

 <p style="text-align: center;">Council Communication Office of the City Manager</p>	Date: April 25, 2011
	Agenda Item No. 53A-B Roll Call No. <u>11-0708 11-0709</u> Communication No. <u>11-229</u> Submitted by: Donald M. Tripp, Director of Park and Recreation

AGENDA HEADING:

Approve a new A.H. Blank Park Zoo Foundation master plan for the A.H. Blank Park Zoo.

Approve an amended Conceptual SuperBlock Master Plan.

SYNOPSIS:

Approving a new master plan developed by the A.H. Blank Park Zoo Foundation (BPZF) for the A.H. Blank Park Zoo (Zoo), which amends former expansion plans due to projected costs of that project, which entailed moving infrastructure of the Zoo and leaving very little funding for new exhibits.

Approving the amended Conceptual Des Moines SuperBlock Master Plan, to incorporate the new master plan for the Zoo that results in changes throughout the planning area, as defined by Army Post Road to County Line Road and Southwest 9th Street to Southeast Fifth Street.

FISCAL IMPACT:

A combination of funding included in the adopted budget, plus anticipated future funding by BRAVO Greater Des Moines, Inc. (BRAVO). Completion of projects necessary for existing Zoo infrastructure to comply with specifications of the Americans with Disabilities Act's (ADA) Project Civic Access Settlement Agreement (settlement agreement) are at the City's expense, funded through the CIP. The amount of funding indicated below includes the settlement agreement CIP expenses in addition to the \$8.1 million outlined in the separate action being requested of Council on April 25, 2011, regarding an economic development grant agreement. The hotel/motel tax including BRAVO funding (approval pending) is proposed for operations expenses.

Amount:

Economic Development/CIP:

Economic Development Grants: \$8,100,000 (included in Adopted CIP)

ADA City Transition Plan/Project Civic Access: \$600,000 (included in Adopted CIP)

Total Economic Development/CIP: \$8,700,000

Annual Operating Support:

Hotel/Motel Tax: \$290,000 (included in the Adopted Budget)

BRAVO: \$150,000 (approval pending)

Total Operating Support: \$440,000 (\$150,000 by BRAVO, pending approval)

Funding Sources: 2011-2012 CIP, Blank Park Zoo Improvements, PKS013, Page PKS-4 Being: \$3,200,000 G.O. Bonds Issued; and \$4,900,000 of G.O. Bonds to be Issued (\$1,050,000 (FY12), \$2,700,000 (FY13), and \$1,150,000 (FY14)); plus, an additional \$600,000 FY 2011-2012 CIP, ADA Modifications for Municipal Buildings, BLD042, Page Municipal Building – 4, Being: G.O. Bonds Issued and to be Issued.

FY2012 Operating Budget, Park and Recreation Department - Zoo, GE001, PKS130000, page 212; FY2012 Operating Budget, Finance Department – Community Partnership Programs, GE001, FIN010400, page 106.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The Zoo is owned by the City but managed and operated by the BPZF through a 28E Agreement approved by City Council on July 18, 2005, by Roll Call No. 05-376. On April 11, 2011, by Roll Calls No. 11-0592 and No. 11-0593, City Council set dates of hearings on a long-term agreement between the City and the BPZF for operations, management and maintenance of the Zoo and vacation of A.H. Blank Park and the Zoo as parkland, thereby allowing use of the property in a park-like manner, while allowing expanded utilization of the property, as is reflected in the new Zoo master plan.

On April 21, 2008, by Roll Call No. 08-743, City Council approved the Conceptual SuperBlock Master Plan, having consensus support among stakeholders, which visualized stimulated economic and social growth in South Des Moines through a signature sustainable green project that included an expanded Zoo and other area attractions.

At the March 23, 2010 City Council workshop, the BPZF notified the City of their proposal to amend the expansion plans of the Zoo due to projected costs of the project, which would thereby require a change to the Conceptual SuperBlock Master Plan. Early cost estimates of the original plan had significant dollars invested in moving the infrastructure of the Zoo, leaving very little funding for new exhibits. In addition, the timing of the recession left the BPZF with a more challenging environment in which to secure donations. These circumstances were compounded by gift requirements for monies to be spent or forfeited and compliance requirements associated with accreditation through the Association of Zoos and Aquariums.

City staff and members of the BPZF board have been meeting to develop a master plan to facilitate the BPZF's goal to propel the Zoo into a premier, regional attraction by expanding and reconfiguring its borders, enhancing and adding facilities and exhibits, while raising the financial resources necessary to undertake and operate this concept. Master plan improvements to the Zoo include ones which are to be implemented from 2011 through 2015, some of which were approved for construction under a private contract by City Council on March 28, 2011, by Roll Call No. 11-0501; those improvements include a quarantine/winter holding building, gibbons holding building, sea lion exhibit and restoration of the Australian trail adventure exhibit. Others yet to be approved by Council for construction by 2015 include infrastructure improvements to facilities built prior to 2005, penguin/tortoise/otter exhibit, Africa in three phases, Macaque refurbish, sea lion infiltration and park entrance improvements/exhibits. Improvements to be made through 2015 total \$24.7 million.

Upon City Council approval of this master plan, any proposed significant changes to the Council-approved master plan below will need to be presented to and approved by the City Council. This master plan may be subject to revision to reflect donor acceptance, as well as unforeseen economic, legal, environmental, infrastructure or other conditions in the future.



