

Iowa City  
Parks and Recreation Commission  
Wednesday, April 14, 2021  
5 p.m.  
Electronic Meeting – 5 p.m.  
ZOOM MEETING PLATFORM



**Electronic Meeting**

*(Pursuant to Iowa Code section 21.8)*

An electronic meeting is being held because a meeting in person is impossible or impractical due to concerns for the health and safety of Commission members, staff and the public presented by COVID-19.

You can participate in the meeting and can comment on an agenda item by going to <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJctduquqD0tHNI8kaBFpcnKdB-KBYUtp9> via the internet to visit the Zoom meeting's registration page and submit the required information.

Once approved, you will receive an email message with a link to join the meeting. If you are asked for a meeting or webinar ID, enter the ID number found in the email. A meeting password may also be included in the email. Enter the password when prompted.

If you have no computer or smartphone, or a computer without a microphone, you may call in by telephone by dialing (312) 626-6799. When prompted, enter the meeting or webinar ID. The ID number for this meeting is: 930 1366 6766

Once connected, you may dial \*9 to "raise your hand," letting the meeting host know you would like to speak. Providing comments in person is not an option.

**Iowa City  
Parks and Recreation Commission  
Wednesday, April 14, 2021  
Electronic Meeting – 5 p.m.  
ZOOM MEETING PLATFORM**

**AGENDA**

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>ITEM 1</b>  | <b>CALL TO ORDER</b>   |
| <b>ITEM 2</b>  | <b>APPROVAL OF MARCH 10, 2021 MINUTES</b>  |
| <b>ITEM 3</b>  | <b>PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF ANY ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA</b>  |
| <b>ITEM 4</b>  | <b>NEIGHBORHOOD OPEN SPACE DEDICATION/EAST OF HICKORY HILL PARK –<br/>RAY HEITNER &amp; TYLER BAIRD</b>  |
| <b>ITEM 5</b>  | <b>PARK HOURS DISCUSSION – TYLER BAIRD</b>   |
| <b>ITEM 6</b>  | <b>IOWA CITY TREE COMMITTEE – TYLER BAIRD</b>  |
| <b>ITEM 7</b>  | <b>REPORT ON ITEMS FROM CITY STAFF</b><br>a) Parks & Recreation Director – Juli Seydell Johnson<br>b) Recreation Division Superintendent – Brad Barker<br>c) Parks Division Superintendent – Tyler Baird |
| <b>ITEM 8</b>  | <b>CHAIRS REPORT</b>   |
| <b>ITEM 9</b>  | <b>COMMISSION TIME/SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS</b>   |
| <b>ITEM 10</b> | <b>ADJOURN</b>   |

*If you will need disability-related accommodations in order to participate in this program/event, please contact Tammy Neumann, Iowa City Parks and Recreation Department at 319/356-5210 or tammy-neumann@iowa-city.org. Early requests are strongly encouraged to allow sufficient time to meet your access needs.*

**IOWA CITY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES MARCH 10, 2021  
ZOOM PLATFORM**

**DRAFT**

**Electronic Meeting (Pursuant to Iowa Code section 21.8)**

**An electronic meeting was held because a meeting in person was impossible or impractical due to concerns for the health and safety of council members, staff and the public presented by COVID-19.**

**Members Present:** Stephen Bird, Alex Hachtman, Chris Odinet, Ben Russell, Melissa Serenda, Angie Smith, Brianna Wills

**Members Absent:** Boniface Penandjo Lemoupa

**Staff Present:** Tyler Baird, Juli Seydell Johnson

**Others Present:** None

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Bird called the meeting to order at 5 p.m.

**RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL:** (to become effective only after separate Council action):

**Moved by Russell, seconded by Wills, that the Parks and Recreation Commission recommends that Council approve an ordinance allowing possession and consumption of beer and wine in park shelters with a shelter reservation except for the shelters in Napoleon Park and Iowa City Kickers Complex. Motion passed 7-0 (Penandjo Lemoupa absent).**

**OTHER FORMAL ACTION:**

**Moved by Hachtman, seconded by Odinet to approve the February 10, 2021 minutes as written. Motion passed 7-0 (Penandjo Lemoupa absent).**

**PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF ANY ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA:**

None

**ORDINANCE REGARDING ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION IN PARKS – JULI SEYDELL JOHNSON:**

Seydell Johnson announced that the City Council will consider the approval of an ordinance change to allow alcohol possession and consumption with a park shelter reservation, with the exception of Napoleon Park and the Iowa City Kickers Complex, at their April 6 council meeting. The Parks & Recreation Commission is asked to consider the topic and provide a recommendation.

