



London N. Breed, Mayor  
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## **Buena Vista Needs Assessment & Cost Estimate Virtual Community Meeting #3 Notes – June 2, 2020 6:00-7:00pm**

### **Agenda**

- Welcome & Project Team Introductions
- Review of Past Community Meetings
- Review of Project Goals and Project Focus
- Part 1: Cost Summary for Base Project
- Part 2: Identified Priority Projects
- Part 3: Project Alternates and Design Options
- Part 4: Comments/Questions/Next Steps

**Please see Community Meeting #3 Presentation for full text of prepared presentation:**

**<https://sfrecpark.org/DocumentCenter/View/15276/Buena-Vista-Park-Site-Assessment-Community-3-presentation-JUNE2020>**

### **Comments/Questions & Answers**

With the virtual meeting format, all questions and comments were submitted via a Q&A chat feature. Live chat was disabled for security reasons and to avoid distractions during the presentation. Staff read questions aloud and responded verbally during the Q&A portion of the presentation. Not all questions were answered during the meeting due to time constraints; all questions and comments are summarized and responded to here. For further details regarding this project, please review the Final Report, which will be posted on the [project webpage](#).

### **General Project Questions**

- A question came up regarding the costs and effort needed to maintain these improvements. The improvements would eventually result in more efficient maintenance operation and a safer park. Addressing erosion, paving and forestry will save gardeners time since they will not have to focus on sand slides after large storms or when damage is caused when trees fall. Replacing weedy areas with erosion control and sheet mulching will save a great amount of time spent string trimming and weeding. Adding irrigation throughout the park will allow for planting of more trees and habitat plants to preserve the forest without having to use a watering truck or

pulling multiple lengths of hoses which can cause gardener injury. General maintenance of the park has increased over the last few years. Community members are welcome to join volunteer days when they resume. BVNA hosts a volunteer effort every 3rd Saturday of the month. We look forward to when we can resume these activities again because they make a huge impact on the park

- There was a question regarding how long the project will take and when it will happen. The cost estimate is based on the assumption that construction will start in early 2023 and would span for over 4 years. However, that timeline is for the entire base project identified. Projects will be selected and carried out in phases as funding become available. Before any project starts staff will communicate to the community about specific construction schedules.
- There was a question regarding how Miller Company Landscape Architecture was selected as the project landscape architect. There was an open RFP process for this professional service contract and Miller Company was the best candidate.
- A question came up regarding why the plans call for the replacement of stairs, instead of repairing them. The rustic stairs are deteriorating and falling apart due to decay and erosion. Realignment with the park's hillside contours is recommended. Historic entry stairs have cracks, and the walls are patched up and potentially moving away from the stairs due to erosion.
- A comment was made regarding how the central overlook is one of the best aspects of the park and more seating and group areas should be included.
- A question came up regarding how changing values and desires for the park will be addressed. BVNA will continue their efforts on engaging with the community members and RPD will continue outreach to public so feedback received will be incorporated into planned improvements.
- A comment was made about the large number of young families in the area and what will be done to attract children and families to enjoy the park. The park offers many features that are of interest to children including the natural beauty and biodiversity which can be enjoyed from the paths and trails, and the improved playground.
- A question came up regarding whether the park's water supply can be connected to the recycled water line currently installed along the Panhandle, on Oak Street. There are not any plans to connect Buena Vista to the Golden Gate Park water system at Oak Street. Doing so would be quite expensive and was not in the consideration when designing the capacity of the GGP system.

- Questions were raised regarding adding a restroom and a second drinking fountain to the park. While the project team understands the need for these amenities, they are not under consideration at this time due to cost considerations.
- A question was raised regarding connecting Buena Vista to other nearby parks. This project was only focused on the internal issues of Buena Vista Park, although the Bay Area Ridge Trail does connect Buena Vista Park to the Panhandle. **Q: Is** there a plan for a second water fountain in the park, say at the top of the hill or near that?
- A question came up about the material choices used for the pathways, etc., with regard to how long they will last. We are planning on using materials that have held up over time at other City parks, including Park Tread.
- A concern was raised about social trails. The removal of these social trails is covered in the trails related scope of work.
- A question was raised over the park's designation as an urban bird refuge. The recommended planting lists **take** into account wildlife habitat, especially for birds, and is based on our habitat ecologist's recommendation.
- A comment was raised about an interest to focus on replanting and enhancing the flora of the park over infrastructure and hardscape improvements. Reforestation and planting **is on** one of the three project focus and is further discussed in the report. However, infrastructure and hardscape in this park is deteriorating rapidly. Without repairing or replacing these items, replanting and flora would just be covering up problems. The foundation must be built first.
- Regarding the Overlook, trees will be thinned and pruned appropriately **to open** up view corridors.
- A question was raised regarding if the stone walls be replaced with similar stone. Yes, we will be using an appropriate stone to match existing.

