



Council Conference Meeting

June 24, 2024

5:30 PM

Fridley City Hall, 7071 University Avenue N.E.

Agenda

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- [1.](#) Cannabis Working Group Update (Report Only)
 - [2.](#) Commons Park Redevelopment Update
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- Yog tias koj xav tau kev pab txhais lus los sis txhais ntaub ntawv dawb, ces thov tiv tauj rau Lub Nroog cov neeg ua hauj lwm.
- Haddii aad u baahan tahay tarjumaad bilaash ah ama kaalmo tarjumaad, fadlan la xiriir shaqaalaha Magaalada.

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AGENDA REPORT

Meeting Date: June 24, 2024

Meeting Type: City Council Conference Meeting

Submitted By: Beth Kondrick, Deputy City Clerk

Title

Cannabis Working Group Update

Background

The Minnesota Legislature signed a bill into law that went into effect as of July 1, 2023, legalizing the use of cannabis products in the State of Minnesota (State). An Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) was formed at the State level to handle regulation and eventual licensing of cannabis products. To best prepare the City of Fridley (City) for these updates and changes, a Staff Cannabis Working Group was created to discuss updates to policies related to cannabis use and what it will potentially look like to have licensed businesses in the City in the future.

The Staff Cannabis Working Group involves staff from several departments in the City that are most directly involved in licensing, business relations, safety concerns and staff compliance. The City Manager's Office, Public Safety, Community Development, and Employee Resources departments are all represented in this Staff working group.

The group has met once in 2024. From discussions that the group has held the following actions have been taken:

Employee Resources

The Employee Resources Department has created an updated Non-DOT Drug, Cannabis and Alcohol Testing and Drug-Free Workplace Policy that will be signed by all staff members and retained in their personnel file.

Community Development

Community Development continues to look at zoning for any Cannabis related businesses. They will develop a zoning ordinance for the City using a model zoning ordinance being developed by OCM with the League of Minnesota Cities, the Minnesota Chapter of the American Planning Association, the Minnesota Association of County Administrators and staff from various Cities throughout the Twin Cities Metro Area. Work on this model ordinance has been taking place throughout the month of June and is expected to be rolled out to Cities for use in early July.

Public Safety

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Public Safety has reported no major issues regarding the updated policy prohibiting cannabis products in public places. They have conducted compliance checks at the five businesses selling low level THC products in the City and have found no violations.

City Manager's Office

The City Manager's Office has been receiving updates from the State and League of Minnesota Cities and are preparing for updated licensing procedures when the State begins issuing Cannabis licenses in 2025.

The State is still planning to begin issuing licenses for Cannabis businesses in early 2025. As of the date of this meeting, Community Development staff have received no inquiries for any Cannabis businesses in the City.

The OCM continues to develop policies and guidance for cities. The Minnesota Legislature passed a law that requires the OCM to begin accepting applications for social equity applicants on July 24, 2024, with the application period closing on August 12. Social equity candidates will gain preapproval to operate a cannabis business in 2025. Someone qualifies as a social equity candidate if they meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Was convicted of an offence involving the possession or sale of cannabis prior to May 1, 2023
- Had a parent, guardian, spouse, child or dependent convicted of an offence involving the possession or sale of cannabis prior to May 1, 2023.
- Was a dependent of someone convicted of an offense involving the possession or sale of cannabis prior to May 1, 2023
- Is a military veteran or National Guard member
- Has been a resident for the past five years in one or more areas with high cannabis enforcement rates, poverty rate of 20% or more, median family income not exceeding 80% of statewide median family income, and at least 20% of households receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program assistance
- Has participated in farm operations for at least three years with gross sales between \$5,000 and \$100,000 in the previous year.

Staff will provide an update to the City Council (Council) if a social equity applicant is approved to operate a business in the City. The working group will meet again in August and provide another update to Council at the end of the year.

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Meeting Date: June 24, 2024

Meeting Type: City Council Conference

Submitted By: Mike Maher, Parks and Recreation Director

Title:

Commons Park Redevelopment Update

Background

Commons Park is scheduled for redevelopment in 2025-2026, with planning and design currently underway. HCM Architects are engaged in concept design and HKGi has been brought on for landscape architecture.

Central to the park design will be an interconnected complex featuring a park building, splash pad, inclusive playground, parking, plazas, trails, and winter recreation area. Athletic fields will also be redeveloped and reprioritized in the park design. Sand volleyball, pickleball courts, basketball, and leisure ice skating facilities are planned as well as a redeveloped baseball field.

