



City of Columbia

701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri 65201

Department Source: Parks and Recreation

To: City Council

From: City Manager and Staff

Council Meeting Date: June 2, 2025

Re: Twin Lakes Recreation Area Improvements and Master Plan Update

Executive Summary

Public hearing for park improvements at Twin Lakes Recreation Area. Staff is also requesting City Council approval to update the master plan for the park. The proposed improvements include the installation of a new playground, shelter renovations, parking lot renovations and multiple dog park improvements. The project has a total budget of \$350,000 and is funded by the 2021 Park Sales Tax. The improvements to the park will be completed using a combination of contract labor and force account labor. The proposed improvements at the park are scheduled to begin fall 2025 and completed by spring 2027.

Discussion

The 73.3-acre Twin Lakes Recreation Area is located at 2500 Chapel Hill Road and provides citizens with a plethora of amenities including a large shelter, playground, off-leash dog park, 18.8-acre lake available for fishing and non-motorized boating, and a 0.4-mile walking trail with a connection to the MKT Trail and County House Trail. The park also includes restrooms, drinking fountain and parking lots.

The Parks and Recreation Department is requesting City Council approval of an ordinance approving proposed Twin Lakes Recreation Area park improvements and update to the park master plan. The proposed improvements include the installation of a new playground, shelter renovations, parking lot renovations and multiple dog park improvements.

After reviewing all plans and discussing the project budget and priorities, park staff focused the improvement project on maintaining existing park infrastructure, removal of old building structures and expansion of the dog park. Park staff held two public input meetings at Twin Lakes Recreation Area on Wednesday, June 5, 2024 and Saturday, June 8, 2024 to discuss the improvements with the public. Staff met with citizens to discuss the proposed plans and gain feedback about the proposed improvement project. Citizens had an additional opportunity to provide comments about the project on beheard.como.gov.

Park staff introduced the proposed Twin Lakes Recreation Area improvements and update to the park master plan to the Parks and Recreation Commission on April 17, 2025. After discussion of the project, the commissioners voted to endorse the proposed improvements and recommended that Council approve the plans as presented. After considering all citizen comments and the P&R Commission recommendation, staff believes the proposed improvements to the park represent a consensus of park users and staff.



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The proposed improvements at the park, funded by the 2021 Park Sales Tax, include the following:

1. Parks and Recreation construction staff will complete renovations to the existing large shelter at the park. This will include replacement of the existing siding, new roof installation and upgrading the shelter lighting to LED fixtures.
2. Contract labor will be utilized to replace the existing 25+ year old playground located adjacent to the park shelter. The new playground for the park was purchased in 2024 and staff will coordinate the installation with the selected contractor. Contract labor will also be utilized to add an ADA accessible walkway from the parking lot to the playground that also extends to the shelter.
3. Contract labor will be utilized to complete asphalt parking lot improvements to the primary parking lots at the park. This will include milling and overlay of the existing asphalt parking lots, restriping for angled one-way parking and striping for bike and pedestrian traffic to connect the two sections of the County House Trail. In addition to the asphalt improvements, park staff will replace existing lighting with new LED fixtures.
4. A combination of contract and parks and recreation labor will be used to complete multiple improvements to the three sections of the Twin Lakes Dog Park.
 - In the small dog area, park staff will install a new shade structure with picnic tables to address the need for more shade and seating in this area of the dog park. Staff is also proposing to extend the existing 6' concrete sidewalk within the small dog area to improve ADA accessibility and add additional bench seating for park patrons.
 - In the lakeside dog area, staff will complete shoreline restoration to stabilize the bank of the lake. This will be completed with a combination of tree plantings and boulder placement. Staff will also replace the existing double entry gate enclosure at the MKT Trail access. The replacement will include pouring a concrete pad, new fencing and gate replacement.
 - The most significant improvements to the dog park focus on the area that is for all dogs. Staff is proposing to expand this space by 5 acres. The space will be open 12 months of the year as the designated space without dog access to water. The expanded area will include the area formerly occupied by Little Mates Cove Aquatic Facility. This will allow for much needed additional dog park acreage, additional shade in this section of the dog park and a second entrance to this section of the dog park through the former Little Mates Cove Aquatic Facility. Seating areas and sidewalks located at the aquatic facility will remain as features of the dog park. Staff will make ADA sidewalk connections to tie in the existing walkways and the double gate access to the all dog park. A gravel maintenance road will be added to provide patron and maintenance access throughout the 9.6-acre dog park area. Staff will remove two existing small buildings that were part of the Little Mates Cove Aquatic Facility due to



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age and existing conditions. This includes the original restroom facility and maintenance/storage building.

The elimination of Little Mates Cove Aquatic Facility is recommended due to the age of facility, current condition of concrete, underground plumbing and electric pumps, and operational difficulties related to lifeguard staffing at the facility. The aquatic facility has not been in operation since 2019 and renovations of the facility are not feasible due to the extensive list of repairs, estimated cost of repairs, and current project budget. The change to the park master plan centers around the removal of the aquatic facility in order to move forward with the dog park portions of the improvement project.

Staff is proposing to keep a designated area adjacent to the shelter and playground unplanned at the present time for the future construction of a large splash pad and new restroom. The addition of a splash pad would allow for water play to continue in this area of Columbia. The desire of staff to show a splash pad for this area is advantageous as this type of facility offers extended water play from May 1 to September 30, provides a free facility to the public, creates an additional accessible water play area and eliminates the need for lifeguards. Staff would include these facilities in the 2027 update to the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan and identify the project, totaling \$750,000 to \$1,000,000, in the 2031 Park Sales Tax ballot list of projects.

The improvement project has a total budget of \$350,000 and is funded by the 2021 Park Sales Tax. The project was funded in the FY2024 capital improvement plan for the Parks and Recreation Department. Portions of the project will be bid through the City's Purchasing Department and the proposed improvements will be completed using a combination of contract labor and force account labor. The proposed improvements at the park are scheduled to begin late fall 2025 and completed by spring 2027.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: The total project cost is \$350,000 and is funded by the 2021 Park Sales Tax. Long-Term Impact: Staff does not anticipate any additional expenses associated with the improvement project as maintenance tasks, such as shelter cleaning, trash removal and mowing, are annual expenses associated with the park. Little Mates Cove and adjacent restroom have not been in operation since 2019 so the expense reduction started in 2020 related to the facility. Proposed LED lighting upgrades in the shelter and parking lots will have a small reduction in total electrical expenses at the park.

Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Reliable and Sustainable Infrastructure, Secondary Impact: Inclusive and Equitable Community, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Infrastructure, Secondary Impact: Livable & Sustainable Communities, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable



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Legislative History

Date	Action
10/1/2012	B264-12: Twin Lakes Recreation Area Improvements. B264-12

Suggested Council Action

Following the public hearing, approve the ordinance authorizing the proposed capital improvement project and master plan update at Twin Lakes Recreation Area.