



## Parks & Recreation Commission Agenda Item

**Commission Meeting Date:** April 12, 2022

**TO:** Parks & Recreation Commission

**FROM:** Mario Guerrero, Jr., Parks & Recreation Manager  
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**SUBJECT:** Support Letter Request for Pioneer Park

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### **Recommendation:**

Staff recommends the Parks and Recreation Commission:

- 1) Approve and sign a support letter for Pioneer Park improvements for the 2023 Community Project funding request cycle

### **Background:**

The House Appropriations Committee will be accepting Community Project Funding requests for Fiscal Year 2023. This initiative allows Members of Congress to target federal funds towards projects and programs in their respective congressional districts that will address the most significant needs facing the communities they represent. If submissions make it through the full process, the requests will be funded through the numerous government funding bills. Projects are restricted to a limited number of federal funding streams, and only state and local governments and eligible non-profit entities are permitted to receive funding.

### **Discussion:**

The Project the City of Lompoc has selected is improvements to Pioneer Park. Specifically, we request \$791,154 from the Fiscal Year 2023 Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development Appropriations bill, Economic Development Initiative account for the Pioneer Park Improvement Project. These funds will be used to construct a new playground and exercise equipment at the park, part of the larger project to renovate the facility.

Pioneer Park, located at 1209 E Airport Ave in Lompoc, is a dilapidated baseball park and playground located between an elementary school and multi-family housing. The

improvements will bring opportunities for safe and healthy recreational activities for a whole range of residents from youth to seniors. Installation of accessible playground equipment as well as exercise equipment will improve the health of the community. This portion of the project will utilize the requested federal funding. Meanwhile, the installation of a new baseball field will serve the community with healthy activity, team interaction and engage our youth with the community around them through sports. Youths aged 12-18 from lower income families often quit sports due to the financial burden, lack of access to facilities, and transportation.

Regarding the playground and exercise equipment, the City recognizes that play is not only fun but also an essential part of a child's development and is critical for the successful growth of both the brain and body. The installation of an all-inclusive play structure for ALL children in the community as well as exercise equipment to accompany the walking paths will allow the WHOLE community to be more physically active and healthy. Lompoc is a community that suffers from rising rates of childhood obesity and physical inactivity, and we are eager to invest in projects that promote and support healthy living.

Lompoc's median household income is \$57,071, far below the statewide median household income of \$78,672 and persons living in poverty are 50 percent higher than the state average (17.6% - Lompoc). Given that, there is a great demand for improved parks and sports facilities to serve disadvantaged, at-risk youth and other members of the community. Improvement to the City's parks and sports facilities is a high priority for the City of Lompoc. Community Development Block Grant funding was prioritized for park improvements and assisted with removal and replacement of restrooms at Pioneer Park about a year ago (\$450,000).

**Conclusion:**

The Parks and Recreation Division has over 32 million dollars in CIP projects identified and more that could be added. The opportunity to support Federal Funding to help renovate an identified area is a great opportunity.

Respectfully submitted,

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Mario Guerrero, Jr., Parks and Recreation Manager

**APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL TO THE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION:**

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Christie Alarcon, Community Development Director

Attachments: 1) Mayor Support Letter example