ANDOVER CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING – JANUARY 26, 2016
MINUTES

The Workshop Meeting of the Andover City Council was called to order by Mayor Julie Trude, January 26, 2016, 6:00 p.m., at the Andover City Hall, 1685 Crosstown Boulevard NW, Andover, Minnesota.

Councilmembers present:	Mike Knight, Sheri Bukkila, Valerie Holthus and James Goodrich
Councilmember absent:	None
Park & Recreation Commissioners present:	Chairman Shane Stenzel, Vice Chair Jim Lindahl, Mark Miskowiec Alisa Lewnau, Ted Butler, and Angela Marinella
Park & Recreation Commissioners absent:	Sarah Elstrom
Also present:	City Administrator, Jim Dickinson Public Works Director/City Engineer, David Berkowitz Assistant Public Works Director, Todd Haas Others

JOINT MEETING WITH PARK & RECREATION COMMISSION

Mayor Trude welcomed everyone to the joint workshop meeting of the City Council and the Park & Recreation Commission and indicated her appreciation for guests who attend meetings and share their viewpoints on issues that are important to the community.

A. Presentation of the Kelsey Round Lake Park Master Plan/15-11

Park and Recreation Commission Chair Shane Stenzel recounted what led up to the proposed Kelsey Round Lake Park Master Plan being recommended by the Park and Recreation Commission at this meeting. Initially, a task force was created to begin the process that included members of the City Council and Park & Recreation Commission. That group hired a consultant, WSB Associates, to assemble a Master Plan.

Jeff Feulner, of WSB & Associates, reviewed the development of the proposed Kelsey Round Lake Park Master Plan. His summary of the development process included: a review of the

timeline including meetings with those in the neighborhood, inventory and analysis to recognize areas that might be usable for development, identification of current assets in the park, identification of a potential Native American burial area and determination of where park property meets city streets and are not current access points. The next step was to put together a series of concepts. Concept 1 included: a picnic shelter, play area, trail connections and loops, dock, corridors to the lake and additional picnic areas throughout the park along with additional signage and interpretive elements. Concept 2 included: a restroom structure in the north (not a shelter), a natural play circuit (5 areas w/ small play features of a natural nature), smaller picnic areas throughout the park, creation of trail connections and loops to maximize the trail length, a lake overlook (no dock) with platforms and picnic areas, and additional signage and interpretive elements.

Following the development of the two concepts, they were brought to City staff for comment. The result was one concept that included: a picnic shelter with a restroom on the north end of the site and a play area near that shelter, plus two additional natural play areas, trail connections and loops a little farther from adjacent properties (with no dock structure), additional picnic areas at the center, and adding new signage and interpretive elements.

The next step was to meet with the Park and Recreation Commission. Their preferred concept focused on including a picnic shelter with a restroom on the north end of the site, five small natural play circuits throughout the park, creating trail connections and loops, a dock at the south end of the park to keep the connection with the water that was expressed at the programming meeting, two picnic areas throughout the park, and a potential future connection to the dead end trail which would require easements.

The Master Plan being brought forward for review at the meeting included:
- Picnic shelter with restroom near the parking lot at the north entrance (no septic system)
- 2 other natural picnic areas aside from the picnic structure
- Enhanced trail system with loop connections within the park to create more of a “circuit” layout and additional connections to the neighborhood
- Boardwalks on the trails in the wetland areas
- Dock at the end of the south trail to access the lake
- 5 natural play circuits throughout the park, one in combination with natural picnic areas
- Enhanced signage and maps with interpretive/educational elements throughout the park. Topics may include prairie restoration, birds/wildlife habitat, Round Lake, Native American burial area, clay mining, etc.
- Add/replace benches

Mayor Trude invited the Council to ask questions.

Councilmember Holthus inquired about the natural play structures. Mr. Feulner gave the example of climbing on a log rather than playing on a slide or a swing, stating it would be simple and more "old-fashioned."