Throughout the park concept development, discussion has been ongoing with the Fridley Youth Sports Association (FYSA) and Fridley Public Schools regarding baseball field use. The Commons Park property currently has two baseball fields and an informal softball field. The current approved park development plan includes one redeveloped baseball field, which can be designed to the specifications of FYSA to include moveable bases and pitching mound to allow for use by a range of age groups.

The approved Commons Park development concept is part of a comprehensive Park System Improvement Plan (PSIP) developed in 2022 by consultant WSB. A robust community engagement effort was undertaken to provide recommendations for each of Fridley's 38 parks. A series of community meetings, titled "Finding your Fun in Fridley", were held prior to the development of the PSIP. In addition to the community meetings, stakeholder interviews, online surveys and statistically valid resident survey data were all used to inform the plan.

Prior to implementation of the PSIP, two resident task force groups were assembled to provide recommendations to the City Council on the scope and funding of the PSIP. A 17 member task force met with the consultant and staff to review concept plans for Community Park, Moore Lake Park and Commons Park. FYSA had representation on this task force group and advocated for the retention of baseball fields in the Commons Park plan, while the initial concepts suggested moving athletic fields to Community Park and fully developing Commons Park for community-wide uses such as picnicking, an

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inclusive playground, and splash pad. The final approved concept plan for Commons Park includes one baseball field with additional fields being potentially developed on Fridley Public Schools property.

Major themes that emerged from the park system community engagement process include a focus on safety and lighting, improved playgrounds, unique amenities, places to gather and access to nature. Specific to Commons Park, a splash pad and expanded playground for all ages and abilities were the most requested amenities.

The City of Fridley and FYSA have a decades-long history of partnership in youth athletics. Currently the City of Fridley owns and maintains the three-field Ray Thompson Little League complex for the exclusive use of FYSA. No fees are charged to FYSA for use or maintenance of these fields or for the existing two baseball fields at Commons Park. Fridley Parks maintenance staff estimates that labor costs to maintain fields and facilities for FYSA exceeds \$50,000 annually.

FYSA Soccer also works in partnership with the City of Fridley. As the Fridley community has grown and changed over the years, the City has always responded to the needs of FYSA to provide and maintain fields for the association's use at no cost. Soccer fields were provided and maintained at Locke Park until development occurred then were established at Commons Park until use conflicts and turf degradation prompted a move to their current location at Community Park. This facility includes indoor restrooms and water as well as a playground and spacious parking.

FYSA Soccer currently utilizes six soccer fields in the complex which are striped in the outfields of softball fields. Softball field use in Fridley has decreased in use over the past ten years or so, which is consistent with national trends.

The City's current policy on field use includes no-cost use by Fridley-based youth sports organizations and allows these groups to have priority scheduling of fields and facilities. It has become fairly common for youth sports organizations to pay for field use or to pass on a per-player fee to the City for ongoing field use and maintenance costs.

Fridley's commitment to a positive partnership with FYSA is ongoing and the City will evaluate field development options for future growth in the soccer and baseball programs. Two youth soccer fields could be seasonally available at Commons Park and other parks in the system may be candidates to develop or improve youth baseball fields. Locations such as Madsen Park, Flanery Park, and Terrace Park will be redeveloped in the coming several years and could be suitable for a baseball field to be developed in partnership with FYSA.

Registration numbers provided for FYSA baseball, including T-ball, little league, and middle-school age teams, were 110, 127 and 144 individuals for the years 2022 to 2024 respectively.

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The Commons Park project is currently moving from concept design to design development. The recreation building has been resized to meet the program needs of Fridley Recreation and to fit within the \$5 million building budget. The building concept features interior and exterior-facing restrooms, warming space, gathering areas, and three community classrooms.

The design team recommends the best practice of developing the park into use zones with community uses such as picnicking, play features and walking paths separated from more active athletic uses such as fields and courts.

Staff will present and be available to answer questions from the Council on park concept design, budget, park building design, and recent trends in youth athletics.

Financial Impact

Staff will provide an outlook of how field development and various layout options for Commons Park may impact the overall park project budget, which ranges from \$11-12 million.

Recommendation

None

Focus on Fridley Strategic Alignment

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vibrant Neighborhoods & Places | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Identity & Relationship Building |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Stability & Commercial Prosperity | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Safety & Environmental Stewardship |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational Excellence | |

Attachments and Other Resources

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