



Date: February 5, 2025

To: Recreation and Park Commission
Capital Committee

Through: Philip A. Ginsburg, General Manager
Lisa Bransten, Director of Partnerships

From: Abigail Maher, Deputy Director of Partnerships

Subject: San Francisco Irish Famine Memorial – Grant Accept and Expend

Agenda Wording

Discussion and possible action to recommend that the Board of Supervisors authorize the Recreation and Park Department to accept and expend cash and in kind grants from the San Francisco Irish Famine Memorial Committee valued at approximately \$500,000 for the installation of the Irish Famine Memorial Plaza.

Strategic Plan References

Strategy 1, Inspire Public Space: Keep today’s parks safe, clean, and fun; promote our parks’ historic and cultural heritage; and build the great parks of tomorrow.

Objective 1.4: Preserve and celebrate historic and cultural resources.

Strategy 3, Inspire Investment: Through community engagement, advocacy, and partnerships, cultivate more financial resources to keep San Francisco’s parks and programs accessible for all.

Objective 3.3: Cultivate increased philanthropic support.

Project Background

The San Francisco Irish Famine Memorial Committee (Committee) was formed as a non-profit organization to memorialize the victims and the survivors of “The Great Hunger” (*An Gorta Mor*) that occurred in Ireland from 1845-1852. On March 19, 2019, by resolution number 190223, the Board of Supervisors passed a resolution supporting a permanent memorial in San Francisco for the victims and survivors of the Irish Famine.

The Committee aims to create the memorial to educate locals and visitors about the period of history that caused the starvation and death of over a million Irish people, and lead to the emigration of over a million more who were forced to leave Ireland. The memorial will also serve to thank the State of California and the City of San Francisco for welcoming these individuals and for the opportunities afforded to the Irish upon their arrival.



The proposed location for the memorial is on El Camino Del Mar in Lincoln Park overlooking the 17th hole of the Lincoln Golf Course, which the Committee selected because the location and water view capture the spirit of the Irish coast and remind the Committee of the Irish men and women who arrived here in 1840's and 50's during the Famine to find a better life.

The Committee would like to deliver the memorial project in two phases. Phase 1 includes the concrete plaza which will be designed and built in partnership with the Committee and Recreation and Park Department staff. The second phase calls for artwork to be installed on the plaza and will be managed in partnership with the Committee and the San Francisco Arts Commission staff.

Proposed Phase 1 Design

The proposed project scope is creating a new concrete and stone plaza. In the coming months, capital division staff plan to request approval of the concept plan and the proposed name for the site.

Accept and Expend

The Committee is proposing a combination of cash and in-kind grant funding to the Department for the design and construction of the plaza. The initial cost estimate for the project is approximately \$500,000. This estimate includes in kind funding for design, regulatory reviews, construction, and cash funding for Rec and Park Capital Project Management Services. On October 17, 2024, the Recreation and Park Commission approved a cash grant from the Committee valued at approximately \$32,000 for the Rec and Park PM Services (Res. No. 2410-003). If there are additional costs, the Committee offered to donate additional funds to cover the full cost of the improvement project.

Financial Impact: approximately \$500,000

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Commission recommends that the Board of Supervisors authorizes Rec and Park to accept and expend the cash and in-kind grants from the San Francisco Irish Famine Memorial Committee.

Supported By

Former Mayor London Breed
San Francisco Board of Supervisors
Micheál Smith, Consul General of Ireland
San Francisco Irish Famine Memorial Committee
United Irish Society
Irish Cultural Center
Tony Bucher, President, The Irish Literary & Historical Society

Opposed By

None known