



## Staff Report

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**TO:** Mayor and City Council  
**THROUGH:** Keith Stahley, City Manager  
**FROM:** Brian D. Martin, PE, Acting Public Works Director

### **SUBJECT:**

Geer Park Development Grant Application to the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department Local Government Grant Program.

Ward(s): Ward 2  
Councilor(s): Nishioka  
Neighborhood(s): NESCA  
Result Area(s): Welcoming and Livable Community

### **SUMMARY:**

Geer Park is a 44-acre community park located at 241 Geer Drive NE in Salem. The City is applying for funds for improvements identified in the 2021 Park Master Plan, including paved pathways, a skate park, a spectator viewing plaza, and a picnic shelter. A City Council Resolution is required as part of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department application process.

### **ISSUE:**

Shall City Council adopt Resolution 2023-11 authorizing the City Manager to apply for and, if successful, accept an Oregon Parks and Recreation Department Local Government Grant to provide funding for construction of improvements identified in the Geer Park Master Plan?

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt Resolution 2023-11 authorizing the City Manager to apply for and, if successful, accept an Oregon Parks and Recreation Department Local Government Grant to provide funding for construction of improvements identified in the Geer Park Master Plan.

### **FACTS AND FINDINGS:**

This project at Geer Park is eligible for funding under the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) Local Government Grant Large Grant category. The project location is shown in Attachment 1. For large projects the maximum grant request is \$750,000 for development or rehabilitation projects and the average award amount is approximately \$518,000. The City application will seek a grant award not to exceed the maximum request amount of \$750,000. The application requires a Council-adopted resolution, which is provided as Attachment 2. The City will provide match funds from Parks System Development Charges in excess of a 50 percent match required by the grant program. The total estimated cost of the project is \$4.25 million.

The park improvement project will include improvements as listed below and shown on Attachment 3:

- Site clearing and grading across the project area (approximately 5.5 acres);
- Construction of an accessible paved pathway (approximately 1,160 linear feet);
- Construction of a skate park (approximately 19,500 square feet);
- Construction of an accessible spectator viewing plaza (approximately 6,900 square feet);
- Construction of a picnic shelter to accommodate small groups (20-foot by 30-foot);
- Construction of a storm drain system and vegetated stormwater basin to capture and treat runoff from the skate park and plaza;
- Installation of approximately five benches, three picnic tables, multiple bike racks, a trash receptacle, drinking fountain, and park signage and wayfinding;
- Installation of irrigated native and native-adaptive plantings (approximately 7,830 square feet);
- Installation of an irrigated lawn area inside the skate park (approximately 3,800 square feet); and
- Seeding of unirrigated lawn area (native seed mix, approximately 186,000 square feet).

The *Comprehensive Park System Master Plan* identifies the need for two additional skate parks in the City to meet current level of service standards. Additionally, the conceptual design for the proposed Geer Park skate park (shown on Attachment 3) was developed with input from the Salem community, including members of the local skateboarding community, to ensure the facility addresses local needs and aspirations.

For the application to be competitive, the project must address the goals and objectives of the current Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, the Salem Comprehensive Park System Master Plan, and the individual site master plan approved in 2021 (Attachment 4).

On March 9, 2023, the Salem Parks Foundation endorsed the grant application to be submitted to OPRD (Attachment 5). Staff is seeking additional support letters from park stakeholders.

Grant applications are due April 1, 2023. The Local Government Grant Program Advisory Committee will evaluate and score all large grant applications in order to establish the priority ranking for state funding assistance. The committee is composed of ten members appointed by the OPRD Director. Recommendations for funding are presented to the OPRD Commission in September. If this grant award is approved by the Commission, the City will sign an agreement and receive a Notice to Proceed by October 2023. The OPRD Local Government Grant stipulates that grant projects must be completed within two years from award. Staff is confident that the project can be constructed by September 2025, the designated timeframe.

### **BACKGROUND:**

As defined by the *Comprehensive Park System Master Plan*, Geer Park is a community park, meaning it is a larger scale park that provides for a variety of recreational uses. These larger scale parks allow for group activities and other recreational opportunities such as organized sports, group picnics, and larger scale playgrounds. Community parks typically attract a large number of people from a wide geographic area, and require adequate support facilities such as restrooms, convenient pedestrian and bicycle access, and parking.

The project will add new paved pathways to provide access to park facilities. The project will not add additional parking or restrooms. Upon completion of the project, park use will be supported by existing restrooms and parking lots.

Additional park improvements are scheduled to begin design next fiscal year, including a fenced off-leash dog park, an additional picnic shelter, and renovation of two baseball fields and two soccer fields. These improvements will be funded by bond sales from the 2022 Salem Safety and Livability Bond Measure. Delivery of the skate park and associated improvements may be combined with the bond-funded project to capitalize on efficiencies associated with project management, design, and construction.

Robert D. Chandler, PhD, PE  
Assistant Public Works Director

### Attachments:

1. Geer Park Location Map
2. Resolution 2023-11
3. Geer Park skate park conceptual design
4. Geer Park Master Plan graphic
5. Salem Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Action Sheet