



**Date:** September 6, 2017

**To:** CITY COUNCIL

**From:** Ann Kattreh, Parks & Recreation Director  
Ross Bintner P.E., Engineering Services Manager

**Subject:** Hold Public Hearing on Concept Plan for Arden Park

### **Information / Background:**

At the August 2, 2017 meeting, City Council elected to postpone a decision on Arden Park and order a public hearing for September 6, 2017.

At its September 19, 2017 meeting, the City Council will consider approval of a concept plan for Arden Park and authorizing the Mayor and City Manager to sign an agreement with Minnehaha Creek Watershed District.

The following agenda content is repeated from the August 2, 2017 meeting.

### **History:**

On August 16, 2016 City Council authorized a memorandum of agreement with Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) to develop the Arden Park Concept Plan. The attached plan is a result of this work. The process to develop this plan included; Three community meetings, in October, November, and May, two Parks and Recreation Commission meetings on December 13 and May 9, and a February 7, City Council work session. Two ad-hoc meetings were added on June 13<sup>th</sup> and July 17<sup>th</sup>. The concept was developed by a project team that consisted of City and MCWD staff, Parks and Recreation Commission members McAuley and Strother, and consulting park and stream design specialists.

The concept plan builds off an August of 2014, [Memorandum of Understanding](#) with MCWD, and exemplifies integrated project development that address needs in five categories identified in the [2015 Parks Recreation and Trails Strategic Plan](#); 1) natural resources, 2) trails, connections, health and safety, 3) park buildings, 4) playgrounds and play areas, and 5) community gathering areas. The plan is also consistent with and advances shared City and MCWD goals of environmental sustainability, clean surface waters, flood protection, wetland preservation, and improved habitat for wildlife.

Engagement of the public and neighborhood was conducted, and was consistent with the neighborhood park designation. Public meeting invites were sent to Arden and Minnehaha neighborhood contacts, and mailed

individually to all properties between Wooddale and France Avenues, and 50<sup>th</sup> and 56<sup>th</sup> Streets ahead of each public meeting. Follow up engagement was conducted by MCWD after groups critical of dam removal came forward. Attached are summaries of meetings 1-3, and a memo summarizing ad-hoc meetings 4-5 prepared by the MCWD. A letter of support from the Department of Natural Resources is also attached.

### **Park Board Review and Comment**

On Tuesday, May 9 the Parks & Recreation Commission received a presentation on the Arden Park Concept plan. The Parks & Recreation Commission was asked to provide review and comments per their 2017 Work Plan. The following comments were given:

**Commissioner McAwley** indicated she was on the committee and that she used to live close to Arden Park. She talked to several neighbors where she used to live and most of the feedback she has received was very positive about the changes to the park. One year when they had a lot flooding they couldn't use the park for a considerable amount of time. People are very excited about the warming house being possibly changed and new playground equipment being installed. The project will do nothing but enhance the park and she personally is very supportive of it. She thinks the city and Minnehaha Creek Watershed District staff did a great job reaching out to people and getting feedback. She attended the first and third meetings and thinks the plan shows what people said they wanted out of restructuring the creek and the park. She also pointed out that a resident has volunteered to get a group together to raise money to help offset the costs.

**Commissioner Strother** was on the committee; however was unable to be at the Parks & Recreation Commission meeting. Chair McCormick read Commissioner Strother's comments to the commission. She indicated she has been very impressed with the engaged community input throughout the process and thinks the plan is a reflection of the community. Thinks this project provides a unique opportunity to both invest in the park and to invest in the health of the creek. The creek is a vital part of Arden Park but is also a vibrant part of the northern half of Edina. She understands the Watershed's desire to invest in the health of the creek but an investment in the health of the creek is also an investment of the long-term health of Arden Park and those properties by the creek. She would also encourage both the Parks & Recreation Department and the Watershed District to consider the timeline for the improvement project. She stated at the meetings she did hear concerns from people that the dual staged project may make the park un-useful for a longer period of time to the extent that if the park improvements and creek restoration could done in conjunction she would encourage that.

