



# Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
**FROM:** Jon Cicirelli  
Jim Shannon  
**SUBJECT:** GARDNER COMMUNITY CENTER ACTIVATION  
**DATE:** May 22, 2024

Approved

Date: 5/23/24

## RECOMMENDATION

Defer activation of the Gardner Community Center as included in the 2024-2025 Proposed Operating Budget within the Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services Department section of the budget document and instead incorporate activation of the Gardner Community Center into the Neighborhood Center Partner Program.

## BACKGROUND

The 2024-2025 Proposed Operating Budget allocates \$364,330 of Google Community Benefits resources for the first of a two-year activation plan of the Gardner Community Center, including 3.75 positions and approximately \$75,000 of non-personal/equipment funding within the Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS) Department.

In May of 2021, the City Council approved the Downtown West Mixed-Use Plan, including an allocation of \$1 million of funding provided by the Google Community Benefits fund to invest in programs at Gardner to uplift individuals, support economic recovery, and build community among residents of the broader Diridon Station Area. The 2024-2025 Proposed Operating Budget provides staffing and resources for PRNS to offer all-ages programming at the Gardner Community Center, including activities at the Teen Tech Room, programming for seniors, digital programming for youth, recreation and leisure programs such as Youth Summer Camps, and special events and cultural celebrations. Google Community Benefits resources are expected to pay for this expanded level of service through 2025-2026.

## ANALYSIS

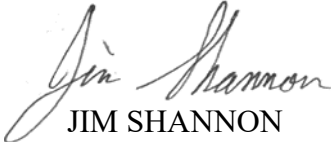
The original proposal to utilize one-time, Google Community Benefits funding would have covered two years of full activation of the Gardner Community Center. The services proposed by staff were developed based on feedback received from community surveys and community engagement.

In response to the City’s proposal, leadership from the Gardner Neighborhood Association (GNA) and the Diridon Area Neighborhood Group (DANG) expressed concern about the cost of the City operating the Gardner Community Center. They believe the funds would last more than two years if the services were provided by a non-profit, community-based organization, or some other entity.

After receiving this feedback, the Administration recommends deferring the activation of the Gardner Community Center using PRNS staff as currently included in the 2024-2025 Proposed Operating Budget. Instead, the Gardner Community Center will be included as part of the Neighborhood Center Partner Program (NCPP), thereby allowing community-based organizations or other non-profits the opportunity to submit a proposal to oversee and implement activation of the Gardner Community Center. Staff will continue to receive input from this community to inform the process. A Request for Proposals was already planned for the NCPP program in the winter of 2025 and will be utilized to search for a provider that can be prepared to open in time for 2025-2026. Under this alternative, PRNS would provide oversight through the NCPP program, and disburse the Google Community Benefits funding for eligible services in the selected proposal.

Representatives of GNA and DANG have been advised that this action will result in a delay in the provision of additional services to the Gardner community. Current services will remain and include senior nutrition, limited senior programming, limited weekday only hours, and summer camps. Should no eligible proposal be submitted or accepted, future staff activation would be considered as part of the 2025-2026 Proposed Budget development process.

/s/  
JON CICIRELLI  
Director, Parks,  
Recreation and Neighborhood Services



JIM SHANNON  
Budget Director

For questions, please contact Jon Cicirelli at [Jon.Cicirelli@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:Jon.Cicirelli@sanjoseca.gov).