


COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

	Number:	26-041	Meeting:	February 9, 2026
	Agenda Item:	9C	Roll Call:	26-0155
	Submitted by:	Benjamin R. Page, Park and Recreation Director, and Steven L. Naber, P.E., City Engineer		

AGENDA HEADING:

Ordering construction of the following: Cheatom Park Improvements - Receiving bids, (2-24-26), and Setting date of hearing, (3-23-26). (Construction Estimate - \$380,000).

SYNOPSIS:

Recommend the City Council order construction of the improvement and set dates to receive bids and hold a public hearing, as required by Iowa Code, utilizing the method of financing referenced below. Cheatom Park includes several amenities that serve neighborhood and citywide recreation needs, including a futsal court and basketball court. The following improvements are included with this project:

- Removal of the existing futsal court, posts, footings, and fencing
- One (1) new futsal court
- New playground area
- Associated Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant sidewalks to access the facilities
- Site grading

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: \$380,000 City Engineer's Estimate

Funding Source: 2025-26 CIP, Page 88, Park Playground Improvements, PK185, Being: \$145,000 Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) funding from the National Park Service (NPS), \$100,500 anticipated additional LWCF funding from the NPS, and the remaining \$134,500 in G.O. Bonds

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- The Engineering Department has prepared plans, specifications, form of contract documents, and City Engineer's estimate for the construction of the Cheatom Park Improvements, Activity ID 11-2024-023. The improvements include reconstruction of the existing futsal court, reinforced Portland Cement Concrete (PCC) paving, PCC sidewalks, new playground, earthwork, subgrade preparation, modified subbase, acrylic court surfacing, fencing, erosion control, surface restoration, and other incidental items, all in accordance with the contract documents including Plan File No. 679-228/246, located at Cheatom Park, 1100 Day Street.

- The estimated construction cost is \$380,000. The proposed plans, specifications, and form of contract documents are available for public inspection in the Des Moines City Engineer's Office.
- Located within the Cheatom Park neighborhood, the 3.5-acre park serves over 2,600 residents within a 10-minute walk based on the current Trust for Public Land ParkServe report.
- The park features beautiful mature trees, open lawn areas for active recreation, basketball court, futsal mini pitch court, open-air shelter, restrooms, playground, sidewalks, pathways, picnic tables, benches, charcoal grills, and a drinking fountain.
- Public input played a large role in the concept design development and layout of the new playground area, as well as selection of play equipment program, type, aesthetics, and color selection, and included:
 - August 24, 2021: Back to school bash, held at Cheatom Park to gain overall insights on Cheatom Park, current use, desired use, and priorities.
 - October 25, 2021: Community event held at Cheatom Park to provide a report, and on the valuable insights gained and focus discussion on priorities identified.
 - January 14, 2025: Cheatom Park Neighborhood Association meeting, presentation to solicit feedback on the development of a preferred playground and site improvement plan which considered the prior community inputs, approved budget, and funding opportunities.
 - September 9, 2025: Cheatom Park Neighborhood Association meeting, presentation to refine the preferred playground and site improvement plan, including color selection and announce an online questionnaire.
 - September 12-28, 2025: Online questionnaire with on-site signage to solicit input on the preferred playground and site improvement plan, including color selection.
- The Parks and Recreation Department anticipates overseeing a volunteer playground build to install the play equipment. The program offers meaningful, well-organized volunteer experiences, supporting community pride, sense of ownership and project cost savings. The volunteer playground build would occur in fall 2026.
- An additional \$100,500 LWCF funding request was submitted to the NPS to support a funding-leveraging opportunity and the identified need to replace the degraded futsal court flatwork and related infrastructure, thereby extending the life of the amenity and reduce the reoccurring operational and maintenance costs. Notification of additional LWCF grant award is anticipated prior to City Council approval of a construction contract.
- This project may also include a separate, privately funded future mural initiative. The park's topography and the placement of the new futsal court will create a striking backdrop featuring the City of Des Moines skyline. In addition, elevated views from the future volunteer-built playground will overlook the basketball and futsal courts and potential mural locations. The mural project would expand the City's collection of accessible public art within the park system and build on partnerships with the Greater Des Moines Public Art Foundation, Friends of Des Moines Parks, and Bravo Greater Des Moines.
- This project is anticipated to begin in spring 2026 and be completed in fall 2026.



Cheatom Park Playground Improvements - Concept Plan



Cheatom Park Playground Improvements - Concept Rendering

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: November 3, 2025

Roll Call Number: [25-1486](#)

Action: [Agreement](#) with Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) for the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) program for Cheatom Park Playground Improvements Project. ([Council Communication No. 25-417](#)) Moved by Gatto to adopt. Second by Voss. Motion Carried 7-0.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): NONE

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:

- Anticipated actions include public hearing, receive and file bids, designate lowest bidder, and approve contract and bond; also partial payments to the contractor and final acceptance of work.

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