



Park and Recreation Commission

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS **DATE: SEPTEMBER 16, 2024**

FROM: PARKS, RECREATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: UPDATES ON THE RENOVATION OF THE CESAR CHAVEZ COMMUNITY CENTER AT BOBBY BONDS PARK

ISSUE:

Provide updates on the renovation and programming components of the Cesar Chavez Community Center at Bobby Bonds Park.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Park and Recreation Commission receive and accept the report highlighting updates on the renovation and programming components of the Cesar Chavez Community Center at Bobby Bonds Park.

BACKGROUND:

The State of California (“State”) in its Budget Act of 2022, as amended by Assembly Bill 178, allocated \$25 million to the City of Riverside for the substantial renovation of the Cesar Chavez Community Center.

Funding for this renovation project was strongly supported by former Assembly Member Jose Medina along with Assembly Member Sabrina Cervantes and lobbied by Riverside Arts Academy (RAA).

On April 4, 2023, the City Council approved an appropriation of \$25,000,000 from the State of California and grant agreement with the California Natural Resources Agency to fund the substantial renovation of the Cesar Chavez Community Center at Bobby Bonds Park.

On October 13, 2023, the Purchasing Division of the Finance Department issued Request for Proposals (RFP) No. 2331 seeking architectural design services from experienced firms for the development of construction plans and technical specifications for the renovation of the Cesar Chavez Community Center.

RFP No. 2331 closed on January 11, 2024, with a total of 17 proposals submitted.

In March 2024, under the guidance of the Purchasing Department, a Selection Committee was formed with three (3) City staff members and one (1) non-City stakeholder. The Selection Committee independently scored each RFP response based on the predefined criteria in RFP No. 2331. Based on the Selection Committee’s independently scored evaluations, four (4) firms

were invited to participate in the next phase, which included presentations and interview sessions conducted by the Selection Committee. Under the direction of the Purchasing Division the four firms presented their proposal and were interviewed and scored independently by the Selection Committee. As a result of this process, ELS Architecture and Urban Design (ELS) was selected as the firm with the top score.

DISCUSSION:

ELS Architecture and Urban Design is an award-winning architectural practice with a 50-plus year tradition in the design of extraordinary buildings and spaces that enhance the experience of urban life while being mindful of the environment. The firm's portfolio represents a diverse array of projects, including community and civic, recreation and sports, historic renovation, performing arts, education, mixed use, retail, sustainable design, and planning and urban design. ELS has ranked among the Top 50 firms in the U.S. by Architect magazine for six years and is listed among the 2021 Architectural Record Top 300 Architecture Firms.

The PRCSD enriches the community by offering the Recreation Arts Program (RAP) out of the Cesar Chavez Community Center. RAP provides instruction in a variety of artistic disciplines, including keyboard, guitar, hip hop, ballet, and visual arts. Recognizing the financial barriers that some residents may face, the program offers scholarships to qualified individuals, ensuring accessibility and promoting inclusivity within the performing arts. The program plays a significant role in fostering a vibrant arts environment within the community, demonstrably improving the quality of life for residents.

The Cesar Chavez Community Center also serves as a hub for various non-profit organizations and associations in Riverside. These organizations offer a range of programs that directly benefit the city's residents. A prime example is the RAA music program, which utilizes the center's facilities to provide instruction to students from across the region. This historic center, located in Riverside's Eastside neighborhood, fosters a collaborative environment where students can learn, grow, and create artistic expression together. RAA boasts a comprehensive curriculum, offering instruction in guitar, strings, band, orchestra, mariachi, and choir.

The planned renovations for the Cesar Chavez Community Center will significantly improve equal access throughout the facility providing a shared experience for all community members visiting the center. Additional improvements to the classrooms and auditorium will enhance the learning experience by providing updated programming spaces and equipment to develop the creativity of the students engaged in the programs offered. Lastly, the planned renovations will help preserve this unique historical landmark by correcting problems caused by weathered windows and inefficient mechanical equipment. Once completed, the renovations proposed will create a refreshed community facility that preserves the history of the past and provides creative learning space for the future.

To ensure the longevity of important buildings like the Cesar Chavez Community Center, the renovation must focus on enhancing structural strength. This nationally registered historic building will undergo a transformation to serve Riverside for many decades to come. The project aims to deliver updated public event spaces, improved accessibility, and a comprehensive rejuvenation of this key landmark, ensuring it remains a vital part of the community.

PRCSD and ELS held the first of a series of three workshops on Tuesday, August 13, 2024. This was an opportunity for community members and stakeholders to share their thoughts on which improvements make the biggest impact at the community center.

The following two workshops are scheduled for Tuesday, September 10, 2024, and Wednesday, October 23, 2024, from 6:30 - 8pm in the Cesar Chavez Community Center Auditorium, where a presentation of concepts and a tabletop design session will take place. In the final gathering of the Community Workshop Series, participants will receive a brief presentation from ELS outlining their design efforts, to date. This presentation will include a "must do" list highlighting code-required improvements and deferred maintenance tasks, and a range of potential program enhancements. ELS will also provide a list of improvements and enhancements along with conceptual cost estimates for each.

ELS and the City team will collect and record these findings, synthesizing all the data into a preferred final concept that reflects the consensus achieved. This preferred direction will then be presented to the City Council for approval, advancing the project to the next phase: Schematic Design. Actual construction is tentatively scheduled for March 2025.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This item contributes to Strategic Priority No. 1 *Arts, Culture & Recreation* and Goal 1.1 - Strengthen Riverside's portfolio of arts, culture, recreation, senior and lifelong learning programs and amenities through expanded community partnerships, shared use opportunities and fund development.

This item aligns with each of the five Cross-Cutting Threads as follows:

1. **Community Trust** – The facility renovations benefit the City's diverse population, and result in greater public good.
2. **Equity** – This report facilitates equitable access to arts, culture, and recreational service offerings to ensure every member of the community has equal access to share the benefits of the renovated Cesar Chavez Community Center.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – Riverside is a prudent steward of public funds, and grant funds help offset the renovation costs.
4. **Innovation** – The renovated of the Cesar Chavez Community Center located at 2060 University is inventive and timely in meeting the community's changing needs and in preparation for the future through collaborative partnerships and adaptive learning experiences.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – The Cesar Chavez Community Center is currently designated as a State Historical Landmark and the proposed renovation to the facility and its interior space will ensure the needs of the community presently are not compromised with their needs of the future.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with receiving this report to file.

Prepared by: Stephanie Gallegos, Recreation Supervisor
Approved by: Pamela M. Galera, Parks, Recreation and Community Services Director

Attachment: Presentation