Mayor Trude followed up with a question as to why the main picnic area would be located near the parking lot, saying that she had taken some pictures from the potential picnic area and felt that the view was not taking advantage of the best natural amenities of the park. Mr. Feulner replied that the location was chosen mostly due to its proximity to the parking lot because people do not want to drag their picnic supplies one-half mile to a picnic shelter and for the convenience of a larger group being dropped off on a school bus. Mayor Trude asked if there was a history of field trips to local parks. Mr. Stenzel clarified that the original Master Plan had called for an interpretive center there and reiterated that any time you have a picnic area, you need to be close to a parking lot for the convenience of hauling coolers and grills. He also encouraged the Council to remember that it is a Master Plan, not a plan for what is going to be constructed today. In that way, if a shelter was to be built in the future, the work has already been done to determine a location, based on input. It is nice to have a shelter as a place for people to gather but it is not the highest priority. We put together priorities and it is not a high priority to have a shelter. Having the picnic area near the parking lot also helps to maintain more of the park in as natural of a state as possible.

Councilmember Knight asked about the amenities of the additional picnic areas. Mr. Stenzel replied that they were intended to simply have placed picnic tables in various areas, rather than to be a picnic area and be more of a place to stop and eat along the trail.

Mayor Trude asked if the plan was to have a trail go through the area with prairie grass, closer to the backyards of the neighborhood. Mr. Feulner confirmed the trail was moved away from the backyards. Mr. Feulner stated that there was not an easement issue but some areas may require a boardwalk due to the wetlands. Mayor Trude asked about the response to that part of the plan at the public hearing. Mr. Feulner stated that a boardwalk was desired.

Mayor Trude then asked about the recommendation for playground equipment when at the public hearing no one had indicated this was a priority. Mr. Feulner stated that representatives from their firm were not at the public hearing and that they were told it was a lower priority, but it was still on the list. Mr. Feulner indicated that what their firm heard at the neighborhood meeting was that a big play structure was not desired. Mr. Butler clarified that the play structures included in the Master Plan would be more natural like stumps and boulders and would not obviously be play equipment. Mayor Trude asked if trees would need to be taken down to add the natural play features. Mr. Stenzel indicated that a small area, maybe 10 x 10 foot, would be cleared out along the trail and it would be very low maintenance and blend in with the features of the park and would not utilize plastic materials.

Councilmember Bukkila requested that the focus revert back to the Master Plan presentation, feeling that the conversation was jumping ahead and getting too much into the details.

Mayor Trude indicated that she had found it to be very helpful to have the exchange and to understand why the Park & Recreation Commission made the recommendations that they did. The Mayor thanked WBS Associates and the Commissioners for the answers they provided.

Councilmember Holthus asked about the trails going through the area where the clay pits are, noting that it is a major benefit and historical element of this park. She further stated that she would hate to have the clay pits disturbed by the trail. Mr. Feulner clarified that the trail would go through the south part of the park and would not include building a large bridge across the clay pits. It was confirmed that there is a large drop-off there.

Councilmember Knight asked for clarification about the parking lots, indicating that they are essential. Mayor Trude confirmed that there is current signage and that the Master Plan includes provision for improved signage. The Master Plan does not include an expansion of the parking lot.

Mayor Trude asked for clarification on the plans to add a dock. She stated that the lake can easily be seen from locations in the park, including the "drop-off" area, and wondered if the goal was to get the trail as close as possible to the water, but still about 200 feet away, due to the rising and lowering of water levels.

Councilmember Goodrich asked if the dock would eventually get enveloped by cattails. Mr. Stenzel confirmed that there are cattails in that area and that in order to kayak or canoe to or from the park, they would need to clear-cut some of the cattails.

Councilmember Holthus asked if there was a permit needed to cut cattails noting that for some lakes in Minneapolis to do this, there needed to be a bill signed in the legislature. Mr. Dickinson indicated that this is not the case here.

Councilmember Knight inquired if there really are Native American burial grounds in the park. Councilmember Holthus investigated some of the history on Kelsey Round Lake Park stating that indications would be that the mounds are likely exactly what they appear to be. Councilmember Holthus said she had talked to a county commissioner in Aitken County and they advised against an archeological investigation because it is very expensive. In the early 1990s, state archeologists came out to the site and advised the City to "stay out of there." State archaeologists would need to be involved if any proposed improvements would disturb that area.

Mr. Feulner of WSB & Associates concluded his presentation by stating that the cost estimates for the Master Plan, as presented, are $1,957,530. Interpretive markers, benches, and an upgraded trail system, included in the plan, are the higher priorities. It was noted that these are

areas that the City can get grants for, so as to not be a financial burden on the City. Mr. Stenzel stated that including trails in the priorities is in response to the residents in the City wanting trails and Kelsey Round Lake Park, as a regional park, has the potential to expand its trails.