Seydell Johnson reminded those present that the commission discussed this ordinance change in the fall of 2017. At that time the commission recommended that Council allow alcohol use to be available for all park shelter reservations except at youth sports complexes such as Napoleon Park and Kickers Soccer Park. She explained that the City currently has a policy of no alcohol in parks with the exception of event facilities such as The Park Lodge at Terry Trueblood Recreation Area, Ashton House and Riverside Festival Stage in City Park, and as part of special events hosted by the Iowa City Parks and Recreation Department. The Council passed the first two readings of the ordinance, however, it was tabled

indefinitely following the third reading in September of 2017 after concerns were expressed by the University of Iowa's Partnership for Alcohol Safety. Mayor Bruce Teague has asked that it be brought to Council again in April 2021.

Seydell Johnson said that staff continues to be in favor of allowing alcohol consumption in park shelters with a shelter reservation. She said that staff reports seeing alcohol being consumed at park shelters and throughout often and they find that many patrons are not aware of the ordinance. Staff has discussed with the police department who said that they have some issues with alcohol consumption in the parks but do not think that allowing it in these areas will make a difference in that regard.

Seydell Johnson researched other cities policies and found that very few have restrictions on alcohol other than forbidding the sale of alcohol on parks properties. Cities checked included Ankeny, Ames, Council Bluffs, Des Moines, Sioux City and Waterloo. Only Council Bluffs prohibits alcohol consumption in its parks.

Serenda asked what is driving this change; She asked if there is a groundswell from the public wanting this change or is it to make the rules catch up with what is happening at the parks. Seydell Johnson explained that in 2017 there were a couple of community members that attended the commission meeting asking for the change as they wanted to be able to have alcohol available during small group gatherings in the parks. Seydell Johnson said it is not a groundswell but thinks that is because most park users don't realize that alcohol is prohibited in Iowa City parks.

Bird asked if staff knew what the objection was that was presented by the University of Iowa Partnership for Alcohol Safety as he thought that this group usually focuses on concerns on or near campus. Seydell Johnson noted that she believes it to have been a timing issue. There had been a number of changes to alcohol policies at the University in 2017 as well as with a couple of downtown establishments. It was determined that it was necessary to take a break from the ordinance change request at that time. She also mentioned that staff have not yet heard from this group during these recent discussions.

Smith noted that she was on the commission when this was previously discussed in 2017. She said she didn't say much at that meeting but wished she had because she saw it happening and that she too did not know it was prohibited until that 2017 meeting. She said that she has seen people consuming alcohol while biking through Napoleon. She shared that her husband is in law enforcement and wondered if having a law in place would make it easier for police to enforce the rule. Seydell Johnson reiterated that the ordinance change would only allow alcohol during a park shelter rental and within the confines of the shelter. Having the rental requirement in place allows staff to track down who the permit is registered to should there be any issues. Wills said that having the ability to track down the permit holder cements her recommendation to change the ordinance. She admitted that she may be missing something as in her position as an event venue manager, she is aware of what can happen when there is excessive alcohol consumed, but again stated that having the ability to track down a renter mitigates any of her concerns.

Bird noted that renting a shelter is more affordable than an event facility and adding the ability to consume alcohol in a shelter may make this option more attractive to some users. He further stated that a more affordable option, such as a shelter rental, aligns with the desire to make things more affordable and thus more accessible in the community.

Hachtman said that in looking through the packet, it seems that other communities have stipulations in place such as no glass bottles. He asked if that is a consideration here as well. Seydell Johnson said that the ordinance would allow for beer and wine only and small kegs or growlers and that the use of individual glass containers would be prohibited.

Serenda asked if there is a mechanism in place to monitor if there is an increase in complaints from other patrons in a park or neighbors who live near a park and could it be revised or reversed if it is found to be detrimental. Seydell Johnson answered yes and that she is hopeful that with stipulations where it is allowed within the shelter only will prevent this from becoming an issue. She added that when a shelter reservation is made, the person will be asked specifically if they plan to have alcohol at their event. She said if they see repeated issues in one park, for instance, the staff has the administrative right to no longer allow rentals where alcohol is requested to take place in that shelter. She added that there will not be an additional permit fee for reservations where alcohol will be consumed.

Bird asked if since two readings by Council already took place in 2017, will it allow Council to pick up the discussion at the third reading level. Seydell Johnson said they can and that it will be on their April 6 agenda. Bird then asked Baird if Parks staff has any issues with an ordinance change. Baird reported there are no concerns from staff and that as previously mentioned, most of the people staff interact with are not aware of the ordinance. Baird also noted that he spoke with evening and weekend staff directly as they would likely be the staff that would encounter these situations and they had no concerns.

