



Department Source: Parks and Recreation

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: October 19, 2020

Re: Setting a Public Hearing: Fairview Park / Bonnie View Nature Sanctuary Improvements

Executive Summary

The Parks and Recreation Department is requesting Council approval of a resolution to set a public hearing for the construction of improvements at Fairview Park and Bonnie View Nature Sanctuary that will maintain existing infrastructure and add new amenities for park users. The proposed improvements at Fairview Park include replacement of pedestrian bridges along the natural surface trail system, replacement of the outdoor classroom benches, installation of educational signage and garden plot improvements. The proposed improvements at Bonnie View Nature Sanctuary include installation of a nature play structure, parking lot improvements, LED lighting improvements, pedestrian bridge and lowland water improvements on the Scott's Branch Creek and native prairie establishment. The total project budget is \$125,000 and is one of the projects identified and funded by the 2015 Park Sales Tax. 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 and force account labor. Contract labor will be used for the installation of the nature play structure and parking lot improvements at Bonnie View Nature Sanctuary. Park staff will complete all other work at the two parks. Improvements at the park are scheduled to begin winter 2020, with an anticipated completion date of fall 2021.

Discussion

As part of the 2015 Park Sales Tax renewal, staff combined improvements at Fairview Park and Bonnie View Nature Sanctuary into one project as the two parks are adjacent to each other and share access to the Scott's Branch Trail. Located at 3300 Rollins Road, Bonnie View Nature Sanctuary is a 92.5-acre nature area that includes a medium shelter, restroom, nature education trail, native prairie areas, and serves as the main trailhead for the Scott's Branch Trail. Fairview Park, located at 1001 Fairview Road, is a 27.2-acre community park that includes a medium shelter, tennis courts, playground, practice soccer fields, garden plots, natural surface trails, small parking lot, and a connector trail to the Scott's Branch Trail.

The Parks and Recreation Department is requesting approval of a resolution to set a public hearing for the construction of improvements at Fairview Park and Bonnie View Nature Sanctuary. Park staff is proposing to make improvements at both parks to maintain existing infrastructure and add new amenities for park users.

After reviewing the proposed improvements for each park in the *2013 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan*, staff discussed potential improvements to each park that would update existing facilities and continue to allow the parks to serve park patrons interested in a variety of amenities and activities. Park staff held an interested parties meeting at Bonnie



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View Nature Sanctuary on August 26, 2020. Park staff met with over 20 citizens to discuss the proposed plans and gain feedback about the two parks and proposed improvements. The public had an additional opportunity to provide comments about the project via an online survey at como.gov from August 21, 2020 to September 3, 2020. All feedback from the public input meeting and online como.gov surveys are included with this Council memo and can also be found online at:

<https://www.como.gov/parksandrec/wp-content/uploads/sites/25/2020/09/IP-meeting-comments-Fairview-Bonnie-View-Improvements.pdf>

Park staff introduced the proposed plans for improvements to Fairview Park and Bonnie View Nature Sanctuary to the Parks and Recreation Commission on September 17, 2020. After discussion of the project, the commissioners voted to endorse the proposed improvement plans to the two parks and recommended that Council approve the plans as presented. After considering all citizen comments and the P&R Commission recommendation, staff believes that the proposed park improvements represent a consensus of park users and staff.

The proposed improvements at Fairview Park will include the following:

1. Park staff will make multiple improvements to park infrastructure along the natural surface trail system located within the wooded area of the park. Staff will replace four wooden pedestrian walking bridges. The bridges range in length from 20 feet to 6 feet. Along with the bridge replacement, park staff will reconstruct the eight wooden benches located at the outdoor classroom. The Missouri Department of Conservation will also work with park staff to create new educational signage along the trail system, including signage for tree identification, wildlife education, and general forest ecology information. The natural trail and outdoor classroom have seen an increase in use over the past couple of years due to increased use by students at Fairview Elementary School.
2. Park staff will make improvements to the garden plots located at the park. The current configuration of plots includes ten 25' X 50' garden plots rented by park users on an annual basis. Improvements to the existing plots will include two additional water hydrants on the east side of the garden plots and a new 6-foot wide gravel walking path from the concrete ADA walkway on the north side of the park to the garden plots. Park staff is also proposing to expand the garden plot area by adding five new 25' X 25' garden plots on the east side of the existing plots. (All existing rental garden plots have sold out four out of the past five years.) The proposed improvements to the existing garden plots and addition of new 25' X 25' garden plots were requested by current garden plot renters during the public input process.

The proposed improvements at Bonnie View Nature Sanctuary will include the following:

1. A combination of contract labor and force account labor will be used to complete parking lot improvements. Contract labor will be used to complete necessary crack fill, seal coat, and striping of the existing asphalt parking lot. Park staff will upgrade the seven



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existing lights in the parking lot to LED lighting fixtures with dimming capability. The lighting upgrades will reduce the amount of constant light in the nature sanctuary, reduce the amount of light spill into the nature area and lower utility expenses for the park. Park staff will also add three bike racks adjacent to the restroom and shelter.

2. Contract labor will be used to install a nature play structure adjacent to the shelter at the park. The glass fiber reinforced concrete structure is fabricated to mimic a large log structure that children utilize as a climbing/balancing structure. The concrete structure composition is similar to the climbing boulders at Stephens Lake Park and Fairview Park. The nature play structure will fit within the theme of the nature sanctuary and provide an additional amenity for shelter renters.
3. Park staff will install a wooden pedestrian bridge across the Scott's Branch Creek to provide access to neighbors on the west side of the park. Currently, park users access the park via a mowed path and have to cross through the small creek. The six-foot wide pedestrian bridge will be approximately 10 feet to 12 feet in total length and improve the access to the nature sanctuary. Along with the construction of the bridge, park staff will work with City Stormwater staff and the Corps of Engineers to make improvements to the Scott's Branch Creek at this location in the park to help slow the water moving through the creek during rain events and improve the eroding creek bank. Staff is proposing to construct a series of pools in this area to help slow the flow of water and bouldering along the creek bank to provide necessary stabilization.

The \$125,000 improvement project is funded by the 2015 Park Sales Tax and is included in the City's FY2020 Capital Improvement Program budget. 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 and force account labor. Contract labor will be used for the installation of the nature play structure and parking lot improvements at Bonnie View Nature Sanctuary. Park staff will complete all other work at the two parks. Construction of the improvements is anticipated to begin winter 2020, and staff anticipates the park improvements will be completed by fall 2021.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: The total project cost is \$125,000 and is funded by the 2015 Park Sales Tax.
Long-Term Impact: Park staff does not anticipate any increase in expenses associated with the park improvements. Staff already completes trash removal, general maintenance and mowing at the park. The conversion of the parking lot lighting at Bonnie View Nature Sanctuary will reduce utility expenses at the park.

Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Infrastructure, Secondary Impact: Not Applicable, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable



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Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

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

Legislative History

Date	Action
N/A	N/A

Suggested Council Action

Approve the resolution to set a public hearing for the construction of improvements at Fairview Park and Bonnie View Nature Sanctuary.