


COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

	Number:	26-109	Meeting:	March 23, 2026
	Agenda Item:	38	Roll Call:	26-0394
	Submitted by:	Benjamin R. Page, Park and Recreation Director, and Steven L. Naber, P.E., City Engineer		

AGENDA HEADING:

Hearing on Cheatom Park Improvements: Resolution approving plans, specifications, form of contract documents, engineer's estimate, receive and file bids, and designating lowest responsible bidder as Absolute Concrete Construction, Inc. d/b/a Absolute Group, Rick Pearson, President, \$270,204.50.

SYNOPSIS:

This is a public hearing to allow for public input on the Cheatom Park Improvements and take the necessary actions as required by Iowa Code to authorize a contract for construction of the proposed project. Cheatom Park includes several amenities that serve neighborhood and citywide recreation needs, including a futsal court and basketball court. The following improvements are included in this project:

- Removal of the existing futsal court paving and the surrounding fencing (mesh, posts, footings, and hardware)
- One (1) new reinforced concrete pad for futsal
- New playground area
- Associated Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant sidewalks to access the facilities
- Sport court surfacing and color
- Site grading and restoration

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: \$270,204.50 Construction Contract (\$380,000 City Engineer's Estimate)

Funding Source: 2025-26 CIP, Page 88, Park Playground Improvements, PK185, Being: \$245,500 Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) funding from the National Park Service (NPS), and the remaining \$24,704.50 in G.O. Bonds

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- On February 9, 2026, under Roll Call No. 26-0155, the City Council received and filed plans, specifications, form of contract documents, and City Engineer's estimate for the construction of the Cheatom Park Improvements. Before the City Council can enter into a contract, it must hold a public hearing and approve the proposed plans, specifications, and form of contract documents and 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.

- Sealed bids for said improvement were submitted by the following bidders:
 - Absolute Concrete Construction, Inc. d/b/a Absolute Group, Granger, IA - Low Bid
 - MPS Engineers, P.C. dba Kingston Services, P.C., Des Moines, IA
 - Burkett Construction, LLC, De Soto, IA
 - Caliber Concrete, LLC, Adair, IA
 - Brothers Cleaning Corporation d/b/a Brothers Concrete, Des Moines, IA
 - Cushman Excavation, LLC, Knoxville, IA
 - Edge Commercial, LLC, Grimes, IA
 - MB Lawn Care, LLC, Urbandale, IA - Bid not read (Bidder did not use revised proposal attachment included in Addendum No. 1)
- The bids were received and opened at a public meeting presided over by the City Engineer in the City Council Chambers, 1st Floor, T.M. Franklin Cownie City Administration Building, 1200 Locust Street, Des Moines, Iowa at 11:00 a.m. on February 24, 2026.
- The City Engineer has determined that the lowest responsive, responsible bid for the construction of said improvement was submitted by Absolute Concrete Construction, Inc. d/b/a Absolute Group, 1800 Burr Oak Blvd, P.O. Box 430, Granger, IA 50109; (Rick Pearson, President) in the amount of \$270,204.50 and said bid should be accepted. The Finance Director has determined that funds are available for said improvement as stated above.
- 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.
- On March 9, 2026, under Roll Call No. 26-0315, the City Council ratified a separate GC26 Public Art Grant agreement, grant to support the grant and privately funded sports court mural project at Cheatom Park. Elevated views from the playground will overlook the basketball and futsal courts providing a full view of the mural locations. The installation will 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: February 9, 2026

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

Action: Ordering construction of the following:

- (C) [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: 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):

Board: Access Advisory Board

Date: January 21, 2026

Board Action Number: 26-04

Action: The unanimous consensus of the board members in attendance was to approve the project as designed with no recommended alterations.

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:

- Partial payments to the contractor and final acceptance of work.

For more information on this and other agenda items, please call the City Clerk's Office at 515-283-4209 or visit the Clerk's Office on the second floor of T.M. Franklin Cownie City Administration Building, 1200 Locust Street. Council agendas are available to the public at the City Clerk's Office on Thursday afternoon preceding Monday's Council meeting. Citizens can also request to receive meeting notices and agendas by email by calling the Clerk's Office or sending their request via email to cityclerk@dmgov.org.