**Moved by Russell, seconded by Wills, that the Parks and Recreation Commission recommends that Council approve an ordinance allowing possession and consumption of beer and wine in park shelters with a shelter reservation except for the shelters in Napoleon Park and Iowa City Kickers Complex. Motion passed 7-0 (Penandjo Lemoupa absent).**

#### **REPORTS ON ITEMS FROM CITY STAFF:**

##### Parks and Recreation Director – Juli Seydell Johnson

- Park Projects: Seydell Johnson shared that park projects are moving forward. Glendale Park will be getting a new playground, an additional shelter and new paths. There will be a public input meeting, likely at the park, by the end of May. She also mentioned that concept plans for the Pedestrian Mall are being shared with the steering committee which consists of downtown and library staff. A future public input meeting for this project will be scheduled as well.

##### Recreation Division Superintendent – Brad Barker: Due to Barker's absence, Seydell Johnson reported.

- Recreation Programs: Seydell Johnson announced that program and activity planning is in progress. Most of these activities will be held outdoors to allow for social distancing. She noted that this past weekend the department hosted a very successful "Dog Pawty" at Thornberry Off-Leash Dog Park. She said that in addition to lap swimming, Mercer Pool will be starting swim lessons up again in late March/early April. She also announced that beginning on Thursday, March 11, the department is hosting a vaccination clinic with a pharmacy from Solon in the Procter & Gamble Room at Mercer Park Aquatic Center/Scanlon Gymnasium. This clinic is targeting senior citizens and The Center (previously known as the Senior Center) will be scheduling the appointments. Staff is conversing with other providers who may administer vaccines from Mercer/Scanlon as well.
- Farmers Market – Tammy Neumann: Neumann was asked to give an update on the status of the Iowa City Farmers Market. She first reported statistics from the 2020 online farmers market. The market partnered with Field to Family to offer this opportunity to vendors and market customers last year. She reported that 41 vendors participated in the online market. There were 5,600 customers that registered for the program, 11,026 food orders were filled with \$485,256 in sales. There were over 180 volunteers that helped throughout the season with over 4,700 donated hours. All of the Recreation Program Supervisors assisted in many different aspects of the online market as well. The Iowa City Farmers Market will return to an open-air in-person format for the 2021 season. She noted that approximately 22 vendors have opted out of the 2021 season due to COVID concerns. Many of them will return in 2022. In the meantime, vendors from the waiting list have been offered the opportunity to sign up as a season vendor for the 2021 season. There

are currently 74 vendors on the waiting list and 6 of those signed up for the season. Staff will put a call out to vendors on the department social media pages. Neumann announced that staff is working with Ashley Monroe, Assistant City Manager; Sarah Gardner, Climate Action Engagement Specialist; Jennifer Jordan, Resource Management Superintendent; Jane Wilch, Recycling Coordinator; and Patricia Fossum, Solid Waste Assistant Superintendent, to develop a compost program at the Farmers Market. Market vendors who currently use paper, Styrofoam, or another non-compostable service-ware, will be encouraged to transition to compostables during the 2021 season. Staff is working on a plan to supplement those vendors who do so this season. All vendors will be required to use compostables only beginning with the 2022 season.

Parks Division Superintendent – Tyler Baird:

- Parks Staff Projects: Baird reported that with the recent warm weather the public is getting anxious to get out into the parks and on the trails. He has received calls regarding trash in these areas. He said this is a typical finding every year once the snow melts. Staff is responding to those calls. He pointed out that it is only March and that it is still too early to turn the water on in the parks. Baird said that since the ground did not freeze this winter the grounds are very soft and difficult to work on. He noted that snow removal has caused some turf damage that needs repaired. Staff will begin working on these areas soon.
- Forestry: Baird noted that also due to the warm weather, some trees are starting to bud. This may be a concern should the temperatures drop too much. Baird has received some calls regarding some tree removal near Court Hill Trail. He explained that this is due to a public works/engineering project on Second Avenue. The bridge is being replaced along with sidewalk infill and stream bank stabilization. To complete these tasks, some trees had to be removed. Wills mentioned that there are a couple of trees that she believes came down during the Derecho at the First Avenue entrance to Hickory Hill Park. Baird said he will have staff take a look and further explained that since that park entrance is natural and wooded, if a tree is not on a trail or considered hazardous, staff will leave a fallen tree where it lands for habitat purposes.

Wills asked if there were any updates about the potential development near Hickory Hill Park and if Parks staff is involved in the project. Baird reported that what he knows is that the plan was returned to the developer to address concerns, however, he is not sure where that currently stands. Seydell Johnson reported that staff has been involved in reviewing plans as they have been developed. However, staff comments can only follow what code allows. Wills said that she knew that Hickory Hill is a city park so wondered how far the commission boundaries reach. Seydell Johnson explained that staff looks at it in terms of ordinances. Baird said that the development would add some area to the park. Smith requested more discussion about this topic at a future meeting. She noted that she recently talked with a person in the park and he was requesting that staff and commission look at expanding Hickory Hill to the northwest onto two plots of land. He said that they are owned by two brothers that he knows are wanting to sell. The other is part of the nature preserve. This will be added to a future agenda for further discussion.

