



Agenda Memorandum

Agenda Item – 8.B.

City Council Meeting
March 17, 2025



Strategic Priority 2: Community Empowerment and Engagement

Enhance the sense of community and connection in Westminster through engaging methods of communication and dialogue that improve accessibility, increase understanding, and encourage participation in civic and City life.



Strategic Priority 3: Community Health and Safety

Invest in innovative and collaborative approaches to provide a continuum of services that preserve, promote, and protect the health, safety, and environment of Westminster.



Strategic Priority 5: Resilient Infrastructure

Maintain and invest in resilient infrastructure that creates the highest return for safety, community connectivity, enjoyment of life, and local economic success.

Subject: Authorize the Public Works and Utilities Department to Pursue an Adams County Open Space Grant for the Municipal Court Park and Site Improvements; and Authorize the Parks, Recreation, and Libraries Department to Pursue an Adams County Open Space Grant for the Bishop Square Park Renovation, ADA Compliance, and Stormwater Management Improvements

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Recommended City Council Action:

1. Authorize the Public Works and Utilities Department to apply for an Adams County Open Space Grant for the construction of site improvement and park enhancements at Municipal Court Park associated with the Replacement Municipal Court project.
2. Authorize the Parks, Recreation, and Libraries Department to apply for an Adams County Open Space Grant for renovation, ADA compliance, and stormwater management improvements associated with the Bishop Square Park project.

Summary Statement:

- The Municipal Court Replacement project, at 3030 Turnpike Drive, is being led by the Department of Public Works and Utilities (PWU). The project has included a robust public engagement process, including four Community Advisory Team (CAT) meetings and two public Open Houses, to solicit broader community feedback. Strong public support emerged for park enhancements beyond the currently allocated budget for site improvements.
- PWU intends to apply for an Adams County Open Space (ACOS) grant for \$1.4 million to help fulfill the community's vision for the park enhancements for the Municipal Court Park. The Westminster Local Match (LM) is expected to be \$600,000 and is available within the existing Replacement Municipal Court project budget. No additional City funds are requested to be allocated for this grant application.
- The Bishop Square Park project, at 8150 Hooker Street, is a planned park renovation led by Parks, Recreation, and Libraries (PRL), focusing on Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility, sustainable infrastructure improvements, and general park enhancements to better serve the community.
- PRL intends to apply for an ACOS grant for \$2.3 million to supplement the project budget to ensure the successful implementation of key improvements, including an ADA-accessible playground, pavilion maintenance, pathway and parking enhancements, and modernized recreation facilities. The Westminster LM recommended is 30%, or \$690,000, of the total improvement cost of \$2,990,000. Funds for the LM are available.
- The ACOS grant program is a competitive grant process where parks, recreation, trails, and open space projects compete for limited funds made available through the Adams County Open Space Sales Tax. The Spring 2025 grant application cycle deadline is March 28.
- Due to the grant amount, City Council authorization is required to submit the grant application.

Fiscal Impact:

Municipal Court Park: \$600,000 in Westminster LM; General Capital Improvement Fund (GCIF)

Bishop Square Park: \$690,000 in Westminster LM; Parks, Open Space, and Trails Tax (POST) Fund

Source of Funds:

Municipal Court Park:

\$ 1,400,000 in ACOS grant funding (revenue)

\$ 600,000 in LM (expenditure); GCIF: Municipal Court COP and Municipal Court Project Accounts

\$ 2,000,000 in total funding commitments

Bishop Square Park:

\$ 2,300,000 in ACOS grant funding (revenue)

\$ 690,000 in LM (expenditure); POST Funds

\$ 2,990,000 in total funding commitments

Policy Issue(s):

- Should City Council authorize PWU to apply for an ACOS grant to fund park enhancements and site improvements at Municipal Court Park?
- Should City Council authorize PRL to apply for an ACOS grant to fund improvements to Bishop Square Park?

Alternative(s):

- City Council could choose not to pursue a grant for additional park enhancements and site improvements at Municipal Court Park associated with the Replacement Municipal Court project. Staff does not recommend this option because, if the grant application is successful, the grant funding would allow the project to be completed and meet the community's full vision of the park design and site improvements.
- City Council could choose not to pursue a grant for the improvements associated with the Bishop Square Park project. Staff does not recommend this option because the City would need to identify new funding sources for this work, leading to a delay in completing the project.

