



STAFF REPORT

DATE: 07/02/2025
TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members
FROM: Community Services Department

2025-273

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

SUBJECT:

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-088 OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CORONA, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING THE APPLICATION FOR THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND FOR THE CITY PARK REVITALIZATION PROJECT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This staff report asks the City Council to approve the submission of an application to the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the City Park Revitalization Project. This would authorize the City to seek federal grant funding to support the comprehensive renovation and enhancement of City Park in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local requirements.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the City Council:

- a. Approve Resolution No. 2025-088 approving the application for the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the City Park Revitalization Project.
- b. Delegate authority to the City Manager, or his designee, to execute all necessary documents, agreements, amendments, and payment requests required for the application process and subsequent grant administration, in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, ordinances, and regulations governing the

Land and Water Conservation Fund program, including but not limited to the requirements set forth in the California Public Resources Code and the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965.

- c. Certify that sufficient funds will be available to operate and maintain the project site in perpetuity, and that the City will comply with all program guidelines and contractual obligations if grant funds are awarded.

BACKGROUND & HISTORY:

City Park, established in 1913, is recognized as the oldest and most historically significant park in the City of Corona. Throughout its history, City Park has functioned as both a neighborhood and community park. Over the past few decades, the park has experienced changes in its user base and patterns of activity. By the 1980s, challenges such as aging infrastructure, increased transient activity, and concerns about safety contributed to a decline in park usage and community perception. Despite periodic improvements, these efforts were not sufficient to restore the park's status as a central gathering place for the community.

Recognizing the need for comprehensive revitalization, the City of Corona has undertaken planning initiatives to restore City Park. These planning processes have been informed by extensive community outreach, including public meetings, surveys, and pop-up events, which collectively engaged thousands of residents and stakeholders. The feedback consistently emphasized the community's desire for a revitalized park that offers a diverse range of amenities and programming.

The City Park Master Plan reflects these priorities and provides a framework for the park's future development, with a focus on honoring the site's historical legacy, addressing current deficiencies, and meeting the evolving needs of Corona's residents. The plan envisions City Park as a vibrant civic anchor, integrating active and passive recreational facilities, sustainable design practices, and enhanced accessibility. It also emphasizes the preservation of historic elements and the incorporation of public art, landscaping, and safety features to create an inclusive and welcoming environment.

ANALYSIS:

The City's application to the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) for the City Park Revitalization Project is shaped by legal, regulatory, and strategic planning considerations. The application is intended to secure federal funding for the comprehensive renovation of City Park, which includes the construction of a new aquatic center, a new community center for flexible recreation programming, a community canvas for large events, a large splash pad for recreational water play, walking loops to connect various areas of the park, a large pump track and skate park, and iconic playgrounds with inclusive play elements. To meet City and LWCF construction timeline, the grant application will focus on the community canvas portion of the project.

The City Park Revitalization Project is directly aligned with several adopted plans and strategic initiatives. The City Park Master Plan provides the primary framework for the project, outlining a vision for City Park as a vibrant, inclusive, and multi-generational civic

anchor. The Master Plan identifies the renovation and accessibility of outdoor recreational facilities, engages and inspires younger generations, promotes healthy lifestyles and communities, and creates meaningful connections and relevancy to people, which are key priorities consistent with LWCF's goals. Securing federal grant funding will enable the City to complete the project while incorporating the amenities most desired by residents. The grant provides up to \$6 million in funding and requires a 50% local match, guaranteed public access for recreational use in perpetuity, environmental and cultural compliance, and long-term sustainability.

Eligible agencies must submit their application by August 5, 2025, with award announcements anticipated in the Winter of 2026. Selected applicants will be required to complete post-selection federal requirements, including NEPA and Section 106 environmental reviews, as well as participate in a project site visit prior to receiving a funding agreement. Once the project is approved and the contract is executed, reimbursable work may begin, with an expected start date in the Spring of 2027 or slightly later.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

This action has no immediate financial impact on the City's budget. If funding is awarded, staff will bring forward a recommendation for Council to accept the grant and appropriate the awarded funds.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

This action is exempt pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the Guidelines for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which states that a project is exempt from CEQA if the activity is covered by the commonsense exemption that CEQA applies only to projects that have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. This action is to approve a resolution approving the application to LWCF for the City Park Revitalization Project and there is no possibility that approving this agreement will have a significant effect on the environment. Therefore, no environmental analysis is required.

PREPARED BY: MIRNA ROMERO, MANAGEMENT ANALYST II

REVIEWED BY: DONNA FINCH, COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Exhibit 1 – Resolution No. 2025-088