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REPORT TO PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION AND BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES

SUBJECT

Recommend that City Council Approve the Preferred Concept for the Lakewood Branch Library and Learning Center Project as shown on Attachment 5 of the Report

BACKGROUND

The Lakewood Branch Library and Learning Center Project (Project) began following a special joint session between City Council and the Board of Library Trustees in July 2012. During that discussion, Council directed staff to explore construction of the first branch library in Sunnyvale at the Lakewood School and park site. Many residents in north Sunnyvale live between two to four miles from any library. As a result, the Lakewood area has the lowest percentage of residents of any Sunnyvale neighborhood with Sunnyvale library cards. There is a significant concentration of seniors and youth in this area. These age groups tend to make the most use of library services and are the most restricted in terms of mobility while having the most to gain from library services. This project will help address this issue.

In early 2017, Council authorized staff to explore a partnership with the Sunnyvale School District (SSD) for the joint development and operation of a branch library at Lakewood (RTC No. 17-0072). This included completion of a feasibility study to be paid jointly by the City and SSD. A formal memorandum of understanding (MOU) with SSD and the Fremont Unified High School District (FUHSD) for construction and operation of a joint-use branch library to be located on the SSD-owned property at the Lakewood Elementary School Site was approved by Sunnyvale City Council in January 2020 (RTC No. 20-0057). The facility described in the MOU, based on results of the feasibility study, would consist of a roughly 20,068 square foot, single-story library and learning center that would include partner space for Sunnyvale and Fremont Unified School Districts, and a community room with small kitchen, and storage. It will be constructed to meet all current City green building and energy efficiency requirements. The existing surface parking lot on the site would also be expanded through the removal of the former swimming pool. The facility will include joint use areas that will be shared by both the library and learning center, serving approximately 500-700 people per day.

On April 28, 2020 Council Awarded a Contract to Anderson Brule Architects, Inc. for Design and Construction Support Services for the project (RTC No. 20-0377). To begin the design phase, a community outreach process was undertaken to review the objectives of the project with the community and receive input on desired design features for the new facility. Using the community input received, two alternatives were created and presented to the public. More input was received, and a final Design Concept was created. The Design Concept presented for approval is based on a combination of feedback from the community, input from staff that will operate and maintain the facility, and the goals of the MOU. City Council approval of a Design Concept will initiate

development of detailed design and construction documents that will be used as part of the invitation to bid process for construction of the new building.

It is possible that some features of the final facility may vary slightly from the Design Concept presented in terms of layout, configuration and materials used. The final design will be prepared with a focus on maintainability and operational efficiency and adjustments that may need to be made based on budget and other factors.

The preferred concepts will be presented as informational items to the Fremont Unified High School District on November 17, 2020 and Sunnyvale School District on November 19, 2020.The City Council is scheduled to consider this item on December 8, 2020.

EXISTING POLICY

CC-7.2a: Study the space needs of the Library as the population grows and diversifies and recommend the most appropriate configuration for services and facilities.

CC-10.6: Leverage available resources by pursuing co-funded and/or cooperative agreements for provision and maintenance of programs, facilities and services, to maximize benefits to the community. Partners may include, but are not limited to, school districts, non-profit groups, governmental agencies and businesses.

CC-12: Maximum access to recreation services, facilities and amenities. The City strives to maximize access to all services, facilities and amenities.

LT-8.7: Conduct a cost/benefit analysis to determine whether the general community would be well served during non-school hours by capital improvements to school-owned open space and/or recreational facilities. The cost/benefit analysis should consider ongoing maintenance costs and responsibilities. When it is determined that the community would be well-served by the capital improvement, the City will consider funding a share of the costs of those improvements proportionate to the City's use.

LT-8.8: Support the acquisition or joint use through agreements with partners of suitable sites to enhance Sunnyvale's open spaces and recreational facilities based on community need and through such strategies as development of easements and right-of-way for open space use, conversion of sites to open space from developed use of land and land banking.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The actions being considered are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15262 as the actions relate to the authorization of a feasibility and planning study for possible future actions that the City Council has not approved, adopted or funded.

If a Design Concept for the Lakewood Branch Library and Learning Center Project is approved, the full scope of the project and any potential impacts will need to be determined and evaluated. It is anticipated that an Initial Study leading to a Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) will be required for CEQA compliance for this project. The CEQA determination will be brought to City Council for approval concurrent with award of the construction contract for the project.

DISCUSSION

The Outreach and Schematic Design phase of the Project was intended to build on the work completed through the Feasibility Study and MOU and to engage key stakeholders and community members. The design team, in collaboration with City staff, hosted 2 virtual community workshops, attended by a total of nearly 100 community members. The purpose was to review initial schematic design concepts, address questions, and gather input about community needs. Summaries from each workshop outlining the key content, discussion, and take-aways are attached (Attachments 2 and 3).

Additionally, the team completed 2 virtual stakeholder sessions to review the concepts with a focus on obtaining key input on building layout, services, and operations. The stakeholders were comprised of key individuals from the City Parks Division, Library and Recreation Services, Facilities Division, City Administrators, SSD, and FUHSD.

