

Daniel Lurie, Mayor



Kat Anderson, Commission President  
Philip A. Ginsburg, General Manager

**Date:** August 21, 2025

**To:** Recreation and Parks Commission

**Through:** Philip A. Ginsburg, General Manager  
Stacy Bradley, Director of Capital & Planning

**From:** Lauren Dietrich Chavez, Project Manager

**Subject:** McLaren Park Vision Plan Update and 2020 Bond Funding Allocations

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### Agenda Wording

Discussion and possible action to approve \$6 million in proposed expenditures from the 2020 Health & Recovery Bond for improvements in John McLaren Park, and to approve concept plans for improvements at Louis Sutter Playground and McNab Lake, Jerry Garcia Amphitheater, Mansell East Gateway, and Shelley Promenade; park wide infrastructure improvements; and the South McLaren Connectivity Project. Approval of this proposed action by the Commission is the Approval Action as defined by S.F. Administrative Code Chapter 31. (ACTION ITEM)

### Strategic Plan

**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 1.2:** Strengthen the quality of existing Parks & Facilities

**Objective 1.4:** Preserve and celebrate historic and cultural resources

**Strategy 2—Inspire Play:** Promote active living, well-being and community for San Francisco’s diverse and growing population

**Objective 2.2:** Strengthen and promote the safety, health and well-being of San Francisco’s youth and seniors

**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

## **Background**

The McLaren Park visioning process identified projects for \$12 million from the 2012 Clean and Safe Neighborhood Parks Bond. After two and half years of community outreach, the Recreation and Park Department published the McLaren Park Vision Plan Report in the Spring of 2018. Projects were prioritized into Quick Start, Tier 1, and Tier 2 categories and the future Tier 2 projects were framed by three pillars: gateways, connectivity, and points of interest.

With the completion of the Vision Plan, investment in McLaren Park has grown and a significant number of capital projects were completed in recent years. With the current McLaren Park Trails Improvement Project underway (and anticipated to be completed in early 2026), the Department is delivering all Quick Start and Tier 1 projects.

### **2012 Bond Quick Start Projects – All Complete!**

- Signage Improvements, delivered with McLaren Trails (2026)
- Group Picnic Area Improvements, delivered with the Playground Renovation (2020)
- Community Garden (2019)
- Path Improvements (2019)
- Mansell Streetscape Improvements (2017)
- John McLaren Bike Park (2017)
- Jerry Garcia Amphitheater Improvements (Phase I) (2016)

### **2012 Bond Tier 1 Projects – Complete with one under construction**

- McLaren Trails Priority Improvements & Natural Features Restoration (2026)
- Jerry Garcia Amphitheater Improvements (Phase II) (2021)
- Visitacion Avenue Pedestrian Crossing (2021)
- Group Picnic Area Restroom (2020)
- Multi-Use Courts (2020)
- Tai Chi Court (2020)
- Community Garden (additional scope) (2019)
- Pathway Improvements (2019)

### **Projects Outside Vision Plan since 2018 – All Complete!**

- Crocker Amazon Soccer Fields Resurfacing & Improvements (2024)
- Herz Playground Let'sPlaySF Renovation (2024)
- McLaren Native Plant Garden (2024)
- Crocker Amazon Green Infrastructure Project (PUC – 2024)
- Redwood Grove Playground Let'sPlaySF (2020)
- Leland Avenue Rain Garden (PUC – 2019)

### **Active Tier 2 Projects – Gateways**

- *South of Mansell Gateway/Herz Playground* – Herz Recreation Center
  - In Construction (opening in Fall 2025)
- *Oxford Street Gateway/Louis Sutter Playground* – Yosemite Creek Daylighting Project by SFPUC (construction start in 2026)

- *South of Mansell Gateway/Crocker Amazon* – Crocker Amazon Baseball and Softball Fields Renovation (planning underway)

### **Active Tier 2 Projects – Connectivity**

- *Access & Connectivity* – Shelly Promenade (legislated in 2023)
- *Access & Connectivity* – Visitacion Avenue Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Project (design underway)

## **2025 McLaren Park Vision Plan Update**

With the above project delivery underway, RPD staff reviewed the 2018 Vision Plan and other related projects, commissioned various assessments, and conducted community outreach from Fall 2022 through Summer 2025 to update the Vision Plan and identify and prioritize the next investment opportunities in the park, focusing on the \$6 million from the 2020 Health and Recovery Bond. This analysis was complemented by extensive engagement with various stakeholders to shape the McLaren Vision Plan Update and prioritize projects for 2020 Bond funding.

This outreach included:

- Three virtual community meetings (12/6/2022, 2/23/2023, 4/11/2023);
- One in-person open house (8/17/2023);
- Survey in Summer 2023 with five hundred and sixty-four responses;
- Presentations at eight stakeholder meetings and events (2022-2025);
- Four focus groups (with producers of events at Jerry Garcia Amphitheater 2/15/2023; representatives in the disability community 5/19/2025 and 5/21/2025; and with bicycling advocates 5/29/2025); and
- Two site walks south of Mansell (7/7/2023 and 11/22/2024).

