



CITY OF POMONA COUNCIL REPORT

March 6, 2017

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Linda Lowry, City Manager

Submitted by: Mark Lazzaretto, Development Services Director

Subject: Adoption of a Resolution Amending the FY 16/17 Adopted Operating Budget by Appropriating \$4,500 from General Fund Reserves, Utilizing Previously Donated Funds from the Fairplex, for the Ganesha Park Wood Carving Plaques and Dedication Ceremony

SUMMARY

Recommendation – It is recommended that the City Council: 1) adopt the attached resolution amending the FY 16-17 Adopted Operating Budget by appropriating \$4,500 from General Fund Reserves utilizing the previously donated funds from the Fairplex for the purchase of two special dedication plaques, installation of fourteen small naming plaques for fourteen wood carvings, 2) and review and approve the proposed wording for two special dedication plaques.

Fiscal Impact – This action will result in a General Fund FY16/17 Adopted Operating Budget Amendment that will appropriate \$4,500, specifically from the donated Fairplex money that the Council received in February, 2015 to Acc#101-0150-52080-00000. In FY 14-15, \$50,000 was donated by the Fairplex. To date, \$29,751.34 has been spent and/or allocated, leaving a remaining balance of \$20,248.66. After this action, \$15,748.66 of the donation will remain. Any unused portion of the requested allocation will be returned to the donated fund balance.

Previous Related Action – On February 23, 2015, the City Council accepted a donation from The Fairplex in the amount of \$50,000, and appropriated \$50,000 to the FY 2014-15 General Fund Operating Budget for Ganesha Park area improvements.

On February 22, 2016, the City Council Amended the FY 2015-2016 Operating Budget by appropriating \$15,000, utilizing previously donated funds from The Fairplex.

On June 6, 2016, the Cultural Arts Commission reviewed the renderings and scope of work provided by West Coast Arborist, and approved to move forward with the chainsaw carving of three trees, two tree trunks and one tree stump.

On June 20, 2016, the City Council received a report on the wood carving project.

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On July 18, 2016, the City Council authorized amendment to the FY 16-17 adopted operating budget by appropriating \$7,000 from the donated funds from The Fairplex, for the purchase and placement of monuments plaques and upgraded protective wood varnish for the wood carvings.

On July 25, 2016, the Cultural Arts Commission reviewed the concepts/images and scope of work provided by West Coast Arborist, and approved to move forward with the chainsaw carving of an additional nine trees located within the Soroptimist Redwood Grove.

On August 1, 2016, the City Council received a report on the Wood Carving Project at Ganesha Park Phase II.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Under the direction of the Cultural Arts Commission, over the past year, fourteen wood carvings have been commissioned in Ganesha Park. The carvings were completed between June and October, 2016, and depict various animals that are sacred to the area's original inhabitants. In order to memorialize the carvings and provide information to the public about their meaning, informational plaques for each of the carvings need to be created. Staff is recommending that the City Council approve funding for the individual plaques and approve the wording for two plaques that will provide information about the tribes that are being honored and information about the groups that contributed to the project.

BACKGROUND

The Ganesha Park Wood Carving Project was initiated by former District 6 Councilmember, Debra Martin, and funded with donations from The Fairplex. The project, with the approval and support of the Cultural Arts Commission, included contracting a chainsaw wood carving artist through West Coast Arborist to transform dead or dying trees in Ganesha Park into wood carvings representing sacred animals of Native American Indians.

The project was divided into two phases. Phase I of the project began in June, 2016, and was completed in August, 2016. Phase II began in August, 2016, and was completed in October, 2016. A total of fourteen wood carvings were produced throughout the park for the enjoyment of the public. Now that all of the wood carvings have been completed, a small naming plaque is needed for each piece. The naming plaques will be mounted at the base of each wood carving to identify the name of the piece, the name of the artist, and the year it was carved.

To educate the public about the local history in Ganesha Park and surrounding area, two larger dedication plaques have been proposed. The first plaque will recognize the Native American tribes that once lived in the area, and the second plaque will recognize the community members that helped make the wood carving project and memorial garden happen. On January 23, 2017, the Cultural Arts Commission reviewed and approved wording for the two special dedication plaques. Staff is requesting that the City Council approve the wording as submitted by the Cultural Arts Commission, or provide input on changes to the approved wording.

