



Date: September 1, 2020
To: Honorable Board of Supervisors
From: Vickie Sanders, Parks Manager *Vickie Sanders*
Subject: **Parks Update and Opportunities**

I am excited to bring you a parks update. The last update was provided in 2016. We have a lot going on in the Parks Division and we have had a very active summer season. With the current COVID situation our outdoor spaces have been heavily impacted as everyone wants to get outside.

It has been years since I have seen so many opportunities ahead of us. As these are trying times, they are also exciting times for us in recreation.

CURRENT PROJECTS

Old Depot Bike Park

Consistent with the 2012 El Dorado County Parks and Trails Master Plan, Parks prioritized the development of a bike park. On May 15, 2018, the County acquired two parcels located at Old Depot Road, adjacent to the Class I section of the El Dorado Trail at Missouri Flat Road. The proposed site is located within a largely underserved community that has no current park space.

The Division applied for and received approximately \$2 million in grant funding through Round 3 of the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Prop 68) through the California Department of Parks and Recreation. This program provides funding for the Statewide Park Development and Community Revitalization Program. There are no matching funds required for this grant program (Legistar Item #18-0696).

With the assistance of Helix Environmental Planning, Inc., to date the Division has completed the site assessment and analysis, held public meetings for public input on the site design and draft conceptual plan, and provided a draft conceptual plan of the proposed Bike Park. The preliminary design was approved by the board on June 30, 2020 (Legistar #20-0764). On the same date, the Board also authorized staff to move forward with the environmental review process.

Pursuant to the grant agreement, the park must be completed and open to the public in March 2022. In order to complete the project, staff is preparing a contract amendment for Helix

Environmental for construction documents and bid support, as well as a new contract with a facilities project manager. Construction is anticipated to begin in Spring 2021, with completion by December 2021.

Chili Bar

Chili Bar is a public access point and rafting/kayaking put-in downstream of the Highway 193 Bridge over the South Fork of the American River. On June 29, 1994 the American River Conservancy acquired the land with a grant and deeded the property to the County. Though the County owns the approximately 16-acre site, under the terms of a conservation easement, ARC operates the put-in and parking on the lower area of the property adjacent to the river.

On June 23, 2020, the Board conceptually approved the use of Sacramento Municipal Utility District Cooperation Agreement funding (SMUD funding) for a proposed Chili Bar Feasibility study (Legistar #20-0420), in order to provide the County information on existing infrastructure, recommendations on the use of the property based on public input, and the cost to implement. The study will also provide an economic analysis of the potential revenue from the site and detailed analysis of up to four conceptual alternatives. On July 21, the Board approved the contract for the Feasibility Study (Legistar #20-0859) with Helix Environmental Planning, Inc for a two (2) year term and a maximum contractual obligation of \$126,818. The start date for this project was August 20, 2020. It is anticipated to be completed in 2021, at which time staff will return to the Board for further direction on implementation of the options provided by the feasibility study. There is currently no dedicated funding for the construction of improvements for this park.

Monroe Trail

The Monroe Ridge Trail project would create a 2.3 mile, unpaved trail from the Marshall Gold Discovery site to Henningsen Lotus Park in the Coloma Lotus Valley. This trail would also provide a connection between Henningsen Lotus Park and the Lotus-Coloma business district. This project was included in the Parks and Trails Master Plan and is listed as a Tier One project in the Henningsen Lotus Park Conceptual Master Plan.

The 2.3 mile portion of the project would be completed by the State of California, a small portion is on land owned by the County. The creek crossing is the only portion for which the County is responsible. In October 2019, the State informed staff that completion of the County's portion would greatly assist the State in finalizing its portion. Once completed, the State will be able to access both ends of trail which should assist with the trail development. On June 23, 2020 the Board approved the project and authorized the use of \$40,000 of El Dorado - SMUD Cooperation Agreement Special Revenue Fund (SMUD funding) to complete the project.

The contract has been executed and construction began on August 17, 2020.

PARKS OPPORTUNITIES

Forebay Community Park

The Forebay Reservoir, located in Pollock Pines on Forebay Road, is owned and operated by EID. The County acquired Forebay Community Park on December 16, 2014, Legistar #14-0132 from EID.

The park features a little league ball field, batting cage, bleachers, scorers booth, snack shack, championship horseshoe pits, and recreation center.

The Park needs several improvements; however, these have not yet been planned due to funding constraints. Since the County acquired Forebay Park in 2014, ADA-related improvements have been installed as funding allows; generally \$50,000 is budgeted for improvements each year. The results of a 2016 community questionnaire showed that the community would like improvements such as a playground, more trails and pathways, picnic shelters, pavilions, a disc golf course, dog parks and bike paths. The restroom at the park is dilapidated and needs to be replaced to ADA standards. However, no funding has been allocated for new improvements or for a conceptual plan. Parks staff submitted an application for a Prop 68 grant for improvements in 2019, but the grant application was unsuccessful (Legistar #19-0687).

