



City of Columbia

701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri 65201

Department Source: Parks and Recreation

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: February 1, 2016

Re: Douglass Park Phase II Improvements

Executive Summary

The Parks and Recreation Department is requesting a public hearing be set for the Douglass Park Phase II Improvements project. Improvements to the park will include the construction of a new medium shelter, small shelter, skate spot, ADA walkway improvements, replacement of the existing playground equipment, and additional park lighting. The proposed improvements are included in the Douglass Park Master Plan approved by the City Council on December 2, 2013. The total project budget is \$225,000 and is funded by the 2015 Park Sales Tax. The project will be bid through the City's Purchasing Department and will be completed using a combination of contract and force account labor. Contract labor will be used for the construction of the skate spot, playground, and walkways. Shelter construction and lighting improvements will be completed by park staff. Improvements to Douglass Park are scheduled to begin spring 2016 with an anticipated completion date of fall 2016.

Discussion

The 6.8 acre Douglass Park is located at 400 North Providence Road and provides citizens with a variety of amenities, including the Douglass Family Aquatic Center, park shelters, playground, baseball field, and basketball courts. The park also serves the community through multiple recreation and program opportunities, including the P&R Easter Egg Hunt, Kite-Flying Day, Black and White Ball, sports leagues, and outdoor music events.

The Parks and Recreation Department is requesting a public hearing be set for the Douglass Park Phase II Improvements project. Park staff is proposing to make a variety of improvements to the park, including the construction of a medium shelter, small shelter, replacement of the existing playground, construction of a skate spot and improve park lighting and ADA walkways.

On December 2, 2013, the City Council approved a new master plan for Douglass park and phase I improvements to be completed as part of the 2010 Park Sales Tax ballot issue. Staff has completed the phase I improvements at the park, including the construction of an outdoor amphitheater, new porous paver parking along 5th Street, new landscaping, increased green space, park signage, and walkways.

Along with the approval of the master plan and phase I construction, the City Council and Parks and Recreation Commission recommended phase II Improvements at Douglass Park be funded in the first year of any future ballot issue approved by Columbia voters. On November 3, 2015, citizens of Columbia voted to renew the 1/8 cent Park Sales Tax for six



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additional years; and on December 7, 2015, Council approved a resolution outlining the implementation plan for projects funded by the 2015 Parks Sales Tax. Douglass Park phase II improvements are funded in the first year of the 2015 Park Sales Tax implementation plan as a Fiscal Year 2016 project.

After reviewing the master plan for the park and the completed phase I improvements, park staff discussed necessary improvements to complete the master plan for the park. A list of improvements was created and incorporated into the design plans for the phase II improvements. The proposed phase II plans complete the majority of the projects shown on the master plan and focus on adding additional amenities, improving park safety, and reducing the maintenance expenses associated with the park. To gain initial feedback about the proposed plans, an interested parties meeting was held at Douglass High School on January 13, 2016. Staff also posted the plans and asked for public comment at one of the Martin Luther King, Jr. events on Monday, February 18 and posted the plans at the Armory Sports and Recreation Center from Thursday, January 14 to Thursday, January 21, 2016. Staff also provided the public with an on-line survey and information on the SpeakUpComo website to provide additional opportunities for public comment about the project.

Staff introduced the proposed improvements to the Parks & Recreation Commission at their January 21, 2016 meeting. After discussion of the project, the Commissioners voted to endorse the proposed improvements to the park and recommend that Council approve the plans as presented. After considering all citizen comments and the P&R Commission recommendation, staff believes that proposed improvements to Douglass Park represents a consensus of park users and staff.

Specific improvements to Douglass Park will include the following:

1. The existing shelter located at the park will be removed and a new 48' X 28' shelter will be constructed by park staff. The existing shelter is over 25 years old and is need of replacement due to age and condition. The shelter will be constructed on the south side of the new 10-foot walkway that intersects the park and will be adjacent to the restroom and baseball field. Constructing the shelter in this location will improve maintenance access for cleaning and trash removal and allow park staff to remove the old shelter after project completion to avoid any disruptions associated with use of the park shelter in 2016. The new shelter will be similar to the new medium-sized shelters constructed at Waters-Moss Memorial Wildlife Area and Fairview Park in 2014.
2. Contract labor will be used to install new playground equipment at the park. The current playground equipment is over 20 years old and is being replaced due to signs of wear and age, to improve the play value of the equipment, meet current ADA play requirements, and to address significant drainage issues in the current area. Park staff has discussed the current equipment with the original manufacturer and the availability to get replacement parts for the existing equipment will become increasingly more difficult in the upcoming years. The playground also has significant drainage issues during rain



events that result in standing water throughout the playground area. By removing all existing play equipment, park staff will have the ability to remove all existing mulch, set the correct subgrades to improve drainage and add one foot of gravel and drainage pipe under the playground area to move any water out of the playground area during and immediately after rain events. Staff evaluated the surfacing options for the park and made the decision to use ADA-compliant fiber mulch under the new play equipment. Rubber tile and pour-in-place materials reduce the annual maintenance associated with the playground, but were not an option for this playground due to the square foot costs associated with those products. Staff will improve accessibility to the playground by incorporating walkways around the playground. This use of walkways is similar to the design of Steinberg Playground at Cosmo Park. Park staff is also optimistic that new play equipment will increase the number of families visiting the park and become a popular area during events such as Lunch in the Park during the summer.

