



Information Item

Date: August 11, 2015

To: Mayor and City Council

From: Martin Pastucha, Director of Public Works
Karen Ginsberg, Director of Community and Cultural Services

Subject: Reed Park Improvement Project - Design Update

Introduction

On [September 9, 2014](#) Council approved an agreement with Katherine Spitz Associates, Inc. (KSA) to provide design services for the renovation of the northeast quadrant of Reed Park. This information item outlines the proposed Reed Park schematic design plans in advance of proceeding with design development and construction documents. It is anticipated that construction of the improvements would be underway next spring.

Background

The park is bounded by California Avenue to the north, Lincoln Boulevard to the east, 7th Street to the west, and Wilshire Boulevard to the south, and the proposed improvements would be located in the one acre northeast quadrant of the five acre site (Figure 1).

Figure 1



Following Council's approval of the design agreement with KSA on September 9, 2014, the design team led two public workshops at Reed Park and canvassed the community with two online surveys.

Community Outreach

Online Survey

In December 2014, staff conducted an online survey to gain input from the public on how frequently they visit Reed Park, what activities they enjoy while at the park, what they like least and most about the park, and what amenities they would like to see included in the redesign of the park's northeast quadrant. In addition to the online survey, identical questions were distributed as a paper survey to the participants of the WISE & Healthy Aging senior lunch program that is hosted every weekday at Reed Park's Joslyn Hall.

A total of 144 survey responses were received. The community indicated their most preferred amenities to be included in the redesign of the northeast quadrant as a walking path, outdoor exercise equipment, and a performance area. Full survey results can be viewed on the Santa Monica Parks webpage

<http://www.santamonicaparks.org/s/parks-Reed-survey-201412.pdf>.

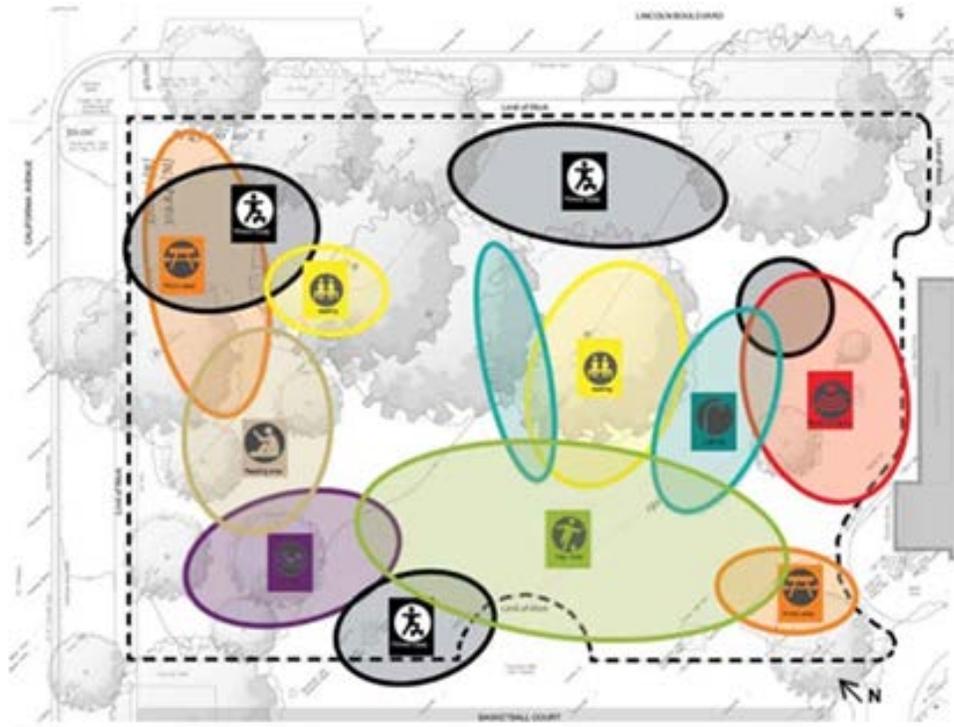
Community Workshop #1

On January 24, 2015, KSA and City staff held a community workshop at Reed Park to present options for program elements and to invite the community to speak to the team about their concerns. The workshop was well attended by approximately 40 community participants. The design team asked participants to select program possibilities from a wide range of options and to indicate their preferred locations for these activities by placing stickers onto a map of the site or by physically placing flags symbolizing their activity choices around the project site. The results of this first workshop identified preference for creating places for walking, sitting, picnicking, chess playing, outdoor performances, exercising, and protecting the existing turf and especially the trees.

