



STAFF REPORT – CITY COUNCIL MEETING

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Emily Sinkhorn, Director of Environmental Services

PREPARER: Emily Sinkhorn, Director of Environmental Services

DATE: December 17, 2025

TITLE: **Approve the Plans for Parking Along Mad River Parkway for Carlson Park.**

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Council approve the plans for parking along Mad River Parkway for Carlson Park.

INTRODUCTION:

This project seeks to expand access to the recently renovated Carlson Park, which was enhanced over the last two years as a Council and community priority. Due to the high use of amenities at Carlson Park, the parking lot originally developed is often full. The addition of parking spaces on Mad River Parkway adjacent to Carlson Park will enhance access to this recreation destination without compromising the Complete Streets design on Mad River Parkway.

BACKGROUND:

The Carlson Park Improvement Project has been a Council and community priority for the Valley West neighborhood for over five years, and the first phase of Carlson Park renovations was opened to the community in September 2024. Carlson Park improvements have been funded through three funding sources from the state. Implemented Park improvements include a new playground and picnic amenities, special event area, pickle ball courts, public restroom, parking lot and river access improvements for hiking and non-motorized boat access, a skate spot, EV vehicle charging station and interpretive signage developed in collaboration with the Wiyot Tribe.

DISCUSSION:

Carlson Park has been fully open for a little over one year, and since that time the City has received much feedback that due to high use of the park parking is limited for access by motor vehicles, particularly when the pickleball courts are busy on the weekends.

The Carlson Park Improvement Project included the development of a small parking lot with 13 parking spaces. The City has also prioritized walking and biking connectivity to Carlson Park from the adjacent Valley West neighborhoods which includes a pedestrian-activated flashing crosswalk across Giuntoli Lane, sidewalks and bike lanes, and a connector trail between the park and Giuntoli Lane.

City staff recognized that changes could be made to existing adjacent streets that accommodate additional parking without impacting bicycle and pedestrian connectivity to Carlson Park. On September 3, the Council approved changing the northern end of Carlson Park Drive to a one-way street to enable the addition of four on-street parking spaces while retaining multi-modal access.

City staff have developed an additional plan to add vehicle parking spaces within a red curb area along the south side of Mad River Parkway. This location was originally planned as a bus turnout when Mad River Parkway was first developed. As transit stops within Valley West have been located elsewhere, this location is available to utilize for additional parking spaces.

If the Council approves these plans for additional parking on Mad River Parkway, this winter, City forces will implement striping changes on both Carlson Park Drive (approved September 3) and Mad River Parkway.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (CEQA):

The California Environment Quality Act (CEQA) determination for the project is a categorical exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301(c), minor alteration of existing public streets.

BUDGET/FISCAL IMPACT:

Budget is available this fiscal year to complete these striping improvements under GL 101-70-81-57613. The creation of additional parking for Carlson Park is supported through a state budget allocation made possible by Senator Mike McGuire.

RECOMMENDED COUNCIL ACTION:

Motion to approve the plans for parking along Mad River Parkway for Carlson Park. Consent Calendar vote.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Exhibit A: Parking Layout for Mad River Parkway East and Carlson Park Drive.