



City of Culver City

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Staff Report

File #: 22-492, **Version:** 1

Item #: A-2.

CAC - (1) Update of a Conceptual Plan for the Revitalization of Media Park; and (2) Provide Comments as Deemed Appropriate.

Meeting Date: November 16, 2021

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Fiscal Impact: Yes ☒ No ☐ **General Fund:** Yes ☐ No ☒

Action Item: ☒ **Attachments:** Yes ☒ No ☐

Public Notification: (E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas - Cultural Affairs (11/11/21); The Actors' Gang (11/11/21)

Department Approval: Sol Blumenfeld, Community Development Director (11/11/21); Serena Wright-Black, Assistant City Manager (11/11/21)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Cultural Affairs Commission (1) receive an update on a conceptual plan for the revitalization of Media Park; and (2) provide comments as deemed appropriate.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

In October 2020, the City Council authorized an agreement with SWA to prepare a conceptual plan for the revitalization of Media Park and conduct community outreach. Design goals include activating the park, accommodating special events/vendors, and integrating the existing green space and tree canopy. Two community meetings were held in February and April 2021 to garner community input on design elements and program components. Representatives from the City of Los Angeles 5th Council District, Department of Recreation and Parks, and members of the Palms Neighborhood Council also participated in the process in consideration of the park's long-term lease with the City of Los Angeles.

Community Workshops and Plan Development

The first workshop held in February 2021 focused on the park's location, context, and activation opportunities. Participants were engaged through an interactive survey assessing connectivity, ecological issues/open space, social programming, park management, and maintenance. Utilizing input from more than 100 survey responses and meeting comments, SWA developed and presented two conceptual designs at the second workshop in April 2021 (Attachment 1).

Option 1 "The Arc," draws inspiration from the curvature of a movie reel and creates a connection to the area's rich film history. Curved pathways connect the four major zones in the design including an elevated lawn, outdoor amphitheater, pop-up café and swing set.

Option 2 "The Interlink" celebrates the existing tree configuration located on the west side of the park. The design reflects the curvature of the tree roots both at the ground plane and in the proposed overhead canopy and incorporates a flat, flexible great lawn, pop-up café, potential public art piece location, stage area and large promenade to host special event programming. This option also includes a decked walk above the tree root system on the westside of the park.

Both designs focus on maintaining the existing tree canopy and creating connection to the Ivy Substation. Each design also contemplates removing the diagonal parking along Culver Boulevard and creating parallel parking to expand the park footprint and allow for increased green and/or promenade space. The parking re-configuration also includes a vehicular drop off zone near the Ivy Substation entrance for theater patrons.

Similar to the first meeting, an interactive survey was conducted during the second workshop held in April 2021 (with a portal to provide input for up to two weeks thereafter) to assess project elements and design preferences. Approximately 200 respondents provided feedback relative to potential parking reductions, open space, and program elements. A majority of the respondents preferred Option 2 relative to layout, open space distribution and connection to Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods. Additionally, a large percentage favored reconfigured parking along Culver Boulevard.

During the meeting there were also several comments concerning the necessity of a commercial business/café, ensuring accessibility, maintaining the ecosystem of the park, and creating stronger connections and acknowledgement with the Palms Neighborhood to the north. The Actors' Gang also participated in the workshop and provided feedback relative to amphitheater/lawn capacity, performance seating and event scheduling which can be further addressed in future design iterations.

Staff presented the initial plans to the City Council Economic Development Subcommittee on September 4, 2021 for their review and recommendations. Input from that meeting related to unsheltered park users, activating the park with a consistent commercial vendor/establishment, creating a connection to the Palms neighborhood at the northwest corner, and including a sound/visual barrier along Venice Boulevard. One Subcommittee Member noted a preference for Option 2 "The Interlink" relative to the promenade area for events and potential accommodation of Farmer's Market.

Farmers Market Considerations

SWA considered opportunities to potentially accommodate the Farmer's Market at Media Park. Option 2, "The Interlink" provides an area for special events and vendors along a Culver Boulevard promenade. In reviewing this option, staff consulted with the City's market manager/contractor to understand potential obstacles relative to potential relocation of the market. The City's current Farmer's Market operator believes that several issues require further study:

1. Accommodation of a minimum of 36 booths (not allowed on grass or dirt);
2. Vendor load in/out and parking plan;
3. Vehicular separation between market and street; and
4. Utility access (water, electricity, and bathrooms).

The operator felt that the existing Farmer's Market will not survive in its current configuration if relocated to Media Park but believes a smaller/boutique market (possibly on weekends) might succeed.

SWA has confirmed that Option 2, with parallel parking, and use of Canfield Avenue, would accommodate the existing footprint of the Farmers Market; however, further operational study for relocating the Farmers Market is required. Utilities, storage, and other infrastructure requirements would be included in further development of the design drawings.

Design Approval and Plan Development

If the City Council approves a conceptual plan, staff will coordinate with the City of Los Angeles to present the selected design to the Board of Recreation and Parks Commission for approval per the terms of the park's lease.

The plan development process includes the following phases:

1. Schematic Design - includes plan refinements, layout, and entry detailing (general materials and profiles) with high-level architecture and civil components;
2. Design Development - focuses on engineering and material selection; and
3. Construction Documents - provides a complete set of design details relative to architecture, landscaping, civil, and electrical components.

This item was originally included on the October 12, 2021 City Council meeting agenda but has been moved to January 10, 2022.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

Preliminary cost estimates were developed for each plan option relative to parking configurations along Culver Boulevard (Attachment 1).

Option 1 "The Arc" is estimated at \$5,067,162 and Option 2 "The Interlink" is estimated at \$5,365,172 with the removal of diagonal parking. If the existing parking/street configuration is to remain, costs for each plan would be reduced by approximately \$450,000 for Option 1 and \$290,000 for Option 2.

Depending on Council direction, additional design development may be offset through grants,

parkland fees, and/or exploring other public/private partnerships.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 21-11-16_ATT_Media Park Concept Design Report

MOTION

That the Cultural Affairs Commission:

1. Receive an update on a conceptual plan for the revitalization of Media Park; and
2. Provide comments as deemed appropriate.