



City of Santa Barbara
Neighborhood Advisory Council
Staff Report

AGENDA DATE: April 11, 2018
TO: Neighborhood Advisory Council
FROM: Administration Division, Parks and Recreation Department
SUBJECT: Louise Lowry Davis Center Renovation Project

RECOMMENDATION: That the Neighborhood Advisory Council (NAC):

- A. Receive a presentation on the Louise Lowry Davis Center Renovation Project; and
- B. Provide advisory comments to the Parks and Recreation Department.

DISCUSSION:

Background

The Louise Lowry Davis Center, located at 1232 De La Vina Street, includes a shared parking lot, a patio courtyard and a one-story structure. The 4,189 sq. ft. structure provides two large multi-purpose rooms, two offices, restrooms and a warming kitchen. Originally built in 1923, the structure housed the first public school building dedicated to vocational training. In 1933, the City of Santa Barbara (City) started using the facility as a community recreation center and was finally deeded the property in 1969. Louise Lowry Davis, an outstanding City Recreation Supervisor, raised a quarter of the funds to refurbish the interior to provide recreational activities for adults. In 1991, the property was declared a Structure of Merit. In 2005, the City completed deferred maintenance including heating and partial air-conditioning, roof replacement, electrical upgrades, code compliant restrooms and two exterior ramps.

The Louise Lowry Davis Center currently hosts a variety of activities for citizens age 50 and older including bridge, chess, knitting, yoga, tai chi and several senior-focused informational lectures. In addition, Santa Barbara County and the Community Action Commission use the facility to provide free hot lunches to low-income seniors Monday through Friday. The facility also offers an affordable meeting space to non-profit organizations, and a venue for business functions and private events such as weddings, receptions and parties.

Renovation Project Objectives

In fall 2015, the Parks and Recreation Department (Department) developed a facility renovation concept to promote a more functional community building while respecting the historic integrity of the structure. The proposed interior improvements focus on enhancing the building's circulation, storage, temperature control, lighting and programing flexibility. The exterior improvements concentrate on defining the main entry, refining site safety, building aesthetics, signage, accessibility and drainage while maximizing use of the existing southeast patio.

Community Input

In 2016, stakeholder meetings were held with the project architect and local caterers, League of Women Voters, AARP, facility staff and seniors using the facility. The meetings further refined the project objectives and helped identify issues. Community input included the following:

- First time visitors have difficulty finding the main entry
- More flexible rooms are needed to increase programing
- Access to a private patio could maximize use
- Consistent misuse of the patio area creates site and building safety concerns
- Small lounge for users would be helpful as they wait for a room or to be picked up
- Air conditioning on the southeast side of the building is desired
- Table and chair cart storage is insufficient and difficult to maneuver into closet
- Kitchen functions poorly for bigger events

Project Elements

On June 7, 2016, the City contracted with Bildsten Architecture and Planning Inc. to develop conceptual and preliminary design drawings to identify the Project's full scope of work and estimated construction costs. As a historic structure of merit, special effort was placed on designing historically compatible improvements. After meeting with stakeholders who frequent the facility, the architect created a conceptual plan. The exterior changes include an entry pergola, sign, and modified kitchen roof to better define the main entry, converting the abandoned De La Vina Street entrance back into a window, fencing in the southwestern patio, creating two sets of doors and a ramp to connect the patio with the building, and providing a shade pergola on the patio.

The interior improvements enhance circulation, storage, and programing flexibility by replacing the two offices on the south side of the building with a smaller office and reception area, replacing the wall to the smaller multipurpose room with a moveable partition wall, remodeling the storage closet for efficiency, create an open transition corridor between the two multipurpose rooms, and remodeling the kitchen cabinetry in

response to caterer recommendations. The renovation improves energy efficiency and a better balance of scale by removing the drop ceiling in the two multipurpose rooms to expose the trusses, adding a skylight in the kitchen corridor, adding air conditioning to the south side of the building and replace window and door. These building improvements will help the City better serve its growing senior population with a safe, accessible, inviting facility while maximizing the functionality of the community resource.

Project Status

On September 28, 2016, this project was reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Commission with positive comments to move forward with final design and construction documents. A Historic Landmark Commission (HLC) meeting was held on November 16, 2016 for comments only. An interior yard setback modification was approved on June 21, 2017, for the patio pergola. On July 12, 2017, HLC granted Project Design Approval and on January 24, 2017, Final Design Approval was granted.

Neighborhood Advisory Council Review:

Staff is seeking comments from the NAC on the renovation. Without any significant obstacles, it is anticipated that construction drawings and permitting could be complete by July 2018. Construction start date will be contingent on funding.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

Council appropriated \$100,000 of General Fund in FY15/16 for the design of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) eligible projects. The Neighborhood Improvement Task Force prioritized this project for FY 16/17. Bildsten Architecture and Planning Inc. was contracted on June 7, 2016, to complete preliminary design for \$59,510 and the final design contract was approved on October 17, 2017, for \$103,660. The preliminary construction cost estimate is \$1,497,130. This cost will continue to be refined as the project further develops. The eventual construction is anticipated to be funded by the General Fund and grants, including the CDBG program.

ATTACHMENTS: Davis Center Flyer for April NAC Meeting

PREPARED BY: Justin Van Mullem, Project Planner

SUBMITTED BY: George Thomson, Capital Projects Supervisor

APPROVED BY: Jill E. Zachary, Parks and Recreation Director

You're invited to
a presentation regarding the
Future Renovation of the Louise Lowry Davis Center



When: Wednesday, April 11, 2018

Where: Louise Lowry Davis Center
1232 De La Vina Street

Time: 6:00pm

As part of the April meeting of the City's Neighborhood Advisory Council, City staff will share plans for the future renovation of the Louise Lowry Davis Center facility. Come see drawings of the proposed new design and hear about the process used to determine what changes needed to be made to the facility to better serve the needs of the community. Also learn about a possible timeline for renovation and construction costs. Everyone welcome!

For more information please call 805-897-2568

