



Public Spaces Committee Meeting Agenda

Monday, August 10, 2026 at 6:00 PM

161 Building

Roll Call

Notice of Open Meeting

Public Comment

New Business

1. Approval of July 13, 2026 minutes.
2. Consider and take action on signs for community groups.
3. Consider and take action on the capital improvement plan for 2027.
4. Consider and take action on 2027 operating budget.
5. Consider and take action on the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan Goals and Recommendations.

Adjourn

*A quorum of city committees and/or commissions may be present at this meeting. No action will be taken or considered by those committees and/or commissions.

Public Spaces Committee Meeting Minutes

July 13, 2026

Roll Call – Matt, Pat, Sherry, Renee, Randy, Denise, absent Mike, Sarah

New Business

1. Consider and take action on election of Chairperson.
Pat nominated Sherry, Denise second. Sherry Culhane elected Chairperson.
2. Consider and take action on election of Vice Chairperson.
Renee nominated Pat, Sherry second. Pat Boness elected Vice Chairperson.
3. Consider and take action on election of Secretary.
Sherry nominated Renee, Denise second. Renee Weichert elected Secretary.
4. Consider and take action on 2027 budget request for downtown flowers.
Discussion held on draft budget for 2027 flowers. No action held.
5. Consider and take action on Community Center improvements.
Reviewed proposed images of improvements, no action taken.
6. Consider and take action regarding tree border concerns in the City of Columbus. Discussion held, ordinance review, no action taken.

Next meeting – August 10, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn by Sherry, Second Pat

Respectfully submitted,

Renee Weichert, Secretary

2027 Capital Budget Items (Public Spaces)

- Possible Funds for another mural \$15,000
- Tree Planting Program \$20,000
- Fireman's Park Pickleball Parking \$250,000
- Kiwanis Park Playground \$100,000
- Trail Development (Fuller to Ridgeline) \$706,000
- Kiwanis Parking Lot

2027 DPW Operating Budget Items (Public Spaces)

- Money for existing flower baskets and 10 new baskets for retrofitted brackets (fertilizer) – total of 20 baskets and flowers
 - \$1200 – flowers, 20 baskets
 - \$450 – 10 metal baskets
 - \$150 – fertilizer
- Flowers for existing metal planters by the benches downtown - \$150
- Purchase of at least 4 planters to be placed on each corner downtown by the street lights - \$1000 (planters and flowers)
- Possible fountain or perennial flower bed for space right outside City Hall on Dickason - \$1500
- Replacement of some bushes/plantings outside City Hall - \$500



Chapter 2: Goals

Goals and Objectives

Community-Specific Goals

Specific community-oriented goals regarding outdoor recreation are based on statewide initiatives and goals outlined in the City's strategic plan.

- 1: Safety and Accessibility
- 2: Meet Recreation Needs of all Citizens
- 3: Support Growth and Development
- 4: Preserve Significant Natural, Cultural, and Historical Resources
- 5: Explore All Funding Sources

Statewide Goals

The Wisconsin DNR identified three main goals and ten strategies for achieving them in their Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2025-2030 (SCORP). Future City projects should consider the State's goals in addition to community-specific priorities. Statewide goals are:

1: Equitable Opportunities

"Ensure that all Wisconsinites have equitable opportunities to participate in outdoor recreation, regardless of where they live or their ethnicity, gender, income, abilities, or age"

Strategies

- A. Provide more opportunities close to home
- B. Provide needed recreation facilities
- C. Improve affordability of participation
- D. Support, develop, and enhance mentoring programs
- E. Create more welcoming outdoor spaces
- F. Improve distribution of information on recreation opportunities

2: Ensure Sustainability of Recreational Opportunities

"Maintain and expand the sustainability of recreational opportunities in our state, ensuring that existing opportunities are well funded and have the support to grow and expand where needed"

Strategies

- A. Expand and diversify funding sources
- B. Adapt to new environmental conditions
- C. Lead by example on climate change mitigation

3: Support Collaboration

"Grow the collaborative partnership approach across federal, state, regional and local agencies and private non-profit organizations and businesses to provide high-quality outdoor experiences for all Wisconsinites"

