



24-2180

DATE: February 6, 2024 (Item No. {{item.number}})

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Gregory G. Iturria, County Budget Director
Don Rocha, Director, Parks and Recreation Department

SUBJECT: All-Inclusive Playground Grant Program – Proposed Third Round Funding

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Under advisement from September 19, 2023 (Item No. 13): Receive report relating to options to establish a third round of funding in the amount of \$10 million for an All-Inclusive Playground Grant Program. (LA-1)

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

Approval of the recommended action would have no impact to the County General Fund. Funding would need to be approved through subsequent actions after Board of Supervisors direction. As part of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-2024 Mid-Year Budget Review, Administration is recommending creating a reserve for the 2012 Measure A Sales Tax fund balance from FY 2022-2023 in the amount of \$5,512,549. This funding could be allocated for a third round of funding for All-Inclusive Playgrounds or for other community needs identified by the Board of Supervisors. The remaining amount of \$4,487,451 (\$10,000,000 request - \$5,512,519 2012 Measure A funds) for future years could either be funded by the General Fund Contingency Reserve or from a future 2012 Measure A Sales Tax fund balance.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION AND BACKGROUND

This report responds to the Board's referral by Supervisors Simitian and Chavez on September 19, 2023 (Item No. 13) in which the Board asked Administration to report on options to allocate \$10 million on a one-time basis to provide additional matching grant funds for the development of all-inclusive playgrounds, including all-inclusive tracks, arenas, and courts in Santa Clara County. The Board also requested the status of current all-inclusive projects under development (Chavez) as well as an equity analysis for future funding of all-inclusive projects (Arenas).

On February 28, 2017 (Item No. 9), the Board approved the All-Inclusive Playground Grant Program Procedural Guide, which established the All-Inclusive Playground Grant Program to be administered by the Parks and Recreation Department.

In the FY 2017-2018 Adopted budget, a \$10 million reserve was established and funded with \$5 million of 2012 Measure A sales tax funds and \$5 million from other General Fund sources. This established the first round of funding of the All-Inclusive Grants Program.

On September 11, 2018 (Item No. 71), the Board allocated an additional \$10 million from the General Fund Contingency Reserve and established a second round of funding.

- As of December 31, 2023, \$20 million in grant funding has been awarded.
- Eighteen projects totaling \$10.9 million have been completed and reimbursements have been issued.
- Seven more projects totaling \$9.1 million are expected to be completed before July 1, 2025, most of which will be completed in 2024.

One project in the amount of \$49,354 was cancelled at the grantee's request (Happy Hollow Foundation for a project relating to the Backyard Habitat and Dino Dig). **Attachment A** includes a map of County grant funded and non-County grant funded all-inclusive playgrounds in Santa Clara County.

Potential Demand for a Third Round of Funding

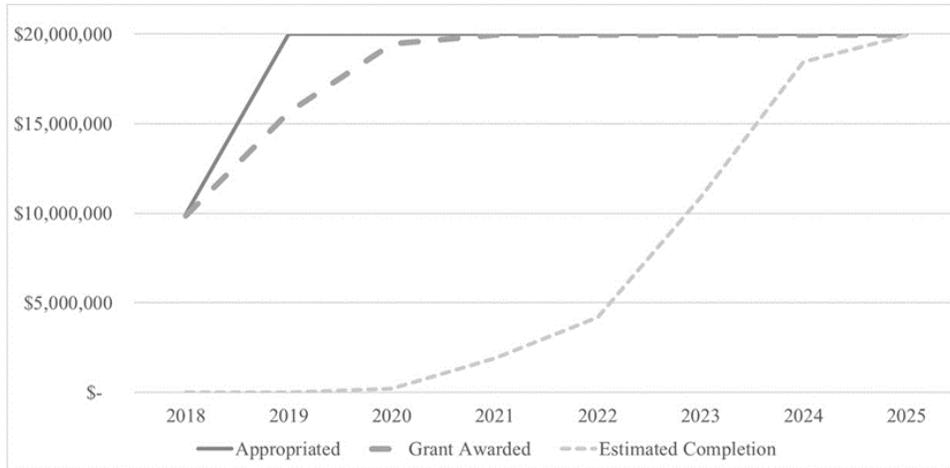
To understand the feasibility of previously submitted projects and gauge current interest in a third round of funding, the Parks and Recreation Department contacted 29 potential applicants including school districts and cities in December 2023. Of the 29 potential applicants contacted, eight responded, but seven stated that they would not be able to match the grant and only one organization stated that it could offer a match at 100%. Should a third round of funding be approved, all previously denied applicants would be invited to reapply and the offer would be extended to new applicants, but it is not known whether there is demand commensurate with the proposed funding level and agencies may not have resource capacity to offer 100% match funding.

Progress on First and Second Rounds of Funding

When funding was awarded for projects on a matching basis, in most cases, school districts, cities, nonprofits, and donors contributed approximately the same amount as the grant award. Five projects, however, were overmatched and ranged from 150% to 300% matching.

Following a change to the All-Inclusive Playground Grant Program Procedural Guide, there were also five projects in the second round of funding that did not receive a matching contribution from the applicant (i.e., the project was solely funded with County resources). All these projects were in elementary school settings and the County's total contribution for these projects was \$2.3 million.

Execution of projects has been affected by COVID-19, supply chain shortages, and weather. Projects where the grant was executed in 2018 have taken, on average, four years to complete. Also, the size of the project can impact the length of time for completion. Execution has improved and projects where the grant was executed in or after calendar year 2020 are expected to be completed within two years. The graph below shows the progress of projects.



The All-Inclusive Playground Grant Program Procedural Guide that was developed and approved by the Board on June 20, 2017 (Item No. 13) set criteria about project scope, design, and accessibility. Applications for the first and second rounds of funding were evaluated by subject matter experts that included advocates for, and members of, the disability community.

Evaluation was based on how well each project addressed the need for accessible spaces for children and parents with cognitive and physical disabilities within Santa Clara County, and the location and access of the playground (e.g., if it was centrally located, walkable, publicly accessible, etc.).

An equity analysis was performed relating to the outcome of projects approved in the first and second rounds. **Attachment A** summarizes the method of the analysis and provides a map of all-inclusive playgrounds. If the Board elects to fund a third round of funding, the Parks and Recreation Department would expand on prior programs by working with the Offices of Diversity, Equity, and Belonging and Disability Affairs to create a program that enhances equitable outcomes.

During the first and second rounds of funding, the County did not award grant funding for all applications that were submitted. While 17 projects that were not approved in the first and second rounds of funding had match funding proposals that ranged from 100% to 300%, not all met the requirements of the grant, including regional availability and access.

The following table shows the total estimated cost of All-Inclusive Playground projects where a grant was not awarded.

Projects that were not approved that represent the potential for unmet demand

District	# of Projects	Requested Grant Amount	Total Project Cost	Match %
1	2	1,150,000	2,300,000	100%
2	2	750,000	1,500,000	100%
3	5	3,104,339	6,666,010	115%
4	4	2,800,000	7,600,000	171%
5	4	2,384,488	4,768,936	100%
Total	17	10,188,827	22,834,946	124%

ATTACHMENTS:

- AIPG Equity Score and Map