



CITY OF POMONA

Parks and Recreation Commission

DATE: February 20, 2020

TO: Parks and Recreation Commission

FROM: Benita DeFrank, Neighborhood Services Director

SUBJECT: Proposed Utility Box Art Projects
450 West Grand Avenue, Tony Cerda Park
800 W. Lexington Avenue, Martin Luther King, Jr. Park

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Parks and Recreation Commission consider Cultural Arts Commission's (CAC) support of the utility box art images and allow the execution of utility box art at Tony Cerda Park and Martin Luther King, Jr. Park.

DESCRIPTION & BACKGROUND

On December 1, 2019, Parks and Recreation Commissioner Fabian Pavon submitted a request to organize a beautification project at both Tony Cerda Park and Martin Luther King, Jr. Park. Projects included installation of landscaping/garden and placing art to utility boxes.

On December 12, 2019, staff from Public Works and Community Services met with Commissioner Fabian Pavon at the project sites to discuss details including placement of the landscaping/garden and proposed art. Following the site meeting, staff reached out to Southern California Edison and Verizon requesting permission to paint the existing above-ground utility cabinets along Park Avenue. Staff obtained permission for the utility cabinets to be painted with a request that any identification markers on the cabinets not be painted over.

On January 16, 2020, Parks and Recreation Commissioner Fabian Pavon proposed the beautification projects consisting of both landscaping/garden and utility box art at Tony Cerda Park and Martin Luther King, Jr. Park to the Parks and Recreation Commission. The Parks and Recreation Commission voted 4-1-2-0 in favor of the landscaping/garden, but recommended that the CAC review the proposed utility box art images and provide input and feedback to the Parks and Recreation Commission regarding proposed art images.

Tony Cerda Park

There are three (3) utility boxes at Tony Cerda Park located off Park Avenue. Proposed images consist of a cactus and a woman pushing a fruit cart (Attachment 1).

Martin Luther King, Jr. Park

There is one (1) utility box at Martin Luther King, Jr. Park located off W. Lexington Avenue. The proposed image is a sketch of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (Attachment 2). The utility box is City-owned.

Cultural Arts Commission Recommendation

On January 27, 2020, Parks and Recreation Commissioner Fabian Pavon presented proposed utility box art projects at Tony Cerda Park and Martin Luther King, Jr. Park to the CAC to obtain their input and feedback regarding the art images.

The CAC reviewed the images while carefully considering symbolism, significance, and cultural sensitivity. Further, discussion included if and how the community was engaged and if there was any public objection to the project. Commissioner Pavon stated the projects were presented at the January 16, 2020 Parks and Recreation and during Spoken Palabra on January 17, 2020 at Tony Cerda Park, with approximately 40 attendees. There were no objections from the public.

The CAC agreed that the image of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. would not be considered controversial at Martin Luther King, Jr. Park. The CAC inquired why the images were selected and considered if these images would upset anyone or if they are culturally generic. Commissioner Pavon responded that fruit and plants can be found everywhere in the world and in Pomona.

As the CAC does not have jurisdiction to approve these specific type of art projects, the CAC offered their unanimous support of Commissioners present of the utility box art projects and recommended that the Parks and Recreation allow the execution of the proposed projects.

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION PRIORITIES AND GOALS: This item supports the Parks and Recreation Commission Priorities and Goals:

Goal 3: Activate parks by providing a diverse range of activities that encourage increased participation and positive use, and foster a sense of community ownership, pride and unity.

Goal 5: Promote the creation of parks and amenities that serve as regional visitor attractions and generate interest and awareness in the unique history and culture of Pomona.

Goal 6: Cultivate partnerships with local organizations and educational institutions to improve and increase park involvement.

Submitted by:

Monica Belloso, Technical Specialist II
Neighborhood Services Department | Community Services Division

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: Tony Cerda Park Location/Aerial Map, Utility Boxes and Images

Attachment 2: Martin Luther King, Jr. Park Location/Aerial Map, Utility Box and Image.