permit No. 632545

As required under the discretionary approvals of the project known as Shawnee, development approvals include a “river park with approximately 5.30 acres of neighborhood parks.” The project was purchased by Palmer Mission Gorge Properties, LP, which is fulfilling its population-based park requirement by contracting for design services and ultimately constructing the 5.3-acre park. The park will be on the applicant’s private land within the overall Shawnee development and will remain in private ownership with public access. The park will be operated and maintained by the developer as a publicly accessible park.

DISCUSSION

The GDP process followed the requirements in Council Policy 600-33 and followed executive orders allowing for the use of Zoom public participation. There were three workshop meetings and a fourth action-item meeting. At the fourth and final meeting of the Allied Gardens Community Recreation Group (CRG) on November 23, 2020, there was an approved motion, passing 8-1 in favor of approval and recommendation to the Park and Recreation Board.

As contemplated in the Shawnee permit conditions, the park would include a continuation of the San Diego River Pathway, with connections on the north edge of the park to the adjacent Verge apartments at the existing fire road/path. The river pathway connects to the property on the south side of the park where a future development will connect. The required parking for the park, as stipulated in the Consultant’s Guide for Park Design, is provided in parallel on the uphill side of the parcels long east side on the adjacent street. There are additional non-reserved spaces across the street as well.

The first of the 4 public meetings focused on existing features of the site, which is between the development proper and the San Diego River. A focus was obtaining stakeholder consensus on a balance of park features that typically occur in a “neighborhood park,” whose components are described in Table RE-2 of the Recreation Element of the General Plan as containing “(p)icnic areas, children’s play areas, multi-purpose courts, multi-purpose turf areas, comfort stations, walkways and landscaping.”

All of the park features listed above, except a comfort station/restroom building, are included in the proposed design, in addition to educational elements that are designed to interpret the features inherent to the site – in particular the San Diego River. In the design, there is a location near the street and the picnic/play area zone for a temporary portable toilet/ event structure.

On the northeast corner of the park, there would be an off-leash dog area of approximately 0.7 acres. While some stakeholders thought that the park should largely be an off-leash dog park, the consensus of CRG members and stakeholders felt that a balance of park features would best meet the needs of both existing and future residents of Allied Gardens and the Navajo Community.

The design of the park allows for surveillance by police and park rangers, and Park and Recreation City staff have weighed-in on practical matters of good park design. It is contemplated in the draft developer-City operations and maintenance agreement that the park will have limited hours, like a dusk-to-dawn concept, and that the park be generally closed at night. Other provisions of the agreement include not only standard terms for park rules and park maintenance – but also for permitting of public events.

A summary of park features is as follows:

- Two play areas, one with conventional play equipment shaded by partial solar covering and a lower “adventure” playground
- Off-leash dog area
- Bocce area with (2) courts and seating
- Pickleball courts (2)
- Tennis court
- Picnic area – open-sided lawn belvedere
- San Diego River Trail with overlooks (4) with interpretive signage
- Picnic plaza with tree shading and tables/chairs
- Fitness equipment nodes (6)
- Security lighting
- An abundance of shade and canopy trees
- Biofiltration water quality zone
- Peeler-pole fencing along riparian edge

ALTERNATIVES

In workshop meetings 2 and 3, the CRG and members of the public gave input on the layout and character of the park. After presentation of two distinct plan alternatives, the design team of Schmidt Design presented the attached GDP with character imagery, examples of equipment and lighting, and plant palette that met with the approval of the CRG 8 to 1.

Respectfully submitted,



Heidi Vonblum, Deputy Director, Planning,
Environment and Public Spaces Division



Scott Sandel, ASLA, Park Planner,
Planning, Environment and Public
Spaces Division

(SS)

Attachment: GDP

cc: Jared Sclari, Deputy Chief of Staff, Council District 7