

**WORKSHOP MINUTES  
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
LITTLE CANADA, MINNESOTA**

**March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018**

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof a workshop meeting of the City Council of Little Canada, Minnesota was convened on the 22nd day of March, 2018 in the Conference Room of the City Center located at 515 Little Canada Road in said City.

Mayor John Keis called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and the following were present at roll call:

CITY COUNCIL:	Mr. John Keis Mr. Tom Fischer Mr. Mike McGraw Mr. Rick Montour (arrived 7:00 p.m.)
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PARKS & REC. MEMBERS PRESENT:	Ms. Anna Abruzzese Ms. Rose Chu Ms. Sharen Darling Mr. Peter Schletty
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ALSO PRESENT:	Mr. Bryce Shearen, Parks and Recreation Community Services Manager Mr. Joel Hanson, City Administrator Mr. Derek Anderson, Parks Maint. Sup. Mr. Bob Kost, SEH Landscape Architect Ms. Anna Springer, SEH Landscape Arc. Ms. Anna Leibel, Recording Secretary
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Kost reported the Draft Master Parks Plan had been distributed last week, and City staff had made comments to which SEH had responded and addressed accordingly. Anna explained she would address the organization of the plan to help familiarize everyone with its contents. Springer stated that Chapter one was the Introduction of the plan, which was based on the previous parks plan, which included elements like the history of the parks. Chapter two is on the Existing Conditions & Needs. Springer explained the sections on existing conditions, system needs, and chapter three; Trends, all set the stage for the priorities described near the end of the plan. Springer explained chapter four includes the mission, vision, and recommendations for the parks system. She stated chapter five was a guidebook for implementing the plan. Springer noted there were two appendices to the plan including the survey results and individual park inventories and recommendations. Kost explained this is the

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first draft of the parks master plan, and there would be spelling errors that SEH would fix, but he wanted the workshop to focus on the content and priorities set forth in the plan.

Councilman Fischer asked how the Action Steps were decided on. Kost stated they were concepts that had come up throughout the process in discussions with the public and the Commission. Councilman Fischer stated there had been significant discussion about balancing the Northwest quadrant of the City with parks and trails. He explained this was not in the action steps. Springer noted when surrounding City’s park and trail systems were included in the map of areas with parks and trails within a five-minute walk; the gap in the northwest quadrant was much smaller.

Kost asked those present to categorize each priority as a short term (1-3 year), Medium term (4-6 year), or long term (7-10 year) goal. The list below includes the priorities and discussion of each item.

<b>Action Step</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Develop a management strategy for linear parks within Xcel Energy Easement	Respond to changes in vegetation management in linear parks within the Xcel Energy easements.	Short – Time Frame Medium – Effort/Cost High - Impact

Kost stated the Commission has discussed rain gardens, food gardens, and pollinator gardens which could be a possibility. Those present thought responding to the vegetation changes would have a high impact, and be a medium cost/effort project. It was suggested this be a short term priority.

Improve signage and wayfinding	Add additional wayfinding and signage elements throughout the City, including directional signs and maps at community parks. Create and distribute a paper map of parks and trails for visitors and residents.	Short – Time Frame Medium – Effort/Cost High - Impact
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Kost stated this is a way to promote the parks and trails system that the City has. Kost noted many of the Little Canada Parks have concrete stand-alone signs, but the City could invest in additional single-post signs. The Parks Maintenance Supervisor stated it would be a good investment to have a map of the parks and trails system at each park. Abruzzese suggested studying where signs are needed and then installing them over the next 10 years. Councilman McGraw asked the Commission what they felt was needed. Abruzzese stated she thought there should be signage on Centerville Road for Spooner Park. Councilman McGraw stated there should be maps and signage on the trails to help people

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find their way. Kost stated trail signage was heard during the public engagement process. Abruzzese stated signage could help identify trail connections that may include some walking on the road. Darling stated a printed map of all the trails and parks would be useful. Mayor Keis suggested an online parks and trails system map. Councilman Fischer stated he liked the idea of a web based map system, but printed maps or map signage at the parks and trailheads would also be good if a web based system wasn't feasible.

