

 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Council Communication</b> Office of the City Manager</p>	<b>Date:</b>	May 5, 2014
	<b>Agenda Item No.</b>	<b>29</b>
	<b>Roll Call No.</b>	<b><u>14-0703</u></b>
	<b>Communication No.</b>	<b><u>14-201</u></b>
	<b>Submitted by:</b>	<b>Benjamin R. Page, Park and Recreation Director</b>

**AGENDA HEADING:**

Approving First Amendment to the agreement between Variety – The Children’s Charity of Iowa (Variety) and the City of Des Moines for donation of a park shelter and sidewalks to be added to the donation of a playground at Ewing Park, 5300 Indianola Avenue.

**SYNOPSIS:**

Approval of a First Amendment to the agreement between Variety and the City of Des Moines for the donation and construction of an open-air park shelter and connecting walkways along with the previously donated fully accessible playground at Ewing Park.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Amount: The donation is the expense to purchase and construct the open-air shelter and walkways connecting it to the playground, which is estimated to be \$50,000.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

On September 9, 2013, by Roll Call No. 13-1402, City Council approved a donation agreement between Variety and the City of Des Moines for a new playground at Ewing Park, to be named the Ashley Okland Star Playground.

Since then, Variety has held news conferences, sent press releases, applied for grants, and created a Facebook page to procure funding and spread the word about this tremendous project, which not only honors the memory of Ashley Okland, but also constructs a playground that provides an opportunity for children of all abilities to be mobile and active, regardless of their physical, mental, or special-needs state. Public support and generosity have been remarkable, so much so that, through donations and grants, Variety has surpassed its initial fundraising goal of \$500,000. Given the level of funding they have raised, they would now like to build a new open-air shelter and connecting walkways to the playground. This First Amendment allows for donation of the purchase and construction of this additional component of the playground project, which would complement the playground and provide another rental facility in the City’s park system. It also provides for extension of the completion of a site survey, design of the site plan, and staking for the improvements to July 2014.

Staff is recommending approval of this First Amendment to the donation agreement.

*About the Playground Project*

This project began in October 2012 when two (2) non-profit groups, Young Variety and Variety – The Children’s Charity of Iowa, approached Park and Recreation Department staff with a proposal to fund and build a new playground that would be “all-inclusive,” thereby providing a play opportunity for children of all abilities. Although the City currently has a variety of types of playgrounds throughout the Parks system, none of them are specifically designed for all children, including those with special needs.

Variety board members met with Parks staff to determine the best location for this type of playground. A location in Ewing Park was determined to be the best suited; an all-inclusive regional playground was a component of the Ewing Park master plan approved by the Park and Recreation Board in 2005. The playground site, which is on McKinley Avenue, already has parking and restrooms available.

The playground will be named the Ashley Okland Star Playground in honor of Ashley Okland, a real estate agent who was fatally shot during an open house event in West Des Moines on April 8, 2011. Ashley was passionate about providing children with the opportunity to engage in outdoor activities. This new playground will offer an exceptional opportunity for children of all abilities to play together.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):**

Date: September 9, 2013

Roll Call Number: [13-1402](#)

Action: [Approving](#) donation agreement between Variety – The Children’s Charity of Iowa and the City of Des Moines for a new playground at Ewing Park, 5300 Indianola Avenue, and naming the playground the Ashley Okland Star Playground, moved by Meyer to adopt. Motion Carried 7-0.

Date: August 26, 2013

Roll Call Number: [13-1354](#)

Action: [From](#) Council Member Meyer regarding a letter received from Variety – the Children’s Charity of Iowa proposing a new playground be built by Variety at Ewing Park, moved by Meyer to receive and file such proposal and refer to the City Manager and Park and Recreation Board for review and recommendation. Motion Carried 7-0.

Date: May 4, 2009

Roll Call Number: [09-801](#)

Action: [Adoption](#) of a policy for naming/renaming of streets, facilities, park facilities and park land in the City of Des Moines. Moved by Coleman to adopt the policy as amended. Motion carried 7-0.

**BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S):**

Board: Park and Recreation

Date: August 27, 2013

Resolution Number: 13-063

Action: Motion to approve naming a playground at Ewing Park the Ashley Oakland Star playground and return to council for approval.

**ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS: NONE**

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