Odinet asked if the Hickory Hill boundaries would expand because the developer is donating land. Seydell Johnson explained that all developments are required to donate land or City can opt to accept fees in-lieu of land as is outlined in the Neighborhood Open Space policy.

Serenda acknowledged that while this may be outside of the Commission's purview, she wondered that since the developments get many benefits by building next to a natural area, which in turn can reduce the property value, what does the City get in return. Seydell Johnson said that the answer to that question is involved but in short, a development generates increased property taxes paid which support city services.



### **CHAIRS REPORT**

Bird asked if the recommendation to rename Creekside Park had yet gone before Council. Seydell Johnson explained that it will be on their March 16 agenda for review. The department put information out to the public through social media pages for comment.

Bird asked if there has been any activity with the Parks and Recreation Foundation endowment fund and if there is something that commission members can do to help enhance the fund. Seydell Johnson said that not much is happening with the fund and that it should be an agenda item in the future as well.

### **COMMISSION TIME/SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:**

Hachtman asked if there are volunteer opportunities to assist with work in parks or on trails etc. Seydell Johnson said there is not a formal program through Parks and Recreation but that Public Works may have some opportunities.

Smith reiterated that she would like to add the Hickory Hill Park land opportunities on the next agenda. She mentioned a plot of land that she always thought was a part of the park but has recently discovered it is not. She would like the City to look at possible land options to add to the park property which may solve some of the issues with the potential development. This item will be added to the April Parks and Recreation Commission agenda.

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

**Moved by Hachtman, seconded by Serenda, to adjourn the meeting at 5:47 p.m. Motion passed 7-0 (Penandjo Lemoupa absent).**

**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
 ATTENDANCE RECORD**

NAME	TERM EXPIRES	4/8/20	5/13/20	6/17/20	7/8/20	8/12/20	9/9/20	10/14/20	11/18/20	12/09/20	1/13/21	2/10/21	03/10/21
Steve Bird	12/31/21	NM	NM	X	NM	NM	X	LQ	X	NM	X	X	X
Alex Hachtman	12/31/20	NM	NM	X	NM	NM	X	LQ	X	NM	X	X	X
Christopher Odinet	12/31/24	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	X	X	X
Boniface Penandjo Lemoupa	12/31/23	NM	NM	O	NM	NM	O	LQ	X	NM	X	O	O
Ben Russell	12/31/21	NM	NM	X	NM	NM	X	LQ	X	NM	X	X	X
Melissa Serenda	12/31/23	NM	NM	X	NM	NM	X	LQ	X	NM	X	X	X
Angie Smith	12/31/21	NM	NM	X	NM	NM	X	LQ	X	NM	X	X	X
Jamie Venzon	12/31/20	NM	NM	X	NM	NM	X	LQ	X	NM	*	*	*
Brianna Wills	12/31/22	NM	NM	X	NM	NM	X	LQ	X	NM	X	X	X
Blake Winter	12/31/22	NM	NM	O/E	NM	NM	O/E	LQ	*	*	*	*	*

**KEY: X = Present      O = Absent O/E = Absent/Excused**

**NM = No meeting      LQ = No meeting due to lack of quorum**

**\* = Not a member now**





# CITY OF IOWA CITY MEMORANDUM

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Date: April 14, 2021  
To: Juli Seydell Johnson, Director of Parks and Recreation  
From: Ray Heitner, Associate Planner  
Re: **Neighborhood Open Space Dedication for REZ20-0016**

## **Background Information**

An application for a planned development (OPD) rezoning of approximately 48.75 acres of land located south of Scott Boulevard, west of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, and east of Hickory Hill Park, is currently being reviewed by City staff and the Planning and Zoning Commission. Should the rezoning application ultimately be approved by the City Council, it is anticipated that the applicant will submit a preliminary plat application to subdivide the property according to the approved OPD Plan. While most recent planned developments and subdivisions have provided neighborhood open space through a fee in lieu payment, the subject OPD Plan has proposed to dedicate 13.96 acres of neighborhood open space to the City (shown as Outlot A in the attached OPD Plan). The proposed open space to be dedicated to the City is adjacent to the existing Hickory Hill Park boundary and would add an additional 13.96 acres to the Park.

The following memo provides an outline of the nature of the land to be dedicated and the neighborhood open space dedication process, why City staff is supportive of the proposed dedication, and the Parks and Recreation Commission's participatory role in that process.

