



# City of Corona

400 S. Vicentia Ave.  
Corona, CA 92882

## Agenda Report

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File #: 20-0216

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### AGENDA REPORT REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

DATE: 03/18/2020

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Public Works Department

**SUBJECT:**

City Council consideration of approving City staff recommended final design for Griffin Park Re-opening Project and additional funding appropriations.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

That the City Council:

- a. Approve staff recommended final design for Griffin Park to include specimen tree and installation of irrigation, planting of acacia, and mulch installation.
- b. Approve an appropriation in the amount of \$57,901 from the Parks and Open Space Fund 217 and \$77,268 from the General Fund Designated Revenue Reserve (\$60,414 from the Vending Machine Beverage Revenue Reserve and \$16,854 from the Park Bond Loan Payment Reserve) to Capital Improvement Project (71720) titled, "Griffin Park Enhancements."

**ANALYSIS:**

Griffin Park was established as a neighborhood park in 1998. Griffin Park is located east of McKinley Avenue, north of the 91 Freeway, in the northeast section of Corona, as shown on Exhibit "A." Griffin Park is approximately 12 acres of hilly terrain, large granite formations, and a few plateaus. These elements significantly limit park design and encourage more natural and passive uses. The park was originally designed with a large grass plateau, playground equipment, and two small parking areas. The terrain provides for a unique park experience, but also presents maintenance and policing challenges. Major areas of the park are not visible from the street and thus provide opportunities for unwelcome activities including graffiti, vandalism, alcohol and drug use, and encampments.

In 2008, as part of citywide budgetary cuts, the City closed Griffin Park and eliminated 13 full-time

positions from the Parks and Recreation Department. In the time period since then, residents have continually expressed a desire to re-open the park. In response, the City held a community meeting with residents in 2016, to obtain input regarding concerns and ideas for Griffin Park. As a result, the City developed several conceptual designs for the park. The City then, unsuccessfully, applied for a grant from the California Department of Parks and Recreation's Habitat Conservation Fund Program for Trails. The City designated some Park Improvement Development Impact Fee Funds (Parks and Open Space Fund 217) to Capital Improvement Project (CIP) No. 7172, Griffin Park Enhancements, towards a future project, but given the cost estimates associated with proposed designs, the Project was put on hold until additional funding could be secured.

In June 2019, then Acting City Manager, Mitchell Lansdell, announced that Griffin Park would be re-opened in the coming fiscal year using Parks and Open Space (Fund 217) funds previously allocated, and directed staff to develop a new plan to re-open Griffin Park by June 2020, using only the funds budgeted to Capital Improvement Project (CIP) No. 7172, Griffin Park Enhancements.

Based on this direction, City staff retained BMLA Landscape Architects and KWC Engineers to develop a limited project scope to include a dog park on the upper plateau and a fitness area in the location of the former playground. Both elements were proposed by residents during the 2016 community meeting. Further, an assessment of the park site revealed, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the park and its amenities are not accessible. No matter what else occurs at the site, the park must be made accessible in order to reopen. Finally, a site inspection revealed an irrigation system and general landscape in disrepair and the driveway and parking lots in need of improvement. To address these deficiencies, included in the current design is some minor rehabilitation work, including new slurry seal for the pavement areas and irrigation repair and hydroseeding of the slopes, immediately adjacent to the upper plateau of the dog park. The rest of the park, including the areas east of the dog park and parking areas, as shown on Exhibit "B," will remain in their natural habitat. The existing asphalt pathways through the park will be designated for vehicular access only. The terrain at Griffin Park presents difficulties in providing ADA access to certain areas of the park, which is why the new park amenities are being limited to the most easily accessible areas of the park. Finally, minimal security lighting for the new ADA pathway is needed at the park.

Design work began in September 2019, to include all these items as part of the revised project scope. It is important to note that since the dog park, fitness area, ADA pathway, and lighting are new amenities, they can be funded using Parks and Open Space (Fund 217) funds. The ADA pathway can be funded through Parks and Open Space Fund 217 monies allocated in the current fiscal year for needed ADA improvements (CIP No. 6869, Citywide ADA Improvements). However, pavement, irrigation, and landscape improvements are not allowable uses of Parks and Open Space (Fund 217) funds, as they are deemed maintenance activities.

Periodic Project updates have been provided to the Parks and Recreation Commission, the last being at their regular meeting on February 12, 2020. At the meeting, City staff presented the most recent conceptual design of the dog park and several options for the fitness area, as shown on Exhibit "C." One option for the fitness area was to provide a shade area without fitness equipment. After some discussion, the Parks Commission supported moving forward with the dog park and favored the

seating area with shade structure, as they stated the fitness activity area was inconsistent with the park's natural setting.

