



TO: PARKS RECREATION & OPEN SPACE COMMISSION
FROM: Mark Hurley, Public Works Director/City Engineer
SUBJECT: **Expenditure Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Tax**
AGENDA DATE: February 8, 2024

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Recommend that the Parks Recreation & Open Space Commission (PROSC) discuss options for how to spend revenue from the sugar-sweetened beverage tax proceeds for Fiscal Year 2025 and provide a recommendation to City Council for consideration at their special study session.

BACKGROUND

In November 2016 Albany voters approved Measure O1, Ordinance No. 2016-02 (Attachment 1) enacting a tax on sugar sweetened beverages. Per the ordinance language, the Council shall hold a study session annually in conjunction with the City's budget process to receive input and recommendations regarding the expenditure of proceeds from the tax, and solicit recommendations from a number of organizations, including: the PROSC, Social & Economic Justice Commission, Transportation Commission (formerly the Traffic & Safety Commission), a designated representative from the Albany Unified School District, and individuals with specialized expertise in areas such as public health issues and programs relating to diabetes, obesity and sugary drink consumption.

The Council-approved Fiscal Year 2024 Sugar Sweetened Beverage Tax Expenditure Plan (Attachment 2) includes funding for the crossing guard program, Healthy Me Music & Movement program (which teaches preschool, transitional kindergarten and kindergarten students the importance of good nutrition, drinking water, fitness, hygiene, and social skills), Bike Safety Program (which teaches 4th & 5th grade students safe street riding), AUSD's All-bany Swims (a pilot program which teaches 1st, 2nd & 3rd grade students basic swimming skills), Move'n'Groove event to promote outdoor exercise and mental wellness and a G7 Access Hub for the BikeLink lockers at the Albany Waterfront rounded out last year's expenditure plan.

DISCUSSION

Per the voter approved Ordinance, the sugar sweetened beverage (SSB) tax is General Fund revenue that the City Council aims to apply towards specific purposes related to health and wellbeing, and approved expenditures are incorporated into the City's annual operating budget. The City estimates receiving \$260,000 of SSB tax proceeds in Fiscal Year 2025. The Council will consider recommendations for the use of SSB tax proceeds at a study session tentatively scheduled for April in conjunction with the City's budget process.

For FY 2024, the PROSC recommended four projects to the Council for consideration for SSB funding (Attachment 3). These included additional recreational equipment on the Ohlone Greenway, additional water bottle filling stations along the Ohlone Greenway, Solano Ave and as close as possible to the Bulb, a new water source to the waterfront to support bottle filling and an outdoor shower, and a sand volleyball court. None of these recommendations were incorporated into the final expenditure plan.

For the purposes of discussion, Staff has identified the following projects as a starting point for the Commission's discussion. These projects are scoped such that they meet the intent of the SSB tax, are a current need as identified by Staff, are less than \$50,000, and actionable within a fiscal year (which is typically a requirement for an operating expense).

- **Inclusive Swing Retrofit:** Terrace, Ocean View and Memorial Parks do not have swings that are accessible for children in wheelchairs. This project would retrofit one or more of the existing swings at each location with a new more inclusive swing.
- **Ohlone Greenway Exercise Equipment:** Several pieces of equipment in the Ohlone Greenway Exercise Yard, across from the Senior Center, have failed beyond repair. The original equipment, which was installed in 2017, had numerous moving parts that were continually breaking and needing replacement. This project will remove the remaining elements of the failed equipment and install more durable equipment which will have greater availability for users and require less maintenance.
- **Sand Volleyball Court – Ocean View Park:** This project would reactivate the little used and dilapidated grass/dirt volleyball court at Ocean View Park (near the Community Garden). One issue with the current court is the soggy soil which limits its playability. The scope of this project would include removing 6-8 inches of soil, place new sand, install new netting and boundary lines, adjust the existing poles and potentially install an underdrain system.
- **Water Bottle Filling Station/Drinking Fountain – Ocean View Park:** This project would upgrade the existing aggregate drinking fountain located at the northeastern corner of the tennis courts. With the upgrade/transition of the existing courts to permanent pickleball courts, this area will be more active and require additional amenities to support park users. The location of this

drinking fountain is ideal to support the four permanent pickleball as well as the ball field. The project would replace the existing, non-functioning drinking fountain with a water bottle filling station. This work is included in the scope of the pickleball project but was not included in the original budget.

- **City Supplied Equipment/Storage Boxes:** The City supplies a variety of equipment to support use of the ball field at Memorial and Ocean View Parks. Some of this equipment is well used and in need of replacement/upgrade. This project would replace the equipment and provide storage boxes.

This list of prospective projects is intended to be a starting point for the Commission's discussion and not a limit to what the commission might recommend to Council. Ideally, the Commission would narrow the list of projects. Staff would then develop a more comprehensive scope of work and cost for each item which then be presented to the Commission in March for final approval. Hopefully, the additional detail and cost information will increase the likelihood of PROCS recommended projects being incorporated in the FY25 expenditure plan.

Attachments

- Attachment 1 – SSB Ordinance
- Attachment 2 – FY24 SSB Tax Expenditure Plan
- Attachment 3 – FY24 PRSOC SSB Recommendations