Mr. Feulner stated that the plan also includes improvements on existing items in the park. He also clarified which items were high, medium, and low priority:

High priority – trials and signage
Medium/High – additional benches
Medium – boardwalk
Low/Medium – interpretive features, picnic shelter, dock, and picnic tables

Mayor Trude ask for clarification regarding the trail on the west side of the park and its proximity to residential property that borders the park. Mr. Feulner indicated that the trails had been moved a little farther away from the property line in the final Master Plan, based on feedback. The trail in the current proposed location now ranges 100 – 150 feet from the property line.

Mayor Trude then invited residents to ask questions or make a comment.

Jeff Kieffer, of 3975 149th Avenue, stated that his biggest concern is the trail system on the west side and the promise to not intrude on homes. He expressed his concern that the pavement has not been updated and that the current boardwalk has not been fixed or replaced. His opinion is that residents like the park the way it is, but that it needs to be maintained. He reiterated saying that nothing new is needed, including more trails. He also wondered why new trails would be cut in the prairie grass that the City tried very hard to create. He felt that the addition of more trails was adding a burden to the existing neighbors to the park. He also wants to leave the burial grounds alone and leave the high ridge. The one dead-end trail is a very short distance to the clay pits and he does not mind the other trail that dead ends near the lake. He does feel that it would be nice to have a boardwalk connecting the trails. On the southeast side is a natural high ridge that would be a good viewpoint of the lake. He encouraged the Councilmembers not to be scared of looking into the burial grounds further because at Itasca State Park you can walk right up to them.

Jeff (and Carol) Voelz, of 3621 153rd Lane, stated that he lived on the farthest north end of the park and that their property is pleasantly surrounded on 2 or 3 sides by the park. He indicated he had a question about the plants growing up through the bituminous walkways, and wondered if the priority is to add boardwalks, then what about the priority of connecting their street into the trail and what function would it have other than providing a walkway up to the parking lot. Mr. Berkowitz responded by stating that the property in question is part of the park, and that the long term goal is to have a trail system that goes up Round Lake Boulevard and then goes through the neighborhood and works its way back. The other option is a trail or connection from Round

Lake Boulevard into that neighborhood. The Voelz' residential lot is adjacent to the trail on the south. Clarification was asked on the distance from the trail to the private property lot line. It was stated that an easement of 60 feet would be needed and then an 8 foot trail would be put in place, making the trail closer than is being proposed in other areas of the park.

Kyle Nemeth, of 3950 South Enchanted Dr NW, expressed his desire to maintain the "naturesque" style of the park, feeling that it is more like a preserve than a true park. Mr. Nemeth would like to see more bird houses, duck houses and bring more habitat into the park. As such, he would like to have the trails farther away from resident's property, believing that it infringes on their property, noting that it is not wooded in many cases. He would like to see the trails connecting and eliminate dead-ends and to move people through on trails or loops within the park. He expressed his support of interpretive elements. Fox Meadows and Pine Hills South parks about ¾ of a mile away both have good playgrounds. Mr. Nemeth expressed his concern that kids seem to use the picnic tables at those locations to smoke and that he feels that it discourages families from using the tables for picnicking. He also noted that the neighbors utilize the basketball court and that the kids play on the playground equipment. He concluded by expressing his appreciation for inviting the public to attend.

Ken Jacobson, 15121 Eldorado Street, is a resident on the west side of the park and north of the main entrance. Mr. Jacobson stated that he did not want a trail through "my backyard," considering the whole park to be his backyard. He expressed his concern about seeing people walking through the park and that he would rather see the prairie grass. He feels that there is already enough traffic "cutting through" his yard to get to the main street and would not like to see it increase. He is supportive of connecting the two short loops.

Ben Shaw, 4050 147th Lane, expressed his gratitude for all of the work that led up to the proposed Master Plan. Mr. Shaw inquired as to how the City communicates with folks on issues like this and what will the process look like to move this forward, acknowledging that at this point it is just a plan. He acknowledged the importance of the Kelsey Round Lake Park as one of Andover's regional parks.

