



**Parks and Recreation Board Agenda
Department of Public Services
851 South Eton-Conference Room
Tuesday, April 2, 2019
6:30 PM**

Call to order

I. Roll Call

II. Approval of the minutes of: Tuesday, March 5, 2019 (*regular meeting*)

III. Agenda Items-Written and submitted by 5pm Monday at the Birmingham Ice Sports Arena, one week prior to the meeting.

- 1) Recommended Parks & Recreation Bond Priority List
- 2) Maintenance of Natural Areas
- 3) Piano in Shain Park

IV. Communications/Discussion Items

- 1) Dog Park Report
- 2) Proposed 2019-2020 Capital Projects
- 3) January/February 2019 “*The Review*” Michigan Municipal League magazine

V. Unfinished Business

VI. New Business

VII. Open To The Public for Items Not On the Agenda

VIII. Next Regular Meeting – Tuesday, May 7, 2019 (DPS)

Individuals requiring accommodations, such as interpreter services, for effective participation in this meeting should contact the City Clerk's Office at (248) 530-1880 at least one day in advance of the public meeting.

Las personas que requieren alojamiento, tales como servicios de interpretación, la participación efectiva en esta reunión deben ponerse en contacto con la Oficina del Secretario Municipal al (248) 530-1880 por lo menos el día antes de la reunión pública.
(Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964).

*If you cannot attend the meetings, please contact Connie Folk at the Birmingham Ice Arena (248) 530-1642.
Minutes are available for review at the Birmingham Ice Sports Arena, 2300 East Lincoln, Birmingham, MI 48009*

PARKS & RECREATION BOARD MISSION STATEMENT

The Parks and Recreation Board strives to provide opportunities for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration for present and future generations of residents and visitors through stewardship of natural, cultural and recreational resources. By continuously elevating the beauty and quality of the parks and recreation system of Birmingham, the Parks and Recreation Board will promote health and wellbeing, and strengthen the community.

PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES

March 5, 2019

Heather Carmona, Vice-Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. at 851 S. Eton.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Heather Carmona, Ross Kaplan, Ellie Noble, Dominick Pulis, John Rusche, Lilly Stotland and Bill Wiebrecht

MEMBERS ABSENT: Therese Longe and John Meehan

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT: John Butcher, Seaholm High School

ADMINISTRATION: Lauren A. Wood, Director of Public Services
Carrie A. Laird, Parks and Recreation Manager
Jack Brito, Golf Course Manager

GUESTS: Anne Bray, Cheryl Couretas, Cindy Rose and David Young

Heather recognized that the March 5, 2019 Parks and Recreation Board meeting will be Lilly Stotland's last Parks and Recreation Board meeting.

Lilly stated that it has been a pleasure serving on the Parks and Recreation Board.

Heather added item number six under Communication/Discussion Items: Press release awarding the contract for the Kenning Park ballfield construction project that was approved at the City Commission meeting.

Heather welcomed John Butcher to the Parks and Recreation Board as the new student representative. John stated that he is employed at Birmingham Country Club and has skated with the Birmingham High School Hockey team and started skating when he was five years old at the Birmingham Ice Sports Arena.

It was moved by Lilly Stotland, seconded by Bill Wiebrecht that the minutes of the February 5, 2019 regular meeting be approved as amended.

Yeas – 7 Heather Carmona, Ross Kaplan, Ellie Noble, Dominick Pulis, John Rusche, Lilly Stotland and Bill Wiebrecht

Nays – 0

Absent -1 Therese Longe and John Meehan

AGENDA ITEM #1: 2018 Annual Golf Report

Jacky Brito reviewed the 2018 Annual Golf Report that included a review of annual rounds, revenue and expenditure comparisons, the Junior Golf Program, a five-year financial projection and a forecast for the 2019 season. Jacky also reviewed the upcoming 2019 marketing strategies.

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Jacky stated that overall the memberships were steady, but there was a drop in the resident memberships compared to last year, although this category seems to fluctuate each season without much impact to the total rounds.

Jacky also discussed golf course capital improvements, which were all new bridges at Springdale Golf Course and a new fairway bunker on #2 at Springdale Golf Course.

Jacky stated the rounds were down based on the coldest and wettest weather last spring and fall.

Jacky stated that in 2019, a new training system will be introduced that is targeted specifically for juniors, the "Colour Path Golf" System. It was developed in England and its focus is to have the juniors develop their swings by simply following the color paths with drills and fun games.

Jacky stated that food and beverage revenues were comparable in this department at each course, with total combined sales of \$84,404 that was slightly down by 1,567, or 2%. There were three events that were cancelled due to inclement weather which had a direct impact for the revenues from the outings; Two Nite Golf Tournaments and our Dueling Planos Tourney. In addition, our "Just A Drive Away" promotion was not utilized this season due to the delay in opening Springdale, but anticipate a successful event this Spring.

Jacky stated that the objective in 2019 is simple, to increase rounds and activity. The membership drive will begin as special invitations to the City of Birmingham residents and surrounding neighbors will be send out mid-March.

It was moved by Bill Wiebrecht, seconded by Ross Kaplan to receive and file the 2018 Annual Golf Report and to forward the report to the City of Birmingham commission meeting for approval.

Yeas – 7

Heather Carmona, Ross Kaplan, Ellie Noble, Dominick Pulis, John Rusche, Lilly Stotland and Bill Wiebrecht

Nays – 0

Absent -1

Therese Longe and John Meehan

AGENDA ITEM #2: Barnum Arch Landscape Enhancement (BALE)

Carrie stated that the BALE concept plan was accepted by the Parks and Recreation Board, and forwarded on to the City Commission for approval.

Carrie stated the initial design included building brick benches using Barnum School Brick that were installed on brick "rugs" using the same brick, and landscaping enhancements with boxwood shrubs, perennials and groundcover. The city went out for bids in May of 2018, was not satisfied with the proposals and ultimately did not award the project. It was determined after discussion with David Young, Community for Barnum Park, and Dave Perterhans, architect to go back to the drawing board.

Carrie stated subsequently, an assessment of the sidewalk approach leading up to the arch was done by Engineering. The city determined it was necessary to replace the approach. Working with Dave Peterhans, the city had exposed aggregate installed in a section across the new concrete approach which tied together 2 aggregate bench pads across from each other on either side of the approach as part of this project as well. This concrete/aggregate work was completed in the fall of 2018. During this project, accommodation was made for future irrigation to be installed.

Carrie stated the city worked with Dave Peterhans who provided a new set of drawings that has u-shaped brick planters surrounding the new city benches located on the new aggregate bench pads.

Carrie stated that the Department of Public Services recommends awarding the Barnum Brick Planters Base Bid project to Brixnstone, llc., as they are the lowest responsive and qualified bidder.

It was moved by Bill Wiebrecht, seconded by Ross Kaplan to approve the purchase and installation of Barnum Park Brick Planters project from Brixnstone, llc., in the amount of \$20,450.00, to be located at Barnum Park Arch. Funds are available from the Barnum Park Donations account # 401-751.000-674.0004 in the amount of \$12,000.00 and Parks Other Contractual Services account # 101.751.000-811.0000 in the amount of \$8,450.00 for these services. Further, to submit to the City Commission for their consideration and approval of this project.

COMMUNICATION/DISCUSSION ITEM #1: Lincoln Hills Dog Park

Carrie stated to the Parks and Recreation Board that the department will have to some maintenance work at the Lincoln Hills Dog Park in the upcoming spring season and the dog park will be closed for a period of time. Carrie stated there has been no date for the maintenance nor how long the dog park will be closed.

Carrie stated that she will provide a dog park update at the April Parks and Recreation Board meeting.

No Action was taken by the Parks and Recreation Board

COMMUNICATION/DISCUSSION ITEM #2: Kenning Park Ballfield Construction Award

Lauren stated that WCI Contractors, Inc. of Detroit, MI was the winning bidder for the Kenning Park baseball fields redevelopment project in the amount of \$737,000 for the enhancements planned for the two easterly baseball fields that are:

- Installation of new fencing and concrete walkways from the parking lot and between the re-aligned fields;
- Installation of new player benches as well as safety netting for added protection from foul balls;
- Rotation of the fields as well as regrading of them to improve drainage, enhancing playing conditions and layout;
- Scoreboards installed for the field users.

Lauren stated that Birmingham Little League provided a donation of \$315,000 to the City of Birmingham which covers almost half of the \$737,000 cost of the project and is expected to begin in June of this year.

No Action was taken by the Parks and Recreation Board

COMMUNICATION/DISCUSSION ITEM #3: Master Plan Sub-Committee

Heather stated that there was feedback of 560 responses from the survey that also included comments from the last parks board meeting.

Heather stated that the committee wants to move all the projects forward based on funding.

Heather stated that at the April meeting the committee will provide a report to the Parks and Recreation Board for review.

Heather stated that the top five were:

- City of Birmingham Park Enhancements
- Rouge River Trail Corridor Improvements
- New Splash Pad
- Booth Park
- Birmingham Ice Arena

COMMUNICATION/DISCUSSION ITEM #4: Booth Park Prescribed Burn

Carrie stated that in the past two years in the spring, at Barnum Park, the native planting beds were treated with a prescribed burn by a contractor that specializes in prescribed burns, David Borneman.

