

City of Scottsbluff, Nebraska
Monday, September 11, 2017
Regular Meeting

Item NewBiz3

Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Amend Parks and Recreation section of Comp Plan to include proposed improvements to 23 Club facilities.

Staff Contact:



*SCOTTSBLUFF
PLANNING COMMISSION
Staff Report*

To: Planning Commission
From: Development Services Department
Date: September 11, 2017
Subject: Comprehensive Plan Amendment
Location:

It has been brought to the City's attention that the current Comprehensive Plan does not address the City's competition fields. Feedback from the public has indicated that there are improvements needed in order to provide a more comfortable space for spectators and visiting teams, ensuring that competitions and tournaments continue to be held in Scottsbluff. This will also help support the local economy as visiting teams support restaurants and lodging establishments.

During the public input process for the City's current Comp plan, there were several comments made pertaining to the importance of adequate restroom facilities and structures to protect from the weather. These were stated as essential amenities for families with children in particular.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve

Make the motion to give a POSITIVE recommendation for the Amendment to the Parks, Recreation, and Public Facilities section of the Comprehensive Plan to the City Council subject to the following condition(s):

Deny

Make the motion to give a NEGATIVE recommendation for the Amendment to the Parks, Recreation, and Public Facilities section of the Comprehensive Plan to the City Council for the following reason(s):

Table

Make the motion to TABLE Amendment to the Parks, Recreation, and Public Facilities section of the Comprehensive Plan to the City Council for the following reason(s):

Appendix 5: Parks, Recreation and Public Facilities

GOALS

Provide adequate opportunities for exercise and recreation to residents

The City should do everything it can to encourage and provide opportunities for a healthy lifestyle for all residents. Numerous recreational opportunities should be provided in the park system. These recreational opportunities should be varied enough to serve residents of all different age ranges and physical abilities.

Provide high quality recreation facilities for local sports leagues and regional tournaments

Competition fields should be well maintained and have sufficient features to attract visiting teams to the area, supporting tourism and the local economy. The City should consider ensuring that all its baseball/softball fields and the soccer complex have ADA accessible restrooms, adequate capacity restrooms, changing areas, and space for concessions. In addition, improvements to parking and access should be considered to improve traffic flow and ensure safety for pedestrians. Shade structures, seating, trees, and plantings should be considered as ways to make spectators more comfortable.

Provide recreational opportunities year round

One of the most common comments that was received through the open house process was that the City lacks recreational opportunities in the winter. Many residents commented that they utilize the parks often, but wish that there were indoor play areas or places to recreate so that they would have a way to stay active when the weather is not conducive to using the outdoor parks.

Provide equitable recreation opportunities in every area of the City

Parks should be distributed across the City as evenly as possible to ensure that all residents have recreational opportunities within walking distance.

Parks and all park features should be well maintained and safe

Residents should feel comfortable taking their families to the City's parks. Well-maintained public spaces also increase the value of nearby properties. Parks should have an attractive appearance, and all playground equipment or other features should be well-maintained to ensure that it is safe for the public.

Parks and public spaces should consider low water use, sustainable alternatives for landscaping



There are many areas in our parks that should remain in turf grass. Not all residents have access to their own yard, especially those in multi-family housing, and the parks provide a great outdoor space for these residents and their families. However, there are some areas in our parks that are not used for recreation that could be landscaped using plants that are native or well-adapted, which would cut down on water use and also require less mowing, fertilizing, and spraying. While there is an initial cost to install such landscapes, over time the reduced inputs, especially labor inputs, will start paying back. This should especially be considered in areas like center medians or near the street where the City does not want residents to linger because of traffic.

Provide a Library facility that can accommodate educational, civic, and recreational activities

Looking to the future, the library will continue to focus on literacy, education and technology. The recent upgrades to the facility have enabled the library to be very successful with programming for youth. In the future, the library will continue to work to keep up with technology needs of the public as well as to serve as the “community’s living room,” a place where the members of the community can come together formally or informally for educational or recreational activities.

Continue to provide Police and Fire facilities that enable the departments to equitably serve the entire community

The police and fire departments began to be housed in the same facility in the Public Safety building in 2011. This facility serves both departments well but in the future considerations should be made for additional storage for both departments and for training facilities for the Fire Department.

Provide City Offices that provide adequate space and accessibility to carry out city functions and for residents to participate in civic processes

City offices should be accessible to the public for activities such as bill payments and building permits. It should also serve as a meeting place for public hearings and public meetings, providing a space where residents can engage with public officials and City staff.

PARKS AND RECREATION

The Scottsbluff Parks Department currently maintains parks and recreation facilities throughout town, including neighborhood parks, ball fields, aquatic facilities, the cemetery, and bike pathways. These facilities are shown in the map of park and recreation facilities below.

One of the overall goals is to ensure that every neighborhood has equitable access to community parks. As shown in the map of walking distance to parks below, there are certain areas, particularly north of Highway 26, that are underserved by park facilities. In addition, several residents have expressed a desire for an indoor recreation facility that would provide space for indoor soccer, volleyball, basketball, etc. In the future, a Parks and Recreation Master Plan should be developed to determine the best locations for future parks and to consider the need for additional recreational facilities. While it is important to add recreational facilities that will better serve residents, it is imperative that the Parks Department be given the additional funding and staff necessary to maintain these facilities.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

For the department's existing facilities, the following have been identified by community members and staff as needed improvements:

- All Parks
 - Expand landscaping, with a focus on tree planting and well-designed landscaped areas that utilize a minimum amount of irrigation water
- Riverside Park
 - Expand services at Campground (more pads w/water, sewer, and electrical hookups)
 - Install restrooms and laundry facility at Campground
 - Expand irrigation system
 - Fix and/or replace sections of pathway that have been damaged by flood events
 - Roads could be paved to eliminate dust
 - Area around ponds could be cleaned up to make them more attractive and useable
 - Potential for additional recreational opportunities, such as lookout towers and floating docks in the west ponds
- Soccer Complex
 - Restroom facilities needed
- Lacy Park
 - Septic system needs expanded to handle the amount of wastewater currently generated
- Westmoor Park
 - Build splash pad
 - Expand aquatic opportunities at Westmoor Pool
- Northwood Park and Frank Park
 - More playground equipment
 - Build splash pad
- 23 Club Baseball/Softball Complex
 - Replace clubhouse/concessions building
 - New shade structures and seating throughout facility
 - Install landscaping and irrigation
- Lacy Park
 - New septic system needed for restrooms

