

July 16, 2020

MEMBERS OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive and file the DeForest Park Vision Plan (Council District 9).

DISCUSSION:

On Tuesday, July 24, 2018 the Uptown Open Space Vision Plan was adopted by the City Council, which identifies new and innovative opportunities to fill the need for publicly-accessible open space and recreation facilities in North Long Beach's Ninth City Council District. Since that time, several projects and plans included in the Uptown Open Space Vision Plan have been pursued. One such effort is planning for the future of DeForest Park.

The DeForest Park Vision Plan (Vision Plan), included as Attachment A, serves as a visionary document to guide potential future development of DeForest Park. The Vision Plan includes an existing conditions analysis, examination of opportunity types, summary of the public outreach process, and community-driven vision and implementation strategies. The Vision Plan looks back to how the park system has evolved to its current state and the previous efforts in planning and development that have informed the path forward. The Vision Plan is a plan for future park investment, anticipated over a long-term horizon, which will be implemented incrementally over time as productive sponsorships or partnerships can be established or as capital, maintenance, and operating resources allow.

The DeForest Park Vision Plan empowered community members to examine and reimagine their seemingly limited park environment with creativity and imagination, while setting expectations in reality through a series of forced-choice decision making workshops. Given the large and diverse population, the public outreach targeted those who have been historically been left out of the planning process, including disadvantaged communities of color, Spanish and Tagalog primary speakers, and youth and families. This involved hosting public workshops at widely accessible locations and platforms throughout the community, including several park and neighborhood events that attract diverse populations, ensuring that materials were available in various languages, consistent with the City's Language Access Policy. The public outreach activities were highly visually engaging so that community members of all ages would gain an increased awareness of the open space, active transportation, and land use planning process.

The Project Team coordinated with the DeForest Park Neighborhood Association to host a series of community workshops, a series of design charrettes and online digital engagement over the course of eight months. park audits throughout the entire park. As part of the existing

MEMBERS OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

July 16, 2020

Page 2

conditions analysis, the park audit involved creating a reliable survey tool designed to evaluate the physical condition of parks and their potential to promote physical activity. The first workshop series involved gathering information from the community and through research about the existing conditions of the park. This information was collected through in-person surveys, park walk audits and a prioritization exercise on what guiding principles future improvements to the park should reflect. The survey was made available online and in-person at public workshops and was promoted through social media and by postcards that were sent each household in the DeForest Park neighborhood. The second workshop series focused on identifying potential opportunities for the park to best serve the needs of all park users. Through a Design Your Park activities players broke out into small groups with an illustrative map of DeForest Park and board game pieces and worked together to decide what activities and programs they imagine taking place in the Park's future. The third workshop series included a park design charrette where community members evaluated two alternative park design concepts that each included consensus-based park elements. This was done through a virtually, in response to the COVID-19 Safer at Home Health Order, and an online survey captured feedback from those who were not able to participate in the live design charrette. To promote the survey, 12 temporary street pole signs that advertised the survey were installed throughout DeForest Park along the walking path, attracting parkgoers practicing social distancing to take the survey. Additionally, a robust digital strategy was created involving sharing to North Long Beach community listservs and spreading promotional content on various stakeholder social media platforms. All outreach and activity materials were produced in English and Spanish, consistent with the City's Language Access Policy.

The DeForest Park Vision Plan was produced in partnership with Long Beach Conservation Corps, Camp Fire Angeles, the Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine, and the DeForest Park Neighborhood Association. The total cost of the Vision Plan was \$100,000, which was funded by a Rivers and Mountain Conservancy State Proposition 1 (Water Bond) grant from the Water Quality, Supply and Infrastructure Improvement Act awarded to the Long Beach Conservation Corps.

Parks and Recreation Commission approval is requested to allow the Vision Plan to be submitted to the City Manager and City Council for approval in a timely manner.

FISCAL IMPACT

The total cost of the Vision Plan was \$100,000, which was funded by a Rivers and Mountain

Conservancy State Proposition 1 (Water Bond) grant from the Water Quality, Supply and Infrastructure Improvement Act awarded to the Long Beach Conservation Corps. There is no fiscal or local job impact associated with this recommendation as the Vision Plan is intended to be the framework for future investment. The Vision Plan provides initial cost estimates for priority projects, although funding for projects outlined have not yet been identified and further detailed cost estimates will need to be created when implementation resources are identified.



MEMBERS OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

July 16, 2020

Page 3

The work done throughout the Vision Plan process will become the basis for future grant funding requests as the City seeks grants for these and other citywide priorities. As municipal resources for maintaining and programming existing park facilities are already strained, the Vision Plan is long-term, intended to be phased in over time, as projects, operations, and maintenance funding becomes available, or as greater stewardship from community and corporate partners is identified.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Approve recommendation.

Respectfully Submitted,



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