


COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

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|  | Number: | 26-146 | Meeting: | April 20, 2026 |
| | Agenda Item: | 42B | Roll Call: | 26-0530 |
| | Submitted by: | Benjamin R. Page, Parks and Recreation Director | | |

AGENDA HEADING:

Approving Water Quality Initiative (WQI) Urban Conservation Demonstration Projects cost-share grant contract with Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) in the amount of \$150,000 for the Birdland Park Master Plan Improvements – Phase 1B Project.

SYNOPSIS:

Recommend approval of the IDALS Water Quality Initiative Grant cost-share contract in the amount of \$150,000 for the Birdland Park Master Plan Improvements – Phase 1B Project.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: \$150,000 IDALS cost-share grant funding towards \$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 – WQI Grant
- \$10,000 – Friends of Des Moines Parks
- \$1,782,701 – Local Option Sales and Service Tax and General Obligation Bonds

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- The Parks and Recreation Department applied for the IDALS Water Quality Grant in February 2026 and was offered a \$150,000 cost-share grant recommended for approval in this action. The Water Quality Initiative (WQI) grant funds up to 50% of all water quality elements in the project including bioretention cells in the parking lot, associated storm sewer structures, native prairie seeding, and stencil artwork that interprets the functions and benefits of the water quality improvements.
- 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.

Date: November 21, 2022

Roll Call Number: [22-1781](#)

Action: [Approving](#) Professional Services Agreement with SmithGroup, Inc. for Birdland Park Phase 1 Improvements, not to exceed \$798,630. ([Council Communication No. 22-538](#)) Moved by Gatto to adopt. Second by Voss. Motion Carried 6-1. Absent: Sheumaker.

Date: March 22, 2021

Roll Call Number: [21-0465](#)

Action: [Birdland](#) Park and Marina [Master Plan](#). ([Council Communication No. 21-135](#)) Moved by Westergaard to adopt. 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:

- Grant agreement amendments as needed.

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