



Monterey County

Parks Commission

Agenda Item #2

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Receive an update on the Tatum's Garden Foundation (TGF) proposal to develop an inclusive accessible playground on 1.75 acres in the Quail Meadows area of Toro Park, including projected time line, community involvement process, TGF's fundraising efforts, preparatory site work and design concept.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Parks Commission accept the report on the Tatum's Garden Foundation (TGF) project at Toro Park.

SUMMARY:

In June of 2017, RMA-Parks received a conceptual proposal from the TGF to renovate an existing playground at Toro Park and develop an accessible, Inclusive Playground with play opportunities for children of all abilities. An Inclusive Playground provides children with a greater opportunity to learn, develop and improve their physical, cognitive and social skills in a playground setting, instead of being dependent on the typical playground handicapped designs, which can often become physical or social barriers.

Tatum's Garden Foundation (TGF) has provided an update that includes information on their preparatory site work required for the planning and design work necessary for the project, a site survey providing information on topography, existing features, site elements and boundary area. This update also provides information on their community outreach and project fund raising activities, proposals for a donor recognition program and the proposed design concept and renderings for an inclusive accessible playground (**Attachment A - TGF Cover Letter and Project Update**).

On July 10, 2017 the TGF presented their update to the Board of Supervisors Park Committee, which received the update, supported their proposed project concept and supported the staff recommendation for the TGF to bring the project forward to the RMA - Planning Department's Development Review Committee (DRC) for proposal review and feedback. TGF has also provided their update to the Board of Supervisors at their July 25, 2017 meeting.

DISCUSSION:

The Board of Supervisors accepted the concept for Tatum's Garden Foundation (TGF) to develop an accessible, Inclusive Playground with play opportunities for children of all abilities at Quail Meadows in Toro Park. Following that, TGF hosted a series of design workshops in Salinas, Gonzales and Carmel Valley where children had the opportunity to provide their ideas for a playground. TGF also received design ideas from online submittals. TGF and their consultants, Leathers and Associates, a firm specializing in community-based public

playground design and development, facilitated these design workshops.

Based on the input received, Leathers and Associates, with direction from TGF, developed a design proposal. This proposal encompasses about 1.75 acres of the Quail Meadows picnic area at Toro Park. It also calls for improvements to the Quail Meadows use area that will help improve and renovate existing park amenities within and adjacent to the Quail Meadows Group BBQ Area, including repaving and striping of the asphalt entry road and parking lot at Quail Meadows, renovation of the existing restroom building, the addition of new accessible BBQ units and picnic tables and an accessible path of travel between these areas, the restroom, around the Inclusive Playground and to and from the parking lot.

On July 10, 2017, TGF provided an update to the Board of Supervisor's Park Committee. The Committee received their update report and supported their proposal for using 1.75 acres of the Quail Meadows area. In addition, the Park Committee supported staff's recommendation to process the proposal through the Development Review Committee (DRC) for further review and project feedback from County land use agencies. On July 25, 2017, the Board of Supervisors accepted a report on TGF's proposal, including the area proposed for renovation. The Board also supported the next steps in the process, which is to bring the project forward to the DRC. A date for the DRC has not yet been scheduled.

Representatives with TGF expressed that they are very familiar with Toro Park and understand the need to comply with the park's Use Permit, the need to address any intensification in use and address identified impacts, the importance of their proposal fitting within the overall, existing character of the park facility and the importance of preserving and enhancing the park's natural, cultural and recreational resources. TGF is also aware that costs associated with the project shall be at their expense, unless the Board of Supervisors approves some other agreement.

As noted in their update material, TGF relies on the generous donations and contributions of willing sponsors. Their submittal material includes images of their existing fundraising program such as murals, signs, logos incorporated into various site features, ceramic artwork, bricks and picket fence slats that would include the names of those who contributed. The greater the donation or contribution, the more prominent the recognition would be.

Quail Meadows, whole or part, has been used for various events that generate revenue for the Parks (Spartan, Stanford Cycling, Take a Kid Mountain Biking, NorCal Mountain Biking, Inside Trail -Running, CCCX Cycling Club, Earlybird Invitational - Cross Country, CCC X-Country Championships). The proposed footprint would impact how these vents have historically set up. Staff finds that there is sufficient park space to redesign these events. However, it will be up to the vendor to decide if they want to continue using Toro Park under these conditions. If they chose not to continue using Toro Park, it would result in a loss of revenue we currently receive.

TGF has proposed that the playground would be named "Tatum's Treehouse." A logo for the project has also been developed. TGF intends for the logo to be prominently displayed at the playground area and used in promotional or outreach material related to the project.

This project involves redeveloping an existing playground and picnic area. Staff finds that the proposed project is exempt from review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as a minor alteration of land (CEQA Guidelines Section 15304). Board Resolution No. 16-329 states the Board's intent to proceed with the project and includes the finding and determination of this exemption.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

RMA-Building Services, RMA-Environmental Services, RMA-Parks, Monterey County Water Resource Agency and County Counsel will be involved in the effort to develop an Inclusive Accessible Playground at Toro Park. TGF is developing a base of private sector supporters.

FINANCING:

The construction cost and seed money to establish a fund to care for the long-term maintenance of the inclusive play structure will be funded by TGF and their private sector supporters. TGF proposes that County staff performs general maintenance of the completed project. Specialized pieces would be handled by TGF. Because there is no long-term warranty or contractual agreements (this project is a community design/build project), there could be a potential impact to the General Fund for any unforeseen future building or structural issues, vandalism and long term maintenance that would not be covered by the fund established by TGF.

As noted above, TGF proposal calls for additional improvements to the Quail Meadows use area at Toro Park, which will help improve and renovate existing park amenities at the Quail Meadows Group BBQ Area. Impact to vendors that have historically used the Quail Meadows area for events is uncertain at this time, but staff feels that the Park can accommodate those events with alternative designs if the vendor agrees.

Prepared by: John Akeman, Parks Planning Manager, Ext. 4911

Reviewed by: John Guertin, RMA Land Use and Community Development Deputy Director

Approved by: Carl P. Holm, AICP, Resources Management Agency Director

cc: TGF, Toro Land Use Advisory Committee, Mike Dove, Save Toro Park, Toro Park Trails Working Group, Spartan, Stanford Cycling, Take a Kid Mountain Biking, NorCal Mountain Biking, Inside Trail -Running, CCCX Cycling Club, Earlybird Invitational - Cross Country, CCC X-Country Championships

Attachments:

Attachment A - TGF Cover Letter

Attachment B - Project Update