

Council Meeting of
September 13, 2011

Honorable Mayor and Members
of the City Council
City Hall
Torrance, California

Members of the Council:

**SUBJECT: Parks and Recreation Commission and the Community Services
Department – Approve Conceptual Design Plans for the Torrance
Centennial Plaza at El Prado Park**

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation of the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Community Services Director to approve the Torrance Centennial Committee's Conceptual Design Plans for the Centennial Plaza at El Prado Park.

FUNDING

The project will be funded by the Centennial Committee Budget: FEAP 753 Torrance Centennial.

BACKGROUND

The City of Torrance Centennial Committee was appointed by the City Council on August 18, 2009, to plan activities and events for the City's Centennial Anniversary Celebration. One of the Committee's projects is to identify an appropriate location to place a *Time Capsule* and provide a project design.

On June 8, 2011, Mr. Don Lee, Project Manager of the Centennial Committee for this project, presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission the Torrance Centennial Committee's Conceptual Design Plans. Residents within 500 feet of El Prado Park were notified of the Commission meeting and invited to participate in the discussion. During the meeting the Commission reviewed the proposal, took public comment, and discussed the project before unanimously approving both the conceptual design plans and the proposed location in El Prado Park.

ANALYSIS

The SEED Group, a landscape architecture firm located in Old Torrance, was invited, and agreed, pro bono, to help the Torrance Centennial Committee identify and design a public area for the installation and display of a time capsule commemorating the City of Torrance's 100th Anniversary. The setting of historic El Prado Park, part of the original Olmsted Brother's design, was a driving factor in the proposed location of the plaza. The final design includes visual elements of the Southern Pacific Railroad Bridge and adds both a tribute to the City's rich past while offering a vision of an exciting future. The SEED Group design concept provides an opportunity for community involvement as the public will be able to purchase donor bricks that will be placed throughout the walkways of the plaza. The plaza will also house a Centennial Time Capsule commemorating the City's first 100 years. In addition, the Centennial Committee met with Community Services Department staff to review the conceptual design plans to address any maintenance concerns from the Department. Upon completion of this capital project, the Community Services Department will continue the maintenance of El Prado Park to include the addition of the Centennial Plaza.

The architect provided a quote from a contractor which is estimated at approximately \$145,000, but staff feels this project may be as high as \$200,000 - \$250,000 depending on the final approved design and construction costs. This includes work to be done by a contractor and by City staff. Once the bids are received, staff will review the line items to determine areas that can be refined or adjusted based on the Centennial Budget and the expected revenue generated from the donor bricks. Currently there are approximately \$145,000 funds within the Centennial Committee Budget for all activities inclusive of the Plaza Project. At this time, the level of funding is not sufficient to cover other planned projects and the full costs for this project that is estimated to be within the \$145,000 - \$250,000 range. However, it is the intention of the Centennial Committee to kick-off a fundraising campaign on October 1, 2011 with an initial goal of selling 600 donor bricks at \$150 each which equates to \$90,000 to assist in offsetting construction costs for this project. It is anticipated that more bricks can be sold if additional funding is required. Direction is being requested from the City Council to allow staff to proceed with the following timeline contingent on additional funding coming from the sale of the bricks to cover the construction costs of the plaza.

The estimated timeline for this project is as follows:

- Parks and Recreation Commission* - June, 2011
- City Council - September, 2011
- Kick-off of Donor Brick Sales - October, 2011
- Development of Bid Documents - Fall, 2011
- Project Out to Bid - Winter, 2012
- Approval of Bid - March, 2012
- Construction - April, 2012
- Completion of Project - August, 2012

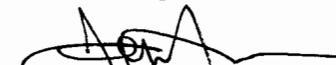
This item is before your honorable body for final review and approval of the conceptual design for the Torrance Centennial Plaza at El Prado Park. Once approved, the Public Works Department will assume the Project Manager role and develop a contract with the SEED Design Firm to develop the Bid Documents for this project.

