Date: March 7, 2018

To: Recreation and Park Commission Capital Committee

Through: Philip A. Ginsburg, General Manager
          Toks Ajike, Acting Planning and Capital Program Director

From: Dan Mauer, Project Manager

Subject: Golden Gate Park Stanyan Street Frontage Improvement Project

Agenda Wording

Discussion and possible action to approve a conceptual plan for the Golden Gate Park Stanyan Street Frontage Improvement Project. Approval of this proposed action by the Commission is the approval action as defined by S.F. Administrative Code Chapter 31.

Strategic Plan Reference

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

Objective 1.2 Strengthen the quality of existing parks and facilities
Objective 1.3 Steward and promote good park behavior
Objective 1.4 Preserve and celebrate historic and cultural resources

Strategy Two: 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.
Objective 2.3 Work with partners and neighborhood groups to activate parks through organized events, activities, and unstructured play.

Strategy Three: Inspire Investment: Through community engagement advocacy, and partnerships, cultivate more financial resources to keep San Francisco’s parks and programs accessible for all.
Objective 3.1 Increase public investment to better align with infrastructure needs and service expectations.

**Purpose of Bond Project**

The intent of this 2012 Clean and Safe Neighborhood Parks (City Wide) Bond project is to renovate and upgrade this area of the park in conformance with the bond measures which state the following objectives: restore natural features, improve recreation assets, connectivity, pedestrian safety, paths and trails.

The key design considerations that were expressed by the public included; Public Safety, Positive Programming, Respect the Historic Landscape and Aesthetics/Beautiful Material and Plants.

**Site Information**

The proposed project location is the eastern edge of Golden Gate Park along Stanyan Street between JFK Drive and Waller Street. The area is commonly referred to as the Alvord Lake Area due to the picturesque lake that resided in the low-lying area just west of the Haight Street park entrance. Most of this park space is occupied by meandering asphalt pathways which run through various lawn and meadow spaces. The area is also heavily forested by large, mature trees. The area between Alvord Lake and Waller Street is sometimes referred to as the Oak Woodland area. In this space, there are valuable remnants of native oak trees which mark the landscape.

The primary entry points to the area occur at the corner of JFK Drive at Stanyan Street, the terminus of Page Street and the terminus of Haight Street. The Page Street corridor entering the park is recognized as a primary cycling route into the park and is documented in the MTA’s Master Bike Plan.

Other noteworthy park features/activities that are found in this space include a free-standing restroom/storage room, Alvord Lake, an entry plaza at Haight Street and Page Street, and a Decaux restroom at the corner of Waller Street. In addition, there are two programmed activities that occur in this area. The Department has a contract with a bike rental concessionaire that operates bike rentals in the Haight Street Entrance Plaza. This concessionaire operation seven days a week throughout the year. The other programmed activity which was initiated last year is an event called Red Umbrella which is an art exhibit event that occurs once a week during various months throughout the year.

The free-standing restroom building mentioned above was construction back in the 1930’s and was subsequently renovated in the early 40’s and again in the late 1990’s. Approximately one year following its last renovation, the restroom was closed for public use due to illegal and illicit activities and has subsequently been converted into a gardener’s storage space.

With all of these terrific park feature, amenities and programmed events, this area of the park has also drawn other less desirable activities that make this space feel less safe for park visitors.
Various activities that both the Park Patrol and Police have been trying to eliminate include camping, smoking and illegal drug use and distribution. One of the primary focuses of this project in to invigorate this area with more inviting and appropriate park use and activity.

**Proposed Park Renovation Scope of Work**

This project has several facets to it and has been broken down into four separate zones of improvements scattered along the Stanyan Street Frontage. These zones include:

- Stanyan Street Frontage
- Kiosk Improvements and Plaza Area
- Haight Street and Page Street Plazas
- Oak Woodland

The proposed improvements in each of these areas is outlined below.

**Stanyan Street Frontage**

- Installation of a new concrete sidewalk from JFK Drive to the Stanyan Street Plaza area
- Introduce decorative paving at the JFK Drive Park Entrance
- Installation of a post and chain barrier along the back edge of the proposed sidewalk
- Modification to the existing irrigation and lawn area to accommodate the improvements above.