In order to move the Griffin Park Re-Opening Project forward, staff is requesting direction from City Council regarding the final design element for the seating area, landscaping, and funding sources.

Staff obtained cost estimates for both a shade sail structure for the seating area, approximately \$54,329, and for a large specimen tree, approximately \$5,500. The shade sail structure would provide immediate shade but at a higher cost; it may be prone to vandalism and create an area for loitering and other inappropriate activities. The specimen tree would take several years to provide significant shade but is far less costly and is more consistent with the rugged, natural beauty of Griffin Park. Both options include the removal of existing concrete from the old playground area and the addition of benches. A third alternative is to clear and level the area and leave it in a natural state without seating or shade. Conceptual drawings for each shade option are shown on Exhibit "D." Staff recommends proceeding with the specimen tree option, given its costs and consistency with the natural setting.

Additionally, BMLA provided three different options for the slope areas adjacent to the dog park:

- Option 1: Hydroseed native plants without irrigation (approximately \$16,000)
- Option 2: Plant 1-gallon acacias and install irrigation (approximately \$33,000)
- Option 3: Plant acacias, install irrigation, and add mulch (approximately \$68,000)

The cost of planting and irrigation rehabilitation is considered maintenance and cannot be funded from Parks and Open Space Fund 217. Native hydroseeding is the lowest cost option, and would be consistent with the park's natural look, but native plants are not always aesthetically popular, as they often look like weeds. Additional maintenance would be required during initial growth to remove weeds by hand. Staff recommends Option 3 as the best option, in terms of both appearance and maintenance. While this is the most expensive option initially, some costs could be reduced by utilizing staff for the installation of irrigation.

Regardless of the final design options selected, funding is an issue. Currently, CIP No. 7172, Griffin Park Enhancements, has a balance of \$244,889 within Parks and Open Space Fund 217. As referenced above, this fund can only be used to install new or expanded amenities at parks or for park land acquisition. Some of the needed work to reopen Griffin Park is considered maintenance of existing amenities and must be funded from other sources. The current cost estimates for the park are shown in the table below, identifying activities as either new or maintenance:

| Item Description                             | Estimated Cost<br>New Amenities | Estimate Cost<br>Maintenance Work | Total     |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| ADA Sidewalk                                 | \$109,415                       | -                                 | \$109,415 |
| Dog Park                                     | \$146,055                       | -                                 | \$146,055 |
| Pathway Lighting                             | \$62,260                        | -                                 | \$62,260  |
| Seating Area (no shade)                      | \$40,949                        | -                                 | \$40,949  |
| Parking Lot Rehabilitation<br>(Donated Work) | -                               | -                                 | -         |
| Landscape Rehabilitation<br>(Hydroseeding)   | -                               | \$14,375                          | \$14,375  |
| Project Inspection Services                  | \$21,000                        | \$9,000                           | \$30,000  |
| 10% Contingency                              | \$37,968                        | \$2,338                           | \$40,306  |
| Subtotal                                     | \$417,647                       | \$25,713                          | \$443,360 |

**Potential Additional Costs (Above Base, 10% contingency included)**

|  |                                  |                            |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Specimen Tree  | \$5,500                          | -                          |                                  |
| Shade Sail   | \$49,390                         | -                          |                                  |
| Option 2 Landscaping<br>(Acacia and Irrigation)            | -                                | \$16,847                   |                                  |
| Option 3 Landscaping<br>(Acacia, Irrigation, and<br>Mulch) | -                                | \$51,555                   |                                  |
| <b>Project Cost Range:</b>                                 | <b>\$417,647 -<br/>\$467,037</b> | <b>\$25,713 - \$77,268</b> | <b>\$443,360 -<br/>\$544,305</b> |

The total estimated cost for all base amenities eligible for Parks and Open Space (Fund 217) funds is \$417,647. In addition to CIP No. 7172, Griffin Park Enhancements, City staff identified available funding in CIP No. 6869, City Park ADA Improvements, that can be used for the ADA pathway at an estimated cost of \$120,357 (\$109,415 + \$10,942 contingency). This leaves a balance for new amenities ranging from \$297,290 (base costs) to \$346,680 (shade sail). Griffin Park CIP No. 7172, Griffin Park Enhancements, has a current balance of \$244,889, leaving an unfunded balance ranging from \$45,406 (base costs) to \$94,796 (shade sail), and would therefore require an additional appropriation from the Parks and Open Space Fund 217 available fund balance. City Council can appropriate additional Parks and Open Space (Fund 217) funds for either option or direct staff to exclude a shaded seating area. City Council may also direct staff to forego any other proposed new amenities and further reduce project scope and costs. Staff recommends appropriating an additional \$57,901 from Parks and Open Space Fund 217 to fund the base improvements and shade tree option.

