


COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

	Number:	26-145	Meeting:	April 20, 2026
	Agenda Item:	42A	Roll Call:	26-0529
	Submitted by:	Benjamin R. Page, Park and Recreation Director, and Steven L. Naber, P.E., City Engineer		

AGENDA HEADING:

Hearing on Birdland Park Phase 1B Improvements: Resolution approving plans, specifications, form of contract documents, engineer's estimate, receive and file bids, and designating lowest responsible bidder as Minturn, Inc., Clinton M. Rhoads, President, \$8,398,738.65.

SYNOPSIS:

This is a public hearing to allow for public input on the Birdland Park Phase 1B Improvements and take the necessary actions as required by Iowa Code to authorize a contract for construction of the proposed project. The Birdland Park Phase 1B project is the second of three (3) sub-phase projects that make up Phase 1 of the community and stakeholder driven Birdland Park and Marina Master Plan. This project includes a new Portland Concrete Cement (PCC) parking lot, open green space, new playground area, skate ribbon, restroom and concessions building, sidewalks and trail along with other amenities. The project also includes native and diverse plantings, including prairie and savanna vegetation to broadly support water quality and wildlife habitat.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: \$8,398,738.65 Construction Contract (\$7,400,000 City Engineer's Estimate)

Funding Source: 2025-26 CIP, Page 90, Birdland Park and Marina, PK189, Being:

- \$800,000 – Anticipated Value Engineering
- \$4,806,038 – Land Water Conservation Funding (LWCF) Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) Grant
- \$500,000 – Anticipated U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Project Funding
- \$350,000 – Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) Grant
- \$150,000 – Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) Water Quality Initiative (WQI) Cost-Share Grant
- \$10,000 – Friends of Des Moines Parks
- \$1,782,701 – Local Option Sales and Service Tax and General Obligation Bonds

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- On February 23, 2026, under Roll Call No. 26-0221, the City Council received and filed plans, specifications, form of contract documents, and City Engineer's estimate for the construction of the Birdland Park Phase 1B 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 Birdland Park Phase 1B Improvements, Activity ID 11-2025-004. The improvements include the construction of a PCC parking lot, PCC skate ribbon, playground area, restroom and concessions building, boardwalks, playground surfacing, storm sewer pipe, storm sewer manholes, storm sewer intakes, bioretention cells and plantings, granular subbase, PCC sidewalks and trail, grading, electrical work, pavement markings, erosion control, surface restoration and other incidental items, all in accordance with the contract documents including Plan File No. 671-184/297, located at Birdland Park, west of Saylor Road.
- Sealed bids for said improvement were submitted by the following bidders:
 - Minturn, Inc., Brooklyn, IA - Low Bid
 - Edge Commercial, LLC, Grimes, IA
 - Reilly Construction Co., Inc., Ossian, IA
 - Lloyd Construction Company, Sioux Falls, SD - Bid not read. Bidder did not use City Proposal forms.
- 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 March 24, 2026.
- The City Engineer has determined that the lowest responsive, responsible bid for the construction of said improvement was submitted by Minturn, Inc., 144 W. Front Street, PO Box 369, Brooklyn, IA, 52211; (Clinton M. Rhoads, President) in the amount of \$8,398,738.65, and said bid should be accepted. The Finance Director has determined that funds are available for said improvement as stated above.
- A master plan for Birdland Park and Marina was developed in 2021 and was approved by the Parks and Recreation Board and adopted by the City Council. The master plan outlines a logical, highest value approach to implementing multiple phases of proposed improvements. In total the project was estimated to cost \$54.4 million in 2021, and implementation is planned to spread across five (5) recommended phases.
- Informed by LiveDSM, the Parks and Recreation Department's comprehensive plan, the Birdland master planning project has been community and stakeholder driven. To facilitate project feedback and achieve community support from the neighborhood and everyday park users, three (3) public meetings were held at different phases of the project's development. The meetings garnered over 200 attendees and generated 350 plus follow-up survey responses. Additional public engagement for Phase 1 projects was ongoing throughout 2024 and 2025 with all master plan stakeholders and in-person presentations to Union Park, River Bend, Highland Park/Oak Park, and Capitol Park Neighborhood Associations. The overarching sentiment was appreciation that the approved and adopted master plan is being implemented and realized.

- Given the complexity and scale of the master plan, intentional sequencing or phasing is recommended to support improvements functioning on their own and are not contingent upon a subsequent phase.

- Birdland Park and Marina Master Plan – Phase 1B Project Improvements Summary:
 - Rehabilitated and right-sized parking lot with lighting, stormwater management biocell with native plantings, and one-way circulation for improved pedestrian safety.
 - Great lawn community gathering space with boardwalk overlook.
 - Destination quality, nature themed playground with unitary tile surfacing to support enhanced Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility.
 - Multi-functional skating ribbon to support year-round skating usage and seasonal Traffic Safety Garden programming where park users can learn to safely navigate the urban environment on a bicycle.
 - Flood-proofed restroom and concessions building to be open year-round.
 - Improvements to the Birdland Park Trail spur off the Neal Smith Trail.
 - Lagoon overlook deck on the Ding Darling Enclosed Shelter to expand capacity for the most popular rental shelter in the park system.
 - Multiple plazas, seating areas, and other park user amenities to best support longer visits and the diverse recreational offerings in the park more broadly.
 - Multiple naturalized drainage areas and diverse native plantings through the park.

- The Birdland Phase 1B project leverages approximately \$5.8 million in external funding from various local, state, and federal sources as listed in the Fiscal Impact Statement.

- A dedicated project [webpage](#) offers a repository of project information including links to digital public meetings, video recordings from prior meetings, downloadable exhibits such as the presentations slides from public meetings and the master plan concept, and updates on the plan adoption process. The project [webpage](#) can be found on the City’s website under Parks and Recreation Department by navigating to current planning projects.

- In late 2022, a professional service agreement was completed with SmithGroup, Inc. to provide engineering design for two sites within Birdland Park, Phase 1A and Phase 1B.

- This Phase 1B project is anticipated to begin in spring 2026 and be completed in summer 2027.

Plan Rendering of the Birdland Park Improvements Phase 1B Site



PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: February 23, 2026

Roll Call Number: [26-0221](#)

Action: Ordering construction of the following:

- (B) [Birdland](#) Park Phase 1B Improvements: Receiving of bids, (3-24-26) and Setting date of hearing, (4-20-26), Engineer's estimate, \$7,400,000. ([Council Communication No. 26-059](#)) Moved by Gatto to adopt. Second by Voss. Motion Carried 7-0.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S):

Board: Access Advisory Board

Date: March 18, 2026

Resolution Number: 26-08

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

Board: Zoning Board of Adjustment

Date: November 20, 2024

Resolution Number: ZBOA-2024-000055

Action: Appeal for requested Conditional Use for a “Public Recreation Area” use in an “F” District. Decision and Order conditionally granting the appeal was adopted by a vote of 7-0 with all Board Members present voting in favor thereof.

Board: Parks and Recreation Board

Date: February 23, 2021

Resolution Number: 21-011

Action: Motion by Facto to approve the Birdland Park Master Plan. Second by Woodard. Motion carried.

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:

- Partial payments to the contractor and final acceptance of work and grant agreement amendments as needed.

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.