William Land Park
William A. Carroll Amphitheater Renovation / Upgrades
Feasibility Study

Background / History-

The history of Wm. Land Park dates back to 1911 when William Land’s will have provided a gift $250,000 to purchase a public park. This did not become reality until 1922 when the current site (166.5 acres) was purchased, the first steps in development was the planting of 4,000 trees & 6,000 shrubs along with the construction of a water system (4 wells). The golf course was developed as one of the first amenities. The Zoo was developed in the present location starting in 1927 and expanded in 1956. Amusement and pony rides were added to the park in 1946. Development of Fairytale Town started in 1955 and first opened in 1959.

The Amphitheater was developed as a WPA project in the late 1930’s, probably being completed in 1940. The stage area was remodeled and upgraded in 1960 and the amphitheater named the Wm. A. Carroll Memorial Amphitheater (after a retired Park Superintendent). The stage remodel was designed by Harry Devine a noted Sacramento architect.

The current bench configuration of the amphitheater seats approximately 700, this does not include any lawn seating or seating along any of the low stone walls

The purpose of this feasibility study is to review requirements needed for the renovation of the amphitheater, including the entry area, seating areas, infrastructure, stage and backstage area.

The following list of possible improvements for the amphitheater was developed at a joint meeting with Sacramento City College and the Dept. of Parks & Recreation on February 11, 2009. Sacramento City College’s Drama Dept. is a primary user of the Amphitheater through their Shakespeare in the Park program that runs for approximately 5 weeks at the end of summer. It was also indicated that the City would also like to expand the uses of the amphitheater to include small concerts and movie nights.

Possible Improvements

1. Electrical upgrades
2. Sound upgrades
3. Benches w/ backs
4. New lighting stanchions
5. Stage improvements, top coat, level, backstage area, ADA access
6. General ADA improvements
7. Entry Area, building w/ tickets, control room for lighting/sound, projection, concessions
8. Restroom
9. Parking lot lighting
10. Covered seating (shade canopy)
11. Remove turf under existing benches

Process for each Improvement

Any improvement that could physically change, alter the look or feel of the Amphitheater would call for a CEQA report. Almost all the improvements listed will require a CEQA report, which in turn will require a Historical Survey done of the site as one of the first phases of the process. Bringing the existing electrical system up to meet current code levels, would likely not trigger a requirement for a CEQA report.

1. Electrical upgrades – have the existing electrical service reviewed and evaluated to determine the existing conditions, at a minimum the existing service should be brought up to Code / Plans, Contract & Building Permit Required.

2. Sound upgrades – review existing acoustic conditions and future requirements, upgrades would require, Plans, Contract, Building Permit, CEQA and Historic Survey.

3. Benches w/ backs – remove the existing benches and replace with a like number of benches with backs / Contract, CEQA and Historic Survey.

4. New lighting stanchions – replace the existing stanchions with new stanchions wired with electrical upgrades / Plans, Contract & Building Permit, CEQA and Historic Survey.

5. Existing stage improvements - top coat, level, backstage area, ADA access / Plans, Contract, Building Permit, CEQA and Historic Survey.

6. General ADA improvements - review existing conditions, provide access from the Entry Area to seating and stage / Plans, Contract, Building Permit, CEQA and Historic Survey.
7. Entry Area, building w/ tickets, control room for lighting/sound, projection, concessions – any structures or buildings will require Plans, Contracts, Building Permits, CEQA and Historic Survey.

8. Restroom - although a restroom was discussed at the meeting, it is most likely that portables will continue to be used when events are held at the Amphitheater.

9. Parking lot lighting – this is reference to the parking lot behind Fairytale Town (east) currently groups bring in portable lighting for the parking lot. There is usually not a problem when people arrive, but departing it is total darkness in the parking lot. / Electrical loads would need to be calculated, design would be required / Plans, Contract, Building Permit, CEQA and Historic Survey.

10. Covered seating (shade canopy) – although a shade canopy would be an added amenity in the hot sunny weather of summer it would require design / Plans Contract, Building Permit, CEQA and a Historic Survey.

11. Remove turf under existing benches – this would be implemented with item #3 above and a seemingly minor change, this is something that would change the “feel” of the site/Plans, contract, CEQA and Historic Survey.

The CEQA report would be done by City staff and take about six months at a cost of $15,000 +/- . The Historic Survey would be done by an outside consultant at a cost of $3,000+/- . This would be a two-part report, one to review the existing site and two to review the proposed improvements.