Mayor Trude summarized that the first step is to approve the Master Plan and then to give it to staff to put expense estimates into the budget. Each budget session has a significant amount of give and take and during the course of the year there is a lot of discussion around the budget. She recalled that Andover has only constructed 2 trails in all of her years. It is important to the Council what constituents say about these matters and residents tell Councilmembers that it is important to the community to maintain our parks better. Every new home in Andover puts about $2,500 - $3,000 into park assets. Mr. Dickinson noted that the adoption of a Master Plan paves the way for grants and that nothing that is being discussed at the meeting tonight is in the 5 year Capital Improvement Plan. Again, the Master Plan allows the City to apply for outside funding from sources such as the Department of Natural Resources.

Councilmember Holthus pointed out that if we have a Master Plan and if the City were to receive a Heritage Grant, for example, the grant would paid 75% of all of the expenses for the bituminous and boardwalk trails and would therefore cost the City only $256,250.

Councilmember Bukkila stated that at this point we are not doing any construction, but we are trying to get pointed in a direction of how a plan for the park could look and what is approved today may change. In the future, we may find a donor that may want to fund the benches and maybe in 10 years we will look at playscapes. She reiterated that in order to apply for grants there must be a Master Plan and in that sense, the Master Plan is an investment in the City's future. It is possible that the Master Plan would be approved, but the building on the site might morph into a different design 20 years in the future.

Councilmember Knight asked if a good approach might be to clarify what were the most contentious areas.

Mayor Trude responded by indicating that there were concerns over the north southwest trail because of the lack of trees or other natural boundaries in that area that would break up the space between residential property and the trails.

Councilmember Holthus stated that she supported the idea of going around the assumed Native American burial grounds, on the east side, that created a loop.

Mayor Trude talked about the open prairie area that residents have as their view and that folks may not even have curtains up in the back windows of their homes as they are not expecting to see people there.

Councilmember Knight expressed his thoughts about moving the trail to the east. Mr. Feulner expressed concerns about how that might change wildlife habits in the park by splitting the natural area.

Councilmember Goodrich thanked the Park & Recreation Commission for their work that led up to bringing this Master Plan forward. He noted that there were a significant number of differing opinions on the Master Plan and that everyone shows up in force around the topic of parks. He feels that it is important to factor in the opinions of others that do not live nearby, as it is a regional park and would serve more than those who live in the neighborhood, while giving those who came to the meeting additional consideration because they attended. Councilmember Goodrich also expressed his discomfort in locking down a plan at this point, understanding the importance of having a plan to move forward and seek grants. He continued by stating that it was also vital to keep property rights in mind as decisions are made. He supports the idea of moving cattails away from the property and acknowledges the plan can be adjusted as we move forward. He thanked everyone who participated in the process.

Commissioner Lindahl reminded everyone that the Commissioners are volunteers and are not elected. He further stated that Kelsey Round Lake Park has had grant funding from the Department of Natural Resources before and that is something that granting agencies look at as part of their decision making process.

Commissioner Butler reiterated that improvements on the proposed Master Plan are not currently part of the 5 year Capital Improvement Plan. When there is discussion about actually designing something, then there is another process whereby it would come back to the Park and Recreation Commission, and then the Council, and the neighbors are notified again, and public input gathered around the specific recommendation being proposed. The Master Plan is an asset to the City and this is one of the largest parks and he views it as an asset to the whole City. The plan should long term be one that allows for the enjoyment of the City's largest park. Mr. Butler stated that it is a great nature park and we want people to enjoy it. He appreciates the neighborhood voices, while it is important to keep in mind that the assets of the City are for the enjoyment of all.

Mayor Trude expressed the thought that the next item on the agenda, applying for an MNDNR grant, is being considered prematurely.

Councilmember Holthus asked the question, if a DNR grant is applied for does this exact Master Plan have to be used.

Assistant Public Works Director Haas replied that the Master Plan has to be flexible because once the work on a trail begins additional information may be discovered, such as a tree species to protect. He continued by saying that the Wetland Conservation Act would also possibly come into play and there will be a process that the City needs to go through with the local Watershed District to get a permit. The goal of the Wetland Conservation Act is to avoid wetlands but there will be some cases where you cannot. There are a lot of cattails that would be on the trail route near the burial grounds. Councilmember Holthus followed up by asking if a trail could be moved to a different location after a request for funding was made and granted. Mr. Hass expressed his belief that the DNR would not likely be interested in funding the smaller loop for the park trail and would more likely be interested in the trail indicated in red because of its potential connection to a larger system. The DNR typically looks for larger projects.