Background Information:

Municipal Court Park

The City has engaged the community through four CAT meetings as part of the Replacement Municipal Court project. The group provided historical information and input on the character of the new Municipal Court, park design, and other site elements. Additionally, two public Open Houses were held, allowing for broader community participation and feedback. Throughout these meetings, strong support emerged for site improvements and park enhancements to Municipal Court Park.

The ACOS grant will allow the City to fulfill community priorities and enhance the park's accessibility, sustainability, and usability. The recommended enhancements for the Municipal Court Park include:

- Drought-tolerant landscaping featuring native plants, shrubs, and trees to enhance aesthetics and sustainability.
- ADA accessible sidewalks and paths, ensuring an inclusive, barrier-free experience for all residents.
- Improved pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, integrating the park into Westminster's active transportation network.
- Poured-in-place playground surfacing, providing a safe and accessible play area.
- Site amenities such as seating and gathering areas to encourage community interaction.
- A public plaza with seating, creating a central, inviting space for courthouse visitors and park users.
- Exterior lighting, designed to enhance safety and visibility while creating a welcoming atmosphere.
- Public Art, incorporating creative elements that celebrate Westminster's culture and identity.

- Irrigation system replacement, improving water efficiency and sustainability to align with the City's environmental goals.

The total cost of the Replacement Municipal Court project, including the park enhancements for the Municipal Court Park, is estimated at \$43.9 million. Staff anticipates requesting \$1.4 million in grant funding through ACOS. The LM required, based on a minimum 30% of the total project cost, would be approximately \$600,000.

The Municipal Court Project is a \$42.7 million investment in Westminster's civic infrastructure, ensuring a modern, functional, and accessible courthouse for the community. While the primary funding covers the building and essential site work, additional enhancements to the Municipal Court Park were identified as priorities through the public engagement process.

Bishop Square Park

PRL intends to apply for the ACOS grant to augment funding for Bishop Square Park to support general park enhancements, with a strong focus on improving ADA accessibility and sustainable environmental principles.

Improvements to the park include replacing the outdated and unusable tennis courts with a post-tension concrete slab and modern, energy-efficient lighting. Stormwater management throughout the park will be improved following current best practices, incorporating on-site detention and water quality controls. Construction methods will prioritize tree preservation, utilizing the most advanced techniques available to protect the park's mature tree canopy. Other planned upgrades for Bishop Square Park include:

- A new playground where at least 20% of the features will be ADA accessible.
- Essential maintenance of the existing pavilion structure.
- New site furnishings designed for accessibility.
- Pathway improvements to enhance internal circulation throughout the park.
- New ADA parking on the northwest side of the park to ensure accessible entry to the pavilion.

The total cost of the Bishop Square Park improvements is estimated at approximately \$3 million. Staff anticipates requesting \$2.3 million in grant funding through ACOS, which would cover approximately 70% of the project cost. The City's contribution of \$690,000 represents the remaining 30% match, ensuring the successful implementation of the planned improvements. Sufficient funds for the LM are currently budgeted; however, the full estimated project cost of \$2,990,000 is not currently budgeted and this grant would allow the project to move forward more quickly.

The ACOS grant program is a competitive grant process where parks, recreation, trails, and open space projects compete for limited funds available through the Adams County Open Space Sales Tax program. In recent years, the City has received grant funding for parks and trail development projects, a recreation center remodel, and open space acquisitions. The City has developed a strong partnership with Adams County in its successful use of these grant funds. Due to the grant amount, City Council authorization is required to submit the grant application.

The Strategic Priority of Community Empowerment and Engagement is met by ensuring the park projects reflect community needs and priorities and creates welcoming public spaces for all residents. The Strategic Priority of Community Health and Safety is met by enhancing accessibility and inclusivity, improving safety, and encouraging outdoor activity to support community well-being. The Strategic Priority of Resilient Infrastructure is met by incorporating sustainable design elements and durable materials to reduce long-term maintenance.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Andrews', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jody L. Andrews
City Manager

Attachments:

Attachment 1 - Municipal Court Park Vicinity Map

Attachment 2 - Municipal Court Park Site Plan

Attachment 3 - Bishop Square Park Vicinity Map