



MEETING OF NOVEMBER 21, 2023

TO: Mayor Jordan and City Council
THRU: Susan Norton, Chief of Staff
Alison Jumper, Director of Parks, Natural Resources and Cultural Affairs
FROM: Ted Jack, Park Planning Superintendent
DATE:
SUBJECT: Hiring a consultant to work on a Park Impact Fee Study

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends hiring MGT Consulting (RFP #23-15) to conduct a Park Impact Fee study for a fee of \$48,325.00 and to set a project contingency of \$5,000.00.

BACKGROUND:

The current Park Land Dedication Ordinance was enacted in 1981 (Ord #2695). At that time, the city had few parks and a lot of open space, and the ordinance brought in valuable park land. As the city grew denser, the ordinance became less effective. Today, most land dedicated to the city through the ordinance is undevelopable land such as floodplain and small parcels, often in locations where park land is not needed and sometimes of little recreational value. The existing ordinance was grandfathered into Arkansas Code in 2003, and to make major changes requires a comprehensive study that must result in an ordinance that is compliant with Arkansas Code 14-56-103. MGT was selected through standard selection processes in RFP 23-15.

DISCUSSION:

Staff believes it would be beneficial to move to a park impact fee ordinance similar to the city of Bentonville. This would allow greater flexibility in how we acquire new land and what land we acquire for the park system. This is needed because park needs have become more specific over time, such as needing land to fill gaps in service areas and needing land that is suitable for specific recreational amenities, such as soccer fields. The current ordinance does not support a targeted or planned approach to acquisition. The process for this study will include a look at best practices to offset park impacts, review of existing ordinances, relevant Arkansas law, detailed analysis (particularly growth and fee analysis), public feedback, and development of possible ways for the city to move forward. Those recommendations will be brought to City Council for final approval.

BUDGET/STAFF IMPACT:

Funding for this study is available in project 23004.1 Parks Impact Fee Study and comes from the Sales Tax Capital Improvements Fund. Staff time will be utilized to manage the contract.

ATTACHMENTS: SRF (#3), RFP 23-15, Contract - MGT Park Impact Fee Signed (#4), RFP 23-15 Appendix A - Scope of Work & Fees (#5), RFP 23-15, Appendix B - City Issued RFP (#6), RFP 23-15, Appendix C - MGT's Submittal (#7)

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