



Legislation Text

File #: 1419-2023, **Version:** 1

Background: This ordinance authorizes the Director of the Recreation and Parks Department to enter into contract with EDGE to provide architectural and engineering services for the Hauntz, Helsel, and Willow Creek Park Improvements 2023 Project. The contract amount is \$390,000.00, with a contingency of \$7,500.00, for a total of \$397,500.00 being authorized by this ordinance.

The master planning design phase of the Hauntz, Helsel, and Willow Creek Park Improvements 2023 Project creates the opportunity to improve the visitor experience at three existing Columbus neighborhood and community parks. This phase of the project will engage stakeholders in three distinct communities, evaluate the fit of the existing park program, and further develop the plans for recreation opportunities that encourage new park uses and support healthy lifestyles. The design will also build upon the best and most unique aspects of each park.

Hauntz Park, located at 480 Columbian Avenue, is a 5.6 acre neighborhood park in Columbus' Greater Hilltop Community. The park has seen little change since the late 1990's and has experienced a steady decrease in social use as concerns about illicit behavior in the park have increased. Residents of the surrounding community have had an active voice in requesting that the City implement a plan to rejuvenate the park. Existing features of the park that will need to be demolished due to their current condition include a shelter, a small playground, and sports courts in poor condition. There is a small parking area that accommodates approximately 10 cars and on-street parking is alternatively available. Parking and driving on the grass has been a recorded issue. Field space is at a premium in the Hilltop, with the Hilltop Vision Plan calling for more greenspace and recreational opportunities. Historically, Hauntz Park has struggled to balance the pressure of its youth sports programming with the lack of parking. Drainage issues in the park limits playability of the existing field space and often creates standing water on a large portion of the park. The project scope includes conducting public engagement with a broad range of stakeholders, both internal and external to the department, assessing the recreational needs and interests of the surrounding community. This will inform a master plan that creates a safe and welcoming environment for visitors across diverse backgrounds. It will also offer stylistic considerations for the park that boost its sense of place, complementing the era and architecture of the residential community in which Hauntz Park is nestled.

Helsel Park, located at 3205 South Hamilton Road, is a 41 acre community park in the Mideast Community. Today, Helsel Park's primary recreation focus is on youth sports programming. Park amenities consist of soccer fields, multipurpose sports fields, two parking lots containing roughly 150 spaces, and a long park drive. Few amenities were built in the original park and it lacks complementary family scale programs for the surrounding neighborhoods. The park is situated lower than South Hamilton Road and the long park drive to the far parking lot, coupled with densely forested area that extends to the property's border with Interstate 270, challenges park visibility. This has resulted in deterring potential park visitors outside of the sports programming. The park is located entirely in the floodway. The current layout presents limited visibility, security challenges, and poor perceptions of visitor safety. It also ignores the scenic values and natural experiences of Big Walnut Creek. A major component of the park will be the development of the Big Walnut Trail which, when complete, will span from Three Creeks Park in the south to Hoover Reservoir in the north. The project intends to provide community access to the greenway trail as well as explore unique amenities that support the trail, promoting the growth of biking, skating, running, and walking in the park.

Willow Creek Park and Preserve, located at 2285 Hardy Parkway, is a 25.7 acre neighborhood park in the Southwest Columbus Community. Willow Creek Preserve, located at 2280 Creekview Place, is adjacent to the park. This preserve consists of 12.7 acres of conservation parkland and shall be considered within the scope of this project. Willow Creek's existing park features include a multipurpose field, playground, basketball court, older shelter, and a walking loop that extends around the field, traveling through a grove of mature trees. Unimproved trails follow the gently sloped banks of

Big Run Creek, offering views and access to Big Run Creek for wading and creeking for those who are aware of them. The Willow Creek Preserve sits on the north and west sides of Big Run Creek but is inaccessible to surrounding residents and park users. In addition to the potential offered through Willow Creek's natural beauty, the park will earn significance as the first phase of development of the Big Run Greenway, a proposed regional greenway trail that will expand across Southwest Columbus from the Scioto River, traveling westward along Big Run over 15 miles, to Green Countrie Park in the Westland Community. During the master plan design phase, the scope includes conducting public engagement within the Southwest Community, developing a high quality programming plan that includes the plans for phase 1 development of the trail through the area, walkable access to the adjacent natural areas, a potential trailhead, and activation of the greenspace for low capacity sports.

This contract is anticipated to be modified in the fall of 2023 in order to produce detailed construction documents with construction anticipated to start in the spring of 2024. The funding source for these projects has strict deadlines that need to be achieved as all funds from the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund, in accordance with the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), need to be encumbered by the end of 2024. The funds to be encumbered include paying for the costs associated with preliminary planning, detailed design, and construction.

