



Blaisdell Park Community Meeting March 30, 2019 Question & Answer

1. *When was Blaisdell Park Playground last updated?*

According to City records, the playground was last replaced in approximately 1995.

2. *Is there an existing long-term plan for Blaisdell Park?*

The Blaisdell Park playground was placed on the City's unfunded Capital Improvement Project list in 2014. The unfunded Capital Improvement Project list includes priority projects for which there is no current identified funding source. Design work related to park improvements is typically completed as funding is identified. There is no adopted master plan for Blaisdell Park at this time.

3. *What is the process for updating a playground in Claremont?*

The City must first receive direction from the City Council to proceed with any Capital Improvement Project. This direction is typically accompanied by approval of a project budget. Once Council has provided direction as well as a project budget, City staff works with the community and neighborhood groups to solicit feedback about the project design. The City then works with a playground designer to develop one or more project designs that meet the communities needs within the available funds.

The project design is typically presented at a neighborhood meeting, after which it is reviewed and approved by the Parks, Hillside and Utilities Committee, Community and Human Services Commission, and finally City Council. Modifications to the design are made based upon input received at the various community meetings. Once the project design is approved by City Council, the City enters into contract for the playground purchase and installation and coordinates the work.

4. *What were the dates of the last update for each playground in Claremont?*

This is a breakdown of the installation dates for all of the City's playgrounds:

Park	Year	Park	Year
Blaisdell Park	1995	June Vial	1997/2007*
Cahuilla	2013	Larkin	1996
Chaparral	2008	Lewis	1995
College	1997	Memorial	1997
El Barrio	2009	Rancho San Jose	2002
Griffith	2001	Rosa Torrez	2007
Higginbotham	2008	Wheeler North	2014
Jaeger	2004	Wheeler South	2016

*The swing set at June Vail was installed in 2007

5. *What were the costs and what was the funding source of other park improvements?*

The last three playgrounds to be updated in the City of Claremont are the Cahuilla Park Playground (2013), Wheeler Park Northern Playground (2014), and Wheeler Park Southern Playground (2016.)

The cost of the Cahuilla Park Project was approximately \$80,000. Park Dedication Funds were utilized for the project. No private money or fundraising contributed to the project.

The cost of the Wheeler Park Northern Playground was approximately \$111,000. Park Dedication Funds were utilized for the project. No private money or fundraising contributed to the project.

The cost of the Wheeler Park Southern Playground was approximately \$102,000. A Housing Related Park Program Grant was utilized for the project. No private money or fundraising contributed to the project.

6. *What is protocol for fixing or replacing damaged park equipment?*

The City currently employs two staff that are certified playground safety inspectors. Amongst other duties, these staff inspect the City's play equipment every 4-6 weeks. Damaged equipment that is a safety concern is removed and/or repaired.

7. *What is the maintenance budget for each park in Claremont? What else can you share about how parks are run, maintained, upgraded?*

The City has a park maintenance budget of \$1,441,028. This funding primarily goes to support staffing, contract landscape maintenance and irrigation repair services, and utilities such as electricity and water. The landscape maintenance contract cost for Blaisdell is \$27,000 per year. And the annual janitorial cost for the restroom is \$3,960

8. *What funding is available for funding an updated park playground?*

The City's **Park Dedication Fund** is currently the primary source of funding for park upgrades, including playgrounds. Park Dedication Funds are generated as a result of development projects. Claremont is largely a built-out community, with very little land available for future development. Many cities in the Inland Empire continue to actively develop large commercial and residential projects, which brings revenue to their cities that can be used to develop and enhance parks. This funding source is relatively limited in Claremont.

The City has a **Landscape and Lighting District Fund** that residents pay into as part of their property tax bill. The Landscape and Lighting District is currently insufficient to cover the cost of routine/ongoing maintenance activities and is heavily subsidized by the General Fund. The Landscape and Lighting District covers some of the costs for routine landscape maintenance services, staffing, and associated utilities but does not allow for any additional funding for park improvements or playground upgrades.

The City actively seeks grant opportunities for park enhancements and was successful in securing funds to update the Wheeler Park South Playground in 2016. The City Utilized Housing Related Park Program funds for this project. This funding source provided grants based upon the issuance of building permits for new housing units that are affordable to very low or low-income households. This funding source is not available to the City at this time for additional projects.

The City meets bi-monthly with a firm that specializes in grant writing and monitoring. Any available grant funds are presented to City staff for review. Often grant funds for park projects give heavy priority to disadvantaged or low-income communities. Due to Claremont's demographics and average household income, it is often difficult to compete for these funding sources.

9. *When Measure A moves forward, what funds will be set aside for each park?*

Pending ongoing litigation, the City anticipates receiving up to \$160,000 per year from Measure A funds. There is no specific allocation to individual parks at this time. The City will evaluate park needs holistically as part of the annual budget process and make funding allocation recommendations based upon need.

10. *Are any of Claremont's park playgrounds made with accessibility for persons with disabilities in mind?*

Yes, all playgrounds are designed to meet accessibility requirements that are in place at the time of design/installation. The existing Blaisdell Park playground was designed to exceed minimum accessibility requirements when it was installed in 1995. When looking at playground replacement designs for Blaisdell, this tradition of focusing upon inclusive, accessible equipment that exceeds current requirements will be considered and presented to the neighborhood for feedback.

11. *What is the procurement process for playground?*

The City is required to utilize a competitive bidding process for any large purchases. To assist with bidding certain products and services, the City is a member of Sourcewell. Sourcewell has an existing contract with Little Tikes Commercial for Playgrounds and Equipment. The City, therefore, can streamline the bidding process by utilizing the nationally bid contract pricing available through Sourcewell. The City of Claremont utilized this competitive bid for the Cahuilla and Wheeler Park playground replacement projects.

Although playground projects are competitively bid to meet the City's purchasing requirements, the contracts must also be approved by the City Council. Any contracts or purchases over \$25,000 must be brought before the City Council for final review and approval prior to executing the agreement. This would be true in the case of any playground purchase/installation projects due to the overall project costs.

12. *Would there be a possibility to also add adult exercise equipment? Could funding from the Blaisdell Community Center fund this type of equipment?*

Adding adult exercise equipment is something the City can certainly evaluate. When designing playground projects and park enhancements, the City conducts a comprehensive outreach effort to solicit feedback from the neighborhood. The final project design is then developed to fall in line with the desires of the neighborhood, restricted only by the available budget and site conditions. It is important for City staff and the playground designers to understand the needs and interest of the neighborhood. The design can then be developed to address the top priorities within the available budget.

The Claremont Senior Center is funded primarily through the General Fund and specialized grants that are earmarked specifically for senior nutrition services. There is not currently any available funding source for adults/seniors specifically intended for park enhancements or capital projects. The City will continue to monitor any available grant opportunities; looking broadly at those available to support parks, youth, and older adults.