Carrie stated the purpose of prescribed burns is to allow the native species to thrive and lessen the impact of invasive species, since native species have adapted to withstand the heat of the fire while the others have not. Native plants actually grow more vigorously after a burn. Prescribed Burns are most advantageous if performed regularly, ultimately resulting in less need of spot treatment with chemical of invasive species. Barnum Park will remain on rotation for treatment, but we will skip the 2019 season. It's not always necessary to perform a burn on an annual basis, and after a follow up visit, the contractor agreed that an appropriate plan would be not to burn this upcoming season.

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Carrie stated This season we are expanding our burn program to include Booth Park. David Borneman, LLC has provided a quote for Booth Park, for the natural area in the bio swale.

Carrie stated that notification letters will be sent to neighboring residents, and the department will also use social media and website communication methods per usual.

Carrie stated the Fire Department is aware of this project and will have a truck assigned to monitor work. David Borneman's personnel come equipped with warning signs, safety equipment and water tanks as well.

Carrie stated the department would like to move forward to other areas of the city based on the positive results from prescribed burning such as natural areas at Quarton Lake.

No Action was taken by the Parks and Recreation Board

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

No Action was taken by the Parks and Recreation Board

NEW BUSINESS:

No Action was taken by the Parks and Recreation Board

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA:

Anne Bray asked that chemicals not be used around Quarton Lake.

Heather Carmona stated the next regular meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 2, 2019 at 6:30 pm at DPS.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:58 pm

Connie J. Folk, Recreation Coordinator

Parks and Recreation Board Meeting 3/5/2019



MEMORANDUM

Department of Public Services

DATE: March 25, 2019

TO: Parks and Recreation Board Members

FROM: Lauren A. Wood, Director of Public Services

SUBJECT: Recommended Parks & Recreation Bond Priority List

At the June 4, 2018 City Commission meeting direction was given to the Parks and Recreation Board to review the 2018 Parks and Recreation Master Plan's Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan and work with staff to identify facility needs related to the Parks and Recreation operation through a public engagement process to identify a priority list of projects and associated amounts to be considered for a potential parks bond to be implemented over the next 3 to 5 years, and further, to return to the City Commission with a recommendation for consideration. Enclosed is the memorandum dated May 23, 2018 to the City Commission from Mr. Valentine, City Manager including the minutes from the action taken by the City Commission on June 4, 2018.

As a result, the Master Plan Sub-Committee continued with this assignment and as such began meeting on a regular basis, approximately eight meetings, including taking site tours in order to provide the pertinent data to the Parks and Recreation Board, so the Board can make their recommendation to the City Commission on this matter.

Several steps were included as part of this process, which included an overview of the capital improvement items listed in the 2018 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, an examination of the public engagement results from the Master Plan, an evaluation of facility needs/updates, a Public Input Session on February 5, 2019 as well as making available on SurveyMonkey a Pick Your Park Passion Poll during February, 2019. The outcome from the public input session and poll results were tabulated and support was found from the public for all of the items listed as part of the ten categories, see the attachments entitled Poll & Public Input Session Combined and Let's Pick your favorite categories.

Overall, the entire review and assessment during the past eight months of potential parks and recreation improvements, were to determine projects for potential future recreation bond opportunities along with the associated estimated costs. The suggested priority ranking of the proposed projects was based on a myriad of criteria; such as project readiness, necessity or need, poll results, Master Plan project list, community priority, facility condition and staff recommendations.

In addition to the parks bond opportunity, there will be many steps necessary as part of the project management portion to advance any of the selected projects. The extensiveness of the specified projects listed on the Recommended Parks & Recreation Bond Priority List, (see Attachment A) will serve the entire community that will enhance our parks and recreational facilities. The priority list is broken down into two phases based on the criteria listed above.

SUGGESTED RESOLUTION:

To recommend to the Birmingham City Commission the approval of the recommended Parks & Recreation Bond Priority List (Attachment A) at a total estimated cost of \$12,045,00 in order to undertake a series of improvement projects that will enhance our parks and recreational facilities for the enjoyment of Birmingham residents. Further, to recommend that these improvements be undertaken in two phases as indicated, based on project urgency, community priority as surveyed, staff recommendation, project readiness, and the City's capacity to oversee the work.

MEMORANDUM

Office of the City Manager

DATE: May 23, 2018

TO: City Commission

FROM: Joseph A. Valentine, City Manager

SUBJECT: Parks Bond Opportunity

As you will recall, the City recently adopted a new Five Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan in March of 2018 to plan for future park improvements and comply with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) best practices. Adoption of this plan also makes the City eligible for MDNR grants as they become available. This 5 year plan outlined several park improvements with costs of several million dollars. Unfortunately, current funding limitations have relegated these parks improvements primarily to grant availability.

Staff has recently identified an additional funding opportunity upon review of the City's Five Year Financial Model and preparation of the 2018-2019 fiscal year budget. The City is in a unique position to leverage its strong financial position to reinvest back into its parks properties and facilities that are in need of attention. A parks and recreation bond is an attractive option to consider given the following reasons.

- 1) Some parks and park facilities haven't had complete renovations since the 1990s.
- 2) The City is AAA Bond rated and would receive favorable rates to bond for public improvements.
- 3) The City has adequate bonding capacity given outstanding bonding debt is currently at 6% of the City overall debt limit.
- 4) The City's current debt levy continues to diminish each year and in fiscal year 2021-2022 the debt associated with the prior sewer bonds will be paid off reducing the debt levy by approximately .5 mills and in fiscal year 2023-2024 the last payment on the 2001 Parks & Recreation Bond will be paid off reducing the debt levy by approximately .4 mills.
- 5) A Parks Bond would allow for several parks and park's facility improvements to occur within the next few years as funding would be readily available rather than continuing to budget a few projects over the long term in order to obtain sufficient funds to make limited improvements.

In order to proceed, a concise priority list should be established based on the projects most in need, the ability to complete these projects in the next 3 to 5 years as you can't typically bond for longer than the life of the asset financed, and consideration of the total amount to be bonded. It is recommended the Parks and Recreation Board work with City staff and Bond Counsel to develop this list while working through a public engagement process at the board level.

As we consider a possible Parks and Recreation Bond we are also potentially looking at a Parking Structure Bond for the re-construction of the North Old Woodward Parking Structure. While both would be City bond proposals for consideration, there are significant differences in how these potential bonds would be funded. A Parks and Recreation Bond would be funded through general tax revenues derived from additional debt levy and paid through city tax dollars. Given the City's current diminishing debt obligations, new debt could be taken on as existing debt is eliminated. A Parking Structure Bond would be funded through the parking system and paid through fees collected by the parking system. General City tax dollars would not be used for the Parking Structure Bond debt and City taxes would not be impacted for the costs of the new parking structure.

In consideration of the above, staff has included the following resolution for consideration.

Suggested Resolution:

To direct the Parks and Recreation board to review the 2018 Parks and Recreation Master Plan's Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan and work with staff to identify facility needs related to the Parks and Recreation operation through a public engagement process to identify a priority list of projects and associated amounts to be considered for a potential parks bond to be implemented over the next 3 to 5 years, and further, to return to the City Commission with a recommendation for consideration.

- Suggested it would be most beneficial if this document were clear enough that the public could understand it.
- Said cost considerations can be addressed at the discretion of the Commission.
- Pointed out that sometimes more traffic, paradoxically, is better-handled with a narrower street.
- Concluded that the document should be returned to the MMTB and the edits made.

City Engineer O'Meara suggested that consideration of on-street parking utilization would reveal some of the 'neighborhood characteristics' Mayor Pro Tem Bordman wanted considered because on-street parking utilization would reveal information about a neighborhood's average lot-size: small lots likely lead to more frequent on-street parking, and larger lots likely lead to more infrequent on-street parking.

Mayor Harris said one conflict is whether neighborhood input is an equally-weighted criterion, or is only considered in conjunction with other criteria.

Planning Director Ecker recommended changing the second point in section two to read "Existing Street is 28 feet or less in width: If existing street width is 28 ft. or less in width, street may be reconstructed at the existing width," which would have the intended effect of the exception-clause in the introduction to section two being applicable to this statement.

There was consensus that if the last two sentences from section three were moved to section four as a criterion, that would sufficiently resolve various Commissioners' concerns.

Mayor Harris, with the consensus of the City Commission, deviated from the agenda to address Item 6H before item 6G.

06-170-18 PARKS BOND OPPORTUNITY

City Manager Valentine made a presentation based on his memo to the City Commission dated May 23, 2018.

City Manager Valentine said:

- The City Commission authorized \$25 million in 2001, but the City has spent about \$20 million.
- Delineated costs of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan are about \$10 million at this time, but there are other projects in the Master Plan that have not had their funding requirements laid out yet.
- The Parks and Recreation Board will be coming back to the Commission with project priorities, and what could realistically be completed in the next five years.
- The Commission should approve the next bond issuance by the middle of August if they want it to appear on the November 2018 ballot.
- The City will consult with bond council to make sure the City's practices are consistent with what is required.
- The conceptual Master Plans will not be enacted without the requisite further study.

