

February 11, 2021
Item 4

TITLE: REVIEW THE CONCEPT PLANS AND PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR THE PROPOSED PLAYGROUND RENOVATIONS AT KEN MERCER, TAWNY, AND VINTAGE HILLS PARKS AND PROVIDE A RECOMMENDATION ON FINAL DESIGN

SUMMARY

The City of Pleasanton is renovating the existing eastern and central play areas at Ken Mercer Sports Park, the play area at Tawny Park, and the play area at Vintage Hills Park. The renovations will include the replacement of the play equipment in all the play areas (with the potential exception of the swing set area at Vintage Hills Park). A public outreach meeting was conducted online on January 23, 2021, public comments were collected by phone and email, and a survey was posted to social media outlets by the City's Public Information Officer. The public comments received during the outreach process are included in this report. Revised conceptual designs that respond to the comments are also included in this report. Staff is requesting a recommendation on the final design direction for the playground renovation.

RECOMMENDATION

1. Review the concept plans.
2. Receive the staff presentation and public comments.
3. Provide a recommendation on the final designs of the playgrounds.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

There is no direct financial impact resulting from a Parks and Recreation Commission action. Staff will include the agreements for design and construction services with the final budget figures in the report to be presented to City Council. Final budget figures will be based on funding availability and the Parks and Recreation Commission recommendation.

BACKGROUND

The City inspects the playground equipment in all City parks to determine which play equipment needs maintenance or replacement. These inspections are performed by the Parks Division's certified playground safety inspectors (CPSIs). As part of the review, the CPSIs consider the physical condition and age of the equipment, safety and accessibility concerns, and the availability of replacement parts. Based on the evaluation for the current two-year workplan, it was determined that the playgrounds at Ken Mercer, Tawny, and Vintage Hills were in the greatest need of replacement.

The Landscape Architecture, Parks, and Recreation Divisions worked together on the advertisement for a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the playground renovations. The RFQ was advertised on October 21, 2020. The City received six qualification packages on November 18 from the following vendors:

- Kompan
- Miracle Playsystems
- MRC Recreation
- Park Planet
- Ross Recreation
- Specified Play Equipment Company (SPEC)

Based on quality of design and capabilities reflected in the qualification packages, the City's Selection Committee (comprised of representatives from the Operations Services Department, the Engineering Department, and the Library and Recreation Department) determined to work with Ross Recreation on the Ken Mercer Sports Park and Vintage Hills playgrounds and Park Planet on the Tawny Park playground.

The City's approach to the public outreach for the playgrounds concentrated on social media and virtual input to address the restrictions due to the pandemic. A website link was created (www.cityofpleasantonca.gov/parkoutreach), a zoom meeting was setup, the project was advertised on social media (NextDoor, Facebook, and the City's website), signs were posted at all playgrounds, and the City sent notifications to all property owners and tenants within 500 feet of Ken Mercer, Tawny, and Vintage Hills parks. Virtual public outreach meetings were held on Saturday January 23. The meeting for Ken Mercer was from 9:30 – 10:30 a.m.; the meeting for Vintage Hills Park was from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m., and the meeting for Tawny Park was from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. City staff, along with a representative from the playground manufacturer, attended the meetings. Ten residents attended the Ken Mercer meeting, and four residents attended the Tawny and Vintage Hills meetings. Due to the low attendance of the meetings and minimal input received from the children that would be playing on the play equipment, the City created a follow up survey to garner additional input.

The survey was posted on February 4, 2021 and asked the following questions:

1. Which color scheme do you prefer? (for all park play areas)
2. Which 5-12 playground option do you prefer for Tawny Park?
3. Which playground option do you prefer for Ken Mercer Sports Park?

In addition to the virtual meeting comments, the City received input by phone or email from 20 residents.

DISCUSSION

The initial conceptual plans are shown in Attachment 1. The total cost of the playground renovations, as proposed in the initial concepts, and presented at the public meetings, were approximately \$600,000. The input received from the public is summarized in Attachment 2 and has been applied to the revised designs that were included in the survey, as shown in Attachment 3.

During the public outreach meetings City Staff presented two color options for each playground design and held a vote to see which color option was preferred. Two playground equipment options were also presented and voted on for the Tawny Park play equipment for 5-12-year-old children and swing and sand box equipment options were voted on for the Vintage Hills playground.

The comments that the City received regarding the playgrounds was as follows:

- Ken Mercer East Playground – Residents would like to see an option that is more traditional and consistent with the existing playground design and the preferred color option was the blue and red scheme by a small margin.
- Ken Mercer Central Playground – Residents liked the design, requested a belt swing(s) for big kids, and the preferred color option was the blue and red scheme by a small margin.
- Tawny – Provide linked equipment for a ninja course feel, mixed results on whether residents preferred Option A (the large traditional structure) or Option B (the rope structure), but kids preferred the rope structure. The preferred color scheme was the blue and green scheme by a small margin.
- Vintage Hills – Provide at-grade play components for kids with mobility challenges, provide shade on the play equipment, keep the same number of swings, or add more, provide a mix of sand play equipment. Two residents wanted to leave the existing swings in place. The color preference for the equipment was split evenly – the kids preferred the blue green and red scheme while adults preferred the green and blue scheme.

Additionally, a resident requested that the construction of Tawny and Vintage Hills occur at different times so that they had access to at least one playground.

The survey, which Staff hopes will supplement the information received during the outreach process, will be open for a 2-week period. The results will be collected and shared with the Parks and Recreation Commission. City Staff's intent is to incorporate the preferred designs and colors into the final design to present to City Council.

Some of the written comments that were received, such as adding basketball courts to Vintage Hills Park, were noted, but are outside of the scope of the playground renovation project and are therefore not included in the revised concepts.

City Council will be presented with the final budget based on funding availability and the Parks and Recreation Commission recommendation.

Submitted by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt Gruber". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Matt" being more prominent than the last name "Gruber".

Matt Gruber
Landscape Architect

Attachments:

1. Initial Conceptual Plan
2. Public Input Summary
3. Revised Plans