## **Staff Analysis**

Section 14-5K-2 of City Code states that *"As a condition of approval for residential subdivisions, commercial subdivisions containing residential uses, and planned developments, the applicant shall dedicate land, pay a fee in lieu of land, or a combination thereof, for park, greenway, recreational and open space purposes, as determined by the city and in accordance with the provisions of this article."* As previously stated, the applicant proposes to dedicate 13.96 acres of neighborhood open space to satisfy this requirement.

Section 14-5K-3 of the City Code outlines the criteria that all neighborhood open space land dedications shall follow.

### **14-5K-3A: Amount of Land to be Dedicated**

Using a formula from this section of the Code, the applicant for the subject rezoning case is only required to dedicate 1.1 acres of neighborhood open space or pay a fee in-lieu. By dedicating the proposed 13.96 acres of open space, the applicant is going far beyond the required dedication amount.

### **14-5K-3B: Nature of Land to be Dedicated**

*"Except as otherwise required by the city, all dedication of land shall meet the following criteria:*

1. **Usability:** *At least ninety percent (90%) of the land required to be dedicated shall be located outside of floodways, lakes or other water bodies, areas with slopes greater than fifteen percent (15%), wetlands subject to federal or state regulatory jurisdiction and other areas the city reasonably deems unsuitable for neighborhood open space due to topography, flooding or other appropriate considerations."*

Due to some varied topography and a wetland in the northern portion of the outlot, staff recognizes that the 90% threshold cannot be met for the entire proposed dedication of land. However, the applicant has confirmed that this threshold can be met for the 1.1 acres of land required to be dedicated.

Furthermore, the Code goes on to say that *"The city encourages the dedication of lakes, ponds, creeks, other water bodies, wetlands falling under the jurisdiction of state or federal agencies and other sensitive areas including woodland areas, both as ten percent (10%) of and in addition to the dedicated land required by this article, if sufficient abutting land is dedicated as a usable, public recreation area or park."*

2. **Unity:** *The dedicated land shall form a single parcel of land, except where the city determines that two (2) or more parcels or greenways/trails would best serve the public interest, given the type and distribution of neighborhood open space needed to adequately serve the proposed development. If the city determines that two (2) or more parcels would best serve the public interest, the city may require that such parcels be connected by a dedicated strip of land at least twenty feet (20') wide in order to provide access and continuity between said parcels.*

The proposed dedication would form a single parcel of land, thereby satisfying this requirement.

3. **Location:** *The dedicated land shall be located so as to reasonably serve the recreation and open space needs of the residents of the subdivision or planned development.*

The proposed dedication would act as a natural extension of Hickory Hill Park. Two new trail connections to the existing trail network within the Park's interior would be provided, as shown on the attached OPD Plan.

4. **Shape:** *If a sufficient amount of land is dedicated to accommodate recreational facilities and activities, such as fields, courts or playground equipment, the shape of the dedicated land shall be suitable for such facilities and activities. Linear open space should be of sufficient width to accommodate trails and adjacent greenways.*

Hickory Hill Park is an urban, wildland park that provides residents with recreational amenities other than playgrounds, ball fields, and courts. The nature of the proposed dedication is somewhat different in it would act as a natural extension of a natural urban park setting and contribute to the overall ecodiversity of the park through the inclusion of the high-quality savannah woodlands and wetlands area.

5. **Access:**
  - a. **Greenways/Trails:** *Public access to greenways/trails shall be provided by a public access easement at least twenty feet (20') in width. In addition, greenways/trails shall be connected to existing or proposed greenways/trails on adjacent property.*

Two new trail connections are proposed to connect to existing trails within the Park. Trail access is proposed from the proposed Hickory Trail extension. No access easements are necessary as the proposed new trail connection will be provided on land proposed to be conveyed to the City to become part of Hickory Hill Park.

- b. **Parks:** *Public access to the dedicated land to be used for parks shall be provided either by adjoining public street frontage or by a dedicated public access easement at least fifty feet (50') in width, which connects the dedicated land to a*

*public street or right of way. The grades adjacent to existing and proposed streets shall permit reasonable access to the dedicated land. The parcel shall be safely accessible to pedestrian traffic.*

Public access to the Park is proposed at two separate locations along the proposed Hickory Trail extension (shown on the attached OPD Plan). Residents will be able to access these trails on foot via the 5-foot sidewalk. On-street parking will also be available for residents who drive to these trail connections.