Strategies

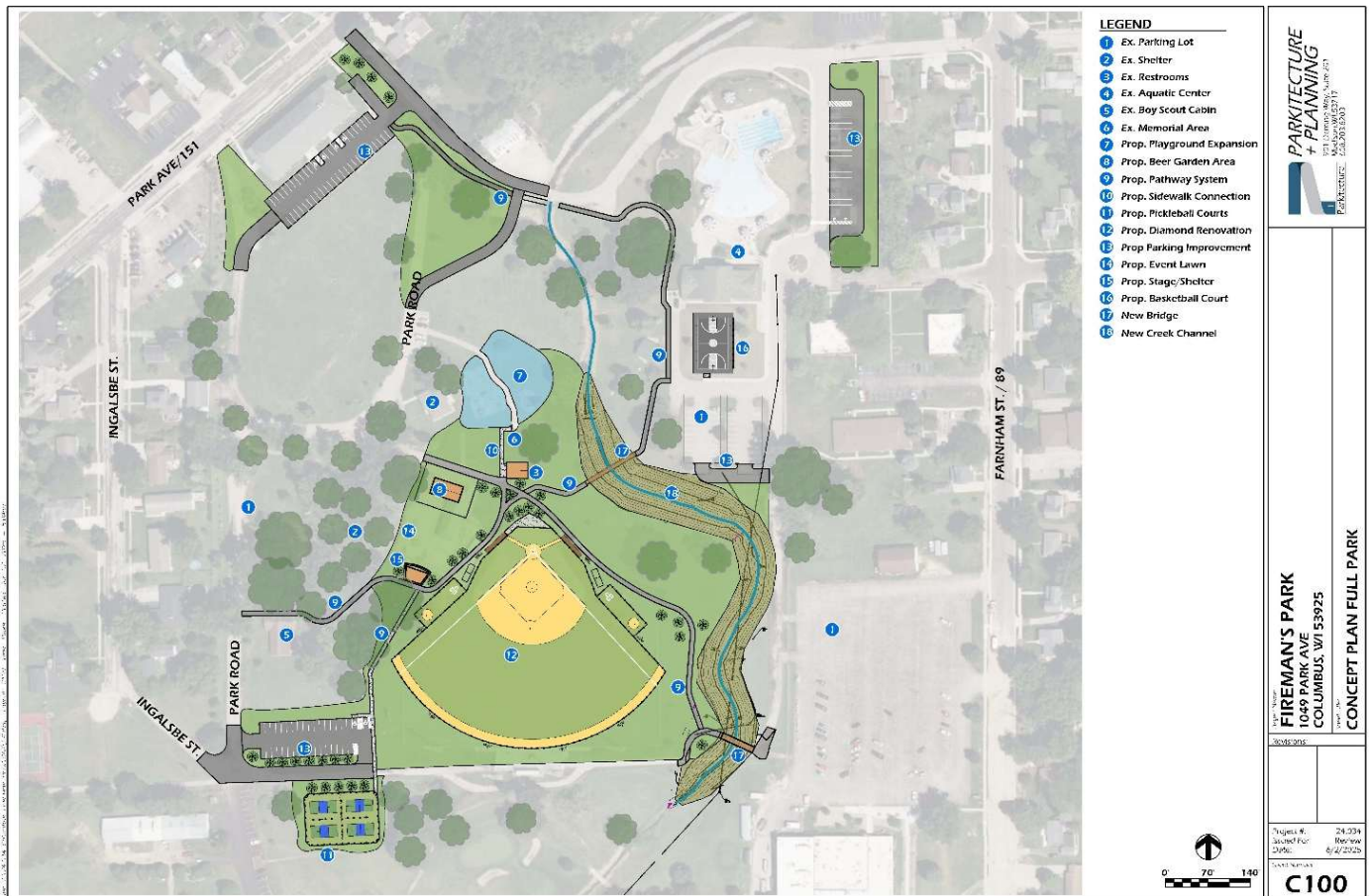
- A. Create implementation plan with desired outcomes and partnerships



Chapter 5: Recommendations

Recommendations

Fireman's Park



Master plan created in 2025 of future updates. Currently pickleball courts are underway. Stormwater project has been completed.