Commissioners Hoff and Sherman said they do not want to see this project rushed, and the Commission should not attempt to get this work done in time for the August submission deadline.

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Sherman, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Bordman:
To direct the Parks and Recreation board to review the 2018 Parks and Recreation Master Plan's Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan and work with staff to identify facility needs related to the Parks and Recreation operation through a public engagement process to identify a priority list of projects and associated amounts to be considered for a potential parks bond to be implemented over the next 3 to 5 years, and further, to return to the City Commission with a recommendation for consideration.

VOTE: Yeas, 7
 Nays, 0
 Absent, 0

06-171-18 N. OLD WOODWARD AVENUE/BATES STREET PROJECT

Assistant City Manager Gunter outlined highlights from the June 4, 2018 memo written to City Manager Valentine regarding this project.

Planning Director Ecker presented a PowerPoint on the N. Old Woodward Parking Deck/Bates Street Extension that detailed the development consultant selection process, the desired amenities for the parking structure, and the Ad Hoc Parking Development Committee's (AHPDC) recommendation to the City Commission.

City Manager Valentine clarified that the Commission is being asked to allow staff to hire a development consultant to create a development agreement with Walbridge/Woodward Bates Partners LLC, ('Walbridge') which would then be returned to the Commission for review and approval at a later date.

City Manager Valentine said a development consultant would:

- Liaise between the City and Walbridge to negotiate the terms of the City's development agreement with Walbridge.
- Bring a high level of expertise regarding the formulation of this development project.
- Provide the best representation of the interests of the City to Walbridge.

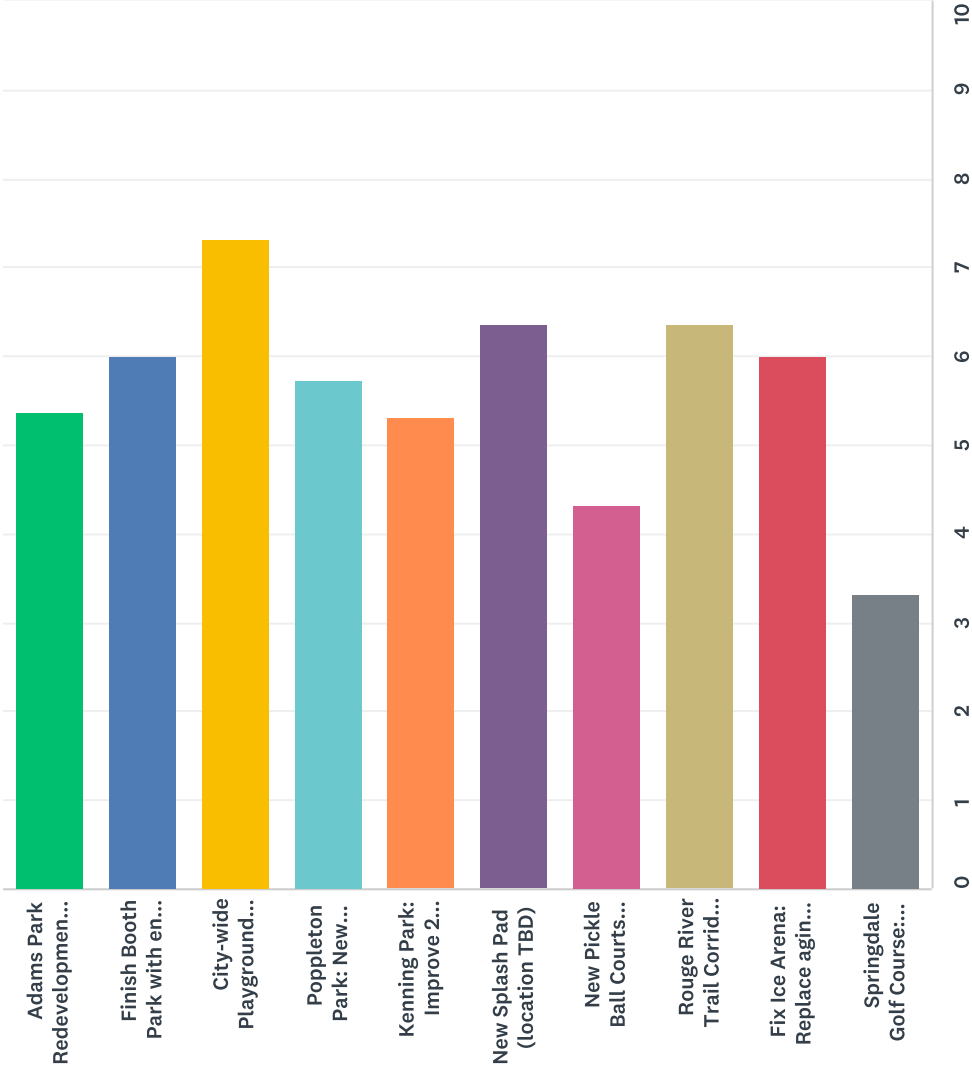
Commissioner Nickita explained as a member of the AHPDC that public-private partnerships (P3) tend to be very complicated, and that is why the AHPDC recommends hiring a development consultant to facilitate the process.

Commissioner Hoff said this decision is a very significant one, and she would like to hear much more Commission input on the details of the plan.

Commissioner DeWeese replied that:

Q1 Potential Projects:

Answered: 561 Skipped: 0



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	TOTAL	SCORE
Adams Park Redevelopment (Entire Park)	7.90% 38	8.11% 39	7.07% 34	10.81% 52	11.02% 53	14.97% 72	14.35% 69	10.40% 50	8.52% 41	6.86% 33	481	5.38

Poll & Public Input Session Combined

Pick Your Park Passion

SurveyMonkey

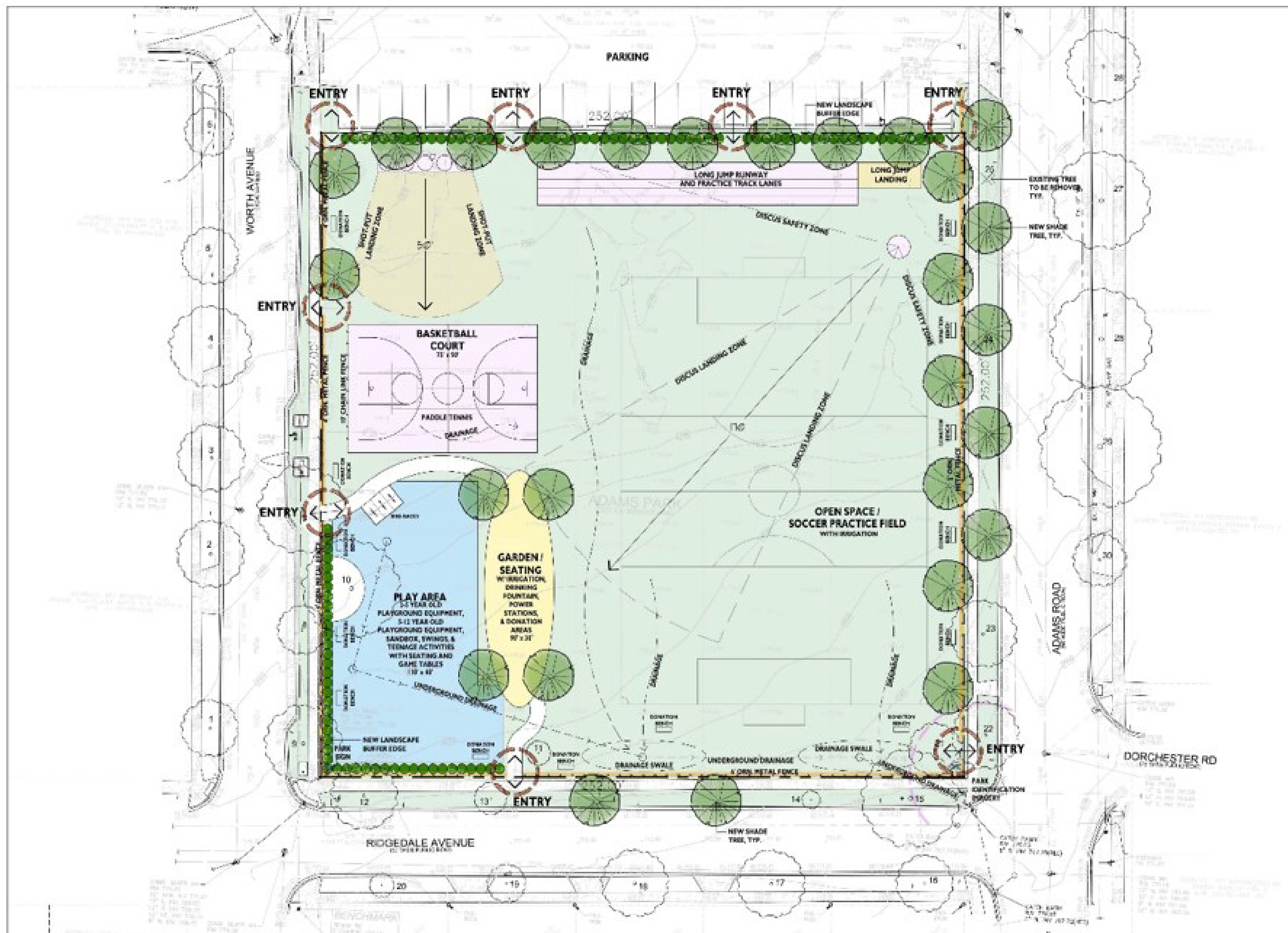
Finish Booth Park with entry plaza, gardens and seating.	4.87% 24	12.17% 60	16.43% 81	14.20% 70	12.78% 63	11.36% 56	9.33% 46	8.52% 42	5.68% 28	4.67% 23	493	6.01
City-wide Playground Improvements: Crestview, Howarth, Lincoln Well, Pembroke, Springdale and St. James- Replace outdated equipment and improve accessibility and inclusivity.	21.74% 110	14.62% 74	19.17% 97	13.24% 67	8.50% 43	9.29% 47	4.74% 24	5.34% 27	2.17% 11	1.19% 6	506	7.33
Poppleton Park: New Inclusive Playground	8.04% 39	9.07% 44	8.25% 40	15.46% 75	14.64% 71	9.90% 48	13.20% 64	9.48% 46	5.77% 28	6.19% 30	485	5.73
Kenning Park: Improve 2 existing Ballfields and create new Inclusive Playground, with pathways between play areas.	2.87% 14	5.13% 25	7.80% 38	12.53% 61	20.12% 98	17.04% 83	10.47% 51	13.55% 66	8.21% 40	2.26% 11	487	5.32
New Splash Pad (location TBD)	17.39% 88	18.77% 95	11.07% 56	7.31% 37	5.14% 26	8.89% 45	7.71% 39	7.11% 36	8.70% 44	7.91% 40	506	6.35
New Pickle Ball Courts (location TBD)	3.24% 16	7.69% 38	6.88% 34	5.87% 29	7.09% 35	8.70% 43	14.17% 70	14.37% 71	17.00% 84	14.98% 74	494	4.33
Rouge River Trail Corridor Improvements: New trail entry plazas, trail heads, signage & streambank stabilization. Connect Willits to Maple Rd at the museum with new stone steps, accessible path and seating.	14.48% 74	15.46% 79	13.89% 71	9.39% 48	8.22% 42	6.46% 33	9.98% 51	12.52% 64	6.46% 33	3.13% 16	511	6.36
Fix Ice Arena: Replace aging refrigeration system to make a year round facility & enlarge and update locker rooms.	24.95% 131	7.24% 38	8.38% 44	8.00% 42	7.81% 41	5.71% 30	4.57% 24	7.81% 41	19.81% 104	5.71% 30	525	6.00
Springdale Golf Course: Cart paths and replace irrigation system	3.84% 19	6.46% 32	4.04% 20	4.85% 24	4.44% 22	4.04% 20	7.88% 39	7.68% 38	11.92% 59	44.85% 222	495	3.33

