STAFF REPORT

DATE: September 21, 2021
TO: City-County Parks Board
FROM: Phil Gonzalez, Planner I
RE: Parks Development Funding Application, La Casa Grande North Park

Applicant:
La Casa Grande HOA
Representatives: Linda & Richard Wilson
2583 Prickley Pear Ave
East Helena, MT 59635

City-County Parks Board Meeting: October 6, 2021 --- 11:30 a.m.

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:
On behalf of the La Casa Grande Estates Homeowner’s Association (HOA), Linda and Richard Wilson have applied to the City-County Parks Board (Parks Board) for monies from the Parks Development Fund for expenses incurred while repairing the existing water pump used to irrigate La Casa Grande North Park (North Park). The total cost of the repair was $5,773.20. The funding request is for $4,329.90, and the HOA plans to cover the remainder of the costs ($1,443.30). If awarded the funds, they would be used to reimburse the HOA for 75% of their total expenses.

II. REQUEST:
The Applicant is seeking $4,329.90 from the Parks Development Fund to reimburse the HOA.

III. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:
Approval.

IV. LOCATION
North Park is located inside of the La Casa Grande Estates Subdivision, east of and adjacent to Valley Drive and south of and adjacent to Bandera Drive, in the SW1/4 of Section 19,
V. BACKGROUND/STAFF ANALYSIS:
North Park is one of two parks located within the La Casa Grande Estates Subdivision, a large residential subdivision. Both North Park and the Woodward Park (a.k.a. La Casa Grande South Park) are maintained by the La Casa Grande HOA with responsibilities that include: mowing, repairing, upgrading, and weeding. Recently a transformer blew causing the North Park’s irrigation system to fail due to damage to the irrigation well’s pump. The Applicant is requesting reimbursement for the money spent to repair this pump to offset the annual budget for continued maintenance of both Parks.

North Park is located within the Southeast Valley Park Fee Area in the Helena Valley Planning Area.

Criteria for Determining Close Proximity:
The 2017 Lewis and Clark County Parks and Recreation Plan outlines the criteria for determining which parks funds are available for the Applicant’s proposal. Below are the criteria followed by Staff’s analyses.
a. **Is the park or recreational area within a 15-minute, or 2-mile radius bike ride from the subdivision from which the funds were generated, or will it provide for new or improved non-motorized access links to a nearby park or recreational area?**

Yes. North Park is within a 15-minute bike ride from multiple contributing subdivisions along Valley Drive and in the surrounding area. In addition, La Casa Grande Estates made a cash payment in lieu of dedicating additional parkland during the subdivision review process.

b. **Is the park or recreational area physically accessible and free of impediments to the subdivision residents by walking or bicycling?**

Yes. The residents of the La Casa Grande Estates Subdivision are able to walk or ride a bicycle through the Subdivision along the internal road network to access North Park and there are no fences or impediments restricting access to it. In addition, residents and non-residents can access the Park along Valley Drive, which abuts the Park’s west boundary and has a trail along it’s west side.

c. **Is the park or recreational area on the way to a common destination of residents of the subdivision, such as employment centers, schools, or regional recreational areas, such as state parks or other public lands?**

Yes. The La Casa Grande Estates Subdivision is located along Valley Drive, a heavily trafficked route for commuters going to East Helena, Helena, and other parts of the Helena Valley. In addition, East Helena High School is located across the street (Valley Drive) from the Park and Prickly Pear Elementary School is located south of the High School, also across the street (Valley Drive) from the Subdivision. There is a trail along the west side of Valley Drive that residents, school-age children, and others can use to access the Park.

d. **Does the park or recreational area provide a link to an established or planned park, recreation area or trail?**

No. North Park does not provide a link to an established or planned park, recreation area, or trail, but there is an existing trail along the west side of Valley Drive that provides access to North Park.

e. **Is the park or recreational area within the same Growth Policy planning area and/or park fee area?**

