

MEMORANDUM

TO: Park Advisory Commission

FROM: Colin Smith, Parks & Recreation Services Manager

DATE: February 24, 2015

SUBJECT: Resolution to Approve a Grant Application to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Grants Management for a Universal Access Playground at Gallup Park

Attached for your review and action is a resolution to approve an application to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Grants Management (MDNRGM) to design and construct a Universally Accessible Playground at Gallup Park.

An application was submitted in 2014 and came extremely close to an award. The application scored 370 points, and all projects that scored 380 points or higher were awarded grants. Overall, 119 projects submitted applications and the Gallup project ranked 21st out of all submissions. As a result, staff and the Rotary Club wish to resubmit the application. Presently there is not another project the City would apply for in this grant cycle.

The City of Ann Arbor Park System has 80 playgrounds. However, none are designed as Universal Access Playgrounds. Universal Access Playgrounds exceed ADA requirements and strive to be as inclusive as possible. These playgrounds include ramp systems, specially designed playground structures, and wheelchair accessible safety surfacing that makes the design and construction costs higher than that of a standard playground.

The City is fortunate to have the Rotary Club of Ann Arbor as a partner in this project. In 2016 the Rotary Club of Ann Arbor celebrates 100 years of service in the community and the Gallup Universal Access Playground is their chosen centennial project. The Rotary Club, in a funding partnership agreement, has committed to raising \$350,000.00 toward the construction of the playground.

One of the main goals identified in the current Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan is to “achieve and maintain a balanced park, recreation, and open space system, accessible to all of the community.” To do so, the following action is identified: “focus on providing play areas that are designed to allow disabled users greater opportunities.”

The playground will replace an existing playground, currently located near the far east parking lot and children’s fishing pond. Gallup Park was chosen because of its popularity, accessible pathways, proximity to a parking lot, and other amenities such as restrooms and picnic shelters. This playground is identified in the Capital Improvements

Plan as needing renovation and in 2013 portions of it were closed for repairs. The Universal Access Playground will be located in the same general location of the park,

The City contribution to the Universal Access Playground will be \$100,000.00 and is noted in the Capital Improvements Plan under Playgrounds and Neighborhood Park Improvements. Funds are available in the Park Maintenance and Capital Improvement Millage. The City also plans to perform ADA pathway renovations in the area of the playground project at an anticipated cost of \$50,000.00.

The preliminary budget estimate for the project is \$800,000.00 and includes design, equipment, construction, and landscaping. Additional fund raising by Rotary would allow for additional amenities at the playground site. Construction on the playground would commence in 2016.

City staff and Rotary Club members presented to the Commission on Disabilities Issues on January 15, 2014 and the Park Advisory Commission on January 28, 2014 and both bodies support the project and applying for this grant. An additional public meeting on the playground will be held March 12, 2015. City staff recommends that the City apply to the MDNRGM for funding for the Universal Access Playground at Gallup Park.

RESOLUTION TO RECOMMEND APPLYING FOR A GRANT TO THE MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES GRANTS MANAGEMENT FOR A
UNIVERSAL ACCESS PLAYGROUND AT GALLUP PARK

Whereas, The City park system does not have a Universal Access Playground;

Whereas, The Park and Recreation Open Space Plan identifies an area of focus as providing play areas that are designed to allow disabled users greater opportunities;

Whereas, The playground at Gallup Park is in need of replacement;

Whereas, The Rotary Club of Ann Arbor has committed \$350,000.00 toward a Universal Access Playground in celebration of their upcoming centennial year in 2016;

Whereas, The City commitment to the project is \$150,000.00 with funds available in the Park Maintenance and Capital Improvement Millage;

Whereas, The City also intends to renovate pathways near the Universal Access Playground that will enhance the overall project; and

Whereas, Grants are available through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Grants Management to assist in funding improvements such as this project;

RESOLVED, That the Park Advisory Commission recommends applying for a Michigan Department of Natural Resources Grant for a Universal Access Playground at Gallup Park.