LET'S PICK

BIRMINGHAM,
MICHIGAN

Parks & Recreation

Adams Park Redevelopment



LANDSCAPE
ARCHITECTURE

MICHAEL J. DUL
& ASSOCIATES, INC.

212 DABBS STREET
BIRMINGHAM
MICHIGAN 48005

P: 248.936.2410

F: 248.618.2619

www.mjdi.com

info@mjdi.com

City of Birmingham

Adams Park Project

Concept Plan

October 27, 2016

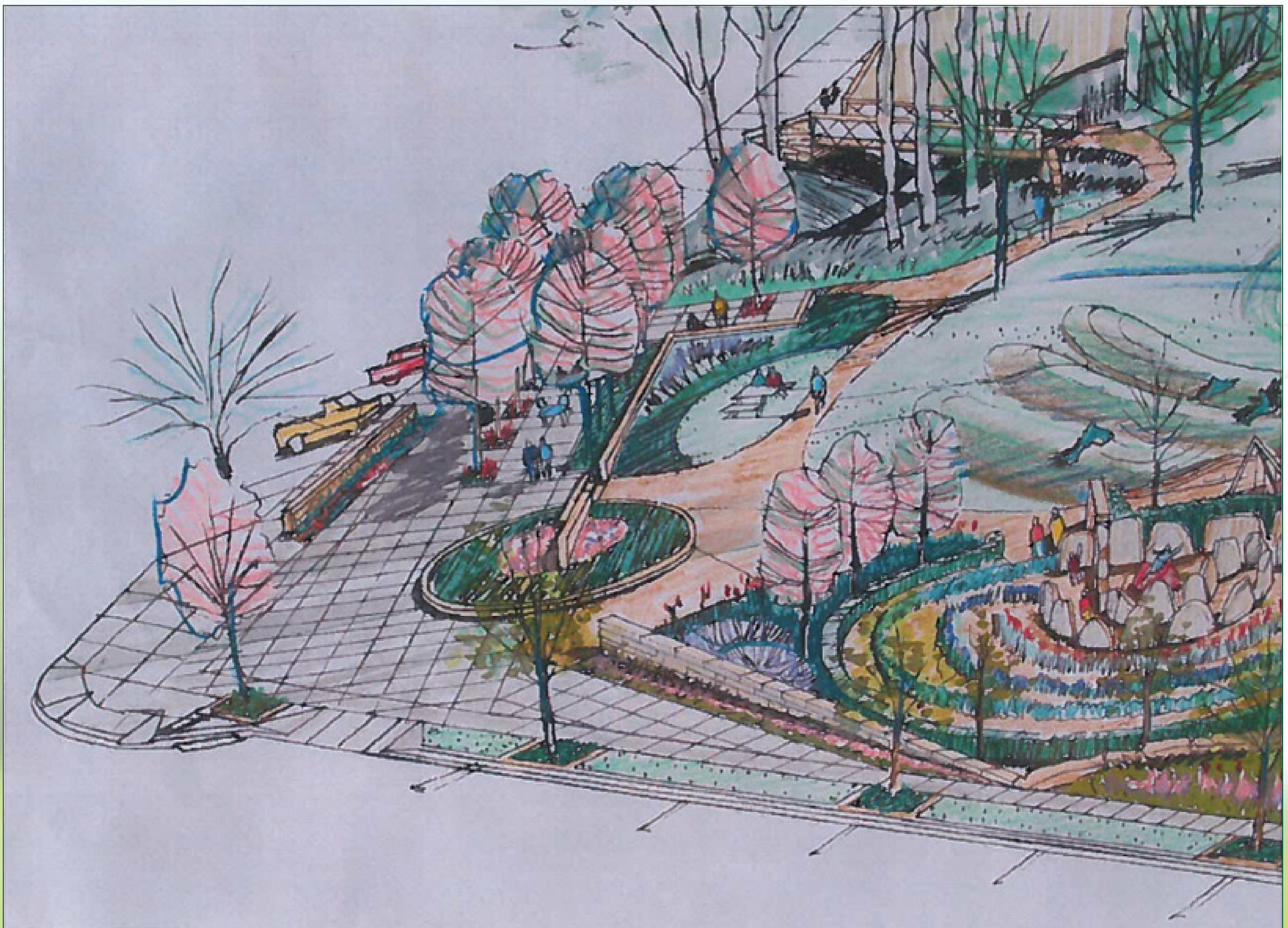
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LET'S PICK

BIRMINGHAM,
MICHIGAN

Parks & Recreation

Booth Park Phase III



- Entry plaza with seating and gardens

LET'S PICK

BIRMINGHAM,
MICHIGAN

Parks & Recreation

City-Wide Playground Improvements



- Crestview, Howarth, Lincoln Well, Pembroke, Springdale & St. James
- Update outdated and aging equipment
- Considerations for inclusive needs