## Lighting

- There were numerous questions and comments regarding lighting. One comment was for less human light to consider the effect on migratory birds, and another was voicing concerns for light pollution.
- Another participant requested more lighting, specifically for safety concerns. The current recommended scope for lighting is to include pedestrian lighting along the perimeter sidewalk and security lighting at the maintenance yard. The lighting will be down lights in line with the Dark Skies Association standards, as well as bird-safe standards.

## Planting/Trees

- There were numerous comments and requests for the use of native plants to be used. Through the guidance of a habitat and biodiversity consultant, the report includes biodiversity enhancement opportunities with native trees and perennials which will enhance wildlife habitat. The final report will include a recommended plant list. We will continue to work with the community on this issue once the projects receive funding.
- A question was raised if plants will survive if there is a drought. New planting material will need water to become established, but not as much later on. We took into consideration climate change and how the climate will be in 10-20 years. There has been a lot of irrigation enhancement in the last few years where irrigation and water usage was cut back and will help prepare the park for any drought situation.
- In response to the question of whether we can use automatic irrigation: there are existing automatic systems at the lawn area and the perimeter apron, however new automatic irrigation will not be added. For the interior of the park, gator bags will be used for trees during the establishment period and then leave the trees alone as they won't require much watering at that point. Quick couplers and mainlines will be added in order to have maintenance staff fill in the gator bags and irrigate manually if needed.
- Regarding forestry and tree removals, there will be a Forestry Report included in the Final Report which includes descriptions of trees that need to be removed. Once funding for forestry efforts has been identified, further analysis will take place to confirm trees that are slated to be removed and replaced.
- A comment was made regarding a number of trees that are currently showing stress and several others have died and been cut down in the past few months. RPD and BVNA is aware of trees that are in need of removal and that action will be taken as needed, even if the entire forestry component of this project is not funded.

## Safety

- Antisocial behavior in the park was brought up as a concern; specifically, the activities of the homeless population. This is an issue that the District Supervisor, RPD and BVNA has been working on for years, and it will remain a priority moving forward.
- The presence of coyotes was also raised as an issue. To the best of RPD's knowledge there have been one or two coyotes over recent years. RPD has been monitoring for coyotes and will continue to post notices of their presence in the park to alert people.

- A question was raised regarding if SFPD can patrol the park. SFPD can respond to calls regarding the park and work with the community in regard to policing the park.

### **Construction/Schedule**

- Question: How long will the project take? How many years will it be?  
Response: The cost estimate assumes that construction will start in early 2023 and would span for over 4 years. Cost escalation in the cost estimate is based on assumed mid-point of construction, which is 2025, for all construction cost. The construction will be done in different phases as funding becomes available.

### **Priority Projects**

- A question was raised regarding the issue of excessive sheet flow of rainwater on paved surfaces during the storm. This will be addressed with new asphalt paving which will be crowned to divert water into infiltration devices from the pathways which will take care of the water management issues and decrease hard surface water sheet flowing into streets and gutters and causing erosion issues. A raised stone curb for the edging along the existing gutter is recommended and the deeper drainage gutter allows greater rainwater runoff capacity and mitigates overflow onto the paving.
- There were a couple comments regarding plans for the Central Overlook. Some people were positive about the improvements proposed and wanted to see more gathering spaces and seating areas in the park. Others commented that they wanted the overlook to be more natural looking and a meditative space with planting that would support habitat.

### **Dog Play Area**

- A couple of questions were raised about the dog park and if there was any plan to change off leash designations. The recommended improvements in the dog park are to stabilize the sandy soil in this area, including rainwater gardens and infiltration areas, low retaining walls to hold back soil. The report recommends rustic fence along the improved new trails and this would deter dogs from entering the sensitive vegetation areas. There has not been discussion around additional off leash dog play areas. Being that the park supports a lot of wildlife, it is not prudent to allow dogs to run off leash in areas where they could harm or be disruptive of this wildlife.

**Next Steps:**

The Final Report will be published on the project website: <https://bit.ly/buenavistaproject> and presented to the Recreation and Park Commission in Fall 2020.