



Council Agenda Report

From: Angelica Fortin, Director

Subject: Approval of the Application to the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the Beechwood Park Project

CEQA Determination: The park project which may be funded by this grant application was previously studied as part of the Beechwood Specific Plan Final Environmental Impact Report SCH#2018061064. It has been determined that the proposed park development is consistent with previously approved EIR and associated Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program and there are no additional environmental impacts. As such, no additional environmental review is required.

Date: August 5, 2025

Facts

1. The United States Congress, under Public Law 88-578, authorized the establishment of a federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grant-In-Aid program. This program provides matching funds to the State of California and its political subdivisions for the acquisition of land and development of facilities for public outdoor recreation purposes.
2. The California Department of Parks and Recreation is responsible for administering the program within the State, including establishing rules and procedures for local agency applications.
3. To apply, the City must adopt a resolution certifying approval of the application and confirming the availability of matching funds.
4. The Beechwood Park Project meets the eligibility criteria under the LCWF grant guidelines.

Community Outreach

The conceptual design for Beechwood Park was presented at a City-hosted open house on May 15, 2024, at Virginia Peterson Elementary School, located across the street from the park's future site. The event provided community members with the opportunity to ask questions, provide feedback, and indicate their preferences for the park's features. Bilingual staff were present, offering Spanish-language interpretation. Based on community input received during the open house, the conceptual design was revised to include youth ball fields, multi-use athletic fields, picnic areas, gazebos, a playground, and perimeter parking.

Options

1. Take no action; or
2. Approve Resolution 25-XXX, authorizing the City's application for funding through the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund for the Beechwood Park Project, and authorizing the Community Services Director to execute all necessary documents related to the application; or
3. Provide alternative direction to staff.

Analysis and Conclusions

Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is a federal grant-in-aid program established under Public Law 88-578 and administered in California by the Department of Parks and Recreation. The program provides matching grants to local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities.

City staff intends to submit an application for \$3,999,818 in funding assistance for the proposed Beechwood Park Project. This project aligns closely with the City's goals to increase access to public recreation amenities, particularly youth sports fields, and to expand park space in the Beechwood area, an area currently underserved by public parks.

As part of the application process, the City is required to adopt a resolution certifying:

- *The City's approval of the grant application;*
- *The availability of required matching funds; and*
- *The City's commitment to comply with all applicable federal and state regulations.*

If awarded, LWCF funding will support the full build-out of the Beechwood Park Project as recommended by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC).

Project Background – Beechwood Park

On October 6, 2020, the City Council adopted the Beechwood Specific Plan, which outlines the development of approximately 234 acres in the southeast portion of Paso Robles. The plan includes an 8-acre public community park. In accordance with the development agreement approved in April 2021, the developer is required to construct the park in lieu of paying shared infrastructure fees. Upon completion, the park will be transferred to the City for long-term ownership and maintenance.

The original estimated construction cost for the park, based on the preliminary concept plan, was approximately \$2,640,000, with the City's contribution capped at \$400,000. However, following a community open house held on May 15, 2024, the concept plan was revised to incorporate extensive public input. The updated plan, adopted by PRAC on September 9, 2024, includes several key enhancements such as:

- *Sports field lighting,*
- *A third youth ball field,*
- *Increased restroom capacity,*
- *Shade structures, and*
- *Equipment storage facilities.*

These additions are consistent with the City Council's long-term strategy to expand youth sports infrastructure. As a result of these enhancements, as well as cost increases since the plan was approved in 2021, the updated cost estimates now total approximately \$7,999,636.

Grant Justification

The Beechwood Park Project is a strong candidate for LWCF funding for the following reasons:

- *The proposed park is located in an area that currently lacks sufficient public park space, addressing a critical recreational need in the Beechwood community.*

- *The project involves the creation of a brand-new park, aligning with LWCF's funding priorities, which tend to favor the development of new parks over the rehabilitation of existing facilities.*

Fiscal Impact

The LWCF program is a matching reimbursement grant that covers up to 50% of eligible project costs. The City is applying for \$3,999,818 in LWCF funding based on a total project cost of \$7,999,636. As a reimbursement grant, the City will be required to commit the full project budget upfront and will be eligible to receive reimbursement for up to half of that amount. Staff recommend using matching funds coming from Development Impact Fees and the Beechwood Developer(s). The current unappropriated balance of the Parks and Recreation Development Impact Fee Fund is approximately \$1.5 million. The developer(s) is expected to contribute a minimum of \$2.6 million toward the project.

CEQA

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Recommendation (Option 2)

Approve Resolution 25-XXX, authorizing the City's application for funding through the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund for the Beechwood Park Project, and authorizing the Community Services Director to execute all necessary documents related to the application.

Attachments

1. Resolution 25-XXX - Approving the City's Application for the Beechwood Park Project
2. Endorsed PRAC Beechwood Park Plan