LET'S PICK

BIRMINGHAM,
MICHIGAN

Parks & Recreation

Poppleton Park Playground



LET'S PICK

BIRMINGHAM,
MICHIGAN

Parks & Recreation

Kenning Park



- Improve 2 Existing Ballfields
- Create Inclusive Playground

LET'S PICK

BIRMINGHAM,
MICHIGAN

Parks & Recreation Splash Pad



LET'S PICK

BIRMINGHAM,
MICHIGAN

Parks & Recreation *Pickleball Courts*



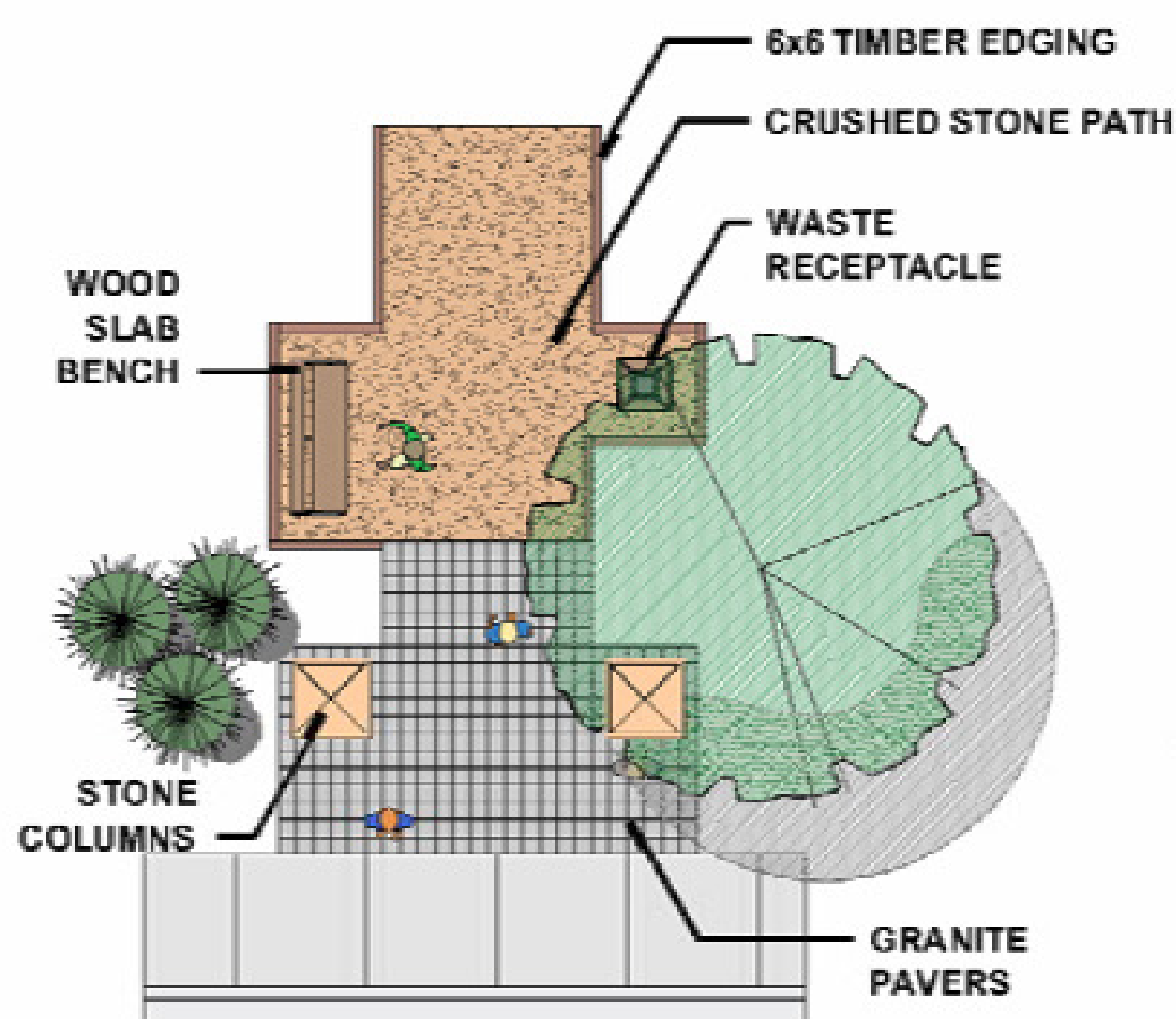
LET'S PICK

BIRMINGHAM,
MICHIGAN

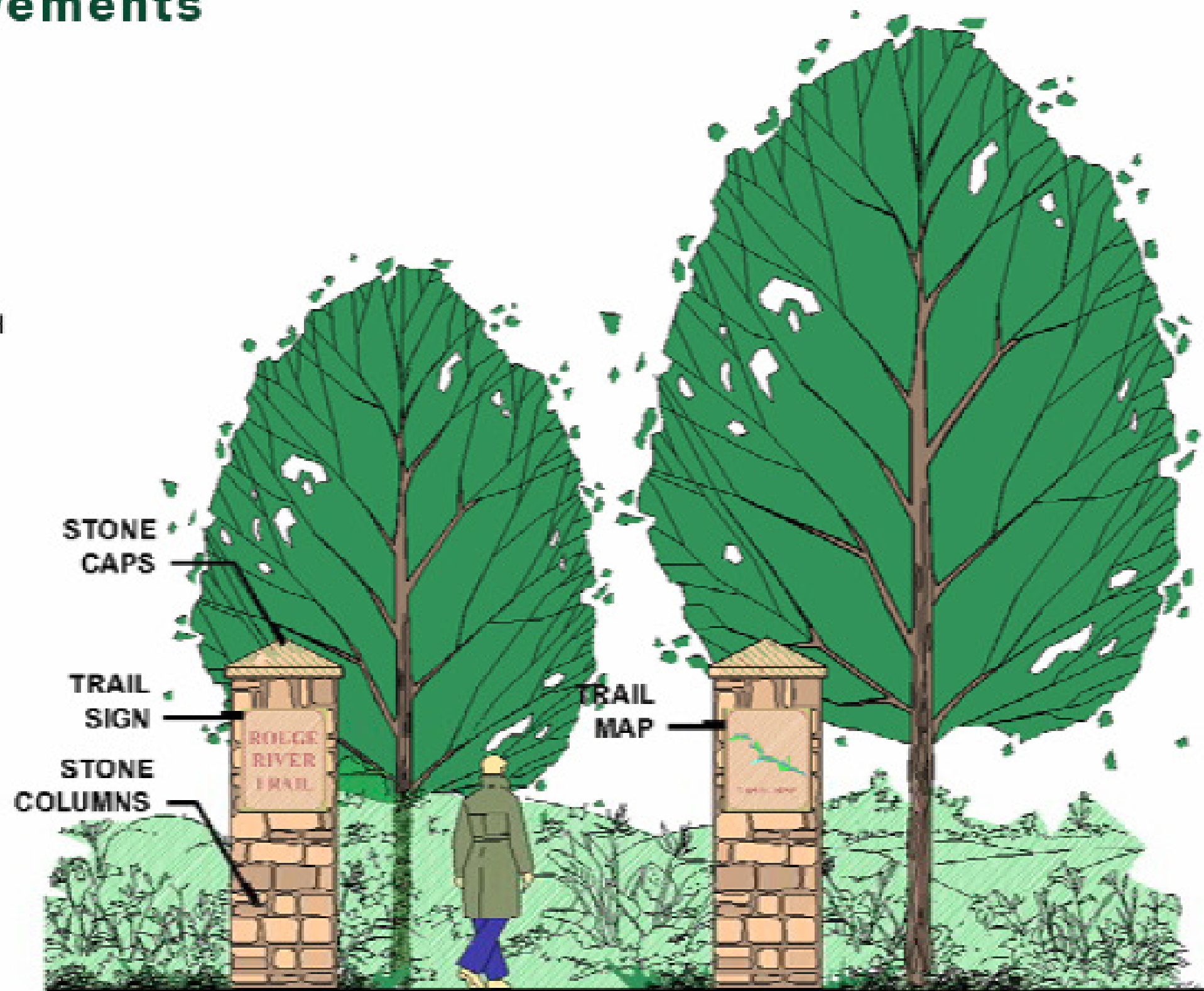
Parks & Recreation

Rouge River Trail Corridor Improvements

Concept Plan - Trail Head Improvements



TRAIL ENTRY AND IDENTIFIER - PLAN VIEW



TRAIL ENTRY AND IDENTIFIER - SECTION VIEW



LET'S PICK

BIRMINGHAM,
MICHIGAN

Parks & Recreation

Ice Arena



- Refrigeration System Replacement
- Locker Room Expansion & Facility Renovations
- All-Season Operation

LET'S PICK

BIRMINGHAM,
MICHIGAN

Parks & Recreation

Springdale Golf Course



- Irrigation System Replacement
- Cart Path Improvements

Recommended Parks & Recreation Bond Priority List

Project	Phase I	Phase II	Cost Estimate
Adams Park Development	★		\$700,000
Booth Park Phase III Entry plaza with gardens and seating	★		\$300,000
Ice Arena New Refrigeration System Locker Room Expansion	★		\$5,100,000
Springdale Park Playground	★		\$350,000
Crestview Playground	★		\$250,000
Howarth Playground	★		\$150,000
Pickleball	★		\$150,000
Trail Improvements New Trail Entry/Plazas, Accessible material upgrades, stream bank preservation	★		\$300,000
Total Phase I			\$7,300,000
Lincoln Well & Pumphouse Park Playground		★	\$350,000
Linden Park Playground		★	\$150,000
Pembroke Playground/Shelter		★	\$400,000
St. James Playground		★	\$300,000
Splash Pad		★	\$500,000
Poppleton Park Playground		★	\$870,000
Kenning Park Playground, Fields 1 & 4, New Walking Path		★	\$1,200,000
Springdale Golf Course- new irrigation and cart paths		★	\$525,000
Trail Improvements Connect Willits to Maple- New stone steps, accessible crushed limestone path, river overlook, benches, retaining walls and plant material		★	\$450,000
Total Phase II			\$4,745,000
		TOTAL:	\$12,045,000



MEMORANDUM

Department of Public Services

DATE: March 25, 2019

TO: Parks and Recreation Board Members

FROM: Carrie Laird, Parks and Recreation Manager

SUBJECT: Natural Areas Maintenance

INTRODUCTION:

Over the past few years, the Department of Public Services has hired Cardno to assist in the maintenance of various natural areas throughout Birmingham, including Quarton Lake, Barnum Park, Martha Baldwin Park, and the Birmingham Museum & Park. Cardno has a dedicated division in environmental management.

