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CURRENT PARK PROGRAM OF CITY OF EL CERRITO

The growth of the past twenty (20) years has seen our open fields and hills gradually taken up with housing developments. While we have become a finer community through this development, we have at the same time lost the open spaces that in previous times were a source of enjoyment for young and old alike. In the days when great open spaces were all around there was little appreciation for the eventual need for parks and open spaces to serve a completely developed community. Several small gullies were acquired by the city in the 1920's and some minimal park development was undertaken in the 1930's. In 1944, the city purchased a seventeen acre parcel which is now Cerrito Vista Park.

A comprehensive program of park development and land acquisition was not undertaken until 1954 when voters approved a 10¢ park tax development levy. Since 1958, additional funds have been made available from the city's Capital Improvement Fund. The Capital Improvement Fund is designed to provide financing for all city capital improvement needs including parks. Twenty-five per cent of the city's sales tax receipts are by ordinance allocated to this fund.

With the inception of the park development program in 1954, improvements were undertaken on Poinsett, Tassajara, Castro, Huber and Cerrito Vista Parks; the El Cerrito Swim Center was constructed, and land acquired for Canyon Park, Arlington Park and Hillside Park. A total of \$765,000 had been expended on park development and land acquisition during the ten (10) years previous to the passage of the bond. In addition, gifts of land valued at an additional \$120,000 had been accepted by the city for park purposes. While many improvements had been achieved, a great deal remained to be accomplished to complete the proposals of the Master Plan for Parks and Recreation and the more specific recommendations of the recent El Cerrito Citizens Conference on the Community's Future.

The park development program was at this time financed on a "pay-as-you-go" basis with a small amount of work being accomplished each year with the current year's allocation. In an effort to be fair to all sections of the community, projects were spread over a broad area. As a result, it had not been possible to totally complete any of the park projects initiated. It further had not been possible to even commence development on several additional planned parks.

An El Cerrito Citizens Conference on the Community's Future was appointed by the City Council in the fall of 1963 to review this problem and accordingly recommended that the City Council seek voter approval for issuance of general obligation bonds to finance the complete program. General obligation bond issues for cities require a 66-2/3% majority for successful passage. Previous park bond issues received 63.8% in 1958 and 65.4% in 1959. On June 2, 1964 the voters passed a Park Bond Measure in the amount of \$1,200,000 receiving 67.9% approval.

OPEN SPACE ACQUISITION & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM OF THE CITY OF EL CERRITO

<u>Project Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Source of Funds</u>	<u>Schedule</u>
1. Canyon Trail Park - 8 acres adjacent to El Monte School			
(a) Acquire 4.2 acres	21,065. 21,065.	City Park Bond Funds Fed. Open-Space Funds (12/16/65 application)	1965 complete
(b) Develop-landscaping, irrigation, tot area, turf play area, walks, benches	50,000. 50,000. 100,000.	City Park Bond Funds Fed. Beautification Funds (Proposed future application)	1966-67
(c) Develop-neighborhood clubhouse & tennis courts	45,000.	City Park Bond Funds	1966-67
Total Project Cost	187,130.		
2. Richmond Annex Area Park - 2 1/4 acre parcel to be acquired and developed jointly with the City of Richmond			

<u>Project Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Source of Funds</u>	<u>Schedule</u>
(a) Acquisition - 1½ acres	34,750. 34,750.	City of Richmond Gen. Fd. City of El Cerrito Park Bond Funds	1966-67
	<u>69,500.</u> 139,000.	Fed. Open-Space App. by City of Richmond	
(b) Acquisition - ¾ acres	36,500. 36,500.	City of Rich. Gen Fd. City of El Cerrito Park Bond Funds	
	<u>73,000.</u> 146,000.	Fed. Open-Space - Future app. by City of Richmond	
(c) Develop - Turf play area, tot area, rest rooms and landscape	15,000. 15,000.	City of Rich. Gen. Fd. City of El Cerrito Park Bond Funds	1967-68
	30,000. <u>60,000.</u>	Fed. Open-Space - Future app. by City of Richmond	
3. Huber Park - Existing 2.6 acre neighborhood park			
Park Improvements-Clubhouse, landscaping, walks & picnic area	<u>50,000.</u> 50,000	City Park Bond Funds	1966-67
4. Poinsett Park - Existing neigh- borhood park			
Park Improvements-clubhouse, walks & deck area	<u>25,000.</u> 25,000.	City Park Bond Funds	1966-67
5. Hillside Park-Natural Area - 109 acres hillside natural area			
(a) Acquire 43½ acres	97,200. <u>97,200.</u> 194,400.	City Park Bond Funds Fed. Open-Space Funds (12/16/65 application)	1965-66
(b) Acquire Lots 27, 28, 30 Tract 2042, & easterly 2 acres of Lot 42, Schmidt Village Tract	18,000. <u>18,000.</u> 36,000.	City Park Bond Funds Fed. Open-Space Funds (Proposed future app.)	1966-67
(c) Beautification Improve- ments - Multi-use amphi- theater area, major & secondary trails, water system, drainage struct- ures, tree planting, PG&E right-of-way landscaping	65,000. 190,145. 255,145. <u>510,290.</u>	Park Bond Funds Capital Improvement Funds Fed. Beautification (Proposed future app.)	1966-67 1968-71 1966-71
Total Project Cost	740,690.		
6. Cerrito Vista Park - existing 15 acre Community Park			
(a) Park Improvements- de- velop 2 acres undevelop- ed land with putting green, quite landscape area, childrens birthday area	40,000.	City Park Bond Funds	1966-67
(b) Construct Tennis Center- on leased land from PG&E	35,000.	City Park Bond Funds	1966-67
(c) Construct Com. Center	<u>225,000.</u>	City Park Bond Funds	1965-66
Total Project Cost	300,000.		

<u>Project Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Source of Funds</u>	<u>Schedule</u>
7. Fairmont Park - acquisition of 3/4 acre of land adjacent to Fairmont School - Develop neighborhood park on City acquired & School-owned lands			
(a) Land acquisition	75,000.	City Park Bond Funds	Complete
(b) Construct turf play area, tot area, crafts area, remodel clubhouse	50,000.	City Park Bond Funds	1965-66
Total Project Cost	125,000.		
8. Arlington Park - Develop 5½ acre neighborhood park adjacent to Boy Scout Camp			
(a) Construct tennis courts clubhouse, tot area, turf playfield, picnic areas	<u>130,000.</u> 130,000	City Park Bond Funds	1966-67
(b) Possible acquisition of Boy Scout Camp (surrounding development making camp use difficult) 18 acres	90,000.	City funds and possible Fed. Open-Space Application	1970-71
Total Project Cost	220,000.		
9. Creekside Park - Acquire land adjacent to Cerrito Creek between Adams St. and west city limits - Develop irrigation system, lawn area, tree planting, walks, benches. Proposed in conjunction with Code Enforcement Application in preparation for Richmond Annex. Addition area (Should be undertaken in cooperation with City of Albany & California Orientation Center for the Blind)	120,000.	Capital Improvement Funds	1966-67
	120,000.	Proposed Federal Open-Space App.	
Total Project Cost	240,000.		
10. High School Area - Acquire & develop neighborhood park facility (Built up section of City site selection not yet made)	200,000.	City funds	1970-71 or later
Total Project Cost	200,000.		

In summary it would take a continued financial program for the City of El Cerrito to keep up with its future park needs. We would like to suggest, as a means of assuring our citizens of adequate park development that would meet their present as well as future needs, an increase in the state sales tax that would be collected and used for parks similar to the state gas tax program for street construction.