The community is currently working on a large fundraising event for a playground and bike trail. The community will work with the county on these projects. There is no funding budgeted for projects at this site currently.

Railroad Park

In 2009, the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors approved the concept plan for the El Dorado County Historical Railroad Park to be located within the SPTC corridor at Oriental Street in the community of El Dorado as a satellite facility of the El Dorado County Museum and park site.

Railroad Park is a 6.3 acre site located within the Sacramento-Placerville Transportation Corridor right-of-way in the community of El Dorado. Proposed improvements at this site include facilities to house El Dorado County Museum's collection of railroad Cronan Ranch Regional Trails Park artifacts, a section of operational track, and multiple use pedestrian, bicycle, and equestrian trails. Prop 68 Round 4 grant application could be submitted for this property.

Sports Complex

Sports fields are mentioned repeatedly in the Parks and Trails Master Plan, with efforts toward this recommendation listed as a Tier 1 priority. The Parks and Trails Master Plan identifies ball fields as one of the largest deficits and largest desires in the community based on the feedback

and results of the Plan. The Plan says, "Sports Fields Baseball, softball, and Little League fields and multiple use/soccer fields are in very high demand. Lighted fields offer the opportunity to extend play into evening hours, but consideration needs to be given to potential impacts on adjacent residential areas... School facilities are available only a fraction of the time that public park facilities are available since the schools need them for their own after school and weekend events. They are also not a substitute for multi-field complexes which are needed for tournament events." In addition, this opportunity is consistent with the Parks and Recreation Element of the General Plan by ensuring a diverse range of recreational opportunities at a regional, community, and neighborhood level and will follow the criteria set forth in Policy 9.1.1.4 to incorporate natural resources into the regional park.

In 2019, a Prop 68 grant application was submitted for a sports complex at a property for sale near Charles Brown School on Missouri Flat Road. The site is 30 acres and would accommodate such a complex. Needs for the development of this park would include property purchase, design and permits, all of which were included in the application. Four ball fields, 3-4 soccer fields, disc golf, natural area, snack shack, restroom and playground are proposed for this property. The grant application was not successful.

Since that time, the Marshall Foundation acquired the property, with the intent that it be used for this purpose. The property does not belong to the County at this time, and no agreements with the Foundation currently exist. However, this provides an opportunity to develop an active recreation center for the community, located in the Missouri Flat / Diamond Springs area.

Dog Park

The City of Placerville contacted staff for aid in locating a dog park within the County.

The Parks and Trails Master Plan lists a Dog Park as a Tier 1 priority and describes the recommendation for such as park under Recreation Facility Recommendation RF11: "While many County residents live on large rural parcels, those who live in the more densely developed communities along U.S. Highway 50 expressed a desire for a dog park where their pets could run safely off-leash. This type of facility would ideally be located adjacent to a pet-oriented business so that people could use the park when they come to shop, or within a park that provided other recreation choices. This would allow families to bring dogs and children to the park at part of a single outing."

There is a location adjacent to the El Dorado Trail off Jacquier Road that is currently vacant and owned by the County. It is also adjacent to the City limits. Staff at the City have proposed that the County and the City work together to fund improvements for the development of a dog park at this location. At this time, no plan has been proposed or approved and no such funding has been identified.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Proceeds from Red Hook Property

On October 30, 2018, The Board declared a 26-acre parcel located at the end of Red Hook Trail Road in the Pollock Pines area as surplus (Legistar #18-1565). This property was originally meant to be a park, but the work needed at the site was cost-prohibitive. At this time, the property belongs to the County. The Parks Commission recommended that the funds from the eventual sale of the property be applied to the Forebay Community Park improvements. Although the Board could direct that these funds be used for any purpose, the revenue from the sale of the Red Hook Trail property will be discretionary funding but staff recommends it be used within the Parks program.

Proposition 68 Funding

Round 4

Round 4 of funding for the Prop 68 Grant Program is open now for applications and will close in December. An additional \$395.3 million in grant funding is available under Round 4. The primary goal for the program is to create new recreation opportunities. As such, projects must create a new park, expand an existing park, or renovate an existing park. Additionally, all projects must create or renovate at least one recreational feature, such as athletic fields or courts, track or trail, picnic areas, playgrounds, non-motorized bike track, skate park, etc. To be eligible for Round 4, the project site must have either a ratio of less than 3 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents or a Median Household Income below \$56,982. Sites that qualify for Round 4 include the Sports Complex, Forebay Park improvements, and the Rail Park.

Per Capita Funding

Prop 68 also awards funding on a per capita basis, with a Minimum of \$400,000 for populations below 247,577. The County was allocated \$400,000. Each agency must submit one or more complete project applications in the amount equal to its allocation by December 31, 2021. The funding is for capital outlay; that is, acquisition of land, or improvements to existing property beyond its original condition.