**6. Responsibility for Site Preparation:**

*a. The city may require the subdivider or developer to grade and seed those portions of the dedicated land to be improved prior to dedication of the property and prior to the city's acceptance of the dedication.*

*b. Where the dedicated land is located adjacent to a street, the subdivider or developer shall remain responsible for the installation of utilities, sidewalks and other improvements required along that street segment.*

*c. Prior to dedication, the subdivider or developer shall be responsible for restoring satisfactory ground cover and controlling erosion on land to be dedicated that has been disrupted as a result of development activities by the subdivider or developer.*

The proposed land dedication is located adjacent to the extension of Hickory Trail. The developer will be responsible for the installation of utilities, a 5-foot sidewalk and other improvements required along that street segment. This includes the installation of the two proposed new trail connections publicly accessible from Hickory Trail. As a condition of the rezoning, staff recommends acceptance of the 13.96 acres by the City contingent upon approval of a Woodland Management Plan that outlines a plan for the removal of any invasive species or hazardous trees and limbs. The Woodland Management Plan must be prepared by a woodland specialist and approved by the City Forester. Invasive species removal will be the responsibility of the owner and must be completed prior to transfer of the land to the City.

As is outlined above in the code sections, flexibility and deference is given to the City in making determinations on the dedication of neighborhood open space. City staff finds that the proposed land dedication meets the criteria listed above and also supports the proposed land dedication for the following reasons:

- Hickory Hill Park will increase in size from approximately 185 acres to nearly 200 acres.
- The dedication will reasonably serve the recreation and open space needs of the future residents.
- Access is improved since the proposed dedication will provide street frontage to the Park from both Scott Blvd and the proposed Hickory Trail extension. Additionally, the attached OPD Plan shows two separate locations that will serve as public trail access points to the Park from the proposed Hickory Trail extension.
- Provides an opportunity to preserve high quality woodlands.
- Enhances the ecodiversity of the park through the inclusion of additional woodlands and a wetland.
- Allows the City to provide ecological management and restoration to the area.

The attached memo from Parks and Recreation staff further outlines their support for this dedication.

**Role of the Commission and Next Steps**

The role of the Parks and Recreation Commission is focused solely on the proposed dedication of land to the City for the expansion of Hickory Hill Park. Recommendations from the Commission regarding the proposed land dedication will be submitted to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

*Attachments:*

1. OPD Plan – Concept Plan
2. Parks and Recreation Staff Letter

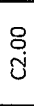
Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Sitzman", written over a horizontal line.

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Danielle Sitzman, AICP, Development Services Coordinator  
Department of Neighborhood and Development Services

## CONSERVATION EASEMENT





**TO:** Planning and Zoning Commission

**FROM:** Juli Seydell Johnson, Director of Parks & Recreation  
Tyler Baird, Superintendent of Parks & Forestry

**DATE:** March 17, 2021

**RE:** Staff Recommendation for Acquiring Outlot A of Hickory Trail Estates for Neighborhood Open Space

Parks and Recreation staff recommends the acceptance of Outlot A of Hickory Trail Estates to satisfy Neighborhood Open Space requirements while increasing the size of Hickory Hill Park. This recommendation is based upon the high quality of the woodlands which the City wishes to preserve and manage. In addition, because the area is connected to Hickory Hill Park, it will add to the eco diversity of the park and provide additional area for public recreation.

As proposed, Outlot A of the Hickory Trail Estates Concept Plan would add 11.66 acres of land to Hickory Hill Park. This would increase the total park acres from approximately 186 to 198 acres. Staff does not intend to use this acquired area as public active use recreation area, but rather as a passive use nature area, as is much of Hickory Hill Park. Management activities will focus on restoration and preservation of the savannah woodlands and wetland area.

The parcel has ecological integrity since it has never been cleared for development or used heavily for agriculture. The addition includes areas of savannah woodlands that were prevalent in the area before development. Hickory Hill Park preserves this ecosystem while providing the public with a natural area to quietly hike and explore. Outlot A is consistent with the character and of a quality equal to or greater than other sections of the park. The wetland in Outlot A further increases the ecosystem diversity of the park.

The preservation of the land could be accomplished through a conservation easement. However, staff recommends dedication to the City due to the location next to Hickory Hill Park. Public ownership will easily allow for ecological management and restoration, as has been happening in recent years throughout Hickory Hill Park.

Another benefit of acquiring Outlot A is that access to Hickory Hill Park will be increased by the long stretch of park frontage planned along Hickory Trail. This access includes two trail entry points that link to the existing trail system in the park.

Early in the development process, staff was also asked to consider dedication of Outlot B. Staff did not recommend acquiring this area because it did not have a connection to the larger park, has topography that would make maintenance very difficult and does not contain the remnant high value trees and wetland found in Outlot A.