Yes. North Park lies within the Southeast Valley Park Fee Area, which is located in the Helena Valley Planning Area. The Helena Valley Planning Area is one of six Planning Areas laid out in the Lewis and Clark County Growth Policy. If approved, the funds
requested will come from the Southeast Valley Park Fee Area.

f. **Will the parkland or funds result in improvements that will provide for the recreational needs of the residents of the subdivision from which funds were collected?**

Yes. North Park is located in the La Casa Grande Estates Subdivision and is within a 15-minute, or 2-mile radius bike ride from other contributing subdivisions along Valley Drive and in the surrounding area. In addition to the residents of this Subdivision using the Park for recreational purposes, two schools and a trail are located in close proximity to the Park, which increases the likelihood that residents from other contributing subdivisions will use this Park as well. Assisting with the cost to repair the failed well pump will also allow the HOA to utilize funds for other scheduled maintenance in this Park.

Criteria for Use of Park Funds

The 2017 Parks Plan outlines the criteria for determining whether and how to expend park funds. Below are the criteria followed by Staff’s analyses.

a. **Would the proposed expenditure benefit school aged children, seniors, or others?**

Yes. North Park is located in a suburban environment and services all residents of the area, including school-age children, seniors and others. According to the application, there is a basketball court and a bench in the Park. East Helena High School is located directly across the street (Valley Drive from the Park) and Prickly Pear Elementary School lies in close proximity to the Park. In addition, there is a trail located adjacent to the Park on the west side of Valley Drive.

b. **Would the proposed improvements be accessible and suitable for recreation?**

Yes. The irrigated grass in North Park will continue to provide accessible space that is usable for a range of recreational activities.

c. **Would the funds be used in the same planning area or fee area in which they were generated?**

Yes. If approved, the funds will come from the Southeast Valley Park Fee Area, which is where the Park is located.

d. **Would the funds provide for the recreational needs of the residents of the subdivision from which funds were collected, including whether the improvements would be in reasonably close proximity to the subdivision?**


Yes. North Park is located in the La Casa Grande Estates Subdivision and is within a 15-minute, or 2-mile radius bike ride from other contributing subdivisions along Valley Drive and in the surrounding area. In addition, the irrigated grass will continue to provide accessible space that is usable for a range of recreational activities. The proximity to two schools and a trail also increase the likelihood that residents from other contributing subdivisions will use this Park.

e. Is a mechanism for maintenance in place so that after development, the park or recreation area will be adequately maintained?
Yes and no. The Park is currently maintained by the HOA, but often, property owners do not pay their dues to maintain the Park, which then limits the funds available for maintaining the Park.

f. In the event of a request for dispersal of county parkland funds that were dedicated as part of a subdivision process, are the funds being requested directly the result of the cash dedication for the subdivision?
1) If yes, is the request in accordance with the parks proposal that was approved during subdivision review?
Yes and no. North Park and the Woodland Park were dedicated through the subdivision review process for the La Casa Grande Subdivision to satisfy a portion of the parkland requirement. The remainder of this requirement was satisfied through a cash payment, which was made in the 1970s. It is therefore unlikely that the funds requested are directly linked to that cash payment due to the length of time between that payment and today’s request.

g. What specific goals or policies of the Parks Plan would be met by the expenditure?
Goal 3. Develop parks in each of the five planning areas of the County where and when justified.
   Policy 3.01 Utilize cash in-lieu of parkland dedication area monies from the Subdivision and Platting Act for park development.

Goal 4. Lewis and Clark County will only accept parklands that can be developed, maintained and accessed.
   Policy 4.04 Cash in-lieu of parkland shall be utilized for development and maintenance of neighborhood or regional parks following the guidelines of this plan.
   Policy 4.05 Where appropriate, encourage subdividers to propose cash payment or a combination of land donation and cash payment to fund new parks or recreational areas that become improved, instead of allowing dedication of vacant parkland that may not be improved for years and become an unused maintenance burden.
Goal 8. Develop lands that connect to other public lands.