**Commissioner Miller** indicated he went to Arden Park and at the bridge it was spectacular with a dozen kids running around and fishing. He appreciates what the neighbors have and what they like about it. On the north side of the bridge there was nice little waterfall effect; however, when he starting looking north it fell flat and turned into a marsh. He thought how it would be to expand the vibrancy for that one portion all the way up through the park and getting that water to flow all throughout the park and making it an actual creek and stream. He thinks overall the whole neighborhood would love it so much more. His impression would be to take that little section of greatness and expand it out for everyone to enjoy. In addition, being able to treat storm water, get the creek healthier and make improvements to the wildlife and

the fish to him it's an excellent opportunity. He understands the people that really, really like that one feature and may lose it over time; however, he thinks it's going to spread the joy of the creek to so many more people. He knows it may not be this exact concept but moving forward he highly recommends it.

**Commissioner Nelson** echoes what Commissioner Miller said in terms of being in favor of it. This offers a great opportunity to at least expand and be able to have the park and creek mesh together. It also would be great when they actually have a path so parents can be involved but not be in the water and make it more of a family activity and more of a community. Change is hard but just getting back to the way nature intended this to flow makes it feel right to her. It's really a beautiful park when you are walking there because there are the trees and the animals and the birds and such. It will be a really great opportunity to have more nature in Edina which is really what we are trying to incorporate in several of these different projects we've been involved with and having incorporated this urban wildlife is an opportunity. She would be in favor for it.

**Commissioner Gieseke** indicated he is in favor of it. Are they looking at balancing the voices and desires from the immediate residents with the needs and wishes of the larger community and he thinks absolutely. He really doesn't see a downside to this. There will be more fishing, it will be more dynamic, more widespread, more fun and more challenging. He added if they can align themselves with the watershed district and get more funding and a partnership working that would be fantastic.

**Commissioner Burke** is in favor of it and thinks it's wonderful when you take resources and multiply them by sharing them collaboratively. She lives near another area where there has been creek restoration and trails built and like this there were community members that were a little bit concerned about what was going to happen. However, it has been such an enhancement to the neighborhood and the entire area that she really welcomes the continued restoration of the creeks and the ability for the community to really be able to enjoy them more fully.

**Chair McCormick** stated the park is going to be beautiful and the design is phenomenal. She likes how it coordinates some of the features they heard from the residents to get that feel of a waterfall. That shows how much they want to work with the community on making this a park that they will really enjoy.

**Commissioner Willett** indicated he grew up on Wooddale Ave. and remembers in the spring and summer they could rarely use the park because it was super marshy and wet. Anything that is going to improve the park and make it more useable, he is all for it. He added it is also going to help the value of the homes in the area.

**Commissioner Dahlien** indicated on paper it's a really pretty plan and he likes how it's laid out. However, he read the comments from the residents that live in the area and to him that is the most valuable feedback. He stated he was not able to attend any of the neighborhood meetings; however, the compromise piece to him is what he is trying to figure out. Also, the way the budgets are currently they don't actually have the funding so there is some time. He noted he doesn't want to extend the timeframe and he doesn't want to continue to draw this out because to the point that was made the flooding might go somewhere else. He sees the value in restoring the creek and the health of the creek but he also sees the

value of those people who bought homes in that area as well as the people who live north of 52<sup>nd</sup> and south of 54<sup>th</sup> have come to love about their neighborhood. He likes the way it looks and is in favor of those things; however, he strongly caveats that with the time remaining they have an opportunity to find something that is as close to replicating what the people in those neighborhoods are experiencing. He also echoed what Commissioner Miller said to spread that out over the course of the whole park is fantastic; however, some residents bought homes in that area because of the amenity. It is important to listen to the residents that are there.

**Student Commissioner Hulbert** thinks this sounds like a good plan and likes all of the amenities proposed.

### **Plan Elements:**

The attached agreement spells out the terms of the joint project, including cost splits. The concept plan is attachment A of the agreement, and a detailed cost estimate is attachment B of the agreement. The following is a summary of the plan elements and cost splits:

The concept plan represents a feasible and desirable project scope that renews aged park facilities including; 1) park shelter building, 2) playground, 3) ice rink, and 4) lawn area. New park facility features include; 5) Patio area near shelter, 6) trail lighting along park path, 7) park landscaping, 8) benches near rink. Renewal, upgrade and new park features are estimated at \$1,119,000. The proposed funding source for this item is the City of Edina Construction Fund (\*Currently unfunded, see funding detail below).

New and renewal of aging walking features include; Renewal of the 1) parks path, and, and new 2) Brookview Avenue sidewalk and overlooks, and 3) trail connections to nature trail and Minnehaha Blvd sidewalk. Renewal and new walking features are estimate at \$335,000. The proposed funding source for this item is the City of Edina PACS fund.

