City of Columbia

701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri 65201

Department Source: Parks and Recreation
To: City Council
From: City Manager & Staff
Council Meeting Date: February 1, 2016
Re: Frank G. Nifong Memorial Park Improvements Public Hearing

Executive Summary

This Public Hearing is for improvements related to the Frank G. Nifong Memorial Park Improvement project. Improvements to the park will take place on the southeast corner of the park property and include replacing the existing medium-sized shelter, and the construction of a small shelter, playground, parking lots, walkways, and lighting. Park staff will also address necessary infrastructure improvements at the park, including park signage, ADA access, and Nifong Lake improvements. The total project budget is $375,000, with $250,000 funded by the 2015 Park Sales Tax and $125,000 funded by a donation from the Columbia Cosmopolitan Luncheon Club. 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 construction of the parking lots, walkways, and playground. All other work will be completed by park staff. Improvements to Nifong Park are scheduled to begin winter 2016 with an anticipated completion date of fall 2016.

Discussion

Frank G. Nifong Memorial Park, located at 3700 Ponderosa Street, is a 58 acre community park with features including the Maplewood Home, Maplewood Barn, other historic buildings, a medium shelter, and fishing lake. The park is also the home of the Walters-Boone County Historical Museum and Galleries, located at 3801 Ponderosa Street. The park and facilities are utilized throughout the year by a variety of groups and individuals, including the Maplewood Barn Community Theater for performances at the Maplewood Barn. The Heritage Festival takes place at the park on an annual basis each September. The festival has an average attendance of 15,000 people and is one of the most successful events hosted by the Parks and Recreation Department each year.

Park staff is proposing to make multiple improvements to the southeast corner of the park, including the construction of a medium shelter, small shelter, playground, parking, walkways, and lighting.

During initial staff discussions about improvements to Nifong Park as part of the 2015 Park Sales Tax list of projects, staff focused on the replacement of the shelter at the park and the addition of a playground. After an initial design was completed, staff met with members of the Boone County Historical Society (BCHS) to allow them to provide feedback about the plans and overall project. They approved the initial design concepts for the park and made the request to add additional permanent parking at the park for use by the general public and for special events at the park and museum. After these discussions, staff revised the

concept plans and cost estimates to include the desired parking addition. Staff scheduled a second meeting with the members of the BCHS and included members of the Columbia Cosmopolitan Luncheon Club (Cosmo Club) after they expressed an interest in participating in the Nifong Park improvement project. Staff presented the improvement plan to the two groups, and both groups agreed that the proposed improvements would be beneficial to the park in terms of functionality, aesthetics, and safety. The Columbia Cosmopolitan Luncheon Club pledged a donation of $125,000 so that all of the desired amenities could be constructed.

Staff introduced the proposed improvements to the Parks & Recreation Commission at their November 19, 2015 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. On December 2, 2015, park staff held an interested parties meeting at the Walters-Boone County Historical Museum and Galleries for final public input concerning the proposed improvements to Nifong Park. Staff also provided the public with an on-line survey and information on the SpeakUpComo website to provide additional comments about the improvements. After considering all citizen comments and the P&R Commission recommendation, staff believes that proposed improvements to Nifong Park represents a consensus of park users and staff.

Specific improvements to Nifong Park will include the following:

1. The existing shelter located at the park will be removed and a new 48' X 28' reservable shelter will be built in the same location. The existing shelter was constructed in 1972 and is in need of replacement due to age and condition. The new shelter will be similar to the new medium-sized shelters constructed at Waters-Moss Memorial Wildlife Area and Fairview Park in 2014. As part of the donation agreement with the Cosmo Club, the club will provide the Parks and Recreation Department with the official name of the shelter. This is a common agreement made between our department and the Cosmo Club as part of the donation process. The Cosmo Club has partially funded and named over 10 park facilities after club members throughout the park system with the most recent being the Clarence Riechmann Pavilion in Stephens Lake Park and the Urban Wussler Shelter in Cosmo Park. Park staff will be used to construct the shelter.

2. Adjacent to the new shelter, contract labor will be used to install a new playground at the park. The absence of a playground is one of the reasons this shelter is one of the last shelters to be reserved by the public. The playground will be ADA compliant, and staff is working with playground manufacturers to potentially provide a farm or early 1900s-themed playground to fit with the existing characteristics of the park.

3. Park staff will construct a small shelter and fishing dock on the southeast corner of Nifong Lake. The 15' X 15' prefab shelter will provide park users with additional covered space and the 30' ADA fishing dock will improve accessibility to the lake.

4. Existing term & supply contract labor will be used to construct two new parking lots and expand an existing parking lot at the park. The request for additional permanent parking was originally made by the Boone County Historical Society (BCHS). The additional parking will provide increased accessibility to the park and assist with traffic issues during festivals and events. Staff is proposing to add two 30-car parking lots and to expand the existing BCHS lot by 12 spaces. The parking lots will be constructed between the existing parking lot at the museum and the existing parking lot in the corner of the park to provide access for through traffic. All new parking lots will be maintained by the P&R department and the existing parking areas in front of the museum will be maintained by BCHS.

5. As part of the parking lot project, park staff will install LED lighting on the new parking lots and add a five-foot walkway connecting the parking lots to the museum and gallery. The lighting and walkway will improve ADA accessibility and safety during evening events at the park. The construction of the parking lots will require the removal of two trees at the park. Both of the trees are smaller than 30" diameter at base height, and forestry staff will replant five to seven new trees as part of the project.

6. Additional infrastructure improvements to the park include the installation of a water fountain adjacent to the playground, construction of a five-foot concrete walkway connecting the two shelters, addressing other ADA improvements, and new park signage. A new park entry sign will be added at the southeast corner of the parking. The sign will include recognition for the Columbia Cosmopolitan Luncheon Club for their contribution to the project.

The improvement project at Nifong Park is included in the City's FY-2016 capital improvement budget and has a total project budget of $375,000. The funding is provided by the 2015 Park Sales Tax ($250,000) and a donation from the Cosmo Club ($125,000). The project is scheduled to begin in winter 2016 with an anticipated completion date of fall 2016. The improvements will be completed using a combination of contract and force account labor with all work done by contract either bid through the City's Purchasing Department or completed using an existing contract.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: The total project budget is $375,000, with $250,000 funded by the 2015 Park Sales Tax and $125,000 funded by a donation from the Columbia Cosmopolitan Luncheon Club.

Long-Term Impact: Parks and Recreation staff currently maintains the park and existing amenities. The only additional utility cost associated with the improvements will be the expenses associated with the parking lot lighting. Staff will install LED lighting on the parking lots to minimize the additional utility costs.

Vision & Strategic Plan Impact

Vision Impacts:
Primary Impact: Parks, Recreation & Greenways, Secondary Impact: Community Facilities & Services, Tertiary Impact: Tertiary

Strategic Plan Impacts:
Primary Impact: Not Applicable, Secondary Impact: Secondary, Tertiary Impact: Tertiary

Comprehensive Plan Impacts:
Primary Impact: Livable & Sustainable Communities, Secondary Impact: Secondary, Tertiary Impact: Tertiary

Legislative History

Date	Action
NA	NA

Suggested Council Action

Hold the public hearing for the Frank G. Nifong Memorial Park Improvement project. After the public hearing, approve the ordinance authorizing the project to proceed and the appropriation of funds.

FRANK G. NIFONG MEMORIAL PARK

1/19/2016



FRANK G. NIFONG MEMORIAL PARK

SOUTHEAST CORNER - AREA IMPROVEMENTS - 1/19/2016

