

Memorandum

Date: April 21, 2021

To: Thomas L. Mattis, City Manager

Subject: Update on Activity Veteran's Park
Expansion Project – Phase I



The following information is provided in response to the general discussion at last night's City Council Meeting related to the Veteran's Park Expansion Project – Phase I that is proposed for funding as part of the 2021 Certificates of Obligation Program.

Public input has been, and will continue to be, a very important part of this project. The Parks & Recreation Advisory Board, Main Street Board and Historic Review Board have all been directly involved in planning of the project, which was initially driven by the Sustainable Places Plan formally adopted by Council in 2014 and had significant community involvement at that time.

The Parks Board and the community in general have been involved in the development of the Parks & Recreation Master Plan in 2020 - 2021. Phase I reflects priorities expressed in the Master Plan as well as input from community leaders in the philanthropic, medical, and religious communities.

The staff is continuing their dialog with The NAACP and Juneteenth Festival Committee regarding park lighting, and their leadership has expressed support for the project.

Staff engaged Advocacy Outreach and Down Home Ranch for additional feedback. These organizations represent the Spanish language population, homeless, immigrants, low-income families, and those with intellectual disabilities. All have shared their input about the project and are excited about the proposed improvements. Staff will be meeting with Elgin Farmers Market and VFW about the project as soon as possible.

Specifically related to the Veteran's Park Expansion Project, it is also important to note that staff continues to explore outside funding opportunities to further support its development through grant funding. If successful, this effort will make it possible to implement the overall project in fewer phases or in a more substantial manner starting in 2022.

Pending Grant Applications for Veterans' Memorial Park (Total Applied For - \$875,000):

- National Recreation and Parks Association Resilient Park Access Grant (\$500,000) - Plaza with Interactive Water Feature and Shade Structure
- American Association Retired Persons (\$75,000) Sensory Garden with Musical Instruments
- Salazar Foundation (\$100,000) Vegetative wall along railroad tracks, irrigation, and dark skies lighting
- Lowe's Foundation (\$100,000) Skate Park

Please let me know if you have any comments or questions.

Amy Miller
Director of Community Services