Reed Park Schematic Design Concepts

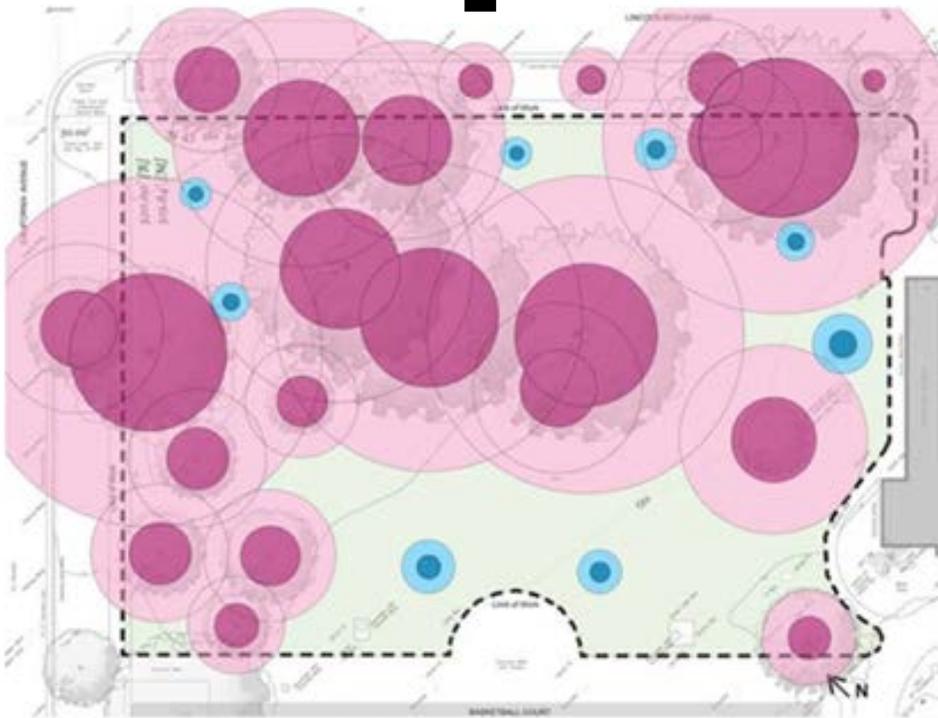
Community preferences created a strong image of programmatic elements and specific site locations for activities at the park. The ongoing health of all of the mature, shade producing Eucalyptus trees are a priority. The existing root zone locations limit development in all but the perimeter of the park site (Figure 2).

Figure 2



COMMUNITY INPUT DATA

N.T.S.



EXISTING TREE ROOT ZONES

N.T.S.



The overlay of program with root zone constraints resulted in two slightly different concepts for the design of the park: Miles Walk and Eucalyptus Trail.

MILES WALK

A gently curving and slightly elevated decomposed granite pathway (to protect tree roots) links exercise, picnic, and chess areas with individual seating at strategic locations throughout the park. A defined area of hard surfacing would provide an outdoor performance area adjacent to Miles Playhouse. The interior of the park area would remain as it is presently, an open turf area for free play. Four exercise areas, with equipment designed for use by all ages including older adults, are distributed along the pathway in order to activate the exercise circuit and enliven this area of the park. Eight small trees within the improvements area are to be relocated elsewhere within Reed Park (Figure 3 and 4).

Figure 3



Figure 6



Plant Palette

Native and drought-tolerant plant selections would blend with the existing planting palette throughout Reed Park.