Additionally, the new master plan for the Zoo necessitates changes to the previously-approved Conceptual SuperBlock Master Plan, as indicated below:

- Portions of the new Zoo master plan to be implemented from 2011 through 2015 will be implemented on property within the current Zoo boundaries and will not require expansion into the northern five holes of A.H. Blank Golf Course or the northern portion of Polk County’s Fort Des Moines Park, as was originally indicated in the SuperBlock Master Plan.
- Since the Zoo will not expand into the northern five golf course holes, the creation of Somerset Linear Park as a buffer between the Zoo and Somerset Neighborhood will not be necessary; however a trail route through this area will remain.
- The Zoo’s entrance will remain off Southwest 9th Street, but will be relocated north of Blank Park, rather than being relocated to Chaffee Road.

- Some Zoo expansion (Asia) planned after 2015 will use land currently occupied by hole No. 12 of A.H. Blank Golf Course, which borders the southern edge of the zoo.
- In order to relocate golf hole No. 12, some land currently owned by the Des Moines Independent School District (DMPS) will need to be acquired; however, this would be a smaller portion than was originally planned for the SuperBlock.

On March 10, 2010, the BPZF presented their new master plan and its impacts on the Conceptual SuperBlock Master Plan to the SuperBlock Steering and Technical Committees. There was no opposition raised by any of the committee members.

Early in 2011, Polk County staff began to explore a concept to expand Fort Des Moines Park into a larger area of DMPS-owned land located between McCombs Middle and Studebaker Elementary Schools than had originally been proposed by the Conceptual SuperBlock Master Plan. The Zoo master plan’s changes enable this opportunity for parkland expansion, because a smaller portion of this area will be needed for relocated golf holes. This proposed expansion area is reflected on the amended Conceptual SuperBlock Master Plan.



The amended Conceptual SuperBlock Master Plan is an attainable vision which will result in economic revitalization, cultural amenities and a state-wide destination.

In addition to this action for approval of the master plan for the Zoo and amended Conceptual SuperBlock Master Plan, City Council is being asked to approve related long-term lease and economic development agreements with the BPZF, and the vacation of A.H. Blank Park parkland.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: April 11, 2011

Roll Call Number: 11-0592; 11-0593, 11-0594

Actions:

11-0592 (A) [On](#) long-term lease agreement between the City and A.H. Blank Park Zoo Foundation, Inc. for operations, management and maintenance of the A.H. Blank Park Zoo. Moved by Coleman to adopt. Motion Carried 6-1

11-0593 (B) [On](#) vacation of A.H. Blank Park and A.H. Blank Park Zoo as parkland. Moved by Coleman to adopt. Motion Carried 6-1.

11-0594 (C) [On](#) reallocation of certain unspent proceeds of the General Obligation Bonds-Taxable Series 2009G, General Obligation Bonds-Series 2010D, and General Obligation Bonds-Taxable Series, 2010E. ([Council Communication No. 11-223](#)) Moved by Coleman to adopt. Motion Carried 6-1.

Date: March 28, 2011

Roll Call Number: 11-0501

Action: [Approving](#) private construction contract between Neumann Brothers, Inc. and Blank Park Zoo Foundation, Inc. for zoo improvements including the Quarantine/Holding Building, Gibbons Holding Building, Sea Lion Pool and the remainder of the Australian Adventure Trail at the Blank Park Zoo, \$3,873,183. ([Council Communication No. 11-187](#))

Date: April 21, 2008

Roll Call Number: 08-743, 08-744 and 08-745

Action: (A) [08-743](#) Approving [Conceptual Plan](#). Moved by Meyer to adopt. Motion carried 7-0. (B) [08-744](#) Authorizing Voluntary Acquisition of property. Moved by Meyer to adopt. Motion carried 7-0. (C) [08-745](#) Recommendation from Plan and Zoning Commission. Moved by Meyer to receive and file. Motion carried 7-0. (Council Communication No. [08-224](#))

Date: March 10, 2008

Roll Call Number: [08-434](#)

Action: Receive and file SuperBlock Master Plan and refer to various boards and City Manager for review and recommendation. ([Council Communication No. 08-112](#)) Moved by Meyer to adopt. Motion carried 7-0.

Date: January 7, 2008

Roll Call Number: [08-077](#)

Action: [Update](#) from the SuperBlock Master Plan Committee and request for extension of completion date to April 2008. Sponsor: Meyer. ([Council Communication No. 08-023](#)) Moved by Meyer to approve. Motion carried 7-0.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S):

Board: Plan and Zoning Commission

Date: April 3, 2008

Resolution Number: N/A

Action: Approve the Conceptual SuperBlock Master Plan and recommend approval to the City Council.

Board: Park and Recreation Board

Date: January 25, 2011

Resolution Number: 11-007

Action: Approval of proposed development and long-term lease amendment, guiding principles.

Board: Park and Recreation Board

Date: November 23, 2010

Resolution Number: 10-097

Action: Received and filed proposed development and long term lease amendment, guiding principles.

Board: Park and Recreation Board

Date: April 27, 2010

Resolution Number: 10-034

Action: Received and filed the Blank Park Zoo Foundation's SuperBlock presentation.

Board: Park and Recreation Board

Date: March 25, 2008

Resolution Number: 08-030

Action: Approve the Conceptual SuperBlock Master Plan and recommend approval to the City Council.

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:

Upon City Council approval of this master plan, any proposed significant changes to the Council-approved master plan below will need to be presented to and approved by the City Council. This master plan may be subject to revision to reflect donor acceptance, as well as unforeseen economic, legal, environmental, infrastructure or other conditions in the future.

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