The acceptance of Outlot A is contingent upon approval of a Woodland Management Plan that shall consist of a plan to remove any invasive species within the Outlot A area, as well as removal of any hazardous trees or limbs. The plan shall be prepared by a woodland specialist and approved by the City Forrester. Invasive species removal will be the responsibility of the owner and must be completed prior to transfer of Outlot A to the City.



# Iowa City Parks & Recreation Commission Packet

May 2021

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## Upcoming Events – COVID Updates

- Mercer Park Aquatic Center pool is open for lap swim, water walking, and open swim (select times) Monday through Friday from 6:15 a.m. to 9:00 p.m, Saturdays and Sundays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Scanlon gym continues to be used for pre-reserved tot time, walking, pickleball, and basketball. These time blocks are available during the same times as noted above.
- Shelter House has moved out of the lower level of the Robert A. Lee Recreation Center. Maintenance staff is completing various projects in anticipation of reopening to the public at a date not yet determined.
- Farmers Market is returning to an in-person format on Saturday, May 1.

## Notable from Parks & Recreation Staff

### **Parks:**

- Athletic practices have started on tennis courts, baseball/softball fields, and soccer fields.
- Water is mostly turned on at restrooms around the park system. Staff we continue with farm hydrants and drinking fountains in coming weeks.
- Mowing is starting with athletic fields.
- Tree pruning continues and plans are underway for spring planting.
- Prescribed burns have been completed at Terry Trueblood Recreation Area, Kickers Soccer Park and Waterworks Prairie Park.
- A tree infill planting contract has been sent out as an RFP.
- Engineering plans for tree planting in the Mackinaw Village neighborhood and infill along the entire length of Scott Blvd. are out for bid.
- Engineering plans for fence improvements at City Park baseball fields have went out for bid.
- The design process continues for Glendale Park and Ped Mall playgrounds.
- Seasonal workers have started to come on board with others to start in the next 2 months.
- A new sign has been ordered to replace the sign at the former Creekside Park with the new James Alan McPherson Park sign.
- Community gardens have been tilled and staked.
- Picnic tables have been redeployed to locations around downtown for outdoor dining options.

### **Recreation:**

- Spring outdoor recreation programming has begun and registration numbers have been encouraging.

- Staff is planning small-group summer programs, small-scale events, neighborhood programming (i.e. Party in the Park, Rec N Roll Tuesdays; Playground), and a modified summer camp structure.
- A digital summer guide is being planned. Notifications about summer programs and events along with where to register will be sent to all Iowa City residents through their utility statements.
- Summer registration will begin April 29.
- Farmers Market is returning to an in-person format on Saturday, May 1 with Covid precautions in place. The market will take place on the usual Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings through October. There currently are 13 vendors registered for Wednesdays and 62 vendors registered for Saturdays.
- Staff is moving forward with plans to open City Park Pool, including the hiring and training of staff. Saturday, May 29 is the anticipated opening date.
- Full-time staff has mostly transitioned away from daily customer service and lifeguard responsibilities. Full-time staff has been increasingly involved with program planning, program administration and hiring hourly staff.
- Recreation division staff will be partnering with FilmScene and Summer of the Arts to present outdoor film experiences at Chauncey Swan Park, Riverfront Crossings Park and Mercer Park throughout the summer.

#### **Cemetery:**

- Stevens Erosion Control was hired to correct a water run off issue and erosion control. The work has been completed and is now up to code.
- Interments for April and May look to be higher than normal due to the easing of Covid restrictions.

#### **Facilities:**

- The Government Buildings teams from SC and RALRC continue to work at City Hall, Senior Center and RALRC to help with sanitizing, deep cleaning, and maintenance during this time. Mercer is open for limited activity.
- The Shelter House closed operations at RALRC on March 26<sup>th</sup>. Staff have been cleaned up the lobby, restrooms and gym, and are painting. Hosting the Warm Center went smoothly, and the Shelter House was a good partner.
- We are in the final phase of the On-Deck Shower Project and RALRC fire alarm project. The contractor for the On-deck Shower project is installing tile through April 9<sup>th</sup>. Gerard Electrical the contractor on the RALRC fire alarm project has received the back-ordered simplex control panel and will be installing that final part this week.
- The Maintenance Aquatics team are gearing up for the Spring season, we will be replacing the electric motor, exhaust fan and pool pump for City Park Pool and are working with a contractor for this work. The staff are prepping the Weatherdance pedestrian mall fountain for spring start up. The focus for the staff at this time is to prep City Park Pool for the summer season.

## **Top Staff Issues**

### **Parks**

- This is our busiest time of year as everything gets geared up for the spring/summer seasons.

### **Recreation**

- Division staff continue to implement programming and facility drop-in options during unique Covid-related circumstances. As Recreation Program Supervisors plan for Spring and Summer programming, these changing Covid circumstances must be accounted for in order to provide recreation opportunities that are viewed as both equally safe and enjoyable.

