



# STAFF REPORT – CITY COUNCIL MEETING

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February 15, 2023

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

**FROM:** Emily Sinkhorn, Director of Environmental Services

**PREPARER:** Emily Sinkhorn, Director of Environmental Services

**DATE:** December 09, 2022

**TITLE:** **Adopt Resolution No. 223-23, Approving an Application for Specified Grant Funds for the Arcata Ball Park and Carlson Park Improvements; and Authorize the City Manager to Execute All Applicable Documents.**

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the Council adopt Resolution No. 223-23 approving applications for Specified Grant Funds from Budget Act 2022/23 for the Arcata Ball Park and Carlson Park Improvements; and authorize the City Manager to execute all applicable documents.

## **INTRODUCTION:**

The City has been successful at bringing in state and federal funding in recent years to support park improvements throughout the City. Investment in our parks and facilities supports not only community health and recreation, but also economic vitality, attracting both residents and visitors to facilities and activities.

Senator McGuire brought this specific opportunity to the City recognizing the key role that community facilities and parks have in supporting local economies. With this Specified Grant, the City has the opportunity to expand improvements at a priority park in the underserved Valley West neighborhood as well as improve ADA access and the entryway of a well-loved, 80-year-old community facility, the Arcata Ball Park.

## **BACKGROUND:**

Last winter Senator Mike McGuire reached out to the City Manager's Office and the Humboldt Crabs organization requesting a proposal for any needed improvements for the Arcata Ball Park. Senator McGuire recognized that the Arcata Ball Park is a thriving community space in downtown Arcata and also there may be opportunities to make key improvements to enhance accessibility and to create a more welcoming and functional entrance.

City staff worked with the Humboldt Crabs to refine priority improvements and also propose additional funding to support the development of Carlson Park. City staff submitted an informal proposal for these two projects to Senator McGuire's office in early January 2022.

## **DISCUSSION:**

Senator McGuire was able to include the City's proposal in the 2022/23 State Budget and made the announcement of a \$1 million grant to support the Arcata Ball Park during a Crabs baseball game on June 6, 2022. The budget allocation through this Specified Grant also includes \$1 million towards improvements at Carlson Park. The City will be the grantee of the Specified Grant Funds to advance improvements at Carlson Park and the Ball Park consistent with Council and community priorities.

The Specified Grant of \$1 million for Carlson Park will complement two additional grants from the state awarded earlier this year – a Wildlife Conservation Board grant for river access and trail improvements and a Rural Recreation and Tourism grant from State Parks to implement a playground, picnic area and special event area. The Specified Grant will help to expand the scale and features of the playground and special event area, fund a restroom at the park, and also create a pickleball court and multi-use court. The funding will enable the creation of family-friendly recreation amenities within walking distance of the Valley West neighborhood as well as provide funding for trail improvements to support river access improvements. Designs for Carlson Park improvements are well advanced following significant community outreach and input. Environmental Services is currently working on final design of the proposed improvements for Carlson Park combining these three funding sources and hopes to construct the improvements in summer 2023.

The Specified Grant for the Arcata Ball Park will focus on design and construction of three major improvements to the Arcata Ball Park: 1) Creation of ADA accessible path of travel from the entrance to the family-friendly lawn seating in left field, 2) Replacement of entryway facade wall and 3) Creation of an entryway plaza with place-making elements. City staff will work in collaboration with the Humboldt Crabs organization to ensure community involvement in the design process for Ball Park improvements. The outreach and design phase is anticipated to start in spring 2023 with construction in 2024/25.

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS:**

Improvements to Carlson Park and the Ball Park are consistent with the Council's Goal for Resident and Community Health to support community creative and cultural life. Carlson Park improvements are further identified as a 2022/23 Priority Project.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (CEQA):**

Environmental review has been completed for the improvements at Carlson Park through an adopted negative declaration. Environmental review for improvements at the Ball Park will be conducted as part of the project, and the City anticipates a categorical exemption through 14 CCR § 15301 for repair and minor alteration of existing public facilities.

## **BUDGET/FISCAL IMPACT:**

The proposed improvements for the Ball Park and Carlson Park will be funded through the Specified Grant from the state. Following submittal of the Specified Grant application and approval of a grant agreement, the City will be awarded \$2 million for the Ball Park and Carlson Park projects. City staff will either implement a budget adjustment or at mid-year update activity budget 81 (Parks) to bring in funds to both revenue and expense GLs to cover anticipated expenses for design this fiscal year.

## **ATTACHMENTS:**

Specified Grant Resolution for Arcata Ball Park and Carlson Park (PDF)