Respectfully Submitted,

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

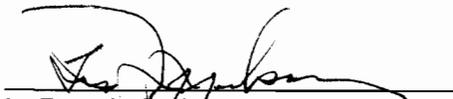
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Hazel Taniguchi, Chair



John Jones
Community Services Director

NOTED:



LeRoy J. Jackson
City Manager

Attachments: A) Torrance Centennial Plaza Design Plan
B) Excerpt 6/8/11 P&R Commission Meeting

SEED GROUP
 landscape architecture
 5005 DODD DRIVE
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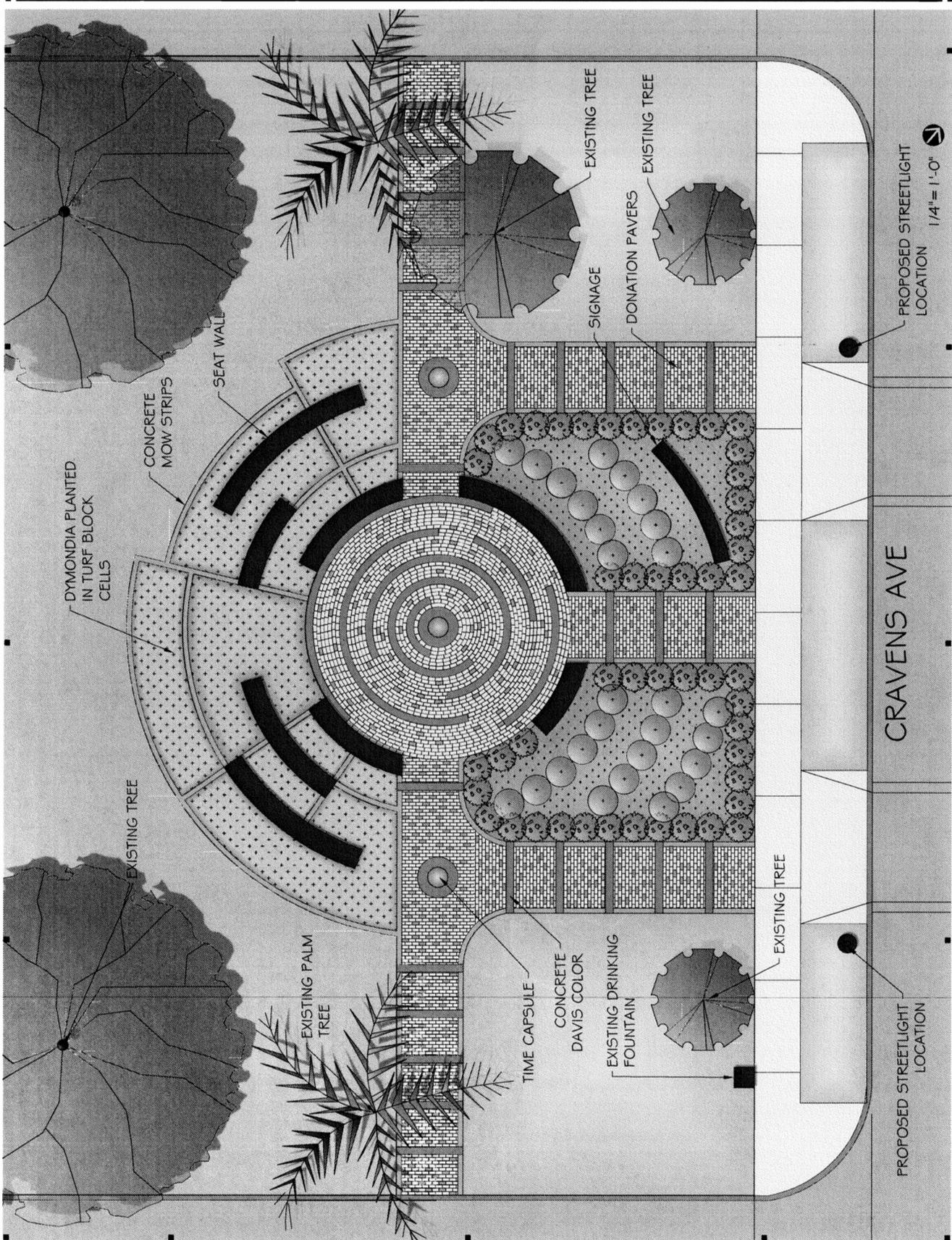