There is a 20% match for projects that do not serve a severely disadvantaged community. The Sports Complex and the Rail Park would will require a 20% match, but Forebay Park is located such that a project here would serve a severely disadvantaged community, so a match is NOT required. In addition, the Cities of Placerville and South Lake Tahoe, as well as the El Dorado Hills CSD, Fallen Leaf Lake CSD, Georgetown Divide CSD, and Tahoe Paradise RPD, also received funding in the amount of \$177,952 each to be utilized for the same purpose. It is recommended that the per capita funding be used for a restroom facility at Forebay Park, as this would meet all funding requirements, and the park is located in an area not requiring a 20% match and not near any of the other areas where per capita funding has been directed.

If the Board directs staff to move forward with the applications for grant funding for any of the three projects, staff will return to the Board with an Authorizing Resolution approving the project.

Rural Recreation & Tourism Program and Regional Park Program - Summer 2021

The Rural Recreation and Tourism program is intended to provide \$23,125,000 in funding for projects that will create new recreation opportunities in support of economic and health-related goals in rural communities. Projects must be located in non-urbanized counties with populations of less than 500,000 people and low population densities. The goal is to create new recreational opportunities that support both economic and health-related goals for residential recreation and will attract out-of-town visitors.

An Additional \$23,120,000 is available through the Regional Park Program for projects that create, expand, or improve regional parks and regional park facilities. Eligible projects include trails, regional sports complexes, and visitor and interpretive facilities.

Applications for both of these funding opportunities will be due no sooner than 2021. Competitive applications will be for those projects that have preliminary documents already prepared. As such, they present an opportunity for larger regional parks projects, such as the Sports Complex.

Bass Lake Property Proceeds

The Bass Lake property is a 41-acre property adjacent to Bass Lake that was acquired by the County on April 24, 2001, for park and recreational purposes. A proposed master plan for a regional park providing sports fields, a dog park, playground, picnic areas, and walking trails, as well as an environmental document for the project were prepared by the County in 2003. There were concerns from adjacent property owners and the Bass Lake Action Committee (BLAC) regarding proposed lighting and sports fields. There were also requests from Rescue Union School District for additional land that was needed for a future school site. Together, these issues stalled this park site from development.

In early 2019 the El Dorado Hills Community Services District (EDHCSD) approached the County about purchasing the subject property to include as part of a larger park at Bass Lake. On January 28, 2020, the Board of Supervisors approved the sale of the Bass Lake property to the EDHCSD for \$250,000, and directed that the proceeds be set aside to be used for future park acquisition or development consistent with the County's General Plan and Parks Master Plan (Legistar #19-1872).

On February 20, 2020, the Parks and Recreation Commission moved to recommend that the Board utilize these funds to fund the design, environmental analysis, and permits for the Sports Complex (described above). The Board has not yet directed use of these funds.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendations are based on the capacity of staff to complete projects within required deadlines, while maximizing funding opportunities and Parks improvements.

1. Utilize Prop 68 Per Capita funding (\$400,000) for the following park improvements:
 - \$300,000 for a restroom at Forebay Community Park, which would require no funding match.
 - \$50,000 for a dog park working with the City of Placerville. A 20% match (\$10,000) would be required.
 - \$50,000 for a playground at the Railroad Park. A 20% match (\$10,000) would be required.

This recommendation would provide for three separate capital projects to be funded in part by the County's per capita funding. The \$300,000 for the Forebay restroom would supplant any funding provided through the community's effort to fundraise, and would allow the County to complete one of the most expensive ADA compliance needs. The \$50,000 for each the dog park and the Railroad Park playground would fulfill two needs that do not require a large amount of funding, but which comply with the requirements for per capita funding reimbursement. If approved, staff will return to the Board with an amendment to the FY 2020-21 Budget to allocate funding for these projects. General Fund dollars would be needed to complete the projects, with all but the \$20,000 in matching funds to be reimbursed through Prop 68 per capita funds.

2. Apply for Prop 68 Round 4 Grant Funding for Forebay Park Recreation Improvements. This Park needs several improvements that would create new recreation opportunities, as required by the grant program, and because Staff applied for Round 3 funding for this project, the submission would not require any additional project outreach or planning.
3. Utilize the proceeds from the sale of the Bass Lake property (\$250,000) to fund a fiscal analysis, design, and environmental analysis for the Sports Complex in El Dorado.

Because the Bass Lake property was originally intended to become a park with ball fields and related amenities, use of these funds for the Sports Complex this would be appropriate. In addition, the funding would provide for the needed preparatory documents to submit an application for the Rural Recreation & Tourism Program and Regional Park Program, both which are due in the Summer of 2021. The Sports Complex fits the goal and intent of these funding programs and would make the County competitive in receiving funding for the construction of the Sports Complex. Approving the \$250,000 for the Sports Complex will move the project forward as a more competitive project for grant applications as a shovel ready project.

Parks and Recreation Commission Recommendation

This item was before the Parks and Recreation Commission on August 20, 2020. The commission made the following recommendations:

Motion 1- Approve Staff recommendations

Motion 2-Commission commends staff's ability to operate and maintain existing park facilities but asks the Board to recognize the need to provide staffing and financial resources for the parks and facilities divisions to maintain future facilities adding a benefit to County residents.