


# COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

	Number:	<b>26-100</b>	Meeting:	<b>March 23, 2026</b>
	Agenda Item:	<b>38b</b>	Roll Call:	<b>26-0396</b>
	Submitted by:	<b>Benjamin R. Page, Parks and Recreation Director</b>		

## AGENDA HEADING:

Approving and authorizing the execution of amendment to the agreement with Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) for the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) program for Cheatom Park Playground Improvements project.

## SYNOPSIS:

Recommend approval and authorization of IDNR Agreement Amendment No. 19-01410 for LWCF, between the City of Des Moines, the IDNR, and the National Park Service (NPS) for \$245,500 towards the Cheatom Park Playground Improvements project.

## FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: \$245,500 LWCF grant revenue toward an overall construction and volunteer project estimate of \$510,500

Funding Source: Anticipated \$245,500 in LWCF funding from IDNR and NPS and remaining \$265,000 in funding from: Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-2026 Capital Improvement Program (CIP), Page 88, Park Playground Improvements, PK185 in the amount of \$254,000 G.O. Bonds and private donations from the Friends of Des Moines Parks in the amount of \$11,000.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- 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 (TPL) 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.
- The proposed improvements at Cheatom Park will include removal of the existing playground equipment and surfacing, restoration of the existing area to turf grass, relocation of playground area in the park, excavation and grading, installation of concrete playground containment curbing, accessible walkway(s) and playground ramp, removal and replacement of the kick-it-forward court surfacing, replacement and updating of electrical service and conduit, lighting for

the courts, paved seating areas (picnic tables, bike racks and/or benches), sidewalk concrete repairs, purchasing new playground equipment, blown-in engineered wood fiber mulch surfacing, hydro-mulch and seed for restoration, rental equipment need for volunteer playground build, trees and landscaping.

- The NPS LWCF is managed through the IDNR and supports cities with populations of 50,000 and up in seeking up to \$250,000 for the development and/or acquisition of land for natural resources and outdoor recreation.
- The Cheatom Park Playground Improvements project has been awarded a \$145,000 LWCF grant and has also been recommended and approved for an additional \$100,500 amendment, bringing the total LWCF award to \$245,500. The additional funding will support community- and staff-identified priorities, primarily improvements to the court, playground, and site accessibility. The total LWCF award requires a City match of \$265,000, which includes a combination of City and privately provided funds.
- 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 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.



*Cheatom Park Playground Improvements - Concept Plan*



*Cheatom Park Playground Improvements - Concept Rendering*

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):**

Date: February 9, 2026

Roll Call Number: [26-0155](#)

Action: [Cheatom](#) Park Improvements: Receiving of bids, (2-24-26) and Setting date of hearing, (3-23-26), Engineer's estimate, \$380,000. ([Council Communication No. 26-041](#)) Moved by Barron to adopt. Second by Gatto. Motion Carried 7-0.

Date: July 15, 2024

Roll Call Number: [24-0976](#)

Action: [Ratification](#) of the National Park Service (NPS) Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant application by the Parks and Recreation Department seeking \$145,000 for Cheatom Park Playground Improvements Project. ([Council Communication No. 24-281](#)) Moved by Gatto to adopt. Second by Coleman. Motion Carried 7-0.

**BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): NONE**

**ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:**

- Volunteer build, partial payments to the contractor and final acceptance of work.

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