

Agenda Report



MEETING DATE: Tuesday, June 11, 2024

TO: City Council

FROM: PUBLIC WORKS & UTILITIES DIRECTOR LINDBERG
ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS MANAGER CASSEL

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION APPROVING PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS AND
AUTHORIZING CALL FOR BIDS FOR THE WATSONVILLE
EXPLORATION/NATURE CENTER, PROJECT NO. CB 23-01

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Adopt a resolution approving plans and specifications and calling for bid for the Watsonville Exploration/Nature Center, Project No. CB 23-01.

BACKGROUND:

Plans and specifications for the new Nature Center Building located at Ramsay Park have been prepared and the project is ready to be advertised for bid.

DISCUSSION:

The new Nature Center facility is part of the Watsonville 2020 Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan which includes the Ramsay Park Concept (Master) Plan adopted on February 11, 2020, by Resolution No. 13-20 (CM). The construction of the new Nature Center will be built on the hilltop of Ramsay Park; however, it is not part of the Renaissance project scope of work. Because of its vicinity within the park boundaries, extensive coordination between both projects has been required in the plans. For ease of construction sequencing and to simplify the logistics of phased construction on the site, it was determined by Parks and PW&U staff that the already designed picnic area and the parks' amphitheater would be better constructed under the Nature Center project and under 19Six Architects administration. The Nature Center Construction project includes:

1. New Nature Center Building

The 3,500 square-foot facility will provide significantly more space for exhibits, a multi-purpose room, storage for educational materials, and office space for staff. The Center will be an accessible and welcoming space to interpret and educate multiple and diverse audiences on a wide range of conservation topics to meet State mandates, including watershed protection, waste reduction, water conservation, and climate action.

2. New Amphitheater

The existing amphitheater has been redesigned to include approximately 5,300 square feet of site improvements. Work includes demolition of existing wood amphitheater and paving, regrading, cut and fill, new concrete walkways, ramps, and stairs along with new concrete seat walls and retaining walls. New permeable paving and planter areas; additional site lighting, electrical pedestal, shade structure, and storm drainage improvements around the amphitheater.

3. New picnic area

Approximately 6,500 square feet of site improvements, including demolition of existing playground and paving, regrading, new concrete walkways, concrete and DG picnic area, site furniture, including picnic tables, trash receptacles, BBQ, new shade structure and adjacent planting.

4. Green Infrastructure Elements

Included in the Nature Center Project but funded by an \$827,853.38 California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) Urban Greening grant (Resolution No. 217-22), the new Center will include a landscaped green roof, a tree-lined ADA-accessible multi-sensory path from the parking lot to the new Center, and an enhanced bioswale beyond stormwater compliance. These elements provide multiple social and environmental benefits of stormwater runoff capture, pollutant reduction, and urban heat island effect mitigation, among others, and will support the new Center to serve as a community flagship for sustainability and conservation.

The new Nature Center will incorporate connections to nature and elements that represent the culturally diverse area, ensuring that every member of the Watsonville community feels welcomed and inspired to connect and engage in sustainability and environmental conservation. Its design and programming will encourage people from all generations to spend more time together as a community. Therefore, this project will be of great benefit to our community and our natural environment.

The project drawings are completed and ready to be advertised for bid. The project was included as part of the Ramsay Park Renaissance Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration which was filed in 2023 with the State Clearinghouse and Santa Cruz County Recorder's Office, therefore no CEQA action is required at this time. The engineers' estimate for the project is \$6.14 million. Bid opening is tentatively scheduled for August 13, 2024. Plans and specifications are on file at the City Clerk's office.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

The project supports Strategic Plan Goals:

2-Infrastructure & Environment

6-Community Engagement & Well-being

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The engineers' estimate for this project is \$6.14 million, which includes the \$700,000 in added green infrastructure feature construction costs that are funded by the CNRA grant. There is no financial impact associated with approving plans and specifications at this time. Once bids are opened, the results will be tabulated presented to Council for further action. The project is planned to be funded through ARPA funds and Measure R funds.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION:

No reasonable alternative is known at this time.

ATTACHMENTS AND/OR REFERENCES (If any):

None.