



Department Source: Parks and Recreation
To: City Council
From: City Manager & Staff
Council Meeting Date: November 7, 2022
Re: Capen Park Improvements

Executive Summary

The Parks and Recreation Department is requesting approval of an ordinance authorizing a capital improvement project at Capen Park. The proposed improvements include parking lot expansion, installation of concrete walkways, parking lot lighting and trail amenities, electrical improvements and stormwater improvements. The total project budget is \$118,000 and is funded by a donation from the Capen Family Trust. 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 concrete and asphalt work associated with the improvements, and park staff will complete all other improvements. The improvements at Capen Park are scheduled to begin spring 2023, with an anticipated completion date of late fall 2023.

Discussion

Capen Park, located at 1600 Capen Park Drive, encompasses 31.9 acres and is utilized by the public as a nature area that includes the scenic Capen Park bluffs. The park also serves as a trailhead for the Grindstone Creek Trail and Hinkson Creek Trail. The park includes 0.5-miles of natural surface trails, 30-car parking lot and the Capen Park mulch site. The mulch site is managed by the City Utilities Department.

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After reviewing the proposed Capen Park improvements in the *2013 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan*, staff focused internal discussions about expanding the parking lot to handle the increased vehicle traffic at the trailhead. With the addition of the Grindstone Creek Trail in 2016, the parking lots at Capen Park and Grindstone Nature Area are often overflowing with vehicles on the weekends, in the evenings and during special events. Park staff held an interested parties meeting at the park on July 19, 2022 and met with citizens to discuss the proposed plans and gain feedback about the proposed improvements. The majority of the citizens that spoke with park staff reiterated the need for more parking and walkway access to the trail and asked staff to avoid any development within the natural areas of the park. The public had an additional opportunity to provide comments about the project via an online survey at CoMo.gov from July 15, 2022 to August 5, 2022. All feedback from the public input meetings and online como.gov surveys are included with this Council



City of Columbia

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memo and may also be found online at

https://www.como.gov/webapps/cipweb/display_project.php?project_id=280.

Park staff introduced the proposed Capen Park improvements to the Parks and Recreation Commission on July 21, 2022. 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.

The proposed improvements at Capen Park include the following:

1. Contract labor will be used to complete an asphalt overlay of the existing parking lot and construct an additional parking lot to the west of the existing parking lot. The parking expansion will increase the number of parking spaces from 30 parking spaces to 55 parking spaces at the park. This will include two ADA accessible parking spaces and access aisle. The contractor will also be responsible for asphalt repairs at the entrance to the existing parking lot to eliminate potholes and striping both parking lots. Park staff will install a center median bio-swale to improve the stormwater controls at the parking lot location. The parking lot expansion will require reducing the existing mulch site footprint (44,000 square feet) by 5,200 square feet. Park staff has met with City Utilities staff and determined that the reduction in square footage for the mulch site would have a minimal impact on the mulch site operations. A new retaining wall will be constructed to divide the parking lot area from the mulch site.
2. Park staff will replace the existing electric service at the park to install one additional LED parking lot light and create a new electric access point at the southwest corner of the parking lot. This electric access point will be used for special events at the park including the Stonegrinder 7K trail run programmed by the Parks and Recreation Department. The new electric access point will also be used for the installation of a future permanent restroom at the park.
3. Contract labor will be used to install a new 6-foot wide concrete walkway on the east side of the existing parking lot that would allow for pedestrian and cyclist access from Capen Park Drive to the Hinkson Creek Trail. This eliminates pedestrian and cyclist traffic traveling through the parking lot. Contract labor will also install a new 6-foot wide concrete walkway from the new parking lot to the Hinkson Creek Trail.
4. Park staff will install a new park sign, bike racks and a three-panel information kiosk as part of the improvement project. These amenities are standards for trailhead users and will provide map information for out-of-town guests using the trail system. Staff will also complete all backfilling and turf establishment necessary after the improvements.

The \$118,000 improvement project at Capen Park is funded by a donation from the Capen Family Trust. 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 concrete and asphalt work associated with the improvements, and park staff will complete all other improvements. The improvements at Capen Park are scheduled to begin spring 2023, with an anticipated completion date of late fall 2023.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: The total project cost is \$118,000 and is funded by a donation from the Capen Family Trust.

Long-Term Impact: None

Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

[Strategic Plan Impacts:](#)

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

[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 ordinance authorizing the capital improvement project at Capen Park.