Mayor Trude confirmed that some of these decisions would need to be closer to final before the City would be ready to apply for grants.

Jason Amberg from WSB & Associates confirmed that granting agencies tend to look at the maximization of loops (e.g. mileage), so larger trail loops are better when seeking funding.

Commissioner Alisa Lewnau asked the residents about their experience with the public coming into the park at the west entrance. Mr. Kiefer responded that they do not want the public to go

through their back yard, adding that the dogs run through their yard already. They also expressed their desire not to have another trail going through their backyard that would increase the foot traffic. He also noted that the yards are not fenced and his feeling is that there is currently an adequate trail system in the park.

Deb Corey, 4530 145th Lane NW, expressed her concern related to the desire to create a trail system with loops and yet the proposal includes a new trail to the lake, which would be a dead end. Her preference would be to provide access around the Native American burial grounds because it creates a new loop for the trail system.

Joy Orvis, Community Center Advisory Commission Member, is an avid runner in the community, said she appreciated the trails that the City has to offer. She stated that she would "side" with the residents saying that she would not personally feel comfortable running through people's back yards, even though she often runs through neighborhoods. She likened the area to the north entrance to Bunker Hills Park near the railroad track with all of the prairie grass and that it was a less desirable place to run because of the openness of the area. She concluded by stating it would be a nice area to walk, but that as a runner she is going to find an entrance and an exit and would not be looking for a circle to run inside the park.

Mr. Haas expressed his thought that maybe the group was "losing scale" as they looked at the proposed trail map. He stated that the nearest point to a property line is 100–200 feet from a trail. He acknowledged that he might be more comfortable with that distance because he lives on a smaller lot and these lots are 2 ½ acre lots. It is the City's park system and the Plan is trying to do what is best for the City and its residents overall.

Commissioner Marinella stated that she agreed with Mr. Haas about the larger lots where the trails are planned so that homes may even be 500 feet from where the trails are planned to be located. She stated that this is public land and that she feels it is important that we use our parks well and position the City to get grant money. She also spoke to the play equipment and clarified that it will be something like a log and big boulder. She believes these are good choices to keep the interest of energetic children while adults read interpretive signage along the trail. She also supported the idea of picnic tables along the way for parents who bring their kids to the park so that they can stop along with way.

Commissioner Miskowiec referred to a comment made that Kelsey Round Lake Park is more of a nature area park. He reminded the group that this is a regional park and should be used as such, but respecting natural aspects of it and its uniqueness. There will be activity there and as the population grows in the City, there will be more. More people will put more pressure on the parks.

Mayor Trude stated that she felt the timing is not right to adopt a plan and that Council members need to go look at the park if they have not had time to yet, especially now that they have seen

the Plan and heard the residents' concerns. Applying for a grant would not be appropriate at this time with questions yet to be answered. She also stated that the City needs to match any grants awarded by the Department of Natural Resources.

Mr. Haas suggested that some time could be taken to re-look at where the west trail might be located and not push for the grant in 2016. The trail could be staked out and then Councilmembers, Commissioners and residents could go out and see it in the spring. Councilmember Knight inquired about removing the "red section" of the trail in the northwest section.

Councilmember Bukkila wondered if the elements could be broken down into segments and if trials are a priority and which trails are a priority. She thought it might be helpful to focus on what the goals are for the park. She asked if the focus should be on a new larger trail or to repair the existing trail.

Mayor Trude suggested having another workshop meeting to focus on goals and priorities. She stated that in order to get a grant the Plan will need to include trails and that is why trails became a big focus of this meeting. She continued by saying that it would be important for the Council to talk about priorities because it is still a lot of money for the City, even with a match in grant funding.

Councilmember Goodrich recommended that the focus be on finalizing the Plan with what the Council and Commission and residents want, rather than grant funding availability.

Mr. Dickson asked about the scope and components stating that it would be good to identify which aspects need further consideration, wondering if it was just the trails that were of concern.

Mayor Trude stated that the Park and Recreation Commission has had one year to consider the Plan and felt that the Council members needed more time than just one meeting to consider the overall Plan.