Policy 8.01 Recommend approval to the County Commission Board for lands that provides access to public areas as parkland when reviewing subdivision applications. If recommended, a maintenance district shall be formed for that land.

h. **Is this parkland a regional park within the same fee collection area that provides opportunity for organized team sports that would not otherwise be available to subdivision residents?**

No. North Park is not considered a regional park. It is a County park that is irrigated and could be used for a variety of recreational activities. There is also a basketball court and bench located on-site.

i. **Has this parkland received prior funding from the Parks Board?**

Yes. According to the application, North Park received assistance for the installation of the existing irrigation system.

VI. **RECOMMENDED MOTION**

Move to APPROVE the Applicant’s funding request: $4,319.90 to be provided by the Southeast Valley Park Fee Area and $1,443.30 to be provided by the HOA.

1. **Application and Supplements**
Project Overview

1. Name of Park or Recreational Area: La Casa Grande North Park
2. Location of Park or Recreation Area: Valley, Bodega, Aveno
3. Name of Sponsoring Organization(s): La Casa Grande HOA
4. Name of Organization Representative: Linda Richard Wilson
5. Address: 1583 Prairie Ave, East Aveno, State: MT, Zipcode: 59635
6. Daytime Phone #: 406-459-6586, 406-459-9350
7. E-mail: n10linda@hotmail.com

Briefly describe the proposed project. You will have the opportunity to describe it in more detail below.

The irrigation pump stopped working because one leg of electrical transformer above the pump blew out.

8. Has this park previously received County funds? ☐ Yes ☐ No  
   If so, when? The county helped put the sprinkler system in at the North Park

9. How much money are you requesting for this project? $43,199.00

10. How many hours of volunteer labor are expected to be used? 0 x $10/hr = $

11. What is the expected value of donated materials? $0
12. *How much money will your organization contribute to the project? $ 443.30

13. What is the total cost of this project? $ 5,113.20

* Note: The requested amount should be no more than 75% of the total project cost

**DESCRIPTION OF ORGANIZATION**

1. Names of Board Officers
   a. President: Richard Wilson
   b. Vice President: None
   c. Secretary: Linda Wilson
   d. Treasurer: Same
   e. Members at Large: Peter Jackson, Ryan Williams

2. Number of Volunteers:

3. Number of Members: 155 Hours

4. Organization’s previous community service:

   The Woodward Park and the North Park are maintained by La Casa Grande HOA which includes mowing, repairs, upgrades and weeding.
PRESENT SITE CONDITION
1. Approximate acreage: 2.5 acres
2. List any facilities presently on-site:
   Basketball court and bench
3. Describe the condition of vegetation and noxious weeds:
   Variety of grasses plus few weeds. Noxious weeds were sprayed this spring.
4. List adjacent property owners and uses: Single family homes
5. Describe the accessibility to general public (hours, seasons, any other access restrictions):
   Fully accessible to general public 24/7.
6. In which Planning Area is this park located? Exhibit "A" shows a map of the Planning Areas.
   (Please circle)
   
   Augusta  Canyon Ferry  Craig/Wolf Creek
   Helena Valley  Lincoln  Marysville-Canyon Creek

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PROPOSED PROJECT

Describe the project in detail below.

Use additional paper if necessary. Note that a single project is not necessarily expected to address every issue listed below. Additional consideration will be given to projects addressing these needs as identified in the Lewis and Clark County Parks and Comprehensive Plan.

Be sure to address:

- Why the project is needed
- Whom it will serve
- How it will benefit the public
- If applicable, describe how this project will increase the access for people with disabilities
- If applicable, describe how this project will increase the quality or amount of natural habitat
**Itemized Project Budget.**

Please attach a minimum of two bids for any contracted work. This is for reference only; applicants are not required to choose the lowest bidder. Any volunteer contributions must be documented and signed and dated by the volunteer.