Community Workshops

Community Workshop #1 was held on July 1, 2020 and focused on building a foundation for the design work and was broken into two primary topics; 1) Vision & Needs and 2) Design Inspiration. This workshop re-engaged the community with the groundwork established during the feasibility study and MOU process. It also served to validate the work completed and track continued alignment with project goals and community needs. The input from Community Workshop #1 guided the design team toward development of the initial design concepts.

Community Workshop #2 was held on August 26, 2020 and sought to bring the input from Community Workshop #1 together with features of the site to develop the design concepts. It was important to not only make sure the Library and Learning Center functions well for the community, but that it is designed to relate strongly to the site and neighborhood.

Two design options were shared during the workshop (Attachment 4). Both had similar site placement and building layout, but with significantly different architectural form and massing. The community provided feedback relating to the floor plan layout, indoor/outdoor connections, and massing and architecture. From this feedback, a preference emerged for Design Option 2 with simple and elegant materials that are easy to maintain and offer a strong sense of openness and a welcoming atmosphere.

Community Workshops Comments and Key Highlights

Vision and Needs

- Need for additional group study rooms
    - Importance of tutorial spaces
    - Access by all to study rooms
- Strong desire for indoor and outdoor connections and use
- Library as a collaborative culture and language hub for the community
    - Concept of family room for all vs. a living room for adults only
    - Large open area for multi-cultural and multi-generational interactions
    - Easy access to language collections
- Increased flexibility of program rooms with operable walls between larger program rooms
- After-hours accessibility of Maker Space
- After-hours access to reserves, book drop and check out

- Importance of separation between active and quiet space

Design Inspiration

- Many supportive comments and excitement around the architectural forms and character
- Preference for Design Option 2
- Like the roof forms and relationship to the neighborhood context
- Liked the use of glass to provide light and visual connectivity from neighborhood to park
- Simple and elegant combination of materials of plaster, glass and wood - providing a feeling that is welcoming, warm, and timeless

The Design Team took the input from the Community Workshops and worked with Stakeholders to develop Design Option #2 into the preferred design solution.

Key Stakeholder Sessions

A Stakeholder Session was held before the first community workshop to allow Stakeholders to shape the content presented at the workshop. Another Stakeholder Session was held following the second community workshop for stakeholders to discuss key input received from the community. Stakeholders reviewed the operational, space layout and building service considerations to be further adjusted and developed into the preferred Schematic Design Concept.

Alignment to the parameters established within the MOU were paramount and the proposed Schematic Design Concept aligns to the MOU as follows:

- Maintaining as much open space as possible to the south, adhering to the boundary line established in the feasibility study
- Maximizing as much parking as possible
    - Current parking count is anticipated at 100 total parking spaces
- Embedment of operational and service needs for all partners
- Alignment to established program spaces and sizes
    - Three additional study rooms were added in response to input received. The approved building size/budget was maintained.
- Clear sense of a single entry supporting a unified Library and Learning Center that can also function independently after hours for Learning Center and community events
- Massing and architecture that balances an appropriate neighborhood response with a civic presence/beacon
- Estimated construction costs are within budget with strategies to track and adjust

FISCAL IMPACT

The expected costs for design and construction of the Lakewood Branch Library and Learning Center Project (project number 830600) listed in the MOU approved by Council are $28,341,211. The project is currently budgeted with $27,415,000. The remaining funds will need to be identified during the award of construction contract and is most likely to be funded by the General Fund CIP Reserve which has a current balance of approximately $4.8 million.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made through posting of the Parks and Recreation and Board of Library Trustees

agendas on the City's official-notice bulletin board, on the City's website, and the availability of the agenda and report in the Office of the City Clerk.

Two community virtual open house events were held for the project. They were conducted by ABA and City staff using the video conference software Zoom. Notification of these meetings was provided by mailing postcards/flyers to over 9,000 residences within an approximate one-mile radius of the project site bounded by Lawrence Expressway to the east, highway 101 to the south and highway 237 to the north. In addition, electronic notices were sent to neighborhood residents through Nextdoor postings and to families in school districts through Peachjar newsletters. Emails were also sent out to individuals that asked to be notified about the Lakewood Branch Library project and Sunnyvale Library facility projects in general. To provide technology assistance, residents were informed that the library had a limited number of electronic devices and wireless hotspots available upon request. In addition, to encourage participation of Spanish speaking residents, notice and meeting information was provided in both English and Spanish and a room with a Spanish speaking facilitator was available during the virtual open house event.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Recommend that City Council Approve the Preferred Concept for the Lakewood Branch Library and Learning Center Project as shown in Attachment 5 of the report.
2. Provide other direction to staff as the Commission deems appropriate.

RECOMMENDATION

Alternative 1: Recommend that City Council Approve the Preferred Concept for the Lakewood Branch Library and Learning Center Project as shown in Attachment 5 of the report.

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Reviewed by: Teri Silva, Assistant City Manager
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ATTACHMENTS

1. Reserved for Report to Council
2. Virtual Community Workshop #1 Report Summary
3. Virtual Community Workshop #2 Report Summary
4. Design Options
5. Preferred Concept