Implement improvements at Pioneer Park	Undertake a design development process to make phased improvements at Pioneer	Short – Time Frame High – Impact High – Effort/Cost
Implement improvements at Pioneer Park	Develop feasibility studies or preliminary designs and cost estimates for artificial turf game field in order to continue to provide a high-quality game field for soccer	Short – Time Frame High – Impact Medium – Effort/Cost
Implement improvements at Pioneer Park	Undertake feasibility study for renovation/replacement of the pavilion building to better meet current and future needs	Short – Time Frame High – Impact High – Effort/Cost
Implement improvements at Pioneer Park	Add an interactive fountain/water feature/mister	Medium – Time Frame High – Impact Medium – Effort/Cost
Implement improvements at Pioneer Park	Add a historical theme to Pioneer Park that tells the story of Little Canada	Medium – Time Frame Medium – Impact Medium – Effort/Cost
Implement improvements at Pioneer Park	Replace the current playground an accessible playground that represents Little Canada through a unique theme	Short – Time Frame High – Impact High – Effort/Cost

The City Administrator asked if residents were interested in a pool at Pioneer Park. Kost stated the public engagement efforts showed residents were not in favor of a pool. Springer stated that the public engagement showed residents would like a simple interactive water feature, but not a splash pad.

Kost asked how the Pioneer Park aspects should be ranked. Chu stated plans should be made for the pavilion because it could serve a larger role in the park. Kost asked if studying the improvements at Pioneer, studying the artificial turf, and studying the renovation or replacement of the pavilion should be done all at once as part of a single study, or as a phased approach. Councilman Fischer

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stated studying the improvements was the main goal, but artificial turf, the pavilion, and the water feature would also be part of that process. Darling suggested adding a historical theme be included with studying the improvements. Kost suggested all of the Pioneer Park improvements listed be included with the first Pioneer Park priority to study improvements. He stated they could be listed as priority 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d, 3e, and 3f. It was noted this would be a short term priority, but a high cost and effort project. The City Administrator asked that the new parcel be included as a Pioneer Park priority. Mayor Keis asked if there was any low hanging fruit opportunities for the Pioneer Park project. Darling explained there was invested interested in the Pioneer Park project and it would be important to show that the City is listening to residents by showing progress. Kost suggested they focus on the playground improvements first since the Community Services Manager had contacted several companies about bids. Councilman Fischer stated a moveable playground would be important in case the feasibility studies showed a better location. The City Administrator noted the Pioneer Park playground was currently in the 2019 budget and the Spooner Park Playground was in the 2018 budget. He stated he wanted to feel confident in the sequence of the phased projects.

Implement improvements at Spooner Park	Update the playground	Short – Time Frame High – Impact High – Effort/Cost
Implement improvements at Spooner Park	Update the sand volleyball court	Short – Time Frame Medium – Impact Low – Effort/Cost
Implement improvements at Spooner Park	Improve universal access throughout the park	Short – Time Frame High – Impact High – Effort/Cost

The Community Services Manager stated \$129,000 was budgeted for the Spooner Park playground in 2018 and he was receiving estimates of about \$150,000. He explained the Commission had considered keeping the current container but the current container had some challenges, such as grade issues, abnormal shape reducing playable area, but it was in good shape and there would not be any additional cost to have it rebuilt. He also explained that with the current grade issues sand often washes out after major rain falls. The Community Services Manager stated the sand volleyball court should be redone at the same time as the playground to limit the time the surrounding area is dug up. He noted timing was also important due to Canadian Days festivities. Kost suggested the new playground be constructed right after Canadian Days. Springer suggested the project be advertised at Canadian Days. The City Administrator suggested the money for the Pioneer Park playground be used for

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Spooner Park in addition to the \$129,000 already budgeted. Councilman McGraw asked if the Spooner Park playground would need significant regrading. The City Administrator stated the City Engineer would have to review the plans. He thought a retaining wall may be needed, and some trees may be taken out as well.

Councilman Fischer asked about parking at Spooner Park. The City Administrator stated the current lot doesn't meet code requirements. He explained if the parking lot was changed or expanded the lot would have to be made compliant which would add significant expense. The City Administrator stated more parking is needed to accommodate upper shelter rentals. He thought the best solution was to build an additional parking lot to the West closer to Centerville Road. Councilman Fischer suggested a plan be made for all proposed changes at Spooner so that the projects can be implemented in an efficient manner.

Kost summarized the discussion stating Spooner Park improvements would be a short term priority, as would the plans and feasibility studies for Pioneer Park. He explained the implementation for Pioneer Park improvements would be a medium to long term priority.

