



**DATE:** November 8, 2021  
**TO:** Parks, Recreation & Cemetery Board  
**FROM:** Tam Rodier, CD Program Coordinator *Tam Rodier*

**SUBJECT: CDBG-CV PARKS PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES**

**Problem / Issue Statement**

The City's Community Development (CD) Division has Community Development Block Grant-Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) funds to allocate to nonprofit organizations and other governmental entities that:

- Exclusively support coronavirus and other infectious disease response.
- Primarily benefit low-income individuals and families in Billings.
- Avoid duplication of other local, state, or federal service or support to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse. Repayment of funding utilized for duplicative activities is required.

**Background**

In the fall of 2020, the City of Billings concluded two surveys designed to gather feedback from community members and social service agencies in Billings regarding how they have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Data collected through both surveys suggest low-income Billings residents may be experiencing gaps in services or a lack of basic needs regarding employment, housing, food security, and mental health ([www.billingsmt.gov/CoronavirusReport](http://www.billingsmt.gov/CoronavirusReport)).

The CD Board has discussed that park improvements in low-income areas may reduce the spread of COVID-19 by implementing touchless features and other elements in park facilities. Some improvements discussed may also positively affect mental health by encouraging socially-distanced exercise / outdoor activities. CD Board representatives and staff toured a few parks in low-income areas and discussed CDBG and CDBG-CV eligible park improvements.

CD Staff worked with the City's Parks, Recreation & Public Lands (PRPL) staff to develop a list of potential park improvements in the following eight (8) low-income area parks:

- **North Park**, 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue N & N 19<sup>th</sup> Street
- **South Park**, 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue S and S 30<sup>th</sup> Street
- **Pioneer Park**, 3<sup>rd</sup> Street West & Parkhill Drive
- **Optimist Park**, Morgan Avenue & Hallowell Lane
- **Highland Park**, 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue S & S 37<sup>th</sup> Street
- **Central Park**, 8<sup>th</sup> Street West & Central Ave.
- **Arrowhead Park**, Crow Lane and Sioux Lane
- **Comanche Park**, South Plainview Street

### CD Board Review

The CD Board prioritized the following park projects to be implemented using CDBG and/or CDBG-CV funds at their November 2, 2021, meeting:

**All eight parks in low-income areas:** Wi-Fi hotspots would added (where feasible).

The addition of free Wi-Fi within low-income area parks will help address survey-identified service gaps (increase computer and internet access; increase ability to access virtual services; etc.).

**North Park:** North Park Center accessibility and ventilation improvements, new 4-room restroom (replacing existing restroom), 12-month touchless water fountain, new shelter near the playground, concrete path bulb-out, and an adult exercise area and equipment.

As a designated "Park Rx" these improvements would strengthen its amenities and encourage additional use. Adding amenities to North Park may also relieve overcrowding at Pioneer Park.

**Pioneer Park:** Zimmerman Center accessibility improvements, restroom repair / upgrades, and Heritage Park Trail replacement.

Pioneer Park is also designated as a "Park Rx," and it is arguably the busiest park in the community. These improvements would strengthen its amenities, support heavy park usage, and meet current user needs.

**Comanche Park:** Playground replacement, and accessible parking spots and walkway to playground.

Comanche Park playground equipment is decades old and should be replaced. Park usage will likely increase significantly with these improvements.

CD staff is providing this information as a courtesy. However, if the Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Board concurs with the above plans, this will be acknowledged within

the City Council memo recommending approval of these projects.

CD staff time is available to assist and support moving these projects forward.

CD staff is happy to answer any questions Board members may have during your November 10, 2021, meeting.

Potential Funding Commitments for Parks	CDBG	CDBG-CV
<b>Wi-Fi</b>		
North Park		\$5,000
South Park		\$5,000
Optimist Park		\$5,000
Pioneer Park		\$5,000
Highland Park		\$5,000
Central Park		\$5,000
Arrowhead Park		\$5,000
Comanche Park		\$5,000
Wi-Fi Contingency @ 20%		\$8,000
<b>North Park</b>		
ADA Enhancements		\$7,500
Concrete walk bulb-out ADA		\$6,678
12 month touchless water fountain		\$3,600
Four-room restroom		\$217,000
Shelter near playground		\$29,000
Air Flow - Building Estimate		\$20,000
Adult Exercise Equipment - 1st Stage	\$63,700	\$1,300
Contingency @ 20%	\$12,740	\$57,016
<b>Pioneer Park</b>		
Zimmerman Building ADA	\$7,500	
Restroom Repair / Upgrades		\$12,000
Heritage Trail Improvements	\$133,000	
Contingency @ 20%	\$28,100	\$2,400
<b>Comanche Park</b>		
Playground Equipment	\$200,000	
Contingency @ 20%	\$40,000	\$0
	<b>CDBG</b>	<b>CDBG-CV</b>
<b>Total Allocated</b>	<b>\$485,040</b>	<b>\$404,494</b>
<b>As additional CDBG revenue is received:</b>		
North Park Adult Exercise Equip - 2nd Stage	\$110,000	
The following projects will be included in the FY23 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) with no local City funds expended for these projects (only federal CDBG and/or CDBG-CV funds): North Park Restroom, North Park Shade Structure, Pioneer Park Heritage Trail Improvements, Comanche Park Playground Equipment, and North Park Adult Exercise Equipment 1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> Stage.		

**\*\* NOTE: The above are preliminary estimates only \*\***