



Department Source: Parks and Recreation

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: October 17, 2016

Re: Public Hearing - Norma Sutherland Smith Park Phase II Improvements Project

Executive Summary

Public hearing for the Norma Sutherland Smith Park Phase II Improvements project. Proposed improvements to the park include the installation of a new playground, basketball court, baseball field, walking trail, restroom and connecting ADA walkways. The improvements are included in the Norma Sutherland Smith Park Master Plan approved by the City Council on June 16, 2014. 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 installation of the playground, baseball field fencing and walkways. All other work will be completed by park staff. Improvements to Norma Sutherland Smith Park are scheduled to begin fall 2016 with an anticipated completion date of fall 2017.

Discussion

The 50.3 acre Norma Sutherland Smith Park, located at 3350 Waco Road, was donated to the City of Columbia by Jeff Smith in 1999 and is identified in the *2013 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan* as a community park serving northeast Columbia. On June 16, 2014, the City Council approved the master plan for the park including the park amenities to be constructed as part of the first phase of development. Phase I improvements, funded by the 2010 Park Sales Tax, included site grading, utilities, large reservable shelter, 2.5 acre lake, fitness trail, and a 50-car parking lot.

Park staff is proposing multiple improvements to the northwest corner of the park, including the installation of a new playground, basketball court, baseball field, walking trail, restroom and connecting ADA walkways.

After reviewing the master plan for the park and completed phase I improvements, park planning staff evaluated desired improvements from the initial master plan citizen comments. These were the projects that were not funded in Phase I, yet remain a priority for the park users. The proposed phase II plans complete the majority of the projects shown on the master plan for the northwest corner of the park. Park staff believes that the proposed amenities will increase recreational use of the park for all age groups and improve access to more areas of the park property.

To gain citizen feedback about the proposed plans, an interested parties meeting was held at Alpha Hart Lewis Elementary School on September 8, 2016. Staff also provided the public with an on-line survey on como.gov and information about the project 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 September 15, 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 the proposed improvements to Norma Sutherland Smith Park represents a consensus of park users and staff.

Specific improvements to Norma Sutherland Smith Park will include the following:

1. Contract labor will be used to install new playground equipment at the park. The playground equipment will include a large play structure, independent play features and swings. All equipment will meet current ADA play requirements. As part of the playground bid and installation, staff will evaluate the surfacing options for the park playground and determine the type of surfacing for the play equipment. Staff will evaluate the initial installation costs and long-term maintenance associated with wood fiber mulch, rubber tile and pour-in-place materials. While wood fiber mulch is an ADA-compliant surface, rubber tile and pour-in-place surfacing allows for the greatest amount of accessibility to the playground equipment and greatly reduces long-term maintenance costs. Staff will also improve accessibility to the playground by incorporating walkways around the playground. This use of walkways is similar to the design of Steinberg Playground at Columbia Cosmopolitan Recreation Area.
2. Park staff will install a full-size concrete basketball court at the park with a minimum of two basketball goals and will paint all regulation basketball court lines to complete the project.
3. A combination of contract labor and force account labor will be used to construct a practice baseball field at the park. The baseball/softball field will include backstop and dugout fencing and an ag-lime infield surface similar to the practice field at Cosmo-Bethel Park. The improved fencing and infield surface will allow for reservable practices at the field for user groups and generate a small amount of revenue through rental fees. Contract labor will be used for the installation of the backstop and dugout fencing and all other work associated with the construction of the practice field will be completed by park staff.
4. Park staff will install a concrete prefab restroom adjacent to the existing large shelter and parking lot to provide restroom facilities for park users. The park restroom will be similar to facilities installed at Fairview Park and Garth Nature Area. As part of the phase I improvements, all necessary sewer, water and electric utilities were installed to the future site of the restroom.



5. As part of the phase I improvements to the park, contract labor was used to construct a 2.5 acre lake on the park property. The second part of the lake construction project will be the installation of a gravel walking trail around the lake that will have concrete connecting walkways to the parking lot and large shelter at the park. Park staff will install the gravel trail and estimates that the trail will be 0.5 miles in total length around the lake. Contract labor will be used to make the necessary concrete ADA connections from the parking lot and shelter to the loop trail around the lake.
6. The final portion of the phase II improvement project will include the installation of necessary ADA connecting walkways and final landscaping and turf establishment at the park. The installation of the connecting walkways will be completed using a combination of contract and force account labor. All turf establishment, landscaping and tree plantings will be completed by park staff.

As part of the phase II improvement project, park staff has applied for a \$150,000 Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant through Missouri State Parks. Staff is using the 2015 Park Sales Tax funds for the project as the proposed match for the grant. If the grant is awarded, park staff will return to the City Council at a later date to appropriate the grant funds and request approval from the Council to make additional improvements to the park.

The \$225,000 improvement project at Norma Sutherland Smith Park is funded by the 2015 Park Sales Tax and is included in the City's FY17 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 as discussed in items 1-6. Construction of the improvements is anticipated to begin late fall 2016, and staff anticipates the park improvements will be completed by fall 2017.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: The total cost of the project is \$225,000 and is funded by the 2015 Park Sales Tax.

Long-Term Impact: Staff anticipates an increase of \$2,000 to \$3,000 in total expenses associated with the park improvements. Additional maintenance and utility costs will occur with the daily operation of the park restroom, necessary maintenance of the gravel trail and bi-weekly maintenance of the ag-lime infield on the baseball field. Staff anticipates offsetting these new expenses along with the costs for the maintenance and utilities associated with the large shelter by collecting fees for shelter reservations and baseball field rentals.



Vision & Strategic Plan Impact

Vision Impacts:

Primary Impact: Parks, Recreation & Greenways, Secondary Impact: Community Facilities & Services, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

Strategic Plan Impacts:

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

Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

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

Legislative History

Date	Action
03/21/2016	R30-16: Resolution to submit an LWCF Grant for Norma Sutherland Smith Park Development
11/03/2014	R207-14: Resolution to approve Midwest Environmental Consultants Agreement for Norma Sutherland Smith Park
06/16/2014	B154-14: Ordinance to authorize Norma Sutherland Smith Park - Phase I Development and approve the park master plan

Suggested Council Action

After the public hearing, approve the ordinance authorizing the project to proceed.