**Example Matching Grant**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expense/Contribution</th>
<th>Total Costs</th>
<th>In-kind Costs</th>
<th>Other Funding Source(s)</th>
<th>Request for Grant Reimbursement (≥ 75%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pruning equipment: loppers, pole saw, lawn refuse bags</td>
<td>$150</td>
<td></td>
<td>Donation from Rotary Club ($40)</td>
<td>$110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Applicant pays at least: $38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New basketball court install: court costs and 10 hrs volunteering x $12</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>$10,800</td>
<td>School Fundraiser ($7,500)</td>
<td>$18,300</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Applicant pays at least: $6,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cement block and gravel for retaining wall repair</td>
<td>$650</td>
<td></td>
<td>Applicant gets HOA to pay $200</td>
<td>$450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Applicant pays at least: $163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebuild and repair retaining wall (14 hours of volunteering x $12)</td>
<td>$168</td>
<td></td>
<td>Applicant pays $50</td>
<td>$118</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Applicant pays at least $42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PROJECT BUDGET**

**TOTAL PROJECT COST: $**

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Project has been completed to maintain park
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1. Why are these funds needed? How long has there been a need for the project?

We used most, 85%, of our budgeted money for this project.

2. Describe the project implementation schedule.
MAINTENANCE PLAN
Distribution of money will be contingent on approval of the Maintenance Plan.

1. Is this parkland within an established Rural Improvement District (RID)? Is the RID collecting money to maintain parkland? *Parkland within an RID will have to abide by County bid contracting requirements/procedure.

2. What will be the frequency and type of maintenance on the project? The pump is used only during spring, summer and fall seasons. Pump is turned on May, June, July and Aug. We have power shut off during winter. Then the sprinkler system is blowout.

3. Who will be conducting the maintenance of the property? If it is multiple organizations, this application will have to be signed by all respective organization representatives.

Organization: ___________________________ Signature: ___________________________

Organization: ___________________________ Signature: ___________________________

4. Describe the annual maintenance budget and funding sources: There is an $8 fee attached to the water/sewer monthly fee, but it is volunteer only. The condomns for the housing district were never legalized.
LONG RANGE PLAN

1. Describe how this project relates to the long-range plans for site improvements.
H & L Drilling, Inc.
P. O. Box 919
4150 Hwy 12 E.
East Helena, MT  59635
Phone: 406-227-7435    Fax: 406-227-8949
handldrilling@msn.com  www.handldrilling.com

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bill To</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>La Casa Grande Water Users Assoc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.O. Box 944</td>
</tr>
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<td>East Helena, MT  59635</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Qty</th>
<th>Rate</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The pump is a 7 1/2HP set on 150' of 3&quot; Galvanized Pipe</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2,582.00</td>
<td>2,582.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goulds 7 1/2HP 65G75 Pump End</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,868.00</td>
<td>1,868.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 1/2HP 480V 3 Phase 4&quot; Pump Motor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.65</td>
<td>683.55</td>
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<tr>
<td>2&quot; Galv Pipe T &amp; C</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>106.60</td>
<td>106.60</td>
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<tr>
<td>2&quot; Flomatic Check Valve</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13.05</td>
<td>13.05</td>
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<tr>
<td>3&quot; x 2&quot; Galv Bushing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.25</td>
<td>5.25</td>
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<tr>
<td>#10 Submersible Splice Kit</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.15</td>
<td>11.15</td>
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<tr>
<td>O Ring for Pileless Adapter</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>3.60</td>
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<tr>
<td>2&quot; SS Hose Clamps</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>500.00</td>
<td>500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor</td>
<td></td>
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We Appreciate Your Business!!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P.O. No.</th>
<th>Terms</th>
<th>Project</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Due on receipt</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Payments/Credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance Due</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>