Recommendations include:

- Playground expansion/update
- Beer Garden
- Increased Pathway System
- Baseball diamond reconstruction
- Parking Improvements
- Amphitheater and event lawn
- New Basketball Court

Other recommendations:

- Increase accessibility of shelters and bleachers by extending paths to access
- Repave roads going through park
- Repair fencing at goat pen and increase viewing opportunities



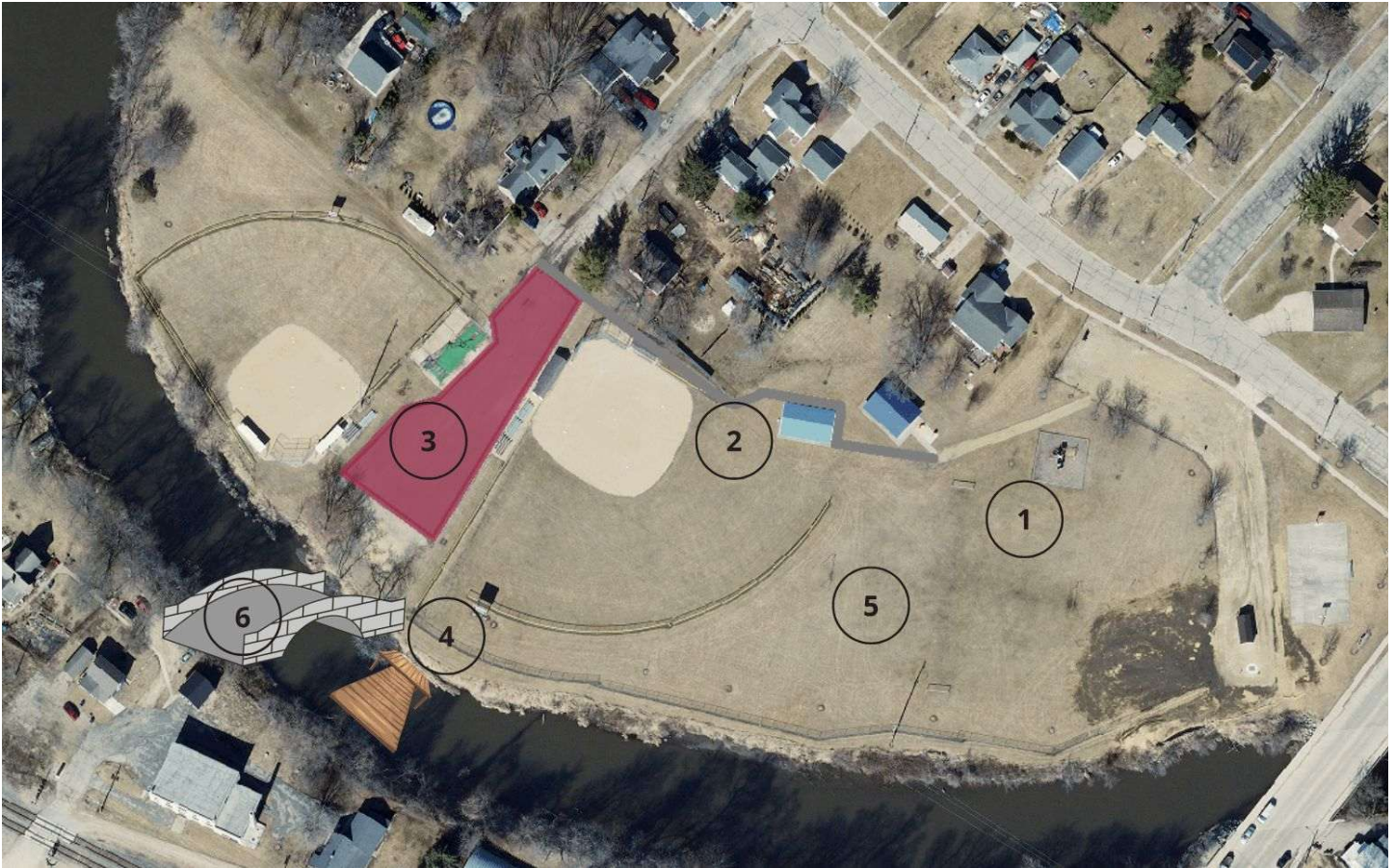


Baseball field flooding and upkeep was noted as a significant concern in the survey, along with accessibility to the fields. Considering many grandparents attend youth baseball games, safe access to fields is a high priority.

