



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 04/20/2021

ITEM NO: 11

DATE: April 13, 2021
TO: Mayor and Town Council
FROM: Laurel Prevetti, Town Manager
SUBJECT: Review and Discuss the Activities of the Parks Commission

RECOMMENDATION:

Review and discuss the activities of the Parks Commission.

BACKGROUND:

The Parks Commission plays an important advisory role for both staff and the Town Council. Meetings occur at 6:00 p.m. on the first Monday of alternating months beginning in February of each year. Spring and summer meetings are held at rotating parks to encourage resident participation and stimulate conversation.

The Commission plays several key roles. The Town's Tree City USA accreditation requires a Parks Commission and the Commission acts as the deciding body for street tree removal appeals per the Town's Tree Ordinance.

Staff relies on the Commission to be the eyes and ears in the community, providing feedback on the use and functionality of Town parks, trails, and open space. Over several recent years, the Parks Commission has reviewed and provided input on a number of important topics, including the character of Worcester Park, the potential for capital improvements to the bandstand at Oak Meadow Park, and most recently discussions on a potential community garden in a PG&E easement on Union Avenue.

The Parks and Public Works Department serves as the liaison with the Commission.

PREPARED BY: Matt Morley
Parks and Public Works Director

Reviewed by: Town Manager and Assistant Town Manager

PAGE 2 OF 3

SUBJECT: Review the Activities of the Parks Commission

DATE: April 13, 2021

DISCUSSION:

The Commission sets annual goals, one of which has been the establishment of a Park Stewardship program. This goal has been ongoing for a number of years and the workload for Commissioners to establish program guidelines has been a challenge.

Staff is currently working on a vegetation management plan for Town open space and undeveloped parks. This will be a future work item for which the Commission will review and provide input. Staff anticipates this as a topic for the Commission's June meeting.

The Commission will also review the design for improvements at the Oak Meadow Bandstand as those are developed. This project will be a part of the proposed FY 2021-22 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Budget, funded largely by State Proposition 68.

Most recently, the Commission has heard from several community groups on specific projects. The first is a community garden concept that a group of residents is proposing for an underutilized PG&E easement adjacent to Union Avenue. The Commission has provided feedback to the project proponents and the proposal continues to evolve. Currently the project is not included in next year's proposed CIP due to a lack of funds. Staff and the Commission will look for other funding opportunities and continue to explore the project for future year's budgets.

The other project is a summer long Picnic in the Park program put forth by the Chamber of Commerce. The Parks Commission provided input on the proposal at their last meeting and were supportive of the effort.

The Commission is anxious to engage with the Council on priorities and to understand how it can best support the Council. Several topics rise to the top as areas for conversation:

- Are there specific areas of focus the Commission should explore with relation to parks, trails, and open space?
- Is there value to advancing a park stewardship program?
- Given the energy behind the community garden concept and the lack of funding, how can the Commission support the project concept?
- What role can the Commissioners play with the Picnic in the Park program?
- How can the Commission best support Town-wide efforts to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)?

The Commission also reviewed the enabling resolution (Attachment 1) and the recruitment questionnaire (Attachment 2). Both meet the needs of the Commission.

PAGE 3 OF 3

SUBJECT: Review the Activities of the Parks Commission

DATE: April 13, 2021

CONCLUSION:

The Commissioners look forward to the dialogue with the Town Council.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this discussion.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

This is not a project defined under CEQA, and no further action is required.

Attachments:

1. Enabling Resolution
2. Commission Recruitment Questionnaire