DISCUSSION

Appropriation of Funds

The fourteen small naming plaques ranging from 5"x8" to 5"x10" will be installed by the base of each wood carving by the City's contractor. The City's contractor has provided a quote for the service (see Attached) with the grand total of \$2,800. In addition, the two bigger special dedication plaques will cost approximately \$1,700 to produce. Therefore, staff requests that the City Council appropriate \$4,500 (\$2,800 + \$1,700 = \$4,500) from the Fairplex donation money for the installation of the fourteen small naming plaques, and the purchase of the two bigger special dedication plaques.

The Fairplex donated \$50,000 towards overall Ganesha Park improvements. The current amount left in the donation account is \$20,248.66. With the Council's appropriation of \$4,500 for the plaques, the new total left in the account will be \$15,748.66.

Wording for the Special Dedication Plaques

Two special dedication plaques have been proposed for the memorial garden area of Ganesha Park, adjacent to the Community Center building. The Boy Scouts have already built the base for his plaque as an Eagle Scout project in 2016. The first plaque is a dedication plaque to the Native American tribes that once lived in area surrounding Ganesha Park.

The wording for this plaque was originally reviewed and approved by the Cultural Arts Commission on January 23, 2017. Staff has attached said wording with this report (Attachment 2). After the Cultural Arts Commission approved the wording, District 1 Councilman, Rubio Gonzalez, submitted a letter to the Commission for its meeting on February 27th to recommend revisions to the plaque wording (Attachment 3). Councilman Gonzalez included substantial evidence on the reasons that certain words and terms in the wording should be revised in order to be more historically accurate. After reviewing the letter from Councilman Gonzalez at the February 27th Cultural Arts Commission meeting, the Commission voted to accept all revisions to the plaque wording as recommended by Councilman Gonzalez.

The revised wording for the Native American dedication plaque as approved by the Cultural Arts Commission at the February 27th, 2017 meeting, as recommended by Councilman Gonzalez, is presented below in **bold**:

Native Americans once lived near Ganesha Park at an ancient village named "Toibinga" which was also a sacred burial site. The indigenous people of Pomona were part of the Uto-Aztec linguistic family which extended from the Northern Great Basin and down to Southern Mexico. They migrated here over 3,000 years ago.

In 1769, Spanish colonizers began to build 21 Catholic missions in Alta California, led by Franciscan priests. The native tribes living in this area were branded as "Gabrielinos" because of their proximity to the nearby San Gabriel Mission. They were originally known as the Kizh people.

Under Mexican rule (1821-1846), the Pomona area became part of the Rancho San Jose land grant. In the aftermath of the Mexican American War, conquering military forces, vigilantes and gold miners invaded California and decimated the Native American population.

A Northern California tribe which built the Carmel Mission, the Costanoan-Rumsen, escaped persecution during the Gold Rush and re-settled to the Pomona Valley during the 1860's.

Native American people were culturally distinct from Europeans and lived in a harmonious relationship with nature. These tree sculptures have been commissioned in their honor.

The second dedication plaque will recognize the community members who helped to make the wood carving project and memorial garden happen. This plaque will be placed in front of the 15' high grizzly bear wood carving, which is located in the memorial garden area of the park, adjacent to the Community Center building. The proposed wording for the second dedication plaque is presented below:

The grizzly bear standing before you was sacred to California indigenous peoples and is part of the California state flag.

This community project was initiated by Pomona city councilwoman Debra Martin and was approved by the Pomona City Council in February 2016. The project was funded by private donations.

The Eagle Scouts of Upland BSA Troop 623 assisted in the project. Artist John Mahoney was commissioned to sculpt sacred animals, using the medium of dead trees, for everyone to enjoy at Ganesha Park.

DEDICATED ON APRIL 22, 2017

Although the proposed wording received approval from the Cultural Arts Commission on January 23, 2017, staff notes that historically, the typical process of plaque production references the Mayor and the entire City Council rather than one single current or former member of the City Council. At this time, the proposed wording for the second plaque references a former City Council member rather than the Mayor and the entire City Council.

Staff recommends that the City Council review and approve the proposed wording for the plaques and budget increase, or provide alternative language or direction for completion of this project.

The Cultural Arts Commission has also created an ad-hoc committee of three members of the Commission that is currently planning a dedication ceremony at Ganesha Park scheduled for April 22, 2017 to coincide with Earth Day celebrations. The event will include invitations to the public for the dedication ceremony and those groups and individuals that assisted with construction of the memorial garden, plaque base and overall project.

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Attachment:

- 1.** Cost Proposal from West Coast Arborists
- 2.** Plaque wording approved by CAC on Jan. 23, 2017
- 3.** Letter to the CAC from Councilman Gonzalez, dated Feb. 25, 2017
- 4.** Resolution