

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT

May 19, 2022
Item 5

TITLE: REVIEW EXISTING OUTREACH PROCESS FOR PARKS AND RECREATION PROJECTS AND RECOMMEND MODIFICATIONS

SUMMARY

Parks and Recreation Commissioners have requested new standards for public outreach regarding recreation amenities at public parks to improve inclusiveness, communication, and transparency within the community. Past, current, and potential future public outreach standards are included for commission information and review.

RECOMMENDATION

Review existing outreach process for parks and recreation projects and recommend modifications.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Financial impacts will depend on the course of action recommended by the commission.

BACKGROUND

Past Outreach

Historically, the City has conducted outreach for playground renovations and any major amenity change within a park. Onsite public outreach meetings have typically been conducted once a location for the amenity is chosen. Projects involving playground renovations have been noticed with the minimum 300-foot radius for public meetings and advertised at the site with a sign. Once the City began to broaden its communications efforts through the use of social media and other digital channels, notifications were sent via these platforms as well.

Current Outreach

For the proposed cricket pitch at Muirwood Community Park, initial notification of the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting to determine a location was provided to residents within a 500-foot radius of the park. In response to community input provided during this meeting, the notification radius was expanded to nearly 5,000-foot for all future cricket discussions pertaining to the Muirwood neighborhood.

Staff has since modified the notification process for public outreach meetings for parks projects involving a recreation amenity. This new omnichannel process provides for more expansive and comprehensive community outreach, including the following:

- Notifications to all tenants and property owners within 1,000-foot of the project property
- Social media notifications (e.g., NextDoor, Facebook, Instagram, etc.)
- Owned media (e.g., City website, newsletters, etc.)
- Email notifications to subscribed users (given an interest list has been created for the project)
- Feedback surveys conducted and distributed via social media, owned media, and interest lists.

This level of effort requires a significant amount of staff time, resources, and adds to the project schedule therefore, outreach to this extent has been focused on the public meetings dedicated to the project.

DISCUSSION

Section 2.32.020 of the Pleasanton Municipal Code outlines the duties of the Parks and Recreation Commission. Section 2.32.020 A, and B – 1, 2, 3, and 6 are relevant to this discussion.

A. The parks and recreation commission shall advise the city council in matters related to city parks and recreational services.

B. The duties of the commission shall include the following:

1. Act in an advisory capacity to the city council in all matters pertaining to public parks and recreation, and to cooperate with other governmental agencies and

civic groups in the advancement of sound recreation programming and park planning. The commission is jointly charged with the planning commission, to establish harmonious and effective relationships, as both of these bodies have designated functions of an interrelated nature in the area of recreation facilities as they relate to the general plan.

2. Formulate recommended policies regarding recreation services for consideration by the city council.

3. Advise the city council, regarding the development of recreation areas, facilities, programs, and services.

6. Take an active role as community leaders in soliciting from the general public the desires and wishes of the people, in making the needs for recreation facilities and programs known along with the best possible methods of achieving such.

In order to make the recreation amenity process at parks more transparent and inclusive, Parks and Recreation Commissioners have requested the development of new standards for public outreach.

Potential Future Outreach

Public outreach, however important, is only one component of a project and must be considered in conjunction with staff availability, project schedule, available budget, and competing priorities.

Before any public outreach efforts are implemented for a proposed recreation amenity project, staff will have already performed significant research and analysis to determine a general scope of work, identify how the project would fit into the City's parks system, and develop a budget for the proposed project. Additionally, staff will have presented these findings before the Parks and Recreation Commission, followed by a recommendation to the City Council to implement the project and allocate appropriate funding.

Because of this work before the public outreach phase of the project, staff recommends taking a measured public outreach approach that can be adjusted based on the scope and importance of each project. This would include, at a minimum, the following enhancements to the public outreach process:

- 1. Staff presents the project to the Parks and Recreation Commission**
 - Notifications to be sent to all tenants and property owners within a 1,000-foot radius of proposed project properties for the meeting
 - Social media notifications (e.g., NextDoor, Facebook, Instagram, etc.) for Parks and Recreation Commission meetings
 - Email notifications to individuals who subscribed to receive project updates or that are on the Parks and Recreation Commission email list.
- 2. On-site public outreach meeting**
 - Notification of public outreach meetings to all tenants and property owners within a 1,000-foot radius of proposed project property

- Social media notifications (e.g., NextDoor, Facebook, Instagram, etc.) for public outreach meetings
- Email notifications to individuals who subscribed to receive project updates.

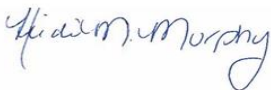
The notifications would invite residents to sign up for the project email list to receive all future updates or to sign up for the Parks and Recreation distribution email list so that they are notified via email. This approach will give everyone an opportunity to be involved if they choose, without placing an undue burden on the project budget, schedule, and staff.

For projects determined to be of more significance or with significant scopes, staff may include, or the Parks and Recreation Commission could recommend additional outreach at the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting:

- Advertising the project and obtaining project feedback at existing community events such as the farmer's market or Concert in the Park
- Additional public outreach meetings
- A feedback survey(s) conducted and distributed via social media, owned media and interest lists
- Sign boards posted in advance at proposed project sites announcing Parks and Recreation Commission meetings and/or public outreach meetings
- Creating focus groups of users and neighbors to gauge opinion on proposed projects/amenities—either prior to Parks and Recreation Commission consideration or following Parks and Recreation Commission recommendation
- As applicable, leverage existing user groups, such as Sports Council, to act as focus groups and provide input on projects relevant to their use/focus areas
- Leverage other City Commissions, such as Youth Commission, as focus groups for new or modified recreational amenities.

Staff will record all feedback from the commission, consider the feedback with all project components and project goals, and return to a future meeting to review proposed modifications for the public outreach process for recreation amenities at parks with the commission.

Submitted by:



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