**Kiosk Improvements and Plaza Area**

- Convert the existing restroom/gardener’s storage room into a visitor kiosk/concession space which will include a single stall restroom for public use. *(Staff is working concurrently on an RFP for a possible concessionaire for this venue. This concession process will be brought to the Commission separately for your consideration and approval.)*
- Install a concrete plaza seating area around the kiosk building.
- Install two bocce courts and a Petanque court adjacent to the kiosk to help activate this space.
- Install several light fixtures to allow for evening play and to improve safety
- Modify the irrigation and landscape around these improvement spaces

**Haight Street and Page Street Plazas**

- Redesign the Page Street Plaza using decorative paving so that it’s more inviting and functional to both pedestrians and cyclists while integrating the new sidewalk that will run along Stanyan Street.
- Remove the existing Haight Street Plaza (raised planter, pilasters, metal rails) and install a new simplified plaza area with decorative paving materials and at grade planting beds.
- Install interpretive signage
- Move the bike concessionaire activities to the south on a new concrete apron along the back of the existing sidewalk.
- Modify the existing irrigation and landscape to accept these new modifications
Oak Woodland

- Remove the temporary construction fence that has been in place for the last several years
- Remove an old handrail and wooden staircase
- Install new pathways through the area (natural paving material)
- Install split rail fencing around sensitive planting areas/oak trees for protection
- Install new irrigation and plantings in the newly created planting beds.
- Install several light fixtures along the pathways for safety.

Please refer to the attached proposed concept plan for the overall plan view of the proposed project as well as enlarged images of the various zones described above.

Community Process

This project was initiated by an organized group of park neighbors that approached both Supervisor Breed and the Department with some ideas on how to improve the park frontage along Stanyan Street. They came forward with many ideas on how to make the space more appealing for park visitors while at the same time make this park area safer. Following several informal meetings with various neighbor’s staff began a more formal public engagement process.

Staff conducted three separate community meetings to discuss the project. The first meeting was intended to generate public feedback on how the site is currently used and prioritize the overall project goals. At the second meeting, staff presented several concept plans each of which achieved a majority of the program wishes expressed at the first meeting. The public was asked to pick amongst several design options that best met program needs. The design team took this information and blended the concepts and ideas into a single plan which was finally approved by the meeting attendees at the third meeting. There were approximately 20 members of the public at the first two meetings and roughly 30 members at the final meeting. Each meeting was also attended by a representative from the Supervisor’s office.

Staff also attended and presented the project to the Haight Ashbury Neighborhood Council (HANC) at one of their monthly meetings.

Funding and Budget

The project will be funded from several funding sources including the 2012 Neighborhood Parks Bond Program

Total Project Budget: $5.5 M

Approximate Soft Costs: $1.5 M (PM, A/E, CM, permits, testing & reg. review fees)
Approximate Hard Costs: $4.0 M (construction cost incl. construction contingency)

Funding Sources: 2012 Bond City Wide, Open Space Reserve, General Fund Capital
Project Schedule

Design Phase: April 2018 through September 2018 (6 months)
Bid and Award Phase: October 2018 through January 2019 (4 months)
Construction Phase: February 2019 through July 2019 (6 months)

Environmental Review

This proposed improvement program has been reviewed by the Planning Department and has been determined to be categorically exempt under CEQA. Class 1- Existing Facilities. Park Staff has received this determination information verbally from Planning Staff. The final hard copy documentation will be submitted to the Department prior to the Commission meeting scheduled on March 15, 2018.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Commission approve the concept plan for Golden Gate Park Stanyan Street Improvement Project. Approval by the Commission of the proposed concept plan is the approval action as defined by the S.F. Administrative Code Chapter 31.

Supported By

Public meeting attendees (3 meetings)
Supervisor Breed (District 5)

Various members of local organizations that either attended meetings or had communications related to the project:

PROSAC
Haight Ashbury Neighborhood Council
Friends of the Oak Woodlands
Friends of Alvord Lake
Haight Ashbury Merchants Association
Haight Ashbury Improvement Association

Opposed By

None known

Attachments

Project Concept Plans