

CITY OF OAKLAND

MEMORANDUM

TO: Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission (PRAC)
FROM: David Valeska, Planner – CEDA
DATE: April 6, 2009
SUBJECT: REQUEST APPROVAL OF PROPOSED FACILITIES AT 25TH
STREET AND M. L. KING JR. MINI-PARK

SUMMARY

This item requests PRAC review and approval of design plans for restoration and enhanced facilities at the quarter-acre 25th Street and M. L. King, Jr. Mini-park (“the park”). The proposed facilities consist of replacing a central concrete space with lawn (natural or artificial), installing two new childrens’ play structures, adding half a dozen trees, upgrading lighting and fences and related improvements. The park is currently closed for repairs. Funding would be provided by Measure WW and other sources. Construction would begin and conclude during 2009.

FISCAL IMPACT

The construction at the park is projected to cost between approximately \$400,000 and \$700,000. The primary expenses of the project include resurfacing and re-landscaping the park, while providing enhanced lights and security fencing. Some existing facilities such as trees and a cultural mural may be retained. The park would be under control of City Recreation and Parks staff.

BACKGROUND

The City’s General Plan Open Space, Conservation and Recreation Element (OSCAR) was adopted in June 1996. Page 5-7 states “West Oakland also contains a large number of mini-parks and plazas. Some provide a recreational amenity for young children....A greater variety of activities...along with security improvements (lighting, ornamental gates, etc.) might help make these parks more hospitable to a broader range of users.” Page 5-8 of OSCAR states that for the “25th Street Mini-Park...Public safety and landscaping improvements would be helpful.”

In March 2009 the City is submitting this park and a dozen other parks for funding from Measure WW, as previously discussed at PRAC meetings.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The park is a level quarter-acre corner parcel at 25th Street and M. L. King Jr. in West Oakland. The park was built over 20 years ago, and deterioration has set in and the park has been fenced off until it can be rehabilitated.

The new plan proposes replacing the central oval shaped paved surface with turf of a type to be determined before construction, adding two children's play structures, half a dozen new 36-inch-box sized trees, new lighting and fencing. Some existing improvements like the mural and trees would be restored and retained. The design would promote access for the disabled (ADA).

KEY ISSUES

Security

The park is exposed on a corner near the 980 Freeway and has been a security and graffiti problem in the past. The new design enhances lighting and fencing, while preserving the viability of positive neighborhood use. The design follows provisions of CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) staffed by Police officers, planners and others, including safety lighting, control of shrubs to maintain security viewing from the street and fencing for control.

Neighborhood Input

The PRAC hearing would be followed by a Conditional Use Permit/Regular Design Review public hearing before the Planning Commission within the next month. Notices to neighbors are involved for each hearing. Staff anticipates that neighbors have generally been waiting patiently for these improvements and would welcome an upgrade from the status quo.

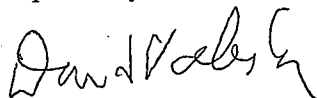
DISABILITY AND SENIOR CITIZEN ACCESS

The shape and location of the flat rectangular mini-park promotes access for the disabled and senior citizens. Security and landscaping improvements will enhance the park experience for these groups.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission approve the 25th Street and M. L. King Jr. Mini-park restoration plan and related grant funding requests. PRAC is asked to recommend to the Planning Commission approval of the Conditional Use Permit/Design Review.

Respectfully Submitted,



David Valeska,
Planner - CEDA