



City of Santa Barbara Neighborhood Advisory Council Staff Report

DATE: November 12, 2014

TO: Neighborhood Advisory Council

FROM: Browning Allen, Transportation Manager and Chair of the
Neighborhood Improvement Task Force

SUBJECT: Neighborhood Improvement Capital Improvement Program and FY
2015-2016 Community Development Block Grant Funds

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Neighborhood Advisory Council (NAC):

- A. Hear a presentation on the draft Neighborhood Improvement Task Force (NITF) Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for Fiscal Years 2016-2021 and recommend the CIP to Council for approval;
- B. Consider the NITF staff recommendations for Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Fund Grant Applications and prioritize the projects to apply for funding; and
- C. Consider the NITF staff recommendations for projects to design with General Fund monies for Fiscal Year 2015 for submission for CDBG funding the following year.

BACKGROUND:

In late 2003, the City launched the Neighborhood Improvement Program to rectify long-held concerns in neighborhoods. Common concerns include: littering in the right of way and in parks and creeks; illegal camping and other transient impacts; and substandard housing and public infrastructure. With Council support, the City created the Neighborhood Improvement Task Force (NITF) to plan, organize, implement, and monitor all projects initiated to address and resolve these concerns. The NITF is an interdepartmental task force comprised of City staff from the Public Works, Community Development, Fire, Police, and Parks & Recreation Departments, as well as the City Administrator's and City Attorney's Offices. Every two years, the NITF develops a Neighborhood Capital Improvement Program (CIP) detailing infrastructure, maintenance, safety, planning and program needs over a six year period.

DISCUSSION:

Exhibits 1 and 2 are the draft Fiscal Year 2016-2021 Neighborhood Improvement Capital Program Project Funding Summary and Project Descriptions for the NAC's review. The first two years of the CIP form the basis of the next two-year Capital Budget that will be adopted by Council. The remaining four years of the CIP are used to plan for future projects. There are ten projects proposed in the Fiscal Years 2016-2021 Neighborhood Improvement Capital Improvement Program. Projects range from right of way improvements like access ramps (curb cuts), sidewalk infill, and street lighting, to City parks and neighborhood center improvements.

FUNDING:

The main funding source for the NITF capital projects is CDBG Funds. The CDBG Program requires that each CDBG funded activity must either principally benefit low and moderate income persons, aid in the prevention or elimination of blight, or meet a community development need having a particular urgency. With respect to activities that benefit all the residents of a given area, at least 51 percent of the area's residents must be low and moderate income. Exhibit 3 is an updated map of the low-moderate income areas of the City as defined under the CBDG Program. As shown on Exhibit 3, the City has 27 census blocks where at least 51 percent of the residents fall within the low to moderate income level. The following parks are located within these 27 census blocks: Bohnett Park, Parque de Los Niños, Plaza Vera Cruz, Spencer Adams Park, De la Guerra Plaza, Ortega Park, Eastside Neighborhood Park, Sunflower Park, Santa Barbara Municipal Tennis Courts, and Oak Park (portion of the park). The following centers are located with the 27 census blocks: Franklin Neighborhood Center, Westside Center, Louise Lowry Davis Center, and Twelve 35 Teen Center.

In order to receive CDBG funding, the City is required to submit a CDBG grant application every year. The grant applications are due every December. NITF staff are recommending the following projects for submission of a CDBG Grant application due in December 2014, for the Fiscal Year 2016 CDBG grant cycle:

1. \$240,000: Construct 24 access ramps located in the Westside neighborhood along San Pascual Street and Sunset Avenue between Pedregosa and Arrellaga Streets.
2. \$240,000: Install playground equipment and adult fitness equipment at Bohnett Park
3. \$45,000: Replace wooden post and rail fencing with same material in Bohnett Park in Fiscal Year 2016.

The proposed access ramp project would benefit a low income area within the Westside neighborhood. Residents in this area have a strong preference to walking and transit. Without access ramps, people with disabilities and families pushing strollers are either forced to walk into the street until there is a curb cut in the sidewalk to walk or ride up onto or they must navigate the curb, which is not always easy to do and can be impossible depending on the disability level.

The proposed improvements to Bohnett Park are safety and health related. The City has a commitment to ensuring playgrounds are maintained and replaced on a regular cycle to ensure safety and provide recreation opportunities for children. In addition, on February 4, 2014, Council adopted the Healthy Eating Living (HEAL) Resolution. One of the action items is to look for opportunities to plan and construct a built environment that encourages walking, biking and other forms of physical activity. Over half of adults and about 46% of local lower-income youth ages 5-20 in Santa Barbara County are overweightⁱ. Installing fitness equipment for adults adjacent to a children's play area, will encourage healthy living for families in this low income area of the City. The fence at Bohnett Park is a safety hazard and needs to be replaced.

New for Fiscal 2015, Council appropriated \$100,000 of general fund monies to go towards design of projects listed in the CIP. The following year, NITF would write grant applications for construction of those projects. NITF staff is recommending design of the following projects with the \$100,000 of general fund monies.

1. \$50,000: Sidewalk infill along Euclid Road, adjacent to the Santa Barbara Westside Center.
2. \$50,000: Facility Enhancements:
 - a. Design of interior entry/greeting area and outdoor patio improvements at Louise Lowry Davis Center; and
 - b. Design of restroom/breezeway and access improvements for the Westside Center.

Sidewalk infill along Euclid Road has been on the CIP list for several cycles to provide better pedestrian access along this street and to resolve drainage concerns. Euclid Street is a main access route for low to moderate income residents to get to the Westside Center.

Facility enhancements are needed at the Louise Lowry Davis Center for security reasons. The greeting area would be similar to the recent improvements at the Franklin Neighborhood Center. Outdoor patio improvements would increase visibility and use of the area. Improvements are needed at the Westside Center to bring the restroom that is located next to the breezeway into compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). There are additional ADA improvements are also needed within the facility, such as access ramps into classrooms.

JWG/kts

Cc: Jill E. Zachary, Assistant Parks and Recreation Director
Exhibits

1. Draft Six-Year NITF Capital Improvement Funding Summary
2. Draft Six-Year NITF Capital Improvement Project Summary
3. Low-Moderate Income Census Blocks within the City of Santa Barbara

ⁱ Santa Barbara County Public Health Department Fitness Promotion and Obesity Prevention Plan, January 12, 2012