



STAFF REPORT

City Council

Meeting Date: 2/11/2020
Staff Report Number: 20-025-CC

Study Session: Receive direction on interim service levels during construction of the Belle Haven community center and library

Recommendation

The purpose of this study session is to provide background information on the analysis done for continuing services during the construction period for the Belle Haven community center and library (BHCCL.) Direction is requested if the City Council desires staff to investigate alternate service levels than those in the preliminary recommendation.

Policy Issues

City Council is responsible for setting service levels.

Background

In October 2019, Facebook announced its intent to collaborate with the community and City to build a new multigenerational community center and library on the site of the current Onetta Harris Community Center (OHCC,) Menlo Park Senior Center and Belle Haven Youth Center located at 100-110 Terminal Avenue. On December 10, 2019, staff provided an Informational Item staff report to provide an update to City Council while awaiting a written offer. In addition, the City Council appointed city councilmembers Carlton and Taylor to an ad hoc subcommittee on this project. On December 16, 2019, Facebook submitted an offer letter for the City Council's consideration.

On December 30, 2019, an interdisciplinary staff committee was formed to investigate the transition from services provided at the current locations to services provided in interim locations should the City Council accept the offer from Facebook. On January 28, the City Council approved a resolution of intent to collaborate with Facebook and accept the offer.

Analysis

In anticipation of the City Council's consideration of the Facebook offer, the staff committee began to develop a framework to evaluate how to provide interim services during the period of time the current OHCC, Menlo Park Senior Center, Belle Haven Youth Center, and Belle Haven Pool facilities would be inaccessible due to construction activity.

Assumptions used

A number of assumptions were made in order to provide the constraints for considering the possible level of interim services. These assumptions are outlined and briefly described below:

- Collocation of services is preferable

- All else equal, having services offered at the same location is preferable to having them at multiple locations
- If this is not feasible, the greatest concentration of interim services possible is preferable
- Programs with more stringent requirements, such as licensed after-school care, may necessitate a change in service level or separate interim location
- The interim service period must precede the start and extend past the end of construction
 - In order to meet a construction target of January 2021, interim services must be ready in fall 2020, tentatively September or October to avoid holiday disruption
 - Interim services must be available throughout construction and final outfitting, a period conservatively estimated at 24 months
 - The current Senior Center, OHCC, Youth Center are assumed to be wholly unavailable for this entire period starting January 2021, with Belle Haven Pool potentially being unavailable starting as early as September 2020
- Costs will be dependent on the interim location(s) used and service levels provided
 - For example, one option might involve sourcing potential vacant, unimproved land and fitting the minimum number of temporary buildings necessary to house interim services
 - Other potential solutions, involve a commercial rental with associated tenant improvements,

Current service inventory

The current service inventory (Attachment A) is a listing of all services provided at the site of the proposed project grouped by facility.

Priority tier for interim services

Of the aforementioned inventory, all of the services are valued and important, but not all services are as critical or practical to provide during the interim construction period. There is a strong commitment to continuing to provide services with a particular focus on services related to health and safety of vulnerable populations (e.g., seniors, children.) Three priority tiers have been identified in an effort to distinguish between these categories. The factors which contribute to each rating are described in greater detail below:

Tier 1

A vulnerable population is the primary service constituency and the service provided is of critical importance to health or safety

Tier 2

The program or service provided is not critical

AND

Alternative space for the program or service can be reasonably acquired

Tier 3

The program or service provided is not critical

AND

There are no reasonable alternatives for space which are not cost prohibitive

Interim service levels

In addition to prioritizing the services currently provided, a recommendation was developed for the degree of services to be provided in the interim, ranging from the current level at the high end to temporary discontinuation at the low end. All services are considered to be inclusive of all factors necessary to provide

the service, including appropriate building floor space and room configuration, transportation if necessary and staff workspaces. The ratings are described in greater detail below:

- Same level – The service is critical and cannot be provided at a lower level without severe disruption
- Reduced level – An alternative service level has been identified which meets most or all program goals
- Outsource – There exists another provider or location for service which can suffice in the interim
- Suspend – Provision of this service is not feasible during project construction but may resume afterward

Recommended interim service summary

The services currently offered, ordered alphabetically by current location, are summarized in Table 1 below by their respective recommended interim level. The specific recommendations are included in Attachment A.

Table 1: Recommended interim service level			
Service	Current location	Tier	Recommended interim service level
Pool operations	Belle Haven Pool	3	Suspended
Sports field group rentals	Kelly Field	2	Same level
Second Harvest program	OHCC	1	Same level
Recreation classes, community special events	OHCC	2	Reduced level
Drop-in fitness/gym classes, room rentals	OHCC	3	Suspended
Senior meals, transportation, health and counseling programs	Senior Center	1	Same level
Senior recreation classes, special events, game room	Senior Center	2	Reduced level
Seniors' community garden	Senior Center	2	Outsourced
Senior community meeting rooms	Senior Center	3	Suspended

Other considerations

If the City Council desires to offer services at levels either higher or lower than those recommended, there may be additional costs or savings associated with doing so. For instance, the City Council may desire to subsidize the costs of using alternate facilities through methods such as enhancing the current shuttle service between the Belle Haven Pool and Burgess campus pool in order to provide more frequent service. Similarly, while the space at facilities on the Burgess campus could perform a similar function to a variety of services currently offered at OHCC, the City Council may desire to offer preferential scheduling, transportation, or both in order to increase the interim service level. Reducing interim services would serve a similar function, whereby there is potential cost savings available. Such reduced services could take the form of fewer special events or reducing the amount of space needed to deliver the service. Due to the wide range of potential strategies, neither strategies for increased or decreased service levels beyond the recommended level have been evaluated to date but can be investigated with City Council direction.

Subcommittee review

The City Council ad hoc subcommittee reviewed Attachment A. The Subcommittee generally support the approach for the recommended interim service, but wants to receive public and City Council feedback at the Study Session February 11 before formulating a recommendation for the February 25 City Council meeting. As part of the staff report for February 25, staff will provide some historical data regarding the types and frequency of facility rentals to better understand the implications of suspending this service.

Next steps

Staff is beginning to reach out to potential partners to determine their level of interest in working with the City to deliver services. After receiving initial feedback on the desired service levels February 11, staff will identify some specific site locations for providing interim services. Staff will focus in the immediate Belle Haven neighborhood, but will consider other sites within the northern portion of Menlo Park if necessary. Locations will include sites owned by the City, other public entities or nonprofits, and private entities. Depending on the site and the type of improvements required, there may be need for zoning and/or building permits, which will need to be factored into the schedule. Construction activity may include utility connections (e.g., water, sewer, electric and telecommunication,) site improvements (parking, paving, grading/drainage,) and/or tenant improvements. A primary overarching consideration will include compliance with applicable disabled access requirements.

Impact on City Resources

Staff will provide a rough estimate of potential costs and any budget implications as part of the staff report for the February 25 City Council meeting. In addition, staff will identify options for modifications to standard contracting authority in order to meet the identified timeframe for having the interim services online.

Environmental Review

This action is not a project within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines §§ 15378 and 15061(b)(3) as it will not result in any direct or indirect physical change in the environment.

Public Notice

Public notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with the agenda items being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. In addition, the City sent electronic notices via Nextdoor, Facebook, the Weekly Digest and Belle Haven neighborhood updates newsletters, and directly to over 120 email subscribers and 28 text message subscribers from the project page (Attachment B.)

Attachments

- A. Current service inventory
- B. Hyperlink – project page: menlopark.org/bellehaven

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