### **Cemetery**

- Staff has removed all snow equipment and are preparing for the mowing/trimming season.
- Staff will concentrate on stick removal / raking before mowing begins. Staff will also be removing all of the winter decorations from the cemetery before mowing/trimming begins.

### **Facilities**

- Staff continue to work through spring/summer(!) conditions, adjusting HVAC systems for comfort, cleaning coils, and increased time in changing air filters to meet COVID air quality recommendations.
- Bid were received for the Mercer Dehumidification project. Council awarded the bid and contracts have been executed and a pre-construction meeting is scheduled for April 13<sup>th</sup>.
- Facilities has been coordinating the FilmScene screen truss installation on Chauncey Swan ramp, the installation work is scheduled to take place in the next week and the first movie is on April 21<sup>st</sup>.



## City of Iowa City Facility Sustainability Projects

One of the seven City of Iowa City Strategic Goals: Promote Environmental Sustainability

Project	Description	Consultant/ Contractor	Cost	Rebate	Stage	Metric/Payback
Mercer/Scanlon Dehumidification and Tuck Pointing Project, Project will include incorporation BAS controls with new systems	Improve air quality and air exchange in the Mercer Natatorium to current code.	Shive-Hattery Inc.,	consultant estimate \$961,668	Transfer gas/no rebate	Bidding	Up to a million gallons of water will be saved & part of the recovery system
City Hall Boiler Replacement and BAS project [R4129]	Install BAS to Boilers/pool water temp/AHUs	Shive-Hattery Inc./pending	\$487,500 total**	\$11,905 for BAS & boilers	99% complete	\$5,613 annual cost savings. 8.9 year payback w/out incentive for City Hall; 6.8 year with incentive***
Mercer/Scanlon Exterior LED lighting Replacement	Replace original halide lights with LED	Shive-Hattery Inc./pending	pending	Incentives pending	Contracts pending	Incentives pending
Mercer Aquatic Center Natatorium Lighting Replacement	Replace original halide lights with LEDs	Shive-Hattery Inc./Gerrard Electric	\$155,000	n/a	Complete	Metal Halide to LED lighting- life cycle will see a 40% to 50% reduction in energy use.
Public Works Maintenance Facility- LEED certified building [P3959]	New Facility to house Public Works Divisions of Streets, Traffic Engineering, Water Distribution	Neumann Monson/Merit Construction	\$10,978,700	LED Lighting rebate- \$23,274 and a custom energy incentive strategies rebate- \$37,594, for total incentive of \$60,868.	Construction 99% complete	Facility received an Excellence in Design Award, with a 52% efficiency rating with comparable building typologies.
Public Works Solar Project	PPA Solar project on new Public Works Structure.	Neumann Monson	pending	n/a	Pending RFP	
Terry Trueblood Recreation Area Solar Project		Neumann Monson	pending	n/a	Pending RFP	



# Oakland Cemetery

## FY 19 Revenue Report

\*\* shaded areas represent previous 5yr average

	Revenue from Lot Sales	Lot Sale 5yr Average	# of Interments	Interments 5yr avg.	Revenue from Interments	5-year Avg. on Interments	Total Revenue	5yr Avg. on total revenue
July	\$3,345.00	\$5,832.00	8	7.8	\$3,590.00	\$4,297.00	\$6,935.00	\$10,129.00
August	\$5,950.00	\$5,813.00	5	7	\$2,675.00	\$4,250.50	\$8,625.00	\$10,063.50
Sept	\$4,250.00	\$8,351.75	5	8	\$3,815.00	\$4,519.75	\$8,065.00	\$12,871.50
Oct	\$18,810.00	\$8,299.00	8	6	\$4,112.50	\$3,502.00	\$22,922.50	\$11,801.00
Nov	\$6,367.50	\$4,075.00	8	6.2	\$4,745.00	\$2,804.00	\$11,112.50	\$6,879.00
Dec	\$2,550.00	\$3,316.00	4	6.8	\$2,375.00	\$3,764.00	\$4,925.00	\$7,080.00
Jan	\$850.00	\$4,633.00	6	3.4	\$3,142.50	\$2,301.00	\$3,992.50	\$6,934.00
Feb	\$2,975.00	\$2,635.00	6	3.2	\$3,542.50	\$2,000.69	\$6,517.50	\$4,635.69
March	\$4,140.00	\$6,263.50	5	5.6	\$4,390.00	\$3,967.50	\$8,530.00	\$10,231.00
April								
May								
June								
Totals	\$49,237.50	\$49,218.00	55	54	\$32,387.50	\$31,406.44	\$81,625.00	\$80,624.69