New trails and vegetation features include; 1) replacement of existing parks path bridge impacted by the creek re-meander, 2) nature trail, boardwalk, and north bridge 2) buckthorn removal, trees, upland area native restoration and pollinator plantings. New trail and vegetation features are estimated at \$497,000. This cost is split evenly between MCWD and the City of Edina. The proposed funding sources for the City of Edina share is an even split between the Stormwater and Construction Fund\*. There is an expectation that this feature has moderate potential for state and local grant funding.

New clean water and natural resource features include; 1) Stormwater filtration and sedimentation features, and 2) Options for low impact or zero runoff add-ons for park shelter and shelter pavilion include pervious pavement pavilion, pervious pavement paths, green roof, cistern, and pollinator garden. New clean water and stormwater features are estimate at \$890,000. Locations planned stormwater facilities are included in Attachment D of the agreement. This cost is split evenly between MCWD and the City of Edina. The proposed funding source for the City of Edina share is the stormwater utility fund. There is an expectation that this feature has significant potential for state and local grant funding. Tradeoffs between project partner costs and project scope are possible after grant funding becomes clearer.

New creek restorations include; 1) removal of dam, re-meandered creek with addition length, riffles and rapids 2) creek put-ins and landings, 3) aquatic and wetland restoration, and 4) creek overlook south of 54<sup>th</sup> Street. Grading limits of the creek restoration are included in Attachment C of the agreement. New creek restoration features are estimate at \$1,243,600. This cost is born by the MCWD.

The total project capital expense is estimated at \$4,084,600; of which \$2,147,500 are City costs.

### **Professional Service:**

The concept level planning and community engagement are concluded. A scope of service for project design is attached. Costs for development of plans and specs are presented in the attached scope. Professional services in this scope take the project through bid (tasks 1-10), to the award in the schedule detailed presented below. Task 11, construction management is included as draft, and any follow on scope would take place at the time of bid award. The overall costs are estimated at \$419,330 and are split on a line item basis consistent with the agreement and plan, totaling \$214,870 for MCWD and the \$204,600 for the City of Edina.

Additional professional services for architectural design for the parks shelter, utilities, and plaza area would take place under a separate contract. The Edina Parks and Recreation Commission will participate in a public process for the detailed designed of the park shelter building and the playground. The cost for additional professional services for work outside the attached scope, and identified in the project estimate, is estimated at \$70,000, with funding needs identified in the 2018 budget.

### **Funding Sources:**

The total project capital expense is estimated at \$4,084,600; of which \$2,147,500 are City costs. The project estimate assumes savings to the parks facilities from coordinated scope of stormwater through the low impact or zero runoff park shelter and pavilion improvements in the amount \$175,000. The project budget recommends holding this amount in contingency. Including contingency, total project capital expense born by the City is \$2,322,500.

City Project totals by City funding source are:

- Construction Fund, \$1,243,250 + \$175,000 = \$1,418,250 (61%)
- Stormwater Utility, \$569,250 (25%)
- PACS, \$335,000 (14%)

Capital funding source detail is broken down in the plan elements summary above.

The capital cost estimates above would modify 2019 capital allocations in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for items 15-047, 17-081, and 17-137. While the Construction Fund is described as the funding source above, it should be noted as in the CIP, that the Construction Fund has no dedicated funding source and the plan elements are over and above even the unfunded amounts described in CIP 15-047.

Professional services expenses born by the City are estimated at  $\$204,600 + \$70,000 = \$274,600$ . These expenses will accrue predominantly in 2018. Professional services estimated totals by City funding source are split along the same ratio:

- Construction Fund (unfunded) and Parks professional services budget (2018 request), \$167,506 (61%)
- Stormwater Utility, \$68,650 (25%)
- PACS, \$38,444 (14%)

**Next Steps:**

If the agreement is approved the following schedule is anticipated:

- Q4 2017 Preliminary design for creek and stormwater, applications for grant funding,
- Q1-Q2 2018 Design of park facilities and trails, 60% design check in.
- Q3 2018 90% plan check in, Final design and bidding
- Q3 2018 Bid award
- Q4 2018 Begin construction of creek, utilities & stormwater
- Q1-Q2 2019 final construction of creek, utilities and stormwater, begin construction of trails and park facilities
- Q2 2019 final construction of trail and park facilities

A detailed schedule is also presented in the professional service scope.

**Attachments:**

Agreement and attachments A-D

Scope of Service for Design

MCWD public engagement reports

DNR letter of support