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## **STAFF REPORT TO COUNCIL**

**DATE:** July 26, 2023

**TO:** Mayor and Council

**FROM:** J.P. de la Montaigne, Interim Parks and Recreation Director

**SUBJECT:** Splash Pad Update

### **BACKGROUND:**

At the April 26, 2023, council meeting, the Council directed staff to not pursue the splash pad at the proposed site due to the many logistics of the site and the increased costs for ADA sidewalk, parking, recirculation system, and a pump house that was exceeding our budget of \$500,000, including a grant supplement of \$250,000. The estimated project cost at that time was \$800,000 (April 26, council report attached). This initial project was based upon the recommendations from a local group of residents interested in seeing the development of a splash pad.

Since April 26, 2023, Staff has met with our contractors and other splash pad representatives to examine modifications, a different location, and options to construct a splash pad. Staff also met with Arizona State Parks to discuss the return of the previously awarded grant.

Specifically, staff has worked to develop a less expensive alternative for the council's consideration. Staff identified an alternative site, utilizing the north portion of the playground site at Green Valley Park. The proposed site would take the amenities already in place and attempt to maximize both play features in one location, while being close in proximity to the park's restroom, sidewalk access, required utilities, and parking areas. See Exhibit 1.

The playground fiber surfacing (wood chips) would be removed and utilized at an existing playground site at Rumsey Park. Two of the existing swing sets at the play area will be relocated at the other areas of the site to maximize an approximately 2,800 square foot splash play area.

A new proposed sidewalk would divide the play areas to set up a wet side and a dry side. The sidewalk could also contain a shaded seat wall to provide additional separation, yet at the same time provide a valuable amenity for parents.

Within the proposed project budget, the shade structures are programmed to be sponsored through donations by community members or organizations. The Lion's Club has already committed to some financial participation.

The water system within this revised project is designed as a flow through splash pad facility, meaning the water will be discharged directly into our sewer system. A sewer line is directly adjacent to the playground as well as water lines, electric power and sewer all feed the adjacent restroom which would minimize the construction cost for the spray pad system.

As detailed previously, in the recirculating pump splash pad, the capital cost and long-term maintenance costs of a recirculation system versus a flow through system is over \$250,000, not including the cost of a pump house building and equipment room to house the equipment. The daily maintenance of a recirculation system is much like that of a pool and requires back washing, cleaning filters, chemicals and water testing. Plus, additional power costs.

## **COST**

Staff has worked with a vendor identified from the National Purchasing Partners Contract and one who has developed numerous playgrounds for us in Payson, to develop a cost estimate for a splash pad feature at the Green Valley Park playground which includes 2,800 square feet of surfacing and substantial seat wall with all 10 spray features at an estimated cost of \$331,000. This would be a turnkey installation including all materials, supplies, construction, and utility relocation.

The current budget includes \$473,000 for a splash pad project, which includes revenue from the matching grant. There is \$236,500 in Town of Payson funding (revenue) without the grant. If Council was to approve this revised splash pad project, additional capital funding would be transferred to this project from other capital projects approved within the Town's approved budget.

## **ANNUAL COSTS**

There will be annual costs for the operation and maintenance of this facility. The daily use of the splash pad system can be managed and programmed based on our needs and to control costs. The estimated future operation and maintenance cost are \$25,000 annually.

## **WATER FEES**

The flow through system (non-recirculating system) has a lower initial construction cost, however it requires more water usage and consequently has higher fees to operate. The water used at the Splash Pad would flow to a treatment facility, which then filters the water back to our lakes to irrigate Green Valley Park landscaping, as well as the Golf Courses and other landscape areas that utilize reclaimed water.

Factors taken into consideration when estimating the cost of the water usage; the splash pad is contemplated to be utilized predominantly from May through September, only 5 months out of the year. Three months, May, August and September, school is in session 4 days per week so some adjustments to the operating time would be made during that time of the year.

The system would operate on a push button use feature, set on a timer. The hours of operation can be adjusted to appropriately manage water consumption. For example, the splash pad could be open 6 days a

week when school is out and 4 days per week when school is in session, as well as operate select hours during the day.

In the beginning months and in the hottest months the system will be used regularly. During colder days, monsoon days, or during maintenance periods, the system would be used less. One day per week would be used for maintenance. (Monday)

The estimated fee for sewer from Green Valley Water would be based on the average estimated usage. The District does a review after two years of usage and would review the actual use and adjust the charge based on these results.

The District's sewer development impact fee is estimated to be \$150,000.

We are working with our contractor and splash pad provider to see how to effectively navigate a system that performs as a play structure amenity and yield the appropriate water usage for our community. Additionally, all usage of water will be billed monthly as a utility expense from the Town.

## **SCHEDULE**

Our vendor tells us that from the time we direct our Town Manager to sign a contract for the splash pad, the vendor needs 12 weeks for the development and delivery of the products.

Our installer says he needs approximately 8 weeks, depending on weather for construction. He also advises that you should not construct the facility and make the water lines operational in the winter months.

As a result, it is recommended that we start construction in the spring of 2024.

## **ENGINEER REQUIREMENTS**

Engineered plans must be stamped for our electrical, plumbing and grading. Completions of these requirements is estimated to cost \$25,000 and is included in the overall project budget.

## **ARIZONA STATE PARKS GRANT**

In discussing our proposed plan with the Arizona State Parks grant staff, to switch the site in Green Valley Park to the playground site we need to submit a new splash pad plan. The plan would then need to go before the State Parks Board for review and recommendation to forward to the Federal Government for a review. The state parks staff advises that an initial Class III archeological survey is first required. The Class III survey is then sent to the State Historical Preservation Office. (30-day review) Then, if the State Board forwards the plan to the next level, it needs an additional review due to the new Build Back Better government requirements. They advise the review may take a year to approve. If Council decides to move forward with the construction of this revised splash pad project, it should authorize full project funding with town funds, as it is unlikely that the grant funding will be available. However, staff would continue working with the grantor to see if approval could be achieved without disrupting the project schedule and within the approved funding cycle timeline. In the event the grant was going to delay the project, staff would return the grant and proceed with the project using Town of Payson funds.

## **COUNCIL DIRECTION**

### Alternative #1

Authorize the Town Manager to transfer the necessary funds within the approved budget and sign all necessary contracts to procure this Splash Pad project in an amount not to exceed \$550,000.

Alternative #2

To incorporate splash pad elements into a new proposed Aquatic center.

Alternative # 3

Discuss any other Town Council developed alternatives.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

[April 26, 2023 Report](#)

[Exhibit 1](#)