



**TO:** T.C. Broadnax, City Manager  
**FROM:** Elliott Barnett, Associate Planner  
Peter Huffman, Director, Planning and Development Services Department  
**COPY:** City Council and City Clerk  
**SUBJECT:** RCO grant submittal for S. 21<sup>st</sup> Street Park play area enhancement – June 3, 2014  
**DATE:** April 30, 2014

**SUMMARY:**

The Foss Waterway Development Authority (FWDA) has requested the City of Tacoma submit a state Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) grant on their behalf. The \$60,000 grant request, which would be matched by private funds from The Henry Group LLC, is for installation of a children’s play area in the City’s 21<sup>st</sup> Street Park. The RCO requires an authorizing resolution from the applicant agency.

**STRATEGIC POLICY PRIORITY:**

The Foss Waterway is a high priority for redevelopment and the proposed improvements to the City’s 21<sup>st</sup> Street Park will help fulfill the following strategic priority:

- Foster neighborhood, community, and economic development vitality and sustainability.

**BACKGROUND:**

The City-owned 21<sup>st</sup> Street Park was developed by the City consistent with the City of Tacoma’s Shoreline Master Program, the Foss Waterway Design and Development Plan, and the Open Space Element of the Comprehensive Plan. The park is part of the public access plan and the Dome to Defiance trail system and is maintained by the Foss Waterway Owners Association.

The FWDA recognizes the need to provide activities that would attract families with children to the downtown and diversify use of the waterway. Integrating the play area into 21<sup>st</sup> Street Park is consistent with the FWDA Master Redevelopment Strategy which was approved by the City Council in 2012. Public comments from Tacoma residents to FWDA staff and Board continue to validate a community interest in providing a play area for young children. This enhancement will help produce the results envisioned by the community for use of public space on the Foss.

As the jurisdiction authorized to submit for RCO funding, the City would act as the official sponsor and submit the application. A Council resolution is needed to meet RCO submittal requirements. The grant writing, private funding match and project management will be the responsibility of the FWDA. Maintenance of the play area will be the responsibility of the FWDA and the Foss Waterway Owners Association. No capital, maintenance or other funds are requested from the City of Tacoma.

The grant match is from The Henry Group LLC, a private contributor who is also constructing a new mixed-use building on the adjacent Foss Development Site 1. An agreement between The Henry Group and the FWDA Board commits The Henry Group to fund the grant match. The play area enhancements have already been approved through the Shoreline Permit for The Henry mixed-use project. This grant would fund purchase of materials (e.g. surface mats) and play equipment. The play area will be ADA accessible.

**ISSUE:**

Improve public access and use of the Foss Waterway by children ages 2 to 12. Currently there is no children’s play equipment along the Dome to Defiance shoreline park system. This facility will make the



Foss Waterway more family friendly and diversify play and recreational activities. It will support residents and help attract family living to downtown Tacoma.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

The FWDA & City could determine the 21<sup>st</sup> Street Park is for passive rather than active use and choose not to install the children's play area. This would make the Foss Waterway a less family friendly place.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The FWDA is recommending submission of a grant to the State Recreation and Conservation Office to improve the 21<sup>st</sup> Street Park with a children's play area to support public access and expand park use and activities. Active play has the additional benefit of reducing the risk of childhood obesity and supports healthy life styles for Tacoma's youngest citizens. The installation of the play equipment would occur as soon as grant funds are available.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The granting agency requires a 1-to-1 local funding match. In this case, the required match is being provided by the Henry Group LLC, per an agreement with the FWDA. Although the City of Tacoma owns and is ultimately responsible for the park, no capital, maintenance or other funds are requested from the City of Tacoma for the project. There is no fiscal impact for the current biennium.

**Attachments:**

- Play Area Location
- Play Structure Location
- RCO resolution template