

ITEM #: 18
DATE: 07-09-24
DEPT: P&R

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: **STUART SMITH PARK PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT**

BACKGROUND:

Park playground equipment is replaced approximately every twenty years according to a replacement plan maintained by City staff. Because some equipment gets used more than others, staff annually reviews all playground equipment to determine the condition of each piece of equipment and whether it should be replaced. After each review, staff recommends which structures should be included in the five-year Capital Improvements Plan (CIP). The playground equipment in Stuart Smith Park, 1501 S. 4th St., was included in the FY 2023/24 CIP for replacement.

Staff sent a Request for Proposals (RFP) to qualified playground equipment representatives, inviting them to submit proposals to replace the playground equipment in Stuart Smith Park. The RFP stated that \$60,000 was available for playground equipment and installation. Staff received multiple proposals and evaluated them based on the following criteria: safety; play features including balancing, spinning, sliding, climbing and swinging components; site compatibility; accessibility and inclusivity; supports physical, cognitive, and emotional/social development; cost vs. relative play value; unique play features; and aesthetics compared to existing structures within the park, as well as the overall park system.

Three vendors submitted proposals:

1. Boland Recreation, Marshalltown, Iowa
2. Play-Pro Recreation, Clive, Iowa
3. Cunningham Recreation, Charlotte, North Carolina

PUBLIC OUTREACH:

Staff evaluated the multiple proposals received and selected two options from Play-Pro Recreation and one from Boland Recreation to present for public feedback (see Attachment A). Residents were asked to provide feedback on the playground proposals through a survey that was included in the weekly Parks and Recreation E-newsletter, which is sent to over 12,000 emails. Additionally, staff presented the options at the June 6 Municipal Band Concert and the Juneteenth event on June 15 at Bandshell Park and asked visitors to those events to complete the survey. In total, almost 400 surveys results were received.

Survey results indicate that respondents favored Option 2 (199) over Option 3 (104) and Option 1 (57). Nineteen individuals did not have a preference. The survey also asked residents if they lived within walking distance of the park. Of the respondents, only 68 individuals lived within walking distance of the park.

BUDGET:

There is \$70,500 budgeted for a new playground structure, swings, concrete playground border, and

engineered wood fiber safety surfacing. The cost of the playground and installation of Option 2 is \$59,990. The approximate cost for the concrete playground border and surfacing is \$10,000.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Award contract to Play-Pro Recreation, Clive, Iowa, to purchase playground equipment (Option 2) for Stuart Smith Park in the amount of \$59,990.
2. Award contract to Boland Recreation, Marshalltown, Iowa, to purchase (Option 3) for Stuart Smith Park in the amount of \$60,000.
3. Award contract to Play-Pro Recreation, Clive, Iowa, to purchase (Option 1) for Stuart Smith Park in the amount of \$59,990.
4. Do not award a contract.
5. Refer this item back to staff for further information.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Residents of Ames, year after year, rate the playgrounds in the parks good or very good over ninety percent of the time. In an effort to keep playground equipment safe and enjoyable, they need to be replaced on a periodic basis. The playground at Stuart Smith Park is due for a replacement. Based on feedback from staff and residents, Option 2 is the most desired playground equipment proposal. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative #1 as noted above.

ATTACHMENT(S):

[Attachment A - Stuart Smith Park Playground Options.pdf](#)