Notable highlights that emerged through the engagement process include the persistence of a strong desire to improve the basic infrastructure of the park—restrooms, irrigation, pathways, and lighting and electrical systems at Jerry Garcia Amphitheater—rather than building new or expanding program areas. Staff also heard the importance of improving accessibility and wayfinding along with using physical and digital means to better communicate the passive and active recreation opportunities available and the value of natural resources within the park.

### Updated Goals & Objectives

The goals stated in the 2018 McLaren Park Vision Plan remain, and have been updated to:

- Engage the community and articulate an identity for McLaren Park;
- Build and reaffirm a community-supported vision;
- Balance neighborhood and city use while protecting natural features;
- Invest Bond funding in priority projects that support a shared vision; and
- Position McLaren Park for future investment.

The 2018 Vision Plan defined principles to guide future projects, and we plan to continue prioritizing projects that:

- Enhance community access into and through the park;
- Steward the natural landscape;
- Enhance the panoramic views; and
- Create and build on diverse play opportunities.

While this Vision Plan Update maintains the three-pillar framework of the 2018 Vision Plan, it proposes a slight modification to elevate accessibility and adds an overarching frame that centers nature in all projects. This acknowledges the importance of the many Natural Resource Management Areas within the park and honors the refrain we hear so often from park stakeholders, to “Keep McLaren Wild!” The three pillars, under the umbrella of Nature, are:

- Gateways
- Access & Connectivity; and
- Program Areas

And we are updating Key Concepts such that proposed projects:

- Regenerate the wild core;
- Enhance Neighborhood-Serving Edges; and
- Improve Access and Connectivity.

### 2020 Bond Quick Start and Tier 1 Projects

Staff are seeking commission approval of conceptual designs for the following projects, to be funded in part by 2020 Bond dollars.

#### ***Louis Sutter Playground and McNab Lake***

*Total Budget \$6,220,000 | 2020 Bond Allocation \$3,040,000*

Work includes replacement of the existing sewer line at the Louis Sutter Clubhouse/Roundhouse, in-kind replacement of the pathway between Yale Street and the Roundhouse, water quality improvements, renewal of the Big Kids Children’s Play Area (CPA), and delivery of accessibility improvements. Efforts to improve water quality at McNab Lake include installation of a new water inlet at the lake’s south end (including installation of a float meter and automatic filler) and replacement of a concrete V-ditch at the lake’s northwest end with planted check dams. Renovation of the Big Kids CPA will be within the existing area south of McNab Lake, though it may include a slightly expanded footprint. Additional community engagement to develop playground design will occur in the near future.

#### ***Jerry Garcia Amphitheater***

*Total Budget \$1,290,000 | 2020 Bond Allocation \$290,000*

Work includes ADA upgrades to the existing ramp to the green room, installation of an ADA-accessible pathway to the flat program area north of the amphitheater seating, restroom lighting, electrical improvements at the stage, in-kind replacement of wood bench seating, and repaving of the pathway between the amphitheater and parking lot. If funding allows, the project will also include installing rustic-style bollard lighting along this main pathway.

### ***South McLaren Connectivity***

*Total Budget \$4,330,000 | 2020 Bond Allocation \$370,000*

The project will replace up to 30,000 square feet of existing asphalt paths in-kind, construct up to 40,000 square feet of new multi-use pedestrian and bicycle trails, and realign and replace approximately 2,000 linear feet of fencing. The project will also replace the existing steps, and improve adjacent planting at the Brookdale entrance. To accommodate the new trail connectivity and protect the safety of users, approximately 30 trees will be removed, and at least 30 trees will be planted.

### ***Park-Wide Infrastructure Improvements (Quick Start Projects and Irrigation System)***

*Total Budget \$1,680,000 | 2020 Bond Allocation \$1,680,000*

Community and stakeholder engagement emphasized the importance of improving the function of basic infrastructure within McLaren Park. Planned improvements include installation of bike racks at trail and path intersections, in-kind replacement of existing pathways, irrigation system upgrades, and conversion of existing concrete V-ditches into planted check dams and other green infrastructure features. As a Tier 1 priority project, the Department will make a major investment in irrigation system mapping and design of irrigation improvements.

### ***Visitacion Avenue Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety***

*Total Budget \$4,070,000 | 2020 Bond Allocation \$400,000*

Included in the Tier 1 project list is delivery of the Visitacion Avenue Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety project. The Commission approved the concept design for the project in January 2025. Scope includes the addition of sidewalks and lighting between Hahn Street and Visitacion Valley Middle School, a protected two-way bike path along Upper Visitacion Avenue, and a new multi-use trail between the fire road and Sunnydale Avenue.

