Meeting Date: March 3, 2009

TOWN OF MORAGA **STAFF REPORT**

To: **Honorable Mayor, Town Council Members, and Parks and Recreation Commissioners**

From: **Jay Ingram, Parks and Recreation Director**

Subject: **Plans for Commons Park**

Request

If funds are available in the fiscal year 2009-10 Town of Moraga Operating Budget, the Park and Recreation Commission requests that Town Council consider funding a site specific master plan for the Commons Park.

Background

The Town Council accepted the 2007 Parks and Recreation Master Plan at the January 9, 2008 Town Council meeting. As part of the acceptance, Town Council requested the lack of adequate parking at the Commons be addressed before anything else was added to the park. At the same time the town-wide master plan process was developing (2006-07), the Commons Park was replacing an old play structure and the splash pad was being upgraded. Due to these improvements there was some concern that changes/upgrades were being made to the Commons, potentially bringing additional traffic while nothing was being done to address existing limited parking.

Discussion

The 2007 Town Council accepted Parks and Recreation Master Plan provides recommendations for the Commons Park.

- Develop a new site master plan, including the following elements:
    - Develop a logical entrance with signage consistent with all Moraga Parks.
    - Create a map of the site which also serves as a public art piece.
    - Expand bike amenities.
    - Renovate restrooms.
    - Renovate and provide new picnic areas, including picnic tables for a variety of group sizes and covered picnic shelter.

- Restore Laguna Creek to provide an improved overlook, improved creekside picnic area, and dry creek bed that serves as a natural sand and water area.
- Develop a community-scale play area.
- Provide ADA accessible seating and an accessible path of travel in front of the amphitheater.
- Provide orchard or oak woodlands landscaping in the hill area behind the amphitheater.
- Relocate bocce court and horseshoe pits to a more central area near other small scale sports facilities.
- Consider providing a gazebo for viewing sports activities.
- Develop a dog park in the 'back 40.'
- Address parking needs for the community park and special events use, including concerts.

Since Town Council of the Master Plan, a number of Commons Park projects have been proposed and discussed at various levels. Three items of interest, all of which would change the footprint of the Commons Park are listed below.

1) Additional Bocce Ball Courts

Moraga resident Dom Sidari has championed the efforts to bring two additional bocce ball courts to the Commons. Mr. Sidari desires to install the two courts directly above the two existing courts (in between the horseshoe pits and the current bocce courts). The Town and the Department of Fish and Game require a set of approvable plans in order to address the proper placement of the two courts. Mr. Sidari has the funds and people power to install the courts and does not clearly understand the process that needs to take place in order to move forward. Staff is working to resolve this issue. (Attachment B – Town written communication to Mr. Sidari and Mr. Fisher)

2) Sport Court

A few months ago the Park Foundation was interested in installing a sport court type surface at the Commons Park. Foundation members met with a consultant to discuss costs and possible locations. Since the Foundation had decided to move forward with band shell improvements there is currently limited funds to accomplish both projects. Staff understands that the sport court idea is currently on hold.

3) Upgrades to the Band Shell

The Park Foundation has voted to move forward with band shell improvement. They will work on drawings and plan to present the concept and designs to the Park and Recreation Commission, Design Review Board and eventually the Town Council. Staff

understand that the Foundation hope to start construction of the project during the fall of 2009. Upgrades will increase the footprint of the food serving area, bringing it out towards the Heritage Walk (possibly relocating the Heritage Walk). The Foundation has informed the Town that the Contra Costa County Health Department is requiring this upgrade in order to comply with County Health Code.

There is considerable interest to upgrade/change the footprint of the Commons Park. In order to address these concerns and the concerns with limited parking, the Park and Recreation Commission is requesting funds for a new site master plan.

Fiscal Impact

$35,000 - $40,000 for a site specific Commons Park Master Plan.

Alternatives

Town Council may choose the following:

1) If funds are available in the fiscal year 2009-10 budget process, appropriate an amount not to exceed $40,000.
2) Commit no funds at this time.
3) Consider this item during a Town Council priority/goal setting session in the future.
4) Receive and file this report understanding that the Park and Recreation Commission may continue to receive proposals for additional projects in the Commons Park which may or may not be consistent with the 2007 Town of Moraga Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Recommendation

Staff recommends option one.

Report Reviewed by: Interim Town Manager

Attachment A: MIG - Cost Proposal Moraga Commons and Rancho Laguna Parks / Master Plans

Attachment B: Town written communication with Mr. Sidari and Mr. Fisher