DATE 09-07-11
 SCALE
 DRAWN BY S. HARRIS
 CHECKED BY A. ALAMIZ

REVISIONS/PLAN LOG

PROJECT AND CLIENT NAME
TORRANCE CENTENNIAL PLAZA
 Torrance, CA

SHEET NUMBER OF 1
 PROJECT NUMBER
 ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN FEET UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED. THE ACCURACY OF THIS DOCUMENT IS LIMITED BY THE QUALITY OF THE INFORMATION PROVIDED BY OTHERS FROM WHOM IT WAS OBTAINED. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.



EXCERPT OF MINUTES

√ Minutes Approved
 Minutes Subject to Approval

June 8, 2011

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
 TORRANCE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Parks and Recreation Commission convened in a regular session at 7:02 p.m. on Wednesday, June 8, 2011, in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Baxter, Greenberg, Hays, Mayeda, Ning, Taniguchi, and Chairperson Gilbert.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Community Services Director Jones, Recreation Services Manager Brunette, Senior Business Manager Minter, and Park Services Manager Carson.

8A. RECOMMENDATION FOR APPROVAL OF THE CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE'S CONCEPTUAL DESIGN FOR THE EL PRADO PARK PLAZA

This item was taken out of order.

Community Services Director Jones introduced the item and welcomed Don Lee, Project Manager for the Centennial Committee.

Mr. Lee, Beckworth Avenue, provided background and presented a conceptual design for the display of a time capsule in El Prado Park commemorating the City's 100 years as a city. He introduced Centennial Committee members and Arthur Alaniz, landscape architect with the SEED Group.

With the aid of slides, Mr. Alaniz presented the conceptual drawing for the project that incorporates visual elements of Southern Pacific Railroad Bridge and the Olmstead Brother's original idea of vistas. He described his firm's analysis of the history of the area, the bridge element, immediate business and residential areas, and Torrance High School. He pointed out existing trees, the proposed location for more time capsules, raised concrete benches, low-growing ground cover, monument wall, and donation pavers separated by emulated railroad ties.

In response to Commissioner Hays' inquiry, he stated that the diameter of the inner circle would be approximately 25 feet.

Responding to audience members' inquiries, he discussed plans for additional lighting, grading for ADA compliance, and possible materials that would be used.

Janet Payne, Engracia Avenue, inquired about maintenance and Park Services Manager Carson responding that a pre-emergent program would prevent weed growth in the dymondia ground cover.

Dick Rossberg, Via Malaga, Redondo Beach, received clarification from staff that the proposal would be a permanent structure, the park would be open from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., and notices were sent to residents living within 500 feet of the park. Mr. Rossberg expressed concern about parking impacts to businesses and residences and suggested extending notification to include downtown businesses.

Community Services Director Jones stated that from a Park's perspective the proposal is another park amenity and the focus has been to minimize maintenance impacts. He stated that it would be a long-term improvement for passive use with no additional activities expected.

Mr. Lee added that changes in parking patterns are not anticipated, it would be fully handicapped-accessible, that maximum elevation would be three feet, and the project would be self-supporting. He provided the estimated timeline for the project: City Council in August 2011, construction in April 2012, and completion in August 2012.

Commissioner Mayeda suggested telling the history of the Olmsted Brothers and the railroad bridge on signage at the park.

Commissioner Taniguchi stated that the design is a good beginning, that she likes that it is self-supporting, and that she is looking forward to finding out what will be placed in the capsule.

Dee Hardison, Centennial Committee Vice-Chairperson, stated that the community would be given an opportunity to suggest what goes into the capsule and that a small committee would make the final selection.

MOTION: Commissioner Hays moved to approve as submitted the Centennial Committee conceptual design plans for the proposed Torrance Centennial Plaza at El Prado Park. Commissioner Taniguchi seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (Chairperson Gilbert abstaining).

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