Councilmember Bukkila indicated that she could agree on the benches.

Councilmember Holthus asked if there is a deadline for grants from the Department of Natural Resources so the City would miss out on something if it did not act on the Master Plan. Mr. Haas stated that the grants are applied for annually. Mr. Berkowitz followed up by stating that the Department of Natural Resources grants can take 2 – 4 years to get awarded, as they are rarely awarded in the first year that you apply.

Mayor Trude stated that she felt that it is important that everyone likes the Plan before the Council moves forward and to remember that a grant requires a match from the City.

Mr. Dickinson encouraged everyone to go view the park and said that the Plan could be brought back, after further review of the trails, in two months to a Council workshop meeting.

Mayor Trude indicated that the Council could review the priorities for the Park at that meeting and that the financial aspects would come out in the budgeting sessions. It is hard to budget not knowing when a grant might be awarded.

Mr. Haas stated that it would be more like 4 months before the stakes could be placed and people would be able to get out and see where the trails are actually proposed to be placed.

Mayor Trude responded to an inquiry from a resident regarding cattails, stating that they are close to being considered an invasive species and that the State of Minnesota needs to do that. At this point they are letting people cut pathways through.

The meeting recessed at 7:32 p.m. and reconvened at 7:44 p.m.

B. Consider Applying for MNDNR Grants/Kelsey Round Lake Park/15-11

This agenda item was tabled to a future Workshop meeting of the City Council.

C. Discuss 2017-2021 CIP for Parks and the Future of the City Park System

The Park and Recreation Commission asked to hear from the City Council as to their thoughts on the 2017 -2021 CIP and the future of the City park system.

Chairman Stenzel gave a quick overview of the plan for the coming year, requesting input before the CIP process begins. The Commission requested input on agenda items now so that the group could focus its work in the right direction. Looking forward to the CIP, there have been concerns raised about the overuse of fields and they have heard from some of the associations. The most expensive items being recommended will be repairs at two parks, one with renovations, and one with an irrigation system. There has also been a donation for scoreboards at Sunshine Park and they will need to be wired and put into place. In 2017 there is potentially a storage building donation, so that is budget neutral and Fox Meadows, if irrigated, could be used to offload pressure on the other fields. In 2018, 2019 and 2020 a campus city ice rink is on the list for now. Trail improvement will be pushed out. The goal is to get back to being budget neutral. Input was invited from Council members.

Councilmember Bukkila stated that she felt that city campus hockey rinks should be removed from the list because of where the City is at in its timeline with other City campus issues and that 2018 is too soon. She followed up by asking for an overview or briefing on what has been happening with maintenance issues on the parks, for example, Rose Park.

Mr. Haas replied that Timber Trails Park is on the agenda for next week and that the Council would get a copy of the plan. He highlighted the upgrade to the field, adding irrigation, putting in new fencing, and reconditioning of the soccer field. At Fox Meadows Park, a plan is yet to be developed over the summer and fall.

Mayor Trude reminded the Commission that the focus is usually on the next budget year. She stated that she had been thinking about the City's population and density. There has been a lot of focus on kids as a big part of this community and that is why people are continuing to build four-bedroom homes. If the City moves forward and redesigns the City campus, there are 9,000 people within a mile of City Hall and maybe the Council and Commission need to be thinking more strategically about parks, i.e. where people live and where are the parks located and with what equipment. It also needs to be taken into consideration where there is a lot of energy and a lot of people in the community wanting to work together and remembering that sometimes land drives decisions. Hanson Boulevard and Prairie Road are the City's next growth areas for younger families with 10-12 year olds hanging around the City campus area. The City does not want to overspend where there are not too many people.

Chairman Stenzel clarified that the Commission wanted to make sure that the Council did not have any particular agenda items in mind to focus on for the Park and Recreation Commission in 2016.

Mayor Trude replied that the Council has only 5 members and that the Council appreciates input from the Commission, noting that the proposed campus Master Plan would give more open space options.

Councilmember Holthus expressed her desire to consider regional parks that have a large amount of open space, for fields that the associations need.

Councilmember Goodrich asked what the Commission was thinking in relationship to focusing on regional parks versus neighborhood parks, dependent upon how the City campus plans develop. Chairman Stenzel responded that there would be a focus on unfinished neighborhood parks, trails, as well as the regional parks, and that they would strive for balance and to be strategic.