3. Park staff will construct a small shelter adjacent to the new playground to provide an additional covered seating area in the park. The 15' X 15' prefab shelter will be identical to the shelter that was constructed adjacent to the outdoor amphitheater during the phase I improvements at the park. The need for the additional small shelters at Douglass Park was expressed by citizens during the initial IP meeting process in 2013. After the construction of this shelter, the park will have one medium-sized shelter and three small shelters located adjacent to popular park amenities.
4. Contract design and labor will be used to develop a skate spot on the southeast corner of the park adjacent to the 5th Street parking. Over the past 5 years, the emergence of skate spots has become a popular trend throughout the United States. More skate spots located throughout Columbia was one of the items requested by some of the citizens and focus groups who participated in the public input process for the 2013 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan and were consequently included in the plan. Skate spots are smaller than a typical skate park and often times incorporate green space and landscaping in the design to soften the concrete look of a typical skate spot. Staff is proposing to construct a 4,500-square-foot skate spot on the northeast corner of Douglass Park to provide an additional location in the central area of Columbia for skateboarding. In comparison of size, the Cosmo Park Skate Park is a 28,000 square foot continuous concrete structure. Staff anticipates the addition of LED lighting to this facility due to existing lighting along 5th Street and to improve user safety. Staff will review lighting options before installation to consider motion activation, light reduction, and shutoff timers. Park staff will hire a professional skate park design firm to design and lead the construction of the new facility. As part of the design services, the firm will work with our local skateboarding community during the initial planning phase to incorporate desired skating features into the plans for the skate spot. Staff anticipates the future construction of multiple skate spots throughout Columbia to provide opportunities for skateboarders who live in Columbia and may not have access to motorized transportation to travel to the skate park at Cosmo Park.



5. Additional infrastructure improvements to the park will include ADA walkway improvements to improve the connectivity between park amenities, completing all required ADA improvements to the park and facilities, installation of new bike racks, construction of new horseshoe pits adjacent to the shelter, and any new park signage necessary for the amenities. Park staff will also discuss necessary lighting additions or upgrades needed for the new amenities and park design. Staff will continue to utilize the existing interior park lighting and may need to add or relocate two to three light poles in the park to provide coverage throughout the park. Upon completion of the phase II improvements, forestry staff will evaluate the tree planting plan for the park and add any new trees necessary to enhance the tree canopy in the park.

On January 4, 2016, the City Council approved an ordinance for mid-year appropriation of 2015 Park Sales Tax funds. The phase II improvements at Douglass Park were included in the ordinance. The City's FY-2016 capital improvement budget now includes a project for Douglass Park, with a total project funding of \$225,000. The project is scheduled to begin in spring 2016 with an anticipated completion date of fall 2016. The improvements will be completed using a combination of contract and force account labor, with all work done by contract either bid through the City's Purchasing Department or completed using an existing contract.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: There was a mid-year appropriation of 2015 Park Sales Tax in the amount of \$225,000 to fund this project.

Long-Term Impact: Parks and Recreation staff currently maintains the park and existing amenities. The only additional utility cost associated with the improvements will be the additional lighting in the park and at the skate spot. Staff will install LED lighting in these areas to minimize the additional utility costs.

Vision & Strategic Plan Impact

[Vision Impacts:](#)

Primary Impact: Parks, Recreation & Greenways, Secondary Impact: Community Facilities & Services, Tertiary Impact: Tertiary

[Strategic Plan Impacts:](#)

Primary Impact: Infrastructure, Secondary Impact: Social Equity, Tertiary Impact: Public Safety

[Comprehensive Plan Impacts:](#)

Primary Impact: Livable & Sustainable Communities, Secondary Impact: Infrastructure, Tertiary Impact: Tertiary



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Legislative History

Date	Action
12/02/2013	Ordinance #21915, Approving the Douglass Park Comprehensive Plan, authorizing construction of the Douglass Park - Phase I Improvement Project https://www.gocolumbiamo.com/Council/Commissions/downloadfile.php?id=11754
12/07/2015	Resolution #R192-15, Adopting an implementation plan for the expenditure of local park sales tax revenue https://www.gocolumbiamo.com/Council/Commissions/downloadfile.php?id=19911
01/04/2016	Ordinance #22705, Appropriating funds for parks projects at Atkins Baseball Complex, Douglass Park, Gans Creek Recreation Area, McKee Street Park and Southeast Regional Park https://www.gocolumbiamo.com/Council/Commissions/downloadfile.php?id=20145

Suggested Council Action

Approve the resolution calling for the public hearing.