### ***Planning: Mansell East Gateway***

*Total Budget \$100,000 | 2020 Bond Allocation \$100,000*

The last project to be funded is the Planning Phase of the Restroom Replacement Project at the Mansell East Gateway. The restroom was destroyed in an arson fire in late 2023. Additional funding will be needed to complete design and construction as a Tier 2 priority project. The currently identified project scope is described below.

### **Potential Future Tier 2 Projects**

In addition to seeking approval for the aforementioned Quick Start and Tier 1 projects, which are funded and ready to initiate, staff are also seeking approval for the following Tier 2 projects as required to move forward with applications to grants that are necessary to close the project funding gaps.

### ***Louis Sutter Playground and McNab Lake***

Additional funding will allow for renewal of the Little Kids Children’s Play Area within its existing footprint, as a priority Tier 2 project. Additional community engagement to develop playground design will occur once funding is secured.

### ***Mansell East Gateway***

Anticipated work includes the installation of new ADA-compliant looping pathways, installation of a new sewer line, and reconstruction of the fire-damaged clubhouse to include two accessible restrooms and storage. The project also includes new landscaping and removal and replanting of approximately six out of twenty existing historic cypress trees. Design for this Tier 2 priority project will be refined with additional community engagement after funding is secured.

### ***Shelley Promenade***

Proposed Tier 2 priority work includes the installation of adult fitness equipment and drinking fountains, paving improvements for ADA access, and restoration plantings along the Promenade edges.

Other Vision Plan Update Tier 2 projects that require development of funding strategies include:

- Cambridge & Shelley Gateway Pathways and Green Infrastructure
- Upper Reservoir Fence Removal and Beautification
- Improvements at Shelley Drive North
- Additional Improvements to Modernize Irrigation Systems

Vision Plan Update engagement also revealed potential for the following program area expansion projects. Each of these would require significant partner collaboration and funding support to proceed to detailed project planning.

- Jerry Garcia Amphitheater Production Upgrade
- McLaren Bike Park Expansion
- Southeast Pickleball Hub at Louis Sutter Playground
- Multi-sport roller rink (at either Mansell Gateway or north of Sunnydale), with or without sports lighting

### **Environmental Review**

The McLaren Park 2020 Bond Projects were reviewed and received a Categorical Exemption from the Planning Department on August 13, 2025 (2025-006562ENV).

### **Budget**

Leveraging past and current bond funding, and in alignment with the Vision Plan, staff have worked diligently to secure grants and partnerships for projects in McLaren Park. Capital division staff have worked with Operations division staff to jointly prioritize improvements in alignment with the Vision Plan Update. The new batch of Quick Start and Tier 1 projects will represent over \$18 million in capital investment in McLaren Park by the early 2030s. Staff are actively seeking funding to ensure completion of all Quick Start and Tier 1 projects, amidst these times of high inflation and economic uncertainty. Additional funding sources include two Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Grants, 2024 Bond funding, and green

infrastructure investment by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission. A program reserve will be held for use as needed on Tier 1 projects. After completion of all Tier 1 projects, any Program Reserve remainder would then be allocated to Tier 2 projects.

**2020 Bond Funding Allocations**

Vision Plan Update and 2020 Bond Planning	\$ 190,000
Quick Start Projects	\$ 480,000
Louis Sutter Playground and McNab Lake	\$ 3,040,000
Jerry Garcia Amphitheater Improvements	\$ 290,000
Visitacion Avenue Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety	\$ 400,000
South McLaren Connectivity	\$ 370,000
Planning: Irrigation System Planning and Improvements	\$ 1,000,000
Planning: Mansell Gateway Restroom Replacement	\$ 100,000
<u>Program Reserve</u>	<u>\$ 130,000</u>
<b>Total 2020 Bond Funding</b>	<b>\$ 6,000,000</b>

Schedule

Project schedules vary. Some Quick Start and Tier 1 projects are already underway, and the others will start design as soon as possible and within the next two years. Tier 2 project schedules will be determined after funding strategies are confirmed.

**Staff Recommendation**

Staff recommend that the Commission approve \$6 million in proposed expenditures from the 2020 Health & Recovery Bond for improvements in John McLaren Park, and approve concept plans for improvements at Louis Sutter Playground and McNab Lake, Jerry Garcia Amphitheater, Mansell East Gateway, and Shelley Promenade; park wide infrastructure improvements; and the South McLaren Connectivity Project.

**Supported By**

AccessSFUSD: The Arc  
BORP Adaptive Sports and Recreation  
Growing Outside and Learning (GOAL)  
Help McLaren Park  
San Francisco Public Utilities Commission

**Opposed By**

None known at this time

**Attachments**

Attachment 1: McLaren Park 2020 Bond Projects – Concept Summaries  
Attachment 2: McLaren Park 2020 Bond Projects CEQA (2025-006562ENV)