BACKGROUND:

The Department of Public Services budgets for invasive species removal, native planting, and general maintenance for natural areas throughout the City each year. For the past 3 years, Cardno has consistently provided competitive pricing as they are an approved vendor for a cooperative agreement with Oakland County. The City has hired them to perform various small tasks from year to year as needed, totaling under \$6,000 per project. In addition, they have been awarded larger projects that went out to bid including Invasive Species Removal Project 2015 taking place at Quarton Lake and the Museum Park property, approved by the City Commission in November 2015 and Martha Baldwin Native Wet Meadow Garden, City Commission approved in May of 2018.

In 2014, the City hired Native Connections to put together a Habitat Restoration Plan specific to Quarton Lake Park. Much of the recommended high priority work has been completed as part of the Invasive Species Removal project of 2015, and as part of the smaller various tasks assigned to Cardno until now. The Habitat Restoration plan calls for Native Species Enhancement, and follow up treatments. Recommended are seed mixes and live native plant plugs to reduce further chance of invasion and to avoid erosion due to bare soil.

In December of 2018, Cardno was asked to provide pricing for maintenance of Quarton Lake, Barnum Park and the Museum for the upcoming 2019 season. Scope of work includes cutting, treating and removing woody invasive species including black alder and spot treatment of herbaceous invasive species such as purple loosestrife, burdock, and garlic mustard along the shoreline at Quarton Lake and planting 700 native plants (plugs) to fill in the areas of which invasive species were removed. Also, at Quarton Lake there is an area near the bridge at Oak that will be planted with 30 native quart size species in order to stabilize the slope. Further, work includes planting more native plants at Barnum

Park in the natural areas and continuing maintenance of follow up treatment of invasive species including Canada Thistle at Barnum Park and Phragmites at the Museum Park property near the pond and in the nearby woods. It's important to note that the invasive species removals are site specific and include spot treatment of woody and herbaceous invasive species to the cut area directly and does not involve mass treatment using a large quantity of approved chemicals.

Included in the pricing for maintenance is 5 monthly visits to each site to monitor new plants and treat or pull invasive species as needed. The price for acquiring and managing an ANC (Aquatic Nuisance Control) permit for working along shorelines through the State of Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is also part of this cost. The total amount for the proposed work is \$20,650.00. The complete proposal is attached for your reference.

The Oakland County Purchasing Unit has developed an intergovernmental Cooperative Purchasing Program for use by other Michigan government entities for the procurement of goods and/or services. Cardno is part of the Cooperative Purchasing program through Oakland County and has provided the approved pricing. Therefore, no other pricing was solicited for this project.

LEGAL REVIEW:

The City Attorney will review this agreement and approve with signature.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This project was included in the 2018-2019 Approved Budget. Funds for this purchase have been budgeted in the General Fund-Parks Other Contractual Services account #101-751.000-811.000

SUMMARY:

Natural areas require periodic maintenance to reach their potential, aesthetically and ecologically. Invasive and exotic plants are a real threat to the environment, choking out native plants, ultimately impacting birds, insects, water quality, and more. This program takes an integrated management best practice approach to maintaining the natural areas which includes evaluating the areas, spot treating or hand pulling as needed, and filling open areas with native plants to reduce invasive plant spores and spreading in open seed beds.

The Department of Public Services recommends awarding the Natural Areas Maintenance project to Cardno, in the amount of \$20,650.00, as part of the Cooperative Purchasing program through Oakland County. Services include maintenance of several natural areas at Quarton Lake, Barnum Park and the Museum Park.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attached is the Proposal including maps of the locations, Oakland County Purchase Pricing and Contract Holder Opt In.

SUGGESTED RESOLUTION:

To approve the project for Natural Areas Maintenance with Cardno for a total cost not to exceed \$20,650.00. Funds are available from the General Fund-Parks Other Contractual Services account #101-751.000-811.0000 for these services. Further, to recommend this project to be considered for approval by the City Commission.



04 December 2018

Cardno

Carrie Laird
City of Birmingham

8000 Kensington Ct.
Brighton, Michigan 48116
USA

Subject: 2019 Natural Areas Maintenance

Phone 517 862 6897
Fax 616 847 9970
www.cardno.com

Carrie,

Cardno is pleased to provide the following costs for natural areas maintenance in the City of Birmingham. I have separated the costs by park as presented below.

Quarton Lake

Along the entire east bank of Quarton Lake (see map below), we propose cutting, treating and removing woody invasive species from the water line to the turf during early spring of 2019. Woody invasives we will target include, but are not limited to invasive buckthorn, alder, and honeysuckle. Treatment will include dabbing all stumps with appropriate herbicide immediately after cutting, then chipping and disposing of the material off site at a licensed composting facility.

Treating resprouts, seeding, and planting in the cleared area are recommended and are included in the total cost of our maintenance visits for 2019. We recommend planting 700 native plugs to fill in the cut stump area; plug species will be selected based on specific conditions within the planting area using monitoring data from last season.

We also propose using coconut fiber erosion control blanket on the slope near the bridge (see map below) to stabilize the area; this area is roughly .05 ac in size. In order to help stabilize the slope further we propose native seeding and filling this area with 20 native quarts.

Barnum Park

We propose combining the two natural areas behind the playground back into one area. This task would include two herbicide treatments of the turf area before any 2019 native seeding. These herbicide treatments would be followed by seeding the area, blanketing, and then planting the area with 30 native quart species (see map below).

We recommend planting the islands near the baseball fields with 150 native quarts per island. Included in the maintenance price for 2019 is the acquisition of treating the circular gravel path that is located behind the parking lot (see map below).

Museum

We recommend continued invasive species control for 2019. Treatments in this unit would focus on treating invasives along the pond edge as well as treating the common reed (*Phragmites australis*) patch located in the adjacent woods. An

04 December 2018

appropriate aquatic herbicide solution would be used to treat the species. For this unit, we recommend only 5 visits from April 2019 – October 2019.

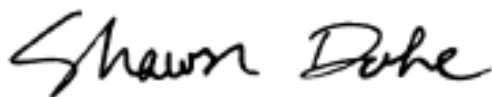
Maintenance within the Quarton Lake and Barnum Park units will include approximately 1 visit per month from April to October 2019, to control invasive species using an appropriate herbicide solution, hand pulling and cut stump treatment as needed.

The below table indicates lump sum costs for cut stump treatment, supplemental seeding and planting, maintenance. The price for acquiring and managing an ANC permit is included in the overall cost.

Task	Cost
Quarton Lake	
2019 Invasive Woody Cutting(entire east bank)	\$3,600
2019 Slope ECB/seeding/quarts	\$1,300
2019 Maintenance area invasives/woody resprouts/seeding/plugs	\$6,950
Barnum Park	
2019 Island Quart Planting (300 quarts total)	\$2,000
2019 Herbaceous Treatments (Prairies/Paths)	\$4,500
2019 Prairie Reconnection (ECB/seeding/planting)	\$950
Museum	
2019 Herbaceous Treatments	\$1,350
TOTAL	\$20,650.00

The total cost is contingent on all units and tasks being included under the scope of work. If you would like to see a task or unit changed, please let us know and we can refigure costs and send an updated proposal.

If you would like to move forward with the estimate below please contact me at shawn.duke@cardno.com or at (517) 862-6897 or colleen.gleason@cardno.com (313)588-5723 and we will send you a professional services agreement. Do not hesitate to call with questions.



Sincerely,

Shawn Duke
Staff Scientist for Cardno
Email: shawn.duke@cardno.com

04 December 2018





**COMPLIANCE OFFICE
PURCHASING**

Compliance Office | Purchasing
248-858-0511 | purchasing@oakgov.com

IV. Pricing: Contractor's fees for the services in this Exhibit are as follows:

Fee Schedule for Contractor Personnel					
Positions	Rates Per Hour (In US Dollars)				
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Field Technician	35-50	35-50	40-55	45-60	45-60
Senior Technician/Field Supervisor	50-65	50-65	55-70	60-75	60-75
Project Assistant/Coordinator	55-80	55-80	55-80	60-85	60-85
Senior Project Assistant/Coordinator	70-85	70-85	70-85	70-85	70-85
Computer/Production Specialist	60-75	60-75	60-75	60-75	60-75
Technical Editor	65-80	65-80	70-85	75-90	75-90
GIS, CADD, or Drafting Consultant	70-85	70-85	75-90	80-95	80-95
Assistant Staff Consultant	65-80	65-80	70-85	75-90	75-90
Staff Consultant	80-95	80-95	85-100	90-105	90-105
Senior Staff Consultant	85-100	85-100	90-105	95-110	95-110
Project Consultant	75-90	75-90	80-95	85-100	85-100
Senior Project Consultant	80-95	80-95	85-100	90-105	90-105
Senior Consultant	105-120	105-120	110-125	115-130	115-130
Director	150-175	150-175	150-175	150-175	150-175

Fee Schedule For Contractor Equipment			
Equipment	Equipment Rates for years 2018-2022 (in US dollars)		
	Hour	Day	Week
Tractor	30	225	900
Seed Drill	30	220	880
Misc. Mechanized Equipment	30	300	1,200
GPS Unit	35	150	600
Fish Stock Boat	20	150	600
Power Rake	20	100	400
ATV	15	75	300
Boat/Motor/Trailer	10	80	320
Backpack Fish Shocker	10	80	320
Fire Pumping Equipment	10	80	320
Surveying Equipment	10	50	200
Mower	10	60	240
Field Sprayer (25-200 gal)	10	40	160
Gas Power Tools (chainsaw, auger, pump, etc.)	10	30	120
Fire Hand-Tools	10	40	160
Mist Nets	10	25	100
Anabat	10	50	200
Radio Receiver & Antenna	15	100	400
Radio Transmitters	20	175	700



L. BROOKS PATTERSON, OAKLAND COUNTY EXECUTIVE

COUNTY MICHIGAN
COMPLIANCE OFFICE - PURCHASING

Pamela L. Weipert, CPA, CIA
Compliance Officer

Cooperative Purchasing Program

Current Contract Holder Opt In

The Oakland County Purchasing Unit has developed an intergovernmental Cooperative Purchasing Program for use by other Michigan government entities and school districts, for the procurement of goods and/or services.