Vendor Bid/Proposal Submissions (Office of Diversity and Inclusion designation status):

Proposals were advertised through Vendor Services, in accordance with City Code Chapter 329, on February 27, 2023 and received by the Recreation and Parks Department on March 21, 2023. Proposals were received from the following companies:

EDGE (MAJ)
Civil and Environmental Consultants (MAJ)
Mannik Smith Group (MAJ)

Of note, professional services contracts are quality based selections and not based on price. Costs were not requested nor where they part of this evaluation.

In accordance with City Code, a selection team evaluated the proposals and recommended EDGE be selected to perform the work. The firm was chosen based on their referenced projects, experience, qualifications, availability, timeline and project approach.

Principal Parties:

The EDGE Group, Inc.
330 West Spring Street, Suite 350
Columbus, Ohio 43215
Tedd Hardesty, (614) 486-3343
Contract Compliance Number: 001500
Contract Compliance Expiration Date: April 28, 2024

Emergency Justification: Emergency action is requested in order to satisfy funding deadlines that are associated with the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund, as these funds need to be encumbered by the end of 2024 and this funding is intended to pay the costs associated with preliminary design, detailed design, and future construction.

Benefits to the Public: By developing these three parks, the Columbus Recreation and Parks Department will be providing recreational opportunities for approximately 7,000 people across three Columbus communities. These parks are currently underutilized, in a state of disrepair, and do not fulfill the needs of the communities that they serve.

Community Input/Issues: Public input for each of the three projects was obtained through preliminary meetings with each area commission in 2021 and 2022. Input was also gathered through the completion of park audits by community leaders and 311 requests. The master planning phase of the Hauntz, Helsel, and Willow Creek Park Improvements 2023

Project will involve the public through at least two engagement sessions held in each community, electronic surveys, and smaller stakeholder groups.

Area(s) Affected: Greater Hilltop (53) - Hauntz Park, South East (65) - Helsel Park, Southwest (59) - Willow Creek Park

Master Plan Relation: This project will support the Recreation and Parks Master Plan by helping to update sports related parks, expanding amenities to appeal to a more diversified audience, and updating five neighborhood parks per year.

Fiscal Impact: \$397,500.00 is budgeted and available from within the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund 2209, Community Recovery Subfund 220902 to meet the financial obligations of this contract.

To authorize the Director of the Department of Recreation and Parks to enter into contract with EDGE for the Hauntz, Helsel, and Willow Creek Park Improvements 2023 Project; to authorize the transfer of \$397,500.00 within the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund; to authorize the expenditure of \$397,500.00 from the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund; and to declare an emergency. (\$397,500.00)

WHEREAS, it is necessary to authorize the Director of the Department of Recreation and Parks to enter into contract with EDGE for the Hauntz, Helsel, and Willow Creek Park Improvements 2023 Project; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to authorize the transfer of \$397,500.00 within the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund 2209, Community Recovery Subfund 220902; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to authorize the expenditure of \$397,500.00 from the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund 2209, Community Recovery Subfund 220902; and

WHEREAS, an emergency exists in the usual daily operations of the Recreation and Parks Department in that it is immediately necessary to authorize the Director of Recreation and Parks to enter into contract with EDGE in order to satisfy funding deadlines that are associated with the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund, as these funds need to be encumbered by the end of 2024 and this funding is intended to pay the costs associated with preliminary design, detailed design, and future construction, all for the preservation of the public health, peace, property, safety, and welfare and, **NOW, THEREFORE**

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:

SECTION 1. That the Director of Recreation and Parks be and is hereby authorized to enter into contract with EDGE for the Hauntz, Helsel, and Willow Creek Park Improvements 2023 Project.

SECTION 2. That the funds necessary to carry out the purpose of this ordinance are hereby deemed appropriated, and the City Auditor shall establish such accounting codes as necessary.

SECTION 3. That the City Auditor is authorized to make any accounting changes to revise the funding source for all contracts or contract modifications associated with this ordinance.

SECTION 4. That the City Auditor is hereby authorized to transfer the unencumbered balance in a project account to the unallocated balance account within the same fund upon receipt of certification by the Director of the Department administering said project that the project has been completed and the monies are no longer required for said project.

SECTION 5. That the transfer of 397,500.00 or so much thereof as may be needed, is hereby authorized within the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund 2209, Community Recovery Subfund 220902 per the account codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

SECTION 6. For the purpose stated in Section 1, the expenditure of \$397,500.00 or so much thereof as may be necessary to pay the cost thereof, be and is hereby authorized from the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund 2209, Community Recovery Subfund 220902, in accordance with the American Rescue Plan Act, in object class 06 Capital Outlay per the accounting codes in the attachments to this ordinance.

SECTION 7. That for the reasons stated in the preamble hereto, which is hereby made a part hereof, this ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure and shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage and approval by the Mayor, or ten days after passage if the Mayor neither approves nor vetoes the same.