Maintenance activities are currently estimated at a minimum of \$25,713, up to a maximum cost of \$77,268. There is currently no money allocated for these project elements; however, staff has identified several potential funding sources for these items including the General Fund Park Bond Loan Repayment Reserve (Designated Revenue) with an available balance of \$284,198 and the

General Fund Vending Machine Beverage Revenue Reserve (Designated Revenue) with an available balance of \$60,414.

The City reached out to All American Asphalt, who agreed to donate work and materials for asphalt repairs to the driveway and parking lots, at an estimated cost of \$23,337, which are not included in the above maintenance costs. Additionally, City Council could also direct staff to forego the identified maintenance activities and no allocation would be needed. Staff recommends appropriation of \$60,414 from the General Fund Vending Machine Beverage Revenue Reserve (Designated Revenue) and \$16,854 from the General Fund Park Bond Loan Repayment Reserve (Designated Revenue) to fund the necessary landscaping improvements for option 3 at Griffin Park. Any unused funds will be returned to the appropriate fund balance at the end of the project.

Once City staff receives City Council direction regarding scope and funding, final design and construction drawings will be developed for Griffin Park and the item will be brought back to City Council for award of bid.

**COMMITTEE ACTION:**

The Griffin Park Re-opening Project Update was presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission on February 12, 2020. The Parks and Recreation Commission voted to proceed with the shade structure with seating for the lower area and the dog park as currently planned, along with needed maintenance.

**STRATEGIC PLAN:**

Not applicable.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Existing CIP No. 7172 for Griffin Park Enhancements has an available balance of \$244,889, in the Parks and Open Space Fund 217. These funds can only be used for new amenities or park land acquisition. Current project estimates for new amenities range from \$417,647 to \$467,037. CIP Project No. 6869, Citywide ADA Improvements, has a balance of \$191,086, that will pay for the ADA Sidewalk, costs estimated at \$120,357 (includes contingency). A shortfall of \$45,406 to \$94,796 remains for the planned new amenities. Available fund balances from each project are shown in the table below. Approval of the recommended actions would result in an appropriation of \$57,901 from the Parks and Open Space Fund 217.

Unfunded maintenance activities associated with the project total \$77,268. Staff recommends appropriating \$60,414 from the General Fund Vending Machine Beverage Revenue Reserve (Designated Revenue), and \$16,854 from the General Fund Park Bond Loan Repayment Reserve (Designated Revenue).

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| <b>GENERAL FUND - Vending Machine Beverage Revenue Reserve Balance</b>           | \$ 60,414.21 |
| Reduce Reserve for Maintenance Component   | (60,414.21)  |
| <b>GENERAL FUND - Vending Machine Beverage Revenue Reserve Balance - REVISED</b> | \$ -         |

|  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| <b>GENERAL FUND - Park Bond Loan Payment Reserve Balance</b>           | \$ 284,197.68        |
| Reduce Reserve for Maintenance Component                               | (16,854.00)          |
| <b>GENERAL FUND - Park Bond Loan Payment Reserve Balance - REVISED</b> | <b>\$ 267,343.68</b> |

| Fund                                | 07/01/19<br>Est. Fund<br>Balance | Budgeted<br>Revenues/<br>Sources | Budgeted<br>Expenditures/<br>Uses | Long Term<br>Receivables/<br>Deposits | Fund Balance<br>Impacts     | 06/30/20<br>Est. Fund<br>Balance |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Parks and<br>Open Space<br>Fund 217 | \$7,713,605                      | \$133,888                        | (\$4,423,658)                     | (\$2,292,733)                         | Appropriation<br>(\$57,901) | \$1,073,201                      |

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:**

This action is exempt pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the Guidelines for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which states that a project is exempt from CEQA if the activity is covered by the general rule that CEQA applies only to projects that have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. This action merely authorizes City staff to proceed with a final design and appropriate funding for the re-opening of Griffin Park, and there is no possibility that approving this action will have a significant effect on the environment. Therefore, no environmental analysis is required.

**PREPARED BY:** TRACY MARTIN, UTILITIES PROJECT MANAGER

**REVIEWED BY:** TOM KOPER, ACTING PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

**REVIEWED BY:** DAVID MONTGOMERY-SCOTT, LIBRARY AND RECREATION SERVICES DIRECTOR

**REVIEWED BY:** KIM SITTON, ACTING ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIRECTOR

**SUBMITTED BY:** JACOB ELLIS, CITY MANAGER

#### **Attachments:**

1. Exhibit A - Location Map
2. Exhibit B - Current Proposed Layout
3. Exhibit C - Griffin Park Presentation 2-12-2020
4. Exhibit D - Shade Sail and Specimen Tree Conceptual Drawings