Recommendations include:

- Repave Parking Lot (1)
- New Playground (incorporate tot playground into main one) (2)
- Add paths to playground and shelters (3)
- Repave paths connecting to Eastern fields and replace bridge (4)
- Add bridge connecting Eastern path to parking lot (5)
- Improve flood prevention infrastructure on ballfields (6)
- Repair fencing (7)
- Patch/repair Western path in some areas
- Create master plan





Home to Columbus' soccer and softball fields, Meister Park gets many outside visitors each year. Thus, updates to this area are incredibly important to attract visitors.

Existing Play Structure:

Recommendations include:

- New Playground (previous one built in 2001) (1)
 - Add accessible play options
 - Add toddler activities
- Add path connecting playground, shelter, and ballfields (2)
- Pave Western parking lot (3)
- Add fishing dock/access area (4)
- Soccer field improvements (5)
 - Add more seating (bleachers or benches)
- Bridge over Crawfish River to connect downtown (6)
- Create master plan





Anecdotally, Avalon is a popular park and features the City's only volleyball court.

Recommendations include:

- Volleyball court repairs (new net, sand, etc.) (1)
- Basketball court improvements (fresh painted lines) (2)
- Add path to volleyball and basketball courts (3)
- Add path to playground (4)
- Playground updates (4)
- Replace tetherball
- Hang signs on restrooms
- Further upkeep/mowing/weed control





Originally operated by the Rotary Club, the City now owns the Southern portion of the park's property. However, land Northeast of the shelter is owned by a private entity (property line depicted above). So, any improvements or additions to this area of the park would require easements or acquisitions.

Recommendations include:

- Pave parking lot (1)
- Add paths to playground and shelter (2)
- Add fishing pier (3)

Washington Park

- Add Toddler Swing

Meadow Lane

- Add benches



The City has an existing segment of trail (0.18 mi) located near Tower Dr which would benefit from an expansion. Trails were commonly expressed as an interest to residents and community members. Ultimately, the City would like to connect Columbus Elementary School to Prairie Ridge Health, expanding upon existing infrastructure. This would occur in two phases, the first expanding through existing neighborhoods near Tower Dr, and the second occurring simultaneously with residential development West of Tower Dr (“Gateway Corridor”). The above map displays planned expansion for phase 1, consisting of 6 new segments. Ideally, the City will allocate funds to construct these segments through its Capital Improvement Program during the next 5 years.

Segment	Construction Cost	Length	City-Owned?
1	\$53,000	8' x 270'	No
2	\$114,000	8' x 375'	No
	\$66,000 Asphalt \$48,000 Boardwalk	335' Asphalt 40' Boardwalk	
3*	\$202,000	8' x 770'	Yes
	\$142,000 Asphalt \$60,000 Boardwalk	720' Asphalt 40' Boardwalk	
4*	\$26,500	8' x 135'	Yes
5	\$40,500	8' x 180'	Yes
6	\$270,000	8' x 1,150'	Partially (3/4)
	\$195,000 Asphalt \$75,000 Boardwalk	985' Asphalt 65' Boardwalk	
Total	\$706,000	8' x 2,880'	

* Segment includes crosswalk and curb ramps | Additional easement/acquisition costs likely for parcels not owned by city
 Segment 6 based on alternate proposal (dotted line) and dependent on wetland study

In addition to the Tower Dr trail expansion, the City would like to explore additional trail systems to connect other major features. This is a priority to expand transportation options and increase bicycle and pedestrian safety. Additional trails would also increase accessibility, especially if connected to parks. Collaboration with neighboring communities including Fall River and the Town of Columbus could foster additional expansion and connect more rural parts of the area.

Next steps for implementing an expanded trail system include additional planning and feasibility studies, along with budgeting through the capital improvement program. The City should also explore grant opportunities, as this would increase its ability to fund and construct the trails.

Expanding the trail system connects to the first 4 community-specific goals outlined earlier in the report and would potentially further all 3 state goals.

