

AGENDA
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE AMES CITY COUNCIL
CONFERENCE ROOM 235 - CITY HALL
515 CLARK AVENUE
JULY 12, 2019

CALL TO ORDER: 1:00 PM

1. Resolution approving local match for Community Attraction and Tourism Grant in regards to Inis Grove Park Accessibility Improvements (Miracle League Field/All Inclusive Playground and Restroom Project)

DISPOSITION OF COMMUNICATIONS TO COUNCIL:

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

ADJOURNMENT:

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION APPROVING CITY MATCH FOR COMMUNITY ATTRACTION AND TOURISM (CAT) GRANT IN REGARDS TO THE INIS GROVE ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (MIRACLE LEAGUE FIELD, INCLUSIVE PLAYGROUND, AND RESTROOM)

BACKGROUND:

At its June 11, 2019 meeting, Council approved the plans and specifications for the Miracle League Field and Inclusive Playground and authorized the Ames Foundation (TAF) to begin construction. The approval to begin construction was contingent on TAF signing a contract with the City stating TAF would be responsible for any shortfall in project funding. This contract has been signed and TAF is moving forward with the project. Since the June 11 meeting, TAF has funds received or pledged of over \$2,000,000.

Additionally, TAF mentioned to Council they would be submitting an application for a state CAT grant. If this grant is successful, TAF will be able to add back most, if not all, of the cost saving reductions Council approved with the plans and specs in June. Representatives from TAF, Ames Chamber of Commerce, and the Miracle Project Steering Committee have met with the Grant Administrator for the Enhance Iowa Board who oversee CAT grants. A summary of this meeting is explained in the next section.

COMMUNITY ATTRACTION AND TOURISM GRANT:

Available Funding and Grant Request Awards

Funding for the CAT Grant Program is made possible through an appropriation by the Iowa Legislature. Grant awards are made quarterly on a case-by-case basis by the Enhance Iowa Board which is a function of the Iowa Economic Development Authority. As a reference, grant awards range from \$50,000 to over \$1,000,000.

Match Requirement

Applicants are required to have a cash match from the City and County governments to be eligible for a grant. The match is to demonstrate investment from the City and County in projects being considered for CAT grant funding. The match is not a percentage of the total project cost, but rather it is a contribution of \$20,000 - \$50,000. The cash match must be for capital projects and that project must start after the application is submitted.

Application Deadline and Grant Funding Award Date

The CAT Grant application is due July 15, 2019 and a decision on funding awards will be made in October, 2019. If TAF is awarded a CAT Grant for this project, TAF will enter into a contract with the Enhance Iowa Board for the funding.

THE AMES FOUNDATION REQUEST:

TAF is submitting the application in the amount of \$200,000 for the project titled the "Inis Grove Accessibility Improvement Project" (IGAIP) which includes the Miracle League Field (MLF), the Inclusive Playground (IP), and the new Restroom to be constructed in Inis Grove. **The MLF and IP are being funded through donations and no City funds are being used for construction of these amenities. The Restroom is being funded as part of the City's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and was in the CIP prior to any discussions began regarding the MLF and IP. By submitting the application with the IGAIP title, the Restroom Project could be used as the City's cash match without violating Chapter 26 of the Iowa Code. TAF is requesting City Council approve the use of the Restroom Project as the City's cash match to the IGAIP.**

The City Attorney has analyzed this situation, and has discussed this issue with other Iowa cities who were involved with nonprofits applying for CAT grants for similar projects. **The City Attorney has offered an opinion that the City agreeing to have the restroom construction count as the City's contribution toward TAF's CAT grant application is allowable, and does not place the City at risk of violating Chapter 26 of the Iowa Code** (the Public Construction Bidding Law). The two projects are being combined together by TAF for purposes of the CAT grant application, but for Chapter 26 purposes they remain two separate projects (the field/playground being funded by TAF and the restrooms being constructed by the City).

Please note the Story County Board of Supervisors approved \$25,000 at its Tuesday, July 9, 2019 meeting to be given to TAF for the IGAIP. In addition, the Board provided a letter of support for the project.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the Inis Grove Restroom Project be used as the City's cash match in The Ames Foundation's CAT grant application regarding the Inis Grove Accessibility Improvement Project.
2. Refer back to staff for more information as directed by City Council.
3. Do not approve the Inis Grove Restroom Project be used as the City's cash match in The Ames Foundations CAT grant application regarding the Inis Grove Accessibility Improvement Project.

MANAGER’S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The Miracle League Field and Inclusive Playground will be a welcomed addition to the City’s park system and provide opportunities for all individuals. The Ames Foundation is committed to this project as is shown by their continued efforts to raise funds. TAF now has funds received or pledged in excess of \$2,000,000 and a successful grant application could provide enough funds to construct the MLF and IP as originally designed.

The City has been very careful not to put any funds toward the MLF and IP construction. Since the City Attorney has ruled the City will not violate Chapter 26 of the State of Iowa Code if the Restroom Project is used as the City’s cash match for the larger Inis Grove Accessibility Improvement Project, the request by The Ames Foundation seems reasonable. Therefore, it is the City Manager’s recommendation that the City Council approve Alternative #1 as stated above.