The purpose of this program is to obtain an overall lower cost for all participants by combining volumes, increasing purchasing power, and realizing efficiencies. Oakland County requires that the vendor awarded the contract will authorize it's availability on the County's Cooperative program website.

All purchasing requests by government entities will be conducted between that entity and the contract holder; purchase orders should be submitted & invoiced directly. Payments will be remitted by the ordering government entities on a direct and individual basis with the contracted vendor, in accordance with the contract pricing and terms.

By signing this Opt In Form; the vendor agrees to supply the goods and/or services, scheduled in the below mentioned contract, at the established County contract pricing to other Michigan government entities and school districts.

CONTRACT NUMBER: 005330

Vendor/Company Name (printed): Cardno, Inc.

Contact Person's Name (printed): Anngie Richter

Email: anngie.richter@cardno.com Phone: 708-516-2544

Signature:  Date: 05/25/2018

Completed form should be emailed back to the person that emailed it to you.
Otherwise, please email to: scianc@oakgov.com

DATE: March 20th, 2019

TO: Parks and Recreation Board

FROM: Brooks Cowan, City Planner

APPROVED: Jana Ecker, Planning Director

SUBJECT: Piano in the Park

The Public Arts Board has considered placing pianos in various locations throughout downtown Birmingham for the public to play at any time. On October 17th, 2018, the Public Arts Board reviewed suggested sites for a public piano and prioritized the pavillion in Shain Park as their top choice. There was consensus with the Board that they only wanted to place one piano in the City at this time.

On January 16th, 2019 the Public Arts Board voted to recommend adding a Piano beneath the pavilion of Shain Park with the following conditions:

- 1.) The Public Arts Board approved \$750 to be used from its budget for picking up a piano from site and delivering it to Shain Park. Finances will also be used for potentially removing the piano for a certain amount of time.
- 2.) Members of the Board find a piano to be donated for free.
 - a. The piano must have wheels for the City to be able to move when necessary.
- 3.) The piano will be placed in Shain Park from June 1st through August 31st
 - a. Piano will have sign "this area is under surveillance" to deter vandalism.
 - b. On August 21st the Public Arts Board will vote on whether or not to extend the amount of time the piano is kept in the park.
 - c. Funding from the Public Arts Board will be used to have piano removed from the park if necessary.

Since the motion was approved, members of the Board posted advertisements seeking a free piano, and also coordinated with the City of Royal Oak's public piano coordinator. The City has received an application for a piano donated by Birmingham residents Michael and Maybeth Flynn whose piano is currently located at the Professional Movers warehouse in Walled Lake, MI. Please see attached application and photos.

On March 20th, 2019, Jason Gittinger of Detroit School of Rock and Pop Music joined the Public Arts Board to provide insight about policy for public pianos. Jason Gittinger discussed his relationship with Professional Movers and how they help assist Royal Oak's public piano program.

He discussed the process of a public painting event for the residents to paint the pianos and what the life cycle of the public pianos typically is, depending on the location.

The Public Arts Board approved a recommendation to the City Commission to accept the piano donated by Michael and Maybeth Flynn for the recommended site beneath the pavilion at Shain Park with the condition that the piano is managed by the Detroit School of Rock and Pop, and would be replaced with another piano donated by Professional Movers if the current piano falls into disrepair.

The Public Arts Board then approved a motion to recommend a public painting event for the piano to be painted with an outdoor floral theme.

The Public Arts Board noted that a plaque recognizing the donors as well as the Detroit School of Rock and Pop will be placed on the piano.

Photos of the recommended pavilion location are provided below, as well as the attached application and piano photos.

Suggested Action:

To recommend approval to the City Commission of a piano with wheels beneath the Shain Park pavilion for the time period of June 1st through August 31st. Also to recommend a public painting event for the piano to be painted with an outdoor floral theme.





APPLICATION
TO THE PUBLIC ARTS BOARD
FOR ARTWORK TO BE DISPLAYED ON PUBLIC
PROPERTY

ARTIST (first and last) or PROJECT NAME

Piano in the Park

TITLE

DATE of ARTWORK

3-11-19

MEDIUM/TECHNIQUE

DESCRIPTION OF ARTWORK

Used Piano in Storage for Piano in the Park
Pilot program.

DIMENSIONS 58 1/2 in height x 59 in width x 25 in length/depth

OBJECT TYPE(S)/MATERIAL Piano (i.e. sculpture, mural, tile, fountain)

INSCRIPTION/FOUNDRY MARKS (if a multiple, please include edition number)

PROPOSED ☒ DONATION ☐ LOAN: DURATION OF LOAN (mos./yr.)

PRESENT LOCATION OF ARTWORK (where is the work of art?)

Walled Lake Warehouse

CONDITION Used - Great Condition

MAINTENANCE REQUIRED Tuning when placed (long term care/annual)

VALUE \$1500 ☐ APPRAISED ☒ OWNER'S STATED VALUE

STATE OWNER OR AGENT FOR OWNER'S RELATIONSHIP TO ARTIST

Michael C. Marybeth Flynn 424-634-2508

NARRATIVE/RATIONALE FOR GIFT/LOAN/TEMPORARY INSTALLATION

We were approached by Jason Eckstein from Bham Public Arts Board about our piano and decided it was a very worthwhile program to donate it to for the enjoyment of the residents of Birmingham.

OWNER/AGENT FOR OWNER

Michael & Marybeth Flynn

DAYTIME PHONE

474-634-2508

EVENING PHONE

EMAIL

SIGNATURE

DATE

3-11-19

Submit application together with SLIDES OR DIGITAL IMAGES of artwork and a VITEA or RESUMÉ of the artist to:

City of Birmingham
Attn: City Clerk – c/o Public Arts Board
151 Martin St.
P.O. Box 3001
Birmingham, MI 48012

For Office use only

Date Received _____

REVIEW/APPROVAL (date)

Presented for Arts Board discussion _____

Board Action ☐ approved for continuation ☐ approved ☐ not approved/decline

Recommendation(s)/Action Taken _____

Routing and dates approved:

Y N

- ☐ Planning Board _____
- ☐ Engineering _____
- ☐ Public Safety (Police/Fire) _____
- ☐ Parks and Recreation _____
- ☐ Presented to City Commission _____

Site Location: _____

Y N

- ☐ Parking _____
- ☐ Building _____
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Final approval _____





OFF LEASH DOG AREA
(DOG PARK)

	YEAR 1 OPENING JUNE 2011 + July 1, 2011-June 30, 2012		YEAR 2 July 1, 2012- June 30, 2013		YEAR 3 July 1, 2013- June 30, 2014		YEAR 4 July 1, 2014- June 30, 2015		YEAR 5 July 1, 2015- June 30, 2016		CUMMULATIVE TOTAL YEARS 1-5 July 2011-June 30, 2016	
REVENUES												
Resident Passes Sold	159	\$7,950.00	147	\$7,350.00	122	\$6,100.00	144	\$7,200.00	132	\$6,600.00	704	\$35,200.00 *
Non-Resident Passes Sold	79	\$15,800.00	55	\$11,000.00	49	\$9,800.00	53	\$10,600.00	35	\$7,000.00	271	\$54,200.00 *
Replacement fobs Sold	48	\$480.00	16	\$160.00	4	\$40.00	11	\$110.00	7	\$70.00	86	\$860.00 *
Total Passes/Revenue	238	\$24,230.00	202	\$18,510.00	171	\$15,940.00	197	\$17,910.00	167	\$13,670.00	975	\$90,260.00 *
EXPENSES												
Maintenance and Administrative Costs		\$14,371.31		\$6,180.00		\$8,282.09		\$7,927.36		\$10,506.08		\$47,266.84
Supplies (trash bags, key fobs, etc)		\$800.00		\$1,500.00		\$1,500.00		\$1,500.00		\$1,600.00		\$6,900.00
Start up Costs (Fencing, Gate System, Construction Costs)		\$27,473.36										\$27,473.36
Total Expenses		\$42,644.67		\$7,680.00		\$9,782.09		\$9,427.36		\$12,106.08		\$81,640.20
INCOME/LOSS		-\$18,414.67		\$10,830.00		\$6,157.91		\$8,482.64		\$1,563.92		\$8,619.80
TOTAL NET INCOME/LOSS		-\$18,414.67		-\$7,584.67		-\$1,426.76		\$7,055.88		\$8,619.80		