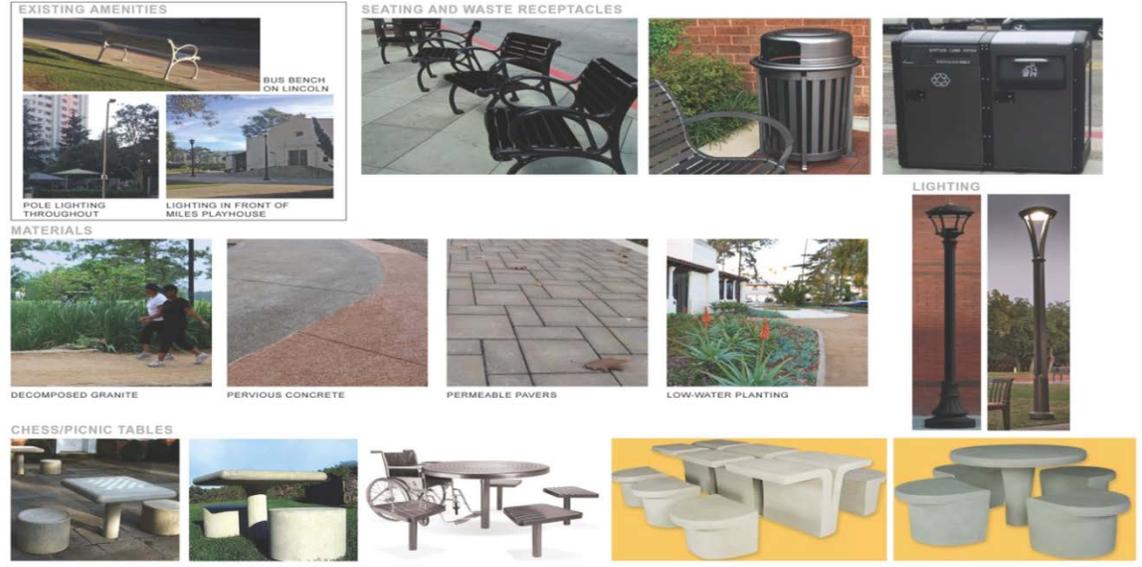
Figure 7



Site Furnishings

Individual seating and benches with intermediate arms were preferred by the Disabilities Commission, Commission for the Senior Community, and Recreation and Parks Commission. Pole lighting with historic references would be selected in order to blend with the historic period of Miles Playhouse.

Figure 8



Exercise Equipment

Both design schemes have provided four distinct exercise areas, each with two pieces of exercise equipment that target specific parts of the body. Half of the eight exercise pieces would be universally accessible. All of the proposed equipment is senior-friendly and combined with the walk around the park on the new pathway, would provide an excellent physical workout (Figure 9).

Figure 9



Community Workshop #2

On March 28, 2015 a second community workshop was held at Miles Playhouse where the project's proposed schematic design concepts were presented. Two community participants expressed concern for the future maintenance and security of the park improvements, but were generally satisfied with the proposed future changes to the northeast quadrant of the park. Participants preferred the Miles Walk concept and were pleased with the exercise equipment suggested for the park.

Following Workshop #2, the design concepts were made available online with a brief survey to provide an alternative method for submitting input to accommodate community members who were unable to attend the March workshop. During the four week survey period, 59 responses were received with 31 respondents indicating a preference for the Miles Walk design concept.

Based on community outreach efforts a consensus has yielded the following preferences for the Reed Park improvements:

- Emphasize park identity

- Improve safety and security: visibility and lighting
- Enhance sense of entry
- Activate the area to discourage improper use and promote safety
- Increase sustainable plantings
- Use buffer plantings on perimeters for enclosure
- Protect and utilize existing trees
- Incorporate turf areas for open use/play
- Establish performance space/event area adjacent to Miles Playhouse
- Allow for a variety of fitness equipment
- Provide space for passive and active recreation

Advisory Commission Reviews

Disabilities Commission

On [April 6, 2015](#) the proposed design concepts were presented to the Disabilities Commission. Highlights of the presentation included a discussion of the trees and tree root constraints on the design, the two slightly different proposed design concepts, the native plant palette, the site furnishings (seating, picnic tables with individual seats, historic-looking lighting and the desire to use solar trash compactors), and the exercise equipment (50% universally accessible – 4 of the 8 selected pieces).

Commission input included the following thoughts and suggestions:

- The Commissioners preferred the use of armrests or backs at picnic tables, favored the use of armrests for all seating, and would like to see the pathways wide enough to allow two-way traffic if the site constraints allow it.
- The Miles Walk scheme was preferred by the Commission because the pathways are straighter and easier to navigate.
- The Commissioners were impressed with the selection of exercise equipment, which is accessible and inclusive.

Commission for the Senior Community

On [April 15, 2015](#) staff presented the design concepts for Reed Park to the Commission for the Senior Community.

Commission input included the following thoughts and suggestions:

- The Commission suggested that seating be added to the parkway so as to not clutter the interior of the park.
- Commissioners voiced concerns about security and enforcement related to bikes and skateboards in the park as well as vandalism of the exercise equipment.
- The Commission expressed a desire to see events in the park, particularly movie nights.
- The Miles Walk concept was unanimously preferred over Eucalyptus Trail.

Recreation and Parks Commission

On June 18, 2015 staff presented the design concepts to the Recreation and Parks Commission.

Commission input included the following thoughts and suggestions:

- The Miles Walk concept was preferred over Eucalyptus Trail.
- The Commission suggested that the parkways be redesigned, possibly to include drought tolerant landscaping similar to the palette of plants being considered for the park.
- The Commission recommended that a drinking fountain be included, specifically near the picnic area.
- The Commission would like the design of the site furnishings and lighting to better reflect the history of the park and of Miles Playhouse.
- The Commission suggested that mile markers be placed in the refurbished north quadrant of the park, as well as along the perimeter of the entire Reed Park area, to give walkers a better sense of how far they are walking.

Next Steps

The following next steps are anticipated:

- Design Development: July – September 2015
- Construction Documents: September – October 2015
- Plan Check and Permitting: November – December 2015
- Bidding and Contractor Selection: January – February 2016
- Council Award of Construction Contract: March 2016
- Construction: March – September 2016

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