System-wide

Some administrative changes would benefit the park system. Recommendations applicable to all parks include:

- Dedicated park maintenance staff
- Establish Friends of Columbus Group
- Contract ADA audit of parks
- Contract impact fee study
- Add benches – explore dedication program
- Plant trees

New Parks

While there are currently no concrete plans for new parks, the City plans to dedicate additional parkland with future development and expansion projects. Having more natural spaces was indicated as a desire by community members on the survey, so future parks will likely include more nature-based features. Additionally, exploring the option for impact fees on new development could offset the costs associated with developing more parks.

Matrix

Priority Rankings: “High” ideally completed in next 1-2 years; “Medium” ideally completed in next 3-4 years; “Low” ideally completed in 5+ years

Task	Location	Details	Priority	Est. Cost	Funding Opportunities	Goals Met
New Playgroun d	Fireman’s	Replace older kid playground and tie into existing tot one (would be good location for accessible playground)	Medium	\$100,000 - \$300,000	CIP, Donations, Sponsorship, LWCF Grants, Stewardship Grants	C1, C2, C3 S1
New Playgroun d	Kiwanis	Replace existing playground, add accessible play options, and add safer toddler options	High	\$50,000 - \$150,000	CIP, Donations, Sponsorship, LWCF Grants, Stewardship Grants	C1, C2, C3 S1
New Playgroun d	Meister	Replace existing playground, add accessible play options, and add safer toddler options (current structure from 2001 and missing slide)	High	\$50,000 - \$150,000	CIP, Donations, Sponsorship, LWCF Grants, Stewardship Grants	C1, C2, C3 S1
New Playgroun d	Avalon	Replace existing playground and increase accessibility	Medium	\$50,000 - \$150,000	CIP, Donations, Sponsorship, LWCF Grants, Stewardship Grants	C1, C2, C3 S1
Outdoor fitness area	Undecide d	Introduce outdoor fitness equipment at existing park (received interest in survey)	Low	\$1,000 - \$20,000 (dependin g on equipment)	CIP, Sponsorship, Donations, LWCF Grants, Stewardship Grants, RTP Grants	C2, C3 S1
Pathway System Expansion	Fireman’s	Increase pathways as outlined in master plan, and improve existing paths for accessibility	Medium	\$275,000	CIP, Donations, LWCF Grants, Stewardship Grants, RTP Grants	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1

Task	Location	Details	Priority	Est. Cost	Funding Opportunities	Goals
Pathway System Expansion	Kiwanis	Add path access to shelter and playground, improve existing path to Eastern fields, replace and add bridges to improve accessibility	High	\$20,000 (\$25 per ft about 670 ft + 1-2 bridges)	CIP, Donations, LWCF Grants, Stewardship Grants, RTP Grants	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1
Pathway System Expansion	Meister	Add pathway connecting playground, bathroom, shelter, and softball fields to increase accessibility	High	\$8,250 (\$25 per ft about 330 ft)	CIP, Donations, LWCF Grants, Stewardship Grants, RTP Grants	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1
Pathway System Expansion	Avalon	Add pathway to volleyball and basketball courts and to playground to increase accessibility	Medium	\$7,500 (\$25 per ft about 300 ft)	CIP, Donations, LWCF Grants, Stewardship Grants	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1
Pathway System Expansion	Rotary	Add pathway connecting parking lot to playground and shelter to increase accessibility	Medium	\$2,500 (\$25 per ft about 100 ft)	CIP, Donations, LWCF Grants, Stewardship Grants	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1
Repave Park Roads	Fireman's	Current roads in bad shape and commonly indicated as an issue in survey	High	\$475,000	CIP	C1, C3, C4 S1
Repave Parking lot	Kiwanis	Upper lot in bad shape, new pavement would improve accessibility	High	\$130,000	CIP	C1, C3, C4 S1
Repave Parking lot	Meister	Western lot in need of pavement	Medium		CIP	C1, C3, C4 S1
Repave Parking lot	Rotary	Parking lot in need of pavement	Medium		CIP	C1, C3, C4 S1
Parking Improvements	Fireman's	Parking lot additions and improvements as outlined in master plan	Medium	\$475,000	CIP	C1, C3, C4 S1
Improve flood prevention infrastructure	Kiwanis	Improve drainage of baseball fields to prevent flooding (commonly indicated issue on survey)	High		CIP, LWCF Grant, Municipal Flood Control Grant,	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1, S2