	YEAR 6 July 1, 2016- June 30, 2017		YEAR 7 July 1, 2017- June 30, 2018		YEAR 8 July 1, 2018- March 22, 2019		YEAR 9		YEAR 10		CUMMULATIVE TOTAL July 2011- March 22, 2019 (TOTAL)	
REVENUES												
Resident Passes Sold	96	\$4,800.00	122	\$6,100.00	84	\$4,200.00		\$0.00		\$0.00	1006	\$50,300.00 *
Non-Resident Passes Sold	35	\$7,000.00	45	\$9,000.00	19	\$3,800.00		\$0.00		\$0.00	370	\$74,000.00 *
Replacement fobs Sold	4	\$40.00	10	\$100.00	4	\$40.00		\$0.00		\$0.00	104	\$1,040.00 *
Total Passes/Revenue	131	\$11,840.00	167	\$15,200.00	103	\$8,040.00	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	1376	\$125,340.00 *
EXPENSES												
Maintenance and Administrative Costs		\$6,000.00		\$9,500.00		\$6,500.00						\$69,266.84
Supplies (trash bags, key fobs, etc)		\$3,520.00		\$2,370.00		\$3,200.00						\$15,990.00
												\$27,473.36
Total Expenses		\$9,520.00		\$11,870.00		\$9,700.00		\$0.00		\$0.00		\$112,730.20
INCOME/LOSS		\$2,320.00		\$3,330.00		-\$1,660.00		\$0.00		\$0.00		\$12,609.80
TOTAL NET INCOME/LOSS		\$10,939.80		\$14,269.80		\$12,609.80						

* Passes expire one year from date of purchase; the numbers in the total column represent the total number of passes sold , not the current number of pass holders

Current Active Pass Holders = 214: 160 Resident / 54 Non Resident



MEMORANDUM

Department of Public Services

DATE: March 21, 2019

TO: Parks and Recreation Board Members

FROM: Lauren A. Wood, Director of Public Services

SUBJECT: Capital Projects for 2019-2020 - Recommended

As part of the budget process, the Department of Public Services submits recommended budget requests for the upcoming fiscal year to the City Manager. These are recommended expenditures and may not become part of the final budget. The recommended Capital Improvement Project items for fiscal year budget 2019-2020 are listed below. In addition, the planned projects for fiscal year 2020-2021 at this time are also itemized below. All of the Capital Improvement requests are considered expenditure items over and above regular department operational expenditures.

2019-2020

\$25,000 Trail System Improvements
\$25,000 Drinking Fountains - Parks
\$30,000 Benches/Trash Receptacles/Tables - Parks
\$25,000 Bike Racks Various Parks
\$35,000 Crack Repair Tennis Courts – Poppleton/Pembroke Parks
\$25,000 Howarth Park Ballfield Improvements
\$30,000 Replace Gutters/Downspouts Ice Arena
\$32,000 Retrofit LED Lights Ice Arena

2020-2021

\$40,000 New Backstops/Fencing (St. James and Poppleton)
\$35,000 Crack Repair/Paint Tennis Courts – Crestview/Quarton
\$35,000 Poppleton Park Softball Field Improvements
\$33,000 New Siding Ice Arena
\$35,000 Irrigation at Waterfall Park

the review

January / February 2019

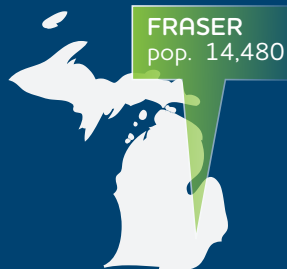
the official magazine of the  michigan municipal league
Communication/Discussion Item#3

Local
Government
Basics

FRASER'S MCKINLEY PARK

Barrier-Free Playground Wins 2018
Community Excellence Award





FRASER'S MCKINLEY PARK

Sliding Fun and Understanding into Barrier-Free Playground

By Lisa Donovan

2018 WINNER!



COMMUNITY
Excellence Awards

A child in a wheelchair can roll right up to the sand and water area. Kids with and without physical and mental challenges can joyfully interact with each other and all the fun, colorful playground equipment. Parents or grandparents with mobility issues can easily move around the park as they watch their laughing kids at play. These priceless moments are now possible at Fraser's McKinley Barrier-Free Park and Playground for People of ALL Abilities, winner of the Michigan Municipal League's 2018 Community Excellence Award.

"This award represents the culmination of 12 or more long years of work, fundraising, and thousands and thousands of volunteer hours by a dedicated group of people," said Michael Lesich, Fraser councilmember and member of Fraser First Booster Club, after winning the award at the Michigan Municipal League's 2018 Convention in Grand Rapids.

"This park has really given our community an engaging, exciting place for people of all abilities and all ages," added Christina Woods, Fraser Parks and Recreation director. "I really hope this park will serve as a reminder to all the volunteers who have

been involved that with hard work, dedication, and passion you can make big things happen. Hopefully, it will spur other volunteer efforts in the future."

The Power of Volunteers

More than a decade ago, McKinley Park was just a dreary hangout for teenagers. The city's Parks & Recreation department had begun formulating a plan to revitalize the park when the Great Recession dealt a blow to their budget. Fraser First Booster Club, a nonprofit organization comprised completely of volunteers, sprang into action. Under the direction of Vania Apps, founder and executive board member, they approached the city with the idea of transforming the park into a place that people of all abilities could enjoy. "If we raise the money, will you build the park?" How could the city say no?

The next step was to get the community on board. An essential part of that plan was to educate people on just what barrier-free means and who benefits from outdoor play. One of the clever methods they used was "Walk in My Shoes" challenges. With assistance from Fraser First founding member Karen Silverthorn—a special education teacher—as well



“This park has really given our community an engaging, exciting place for people of all abilities and all ages.”





as a physical therapist and a local business that made prosthetic feet, Fraser First designed a set of engaging challenges. The challenges encouraged people to experience what it would be like to be missing an arm or a foot, the loss of feeling in your hand, or impaired sight. How might people with these challenges be excluded from play at a conventional park? Fraser First took the “Walk in My Shoes” challenges to city and school events to show that it’s the community that loses when we don’t have outdoor play that includes everyone.



“We believe barrier-free play can cure ignorance,” said Apps. “Once someone sees how a person with physical or mental challenges navigates in play, they see that we all have challenges. It’s how we deal with our challenges that is important, and inclusiveness benefits the total community.”

Next up? Fundraising! Building a truly barrier-free playground was going to cost more than a few dollars. Fraser First was definitely up to the challenge. The city has invested about \$150,000 primarily in in-kind donations. In contrast, Fraser First—the primary funding source for the project—has raised well over \$600,000 to date. They’ve received grants from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund, as well as other grants and significant private donations. They’ve also held a variety of fundraisers—everything from Valentine’s dances and raffles to spaghetti dinners. “The Fraser First Booster Club was the power behind making that happen,” said Lesich.

“This community came together to build this park. It wasn’t corporations saying we’re going to build this for you,” said Sherry Stein, who became president of Fraser First in 2018. “I feel like if you put more effort into it, you feel more pride, more ownership.”



Build It and They Will Come

In addition to fundraising, Fraser First has been an integral part of designing and planning the park, funding a professional grant consultant, and working directly with the city administration on a regular basis. In 2015, their efforts resulted in the grand opening of Phase 1 of the new and improved McKinley Park, which included a parking lot, “Walk and Roll” path, drainage, and comfort station. Two years later, a toddler sand lot, benches, and colorful play structures became part of Phase 2’s entertaining landscape. And just recently, swing sets were added.

In keeping with the park’s mission, all the amenities are accessible. The parking lot has no curbs to hinder access for people in wheelchairs or walkers. And all the playground equipment has a ramp or transfer pad so people in wheelchairs can access all parts of the playground.


“The really cool thing about the park is, because we’re doing it in a real grassroots way, it has come together in phases,” said Woods. “The next step will be looking into adult outdoor gym equipment and maybe a pavilion—things that will really cement that area as a place that people can come to and spend the entire day.”

Fun for All

In the three years since the transformed McKinley Park debuted, it has become a very popular community attraction. People from the surrounding subdivisions and the adjacent Hanover Grove co-op—home to about 600 children—are now enjoying the park on a daily basis.

“It has really transformed the neighborhood,” said Lesich. “People who said, ‘Why are you doing this?’ are now out there every day using the park and walking on the path.”

Fraser resident Brian Laubert, father to two autistic children, is one of those believers. “I’ve watched the park go from absolutely nothing to something great,” said Laubert in a video on the Fraser First website. “I was drawn to the sand park by my kids. They have sensory issues and love the sand. It helps them in their activities.”

“To be able to provide an area where everybody can come together and play on the same playing field helps promote understanding of people who are unlike ourselves,” said Woods. “We’ve been seeing a lot of that.” 

Lisa Donovan is the communications specialist and editor for the League. You may contact her at 734.669.6318 or ldonovan@mml.org.