



CITY OF SALINAS

COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

DATE: February 15, 2022

DEPARTMENT: LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

FROM: KRISTAN LUNDQUIST, LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR

BY: JOSE ARREOLA, COMMUNITY SAFETY ADMINISTRATOR

TITLE: THE CITY OF SALINAS ACCEPTANCE OF 6.8 MILLION GRANT FOR CLOSTER PARK IMPROVEMENTS

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

A motion authorizing the acceptance of Proposition 68 Statewide Park Development and Community Revitalization Program funds of \$6,845,563 and the establishment of the Closter Park Improvement Project appropriation totaling \$6,845,563 and corresponding revenue budget for the Improvements to Closter Park as described in our grant application with no matching funds required.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that Council approve the motion authorizing the acceptance of Proposition 68 Statewide Park Development and Community Revitalization Program funds of \$6,845,563 and the establishment of the Closter Park Improvement Project appropriation totaling \$6,845,563 and corresponding revenue budget for the Improvements to Closter Park as described in our grant application with no matching funds required.

BACKGROUND:

The California Department of Parks and Recreation Office of Grants and Local Services (OGALS) has selected the City of Salinas Closter Park Improvements application for funding. The grant award is for \$6.8 Million Dollars and will fund a comprehensive renovation of Closter Park. There was a total of \$548.3 Million in available funding for the fourth and final round of the Statewide Park Program. OGALS received 468 applications totaling \$2.43 Billion dollars in project requests. This is a highly competitive program and Salinas was one of 112 successful applicants. A key to our successful application was our extensive community engagement for the grant and having a strong Parks, Recreation and Libraries Master Plan.

The Library Community Services Department completed a Parks, Recreation and Libraries Master Planning effort in 2019, which included a full assessment of our park, recreation, and library facilities. Following this assessment and extensive community engagements in developing key project recommendations, strategies and a capital investment plan, Closter Park was ranked as the highest priority based on community need, significance, funding leverage, safety/security, usage/benefits, and location/demographics. Closter Park is heavily used by the community and hosts hundreds of people daily on the basketball courts, large playground, multiple ball fields, in the community center and jogging or walking around the park. Apart from the basketball courts, Closter Park is in critical condition and all the major amenities need repair due to heavy use or age.

Extensive community engagement was done to ensure that ideas from the community were made part of the submitted conceptual design. Starting in November 2020 through to February 2021 we held six community meetings via zoom and three in person pop ups at Closter Park. We engaged with 129 residents and park users most of whom live within a half mile radius of the park. Over 2,500 Salinas residents were interacted with our social media platforms on posts regarding our Prop 68 application. Residents shared with us the elements of the park they love, their concerns about the park and of course what they would like to see added or improved to the park. Our survey data shows that the top use of the park is for walking and jogging. So, a ten-foot-wide fitness loop, a half mile long with downlighting for security, fitness stations and a decomposed granite surface are key elements of the conceptual design. New restrooms, concession stands and built-in Amphitheatre style seating at the plaza are all community driven elements of the conceptual design. Refurbished baseball fields and bleachers will make Closter Park one of the nicest in the Salinas Little League system.

This grant application and now award is part of our goal to finding a solution to renovate this important park central to a thriving and densely populated community. The grant performance period for this project goes through to June 30, 2025 and all park improvements that are part of the grant must be completed by December 31, 2024. A few key improvements identified by our community and included in the initial concept design are new bathroom and concession facilities, Amphitheatre style seating for outdoor performances, a 10' wide fitness loop around the park with fitness stations, renovated baseball fields, colorized basketball court playing surface and a multi-use event space. There will be a whole new round of community engagement to inform the final designs for the park renovations.

CEQA CONSIDERATION:

Not a Project. The City of Salinas has determined that the proposed action is not a project as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378).

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE:

The application for this grant funding supports the following City Council Goals:

- ☐ Operational Efficiencies
- ☐ Public Safety

DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION:

The Library & Community Services Department will coordinate and collaborate with the Public Works and Community Development Departments during already planned weekly meetings to plan and implement the grant project. The Library Community Services Department will work with the Finance Department to receive funds, provide financial progress reports to the granting agency and manage the spending of grant funds on the project.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

The grant requires a commitment from the Applicant that if awarded the grant the organization has or will have enough funds to operate and maintain the project for up to thirty years. No matching city funds are required. Once funds are appropriated a corresponding project account will be created for expense of the funds.

ATTACHMENTS:

Resolution, Closter Park Improvement Project Grant Award Acceptance
Department of Parks and Recreation Grant Contract
Closter Park Improvement Project PowerPoint Presentation