Councilman McGraw asked about the Pioneer Park pavilion. The City Administrator stated the Commission has discussed studying options for the Pioneer Park pavilion because it is not ADA compliant, and could be better used. Kost explained the Commission had discussed renovating or replacing the pavilion. Councilman McGraw asked about the upper shelter at Spooner Park. Kost stated the Commission hadn't discussed changes to the upper shelter. The City Administrator noted a Canadian Days Committee member had suggested renovating the space to build a larger kitchen, and new bathrooms.

Initiate planning on priority projects to prepare for collaboration with other agencies and grant funding	Determine infrastructure and right-of-way needs; develop preliminary designs and cost estimates for a bicycle/pedestrian connection over 694	Short – Time Frame High – Impact Medium – Effort/Cost
	Determine infrastructure and right-of-way needs; develop preliminary designs and cost estimates for a bicycle/pedestrian connection over 35E	Short – Time Frame High – Impact Medium – Effort/Cost
	<del>Determine infrastructure and right-of-way needs; develop preliminary designs and cost estimates for a</del>	

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	bicycle/pedestrian connection around Keller Lake	
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Mayor Keis noted the shoulders around Keller Parkway were widened last year. Councilman Fischer stated one way to give pedestrians more room would be to design the Parkway as a one way street. Kost noted there were many options, and suggested the Action Step for Keller Parkway be removed. Those present agreed.

The City Administrator stated Little Canada had a good case for making pedestrian connections over the two freeways that intersect the City. He explained the City could finish the Trout Brook Trail with a pedestrian connection over the freeway. The City Administrator suggested this be a high priority item that the City could bond for.

Councilman McGraw stated he would like to see a map with the trail connections needed to complete the trail system. Kost suggested adding an Action Step about acquiring the gap in the powerline trail. It was suggested this be a medium priority.

Construct prioritized projects to minimize gaps in the trail system	Make interim bituminous sections along Rice Street	Short – Time Frame High – Impact Medium – Cost/Effort
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The City Administrator stated the City had been prepared to put a sidewalk in front of US Bank on Rice Street, but the County had plans to redo the road, so the project was put on hold. He suggested a concrete sidewalk be put in place.

Pavement Management	<del>Implement a framework for assessing and maintaining paved trails including parks trails</del>	
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The City Administrator stated staff assess the trails annually. This action step was removed.

Monitor and match interests and offerings of programs	Develop and implement a system to determine the needs/desires of community members for programs and athletic	Short – Time Frame High – Impact High – Effort/Cost
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	offerings	
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Kost stated this should be studied because some think Little Canada should have more programs offered and others think less should be offered. The City Administrator stated this could be a focus in the upcoming community survey. He stated the survey is statistically valid, based on a questionnaire and 400 random participants. It was decided this would be a short term priority.

<del>Develop and maintain an asset management plan</del>	<del>Prepare and implement an asset management plan that ties equipment replacements and management strategies to the annual budget and Capital Improvement Plan. Include annual equipment inspections and condition ratings of park facilities and equipment.</del>	
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Councilman Fischer asked if the new website which will link to the Counties GIS database could also have an asset management plan software. The Community Services Manager stated additional components can be added, but were very costly. The City Administrator stated equipment is currently tracked on a spreadsheet which has worked well for the City. It was decided this action step would be taken out.

Maintain/expand funding for maintenance and equipment replacement	Set the foundation for the pursuit of additional funding, whether from the general fund, a referendum, or a utility franchise fee.	Ongoing – Time Frame High – Impact Medium – Effort/Cost
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The City Administrator explained the City already has a franchise fee to fund street repairs. It was decided donations would be added to the description and this would be an ongoing priority.

The City Administrator asked about a recommendation in the plan regarding striping on-street bike lanes. Kost stated this is important because drivers see this as “the breakdown area” unless there are signage and striping to remind drivers. Schletty stated signage would let people know that the trails continue on the road. Kost stated bike lanes appeal to avid bikers.

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Mayor Keis asked about a recommendation in the plan regarding one contiguous acre of woods in each half of the City. Kost stated this was a system recommendation. Mayor Keis asked about including a park in each of the four quadrants. The City Administrator stated there were practical limitations to a park in the Northeast quadrant. Springer stated when the map included green features instead of only parks, almost all residents had access within a ten-minute walk, when surrounding cities facilities were included.

Councilman McGraw asked if the Commission had discussed a Public Art Commission as recommended in the draft plan. Abruzzese suggested the recommendation be to explore creating a workgroup.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anna Leibel