



City of Columbia

701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri 65201

Department Source: Parks and Recreation

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: March 21, 2016

Re: Public Hearing for Thomas E. "Country" Atkins Jr. Memorial Park – Phase III Improvements

Executive Summary

Public hearing for Thomas E. "Country" Atkins Jr. Memorial Park – Phase III Improvements. Improvements to the park include the construction of the final two baseball fields, installation of lights for the two fields, additional parking, walkways and interior park lighting. The project also includes installation of an irrigation pump station and deep well needed to irrigate the five field baseball complex. The proposed improvements are included in the Atkins Park Master Plan approved by the City Council on April 16, 2007. The total project budget is \$650,000 and is funded by the 2015 Park Sales Tax. Portions of the project will be bid through the City's Purchasing Department, and construction of the proposed improvements will be completed using a combination of contract and force account labor. Contract labor will be used for the installation of fencing, lights and the irrigation pump station and deep well. Construction of the playing surface on the two fields and all internal walkways and lighting will be completed by park staff. Improvements to Atkins Park baseball complex are scheduled to begin spring 2016 with an anticipated completion date of fall 2016.

Discussion

The 81.41 acre Thomas E. "Country" Atkins Memorial Park is located at 5220 North Oakland Gravel Road and includes three baseball fields, concession stand with restroom facilities, batting cages and parking for the baseball complex. The baseball fields at the park are used by multiple user groups including Diamond Council, BC Baseball, Columbia Public Schools, Show-Me State Games, University of Missouri Club Sports. The fields also host multiple private tournaments each year.

Park staff is proposing to construct the final two fields at the baseball complex, installation of lights for the two fields, additional parking, walkways, lighting and installation of an irrigation pump station and deep well.

On April 16, 2007, the City Council approved the master plan for Thomas E. "Country" Atkins Memorial Park, and two phases of construction have been completed at the park since the approval of the master plan. Phase I improvements at the park included the initial site grading, construction of the first two fields, lake, parking and entry road. The initial development of Atkins Park was funded by the 2005 Park Sales Tax, Recreation Services User Fees, a LWCF grant and donations by Boone County and Diamond Council. Phase II improvements included the construction of the concession stand with restrooms and the third field at the complex and were funded by the 2010 Park Sales tax and a LWCF grant.



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After reviewing the master plan for the park and the completed park improvements, staff discussed necessary improvements to substantially complete the baseball complex at the park. A list of improvements was created and incorporated into the design plans for the phase III improvements. The proposed improvements focus on adding the final two fields and reducing the utility expenses associated with the park. An interested parties meeting was held at the Activity & Recreation Center (ARC) on January 21, 2016. Staff met with citizens to discuss the proposed plans and gain feedback about the fourth phase improvements. Staff also provided the public with an on-line survey at gocolumbiamo.com and information 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 January 21, 2016 meeting. After discussion of the project, the Commissioners voted to endorse the proposed phase III 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 proposed improvements to Atkins Park represents a consensus of park users and staff.

Phase III Improvements at Atkins Park will include the following:

1. A combination of contract and force account labor will be used to construct the final two fields at the baseball complex. The two fields will have a similar design to the existing three fields with identical backstops, dugouts and spectator viewing areas. The fields will have a total length of 300 feet from home plate to the outfield fences with additional fence height in left field to increase the total distance in that area of the field. Park staff will install the irrigation on the two fields and complete the installation of the infield and warning track material, turf on the infield and outfield and other field amenities such as bullpens and foul poles. Contract labor will be used to install all chainlink fence and Musco field lighting. The new sports field lights proposed is Musco's Light-Structure Green™ and will match & be controlled by the same computer system as the other three fields. At this time, LED lights on baseball fields are cost prohibitive, but the department continues to evaluate LED technology and when the return on investment improves, will consider a conversion plan.
2. With the addition of two more fields at the baseball complex, additional parking must be added to provide adequate parking when all fields are in use for league play and tournaments. Park staff is proposing to add an additional 168 parking spaces adjacent to the existing parking at the park. Park staff will lay asphalt over an existing gravel lot and construct a new parking cell on the east side of the existing parking lots. The addition of this parking is part of the park master plan and will allow staff to construct the permanent service entrance to the concession/restrooms building. Contract labor will be used for the grading and asphalt installation for the additional parking lots at the park.
3. Initial funding for the development of the baseball complex at Atkins park included the construction of an irrigation lake on the property to be used as a future source of water



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for the five field complex. Park staff currently uses city water to irrigate the three fields at the complex. Due to the addition of two more fields and in an effort to reduce annual utility costs associated with city water use at the park, staff is proposing to add an irrigation pump station and deep well to sufficiently supply water to the turf areas in the baseball complex. The deep well will be used as a supplemental source of water for the irrigation lake during drought conditions and the pump station will provide adequate pressure to irrigate all fields and common areas at the complex. Contract labor will be used to install the pump station, deep well and necessary pipe to connect the pump station to the existing irrigation system.

4. With the completion of the five fields shown on the park master plan, staff will design and construct the final layout of permanent lighting and walkways in the complex. Staff will install additional LED lights along main walkways to provide ample light for players, coaches and spectators to enter and exit the complex. A variety of 6 foot and 10 foot walkways will be added throughout the complex to provide ADA and maintenance access to all five fields, parking lots, concession stand and restrooms, and batting cages.

The phase III improvements at Atkins Park will cost \$650,000 with \$575,000 funded in FY16 and \$75,000 funded in FY17. The project is included in the City's FY16 Capital Improvement Program budget, with construction anticipated to begin this spring 2016. Staff anticipates that the improvements will be completed by fall 2016. All work and materials will be bid through the City's Purchasing Department and will be completed using a combination of contract and force account labor.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: The Atkins Park phase III improvement project, funded by the 2015 Park Sales Tax, will cost \$650,000, with \$575,000 funded in FY16 and \$75,000 funded in FY17.

Long-Term Impact: Staff anticipates an annual increase in expenses of \$15,000 to \$22,000 upon completion of the two baseball fields. The increase in expenses includes field maintenance (mowing, fertilizing, infield preparation) of the two baseball fields and costs associated with the sports field lighting on the two fields. Staff anticipates offsetting these expenses through revenues from field rentals and tournaments and the reduction in water expenses once the pump station and deep well have been installed in the park. The department currently pays approximately \$17,000 per year for water to irrigate the three fields and common areas. The installation of the pump station and deep well will eliminate this cost to the department. With the completion of the five field complex, sports programming staff will also be able to submit bids for new baseball tournaments at the complex with the potential to increase revenues at the complex as well as in the city of Columbia through hotel, restaurant and retail spending by players, coaches and families.



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Vision & Strategic Plan Impact

Vision Impacts:

Primary Impact: Parks, Recreation & Greenways, Secondary Impact: Community Facilities & Services, Tertiary Impact: Economic Development

Strategic Plan Impacts:

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

Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Livable & Sustainable Communities, Secondary Impact: Economic Development, Tertiary Impact: Tertiary

Legislative History

Date	Action
April 16, 2007	Ordinance #19496, Approving the master plan for Thomas E. "Country" Atkins Memorial Park, authorizing construction of the Atkins Park – Phase I project https://www.gocolumbiamo.com/Council/Bills/2007/apr2bills/B127-07.pdf

Suggested Council Action

Hold the public hearing for the Thomas E. "Country" Atkins Jr. Memorial Park – Phase III Improvements project. After the public hearing, approve the ordinance authorizing the project to proceed.