Task	Location	Details	Priority	Est. Cost	Funding Opportunities	Goals
					Sponsorship, Donations, Stewardship Grants	
Repair Fencing	Kiwanis	Baseball field fencing in need of repairs	Medium	\$10,000	CIP	C1 S1
Baseball diamond reconstruction	Fireman's		Low		CIP, Sponsorship, Donations, LWCF Grant, MLB-MLBPA Youth Development Foundation Grants	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1
Baseball diamond reconstruction	Kiwanis	Multiple fields in need of updates	Medium	\$250,000 - \$1,000,000 per field	CIP, Sponsorship, Donations, LWCF Grant, MLB-MLBPA Youth Development Foundation Grants	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1
Volleyball Court improvements	Avalon	Replace net and maintain sand in volleyball court	High	\$900 - \$1,000	CIP, DPW Budget, Donations, Sponsorship	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1
Basketball court improvements	Avalon	Repaint court lines	Medium	\$1,000 - \$2,000	CIP, DPW Budget, Donations, Sponsorship	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1
Replace tetherball	Avalon	Currently missing ball and rope, pole still standing	High	\$30	DPW Budget	C2 C1
Soccer field improvements	Meister	Add bleachers or seating to fields	Medium	\$2,000 - \$10,000 (depending on size)	CIP, LWCF Grant, Donations, Sponsorship, US Soccer Foundation Grant	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1

Task	Location	Details	Priority	Est. Cost	Funding Opportunities	Goals
Add basketball court	Fireman's	Additional place for outdoor basketball	Low	\$77,000	CIP, Sponsorship, Donations, LWCF Grant	C2, C3 S1
Build Amphitheater and beer garden	Fireman's	Add dedicated concert/event space to park for summer concert series and other events (commonly asked for in survey)	Low	\$1,500,000	CIP, Sponsorship, Donations, LWCF Grant	C2, C3 S1, S3
Trails	Multiple	Expand trails system	High	\$710,000	CIP, Sponsorship, Donations, LWCF Grants, Stewardship Grants, RTP Grants	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1, S2
Hang signs on bathrooms	Avalon	Currently missing signage, would help users access facilities	High	\$50	DPW Budget	C1 S1
Improve goat pen viewing area	Fireman's	Make goat pen more accessible and prevent people from climbing in storm water trench. Highlight unique asset of our parks system	Medium	\$5,000 - \$10,000 (add bridge)	CIP, Sponsorship, Donations	C1, C4 S1
Add benches to parks	Multiple	Add more seating to parks (indicated as a need in survey), could introduce dedications	Medium	\$200 - \$500 per bench	CIP, Sponsorship, Donations	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1, S3
Plant trees in parks	Multiple	Increase urban canopy by implementing tree program	Medium	\$150 per tree	CIP, Sponsorship, Donations, Grants	C4 S2
Establish dedicated park maintenance staff	Multiple	Hire seasonal DPW staff dedicated to park upkeep to improve mowing and weed control (commonly indicated as issue in survey)	High	\$15,000 - \$50,000 per year	DPW Budget	C3, C4 S1, S2

Task	Location	Details	Priority	Est. Cost	Funding Opportunities	Goals
Establish Park Sponsorship/Friends of Columbus group	N/A	Increase donations to parks systems by organizing collaborations with local businesses and gathering a community group	High	N/A	N/A	C3, C4, C5 S2, S3
Contract an impact fee study	N/A	Considers potential to increase impact fees as the City develops	Medium	\$10,000 - \$20,000	CIP/Budget Allocation	C3, C4, C5 S2
Contract Master Park Plan	Kiwanis	Park in need of several improvements, would help guide expansion in future	Medium	\$10,000-\$20,000	CIP/Budget Allocation	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1, S2
Contract Master Park Plan	Meister	Park in need of several improvements, would help guide expansion in future	Medium	\$10,000-\$20,000	CIP/Budget Allocation	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1, S2
Contract ADA Audit	Multiple	Get professional expertise on where to increase accessibility and how to improve compliance with ADA	Medium	\$9,000 - \$18,000 total (\$1,000 - \$2,000 per park)	CIP/Budget Allocation	C1, C2, C4 S1, S2