



Department Source: Parks and Recreation

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: March 15, 2021

Re: Public Hearing: Proposed Construction of the Flat Branch Park Expansion Project

Executive Summary

Public hearing for the proposed construction of the Flat Branch Park Expansion Project. The master plan for the park was approved at the December 7, 2020 Council Meeting. By separate legislation, the Parks and Recreation Department is requesting an appropriation of funds in the amount of \$500,000 to begin construction. In January, 2021, Mayor's Task Force on Bicentennial Celebration Chairperson David Lineberry met with the City Manager, Convention and Visitors Bureau Director and Parks and Recreation Director to discuss concerns about raising the funds required for the demolition and site reclamation at Flat Branch Park. The attached letter summarizes the task force concerns. The task force is on track to raise nearly \$750,000 in funds or in-kind services for the bridge, but have found it difficult to raise funds for infrastructure work such as demolition and site reclamation. With the sales tax revenue coming in higher than projected, staff is recommending that \$200,000 from Park Sales Tax Funds and \$300,000 from the General Fund Balance be appropriated to this project. This will allow demolition to begin this spring and hopefully be on track to be completed by the Bicentennial Celebration on the July 4th weekend. The Department will proceed with the construction of the park as far the current funding allows, beginning with the site reclamation, demolition completion, sidewalk installation, lighting, creek restoration, and landscaping. The task force will continue to raise funds for amenities such as the bridge, bridge art work, scenic overlook, art installations, and other miscellaneous amenities. The Department will schedule construction of the other amenities included in the park master plan, as funding becomes available.

Discussion

On October 17, 2017, the City Council approved the acquisition of approximately 0.4 acres of land on the southeast corner of Providence Road and Broadway for the expansion of Flat Branch Park and Providence Road improvements. With the City of Columbia's bicentennial celebration scheduled in 2021, the Mayor established a Task Force on Bicentennial Celebration Planning. The Director of the Convention and Visitors Bureau is the designated staff liaison to the task force. One of the goals of the task force was to create a plan for the site near Columbia's origin, Flat Branch Park.

An interested parties meeting was held on January 31, 2019 to solicit comments and an online survey was made available from January 28-February 19, 2019. Public comments are attached and can be viewed on line at this following link:

<https://www.como.gov/parksandrec/wp-content/uploads/sites/25/2019/03/IP-Meeting-Comments-Flat-Branch-Expansion.pdf>



City of Columbia

701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri 65201

Park planning staff continued to work with interested parties and submitted a compromise plan that was approved by Council on December 7, 2020, along with a lease agreement with the Downtown Community Improvement District for the development of the Gateway Plaza portion of the project located on the property.

The Mayor's Task Force was also tasked with raising funds for the park development. However, the ongoing pandemic has limited the fundraising opportunities for many organizations across the country, and that is the concern of the Mayor's Task Force on Bicentennial Celebration Planning. Many events that were proposed to raise funds in 2020 were cancelled due to the pandemic. However, despite these challenges the task force is on track to raise nearly \$750,000 in funds or in-kind services for the bridge. The bridge is a tangible item that organizations or corporations feel they can brand as their own. Unfortunately, demolition, site reclamation, sidewalks and restoring the property to turf does not provide the same branding opportunities.

With the sales tax revenue coming in higher than projected, staff is recommending that \$200,000 from Park Sales Funds be appropriated to the project. Additionally, since several aspects of this project relate to stormwater and stream restoration/clean-up, staff is recommending \$300,000 from the General Fund Balance be appropriated to this project.

For the development of Flat Branch Park Phase I and II projects, the City was able to secure over \$440,000 to assist in the site cleanup and stream restoration through a federal Brownfields Grant, State Petroleum Tank Insurance Fund, and a Stormwater Grant. However, this portion of the property does not have the contaminants found in the earlier phases.

The following will be funded by this appropriation:

- Demolition of Remaining Building and Support Pillars: \$140,000
- Grading: \$30,000
- Restoration of Creek Bank: \$130,000
- Electric and Utility Infrastructure Install/Relocate/Repair: \$25,000
- Lights: \$40,000
- Clean Fill: \$8,000
- Top Soil: \$12,000
- Sidewalks/Stairs/Retaining walls: \$45,000
- Landscape (signs, trees, shrubs, seed/straw, mulch): \$11,000
- Contingency: \$59,000 (amount higher than normal due to concern about demo next to existing building and conditions of underground storm water structures)

This appropriation will allow demolition to begin this spring with a goal of being completed in time for the Bicentennial Celebration on July 4th weekend. The task force will continue to raise funds for amenities such as the bridge, bridge art work, scenic overlook, art installations, and other miscellaneous site amenities such as lights, bike racks, signs, donor wall, etc. All funds raised will be donated to the project and will be used for future improvements, or major maintenance should the funds exceed development expenses.



Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: \$200,000 for Park Sales Tax and \$300,000 from General Fund Balance.
Long-Term Impact: NA

Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

Strategic Plan Impacts:

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

Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

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

Legislative History

Date	Action
12/07/20	(B332-20) Authorizing a Lease Agreement with Downtown Community Improvement District (CID) for Development of the Gateway Plaza and Approving Flat Branch Park Master Plan https://gocolumbiamo.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4693783&GUID=F05CB75-6BCF-4720-AFA8-D53DFD2BFF55&Options=&Search=
10/21/19	(B316-19) Construction of a right turn lane and sidewalk on SE Corner of Providence and Broadway. https://gocolumbiamo.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4154823&GUID=6D9BF8C4-003A-4CE9-B82E-BD4B0FC9ADBD
06/03/19	(REP54-19) Flat Branch Park Compromise Plan https://gocolumbiamo.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3967840&GUID=F56B92B7-51D1-40B8-ADBA-3442743BFBAF&Options=&Search=
05/06/19	(PH19-19) Public Hearing: Consider proposed options for Flat Branch Park Expansion and Master Plan. https://gocolumbiamo.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3936135&GUID=61A698A7-274D-4A8C-B665-7FD660727DFB&Options=&Search=
10/17/16	(B273-16) Acquisition of property at 32 S. Providence Rd from Roth Properties, LLP. https://gocolumbiamo.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2848812&GUID=F18A796E-B9A5-4231-A4B0-67EC603A5DEB&Options=&Search=

Suggested Council Action

After the public hearing, approve the legislation authorizing the construction of the Flat Branch Park Expansion Project and appropriating funds.