Councilmember Goodrich wondered if any tracking had been done on park facilities utilization. Chairman Stenzel stated that he believed some parks are not used because they are not finished.

Mr. Miskowiec stated that the Commission wants to impact the largest number of people utilizing the least amount of money.

Commissioner Lindahl commented on the irrigation for the ball field and the soccer field that had been upgraded this year at Timber Trails Park, noting that they are serving a large number of

kids and that the field can also be used for football practice. Fox Meadows Park also has the potential for 2 fields.

Mayor Trude indicated that kids now play on sports fields more nights a week and associations need availability for different age groups as well, creating more field usage.

Chairman Stenzel stated that he does not believe there is a need for more fields, but rather fields that are playable, functional and universal. Sports associations are not necessarily asking for more fields, rather fields in better condition, so a request for irrigation will be a big part of the CIP this year.

Councilmember Knight commented that today's parents go with their kids to parks rather than sending them down the street by themselves to play at the park.

Mayor Trude stated that involvement by the community is important, as well as input into maintenance of the parks. She suggested that it might be helpful to go to other cities and see what other ideas the City could implement, noting that playground equipment is not built to last as long anymore and they would like to see some creative alternatives. She felt that there was more input on parks than anything else all year. In summary, she indicated that it is important to hear our residents well and to acknowledge their concerns.

D. Update of the Overuse of Fields/Public Works

Because of issues with overuse of fields and resulting damage that occurred at Prairie Knoll Park, staff felt that this was important to give an update to the City Council on what is being done to preserve the fields so they do not get overused. As of right now, the west and east fields at Prairie Knoll Park have been hit the hardest with overuse from playing too many games. Public Works has notified the lacrosse and football associations that the east field will be off line until further notice, but it is anticipated that this field should be ready for the fall football season. The west field is closed this upcoming summer since the field was regraded last fall. The field needs time to allow the seed to grow and for the root system to take hold. Public Works is anticipating the field will be ready for lacrosse in the spring of 2017. The lacrosse and soccer associations are currently working together on the scheduling of City fields since lacrosse has in the past scheduled games at both Prairie Knoll Park fields. It is planned that the lacrosse association will be adding 6 new teams, and it is a growing sport, so having space will be important. The Park and Recreation Commission is aware that a discussion needs to take place with the Andover Football Association on regulating the number of regular and playoff games. This will be discussed in July when the fall applications for use of the fields are due. In the past, Public Works has discussed the overuse of fields with John Hopko, an expert in grass turf /athletic field construction and rehabilitation. The primary concerns that Mr. Hopko has had with fields are compaction, drainage and over scheduling of fields. Mr. Hopko is also an advocate of designating fields and parks to one sport.

Chairman Stenzel reviewed the staff report with the Council.

Chairman Stenzel stated that the goal is to get the fields being used back into condition, and the approach will be to dedicate fields for baseball, football and lacrosse. With the addition of Pine Hills North for soccer, and getting some of the other fields "up," the City should be able to finally achieve the goal of designated fields for individual sports. He noted that the number of kids involved in these sports and the number of games being played are still growing, however, there also needs to be care taken not to build too many fields because the population will tip the other direction over time. They are not hearing a big demand for more fields right now.

Councilmember Holthus expressed concern about "donuts" being done by cars in gravel parking lots of the parks, along with vandalism. Chairman Stenzel stated that it is a matter of priorities, whether to focus on amenities or asphalt parking lots for the parks.

Chairman Stenzel also said that the parking situation would be addressed at Prairie Knoll Park and they will be discussing cutting a trail on the north side of the sledding hill. Mayor Trude also noted that there is street parking available there.

PRESENTATION/15-22/CITY CAMPUS EXPANSION MASTER PLAN

Mr. Berkowitz introduced Tim McIlwain with HCM. In October direction was given to staff and consultants to look at additional information on a traffic study on a potential roadway connection to 154th Avenue. The purpose of the agenda item is to present information to the Council and then gain feedback to enable movement into a final Master Plan.

Mr. McIlwain presented a review of the overview given to the Council in late October of 2015. He reminded those in attendance that there were originally 3 options: A, B and C and that there was good discussion and comments given at that time. The 3 options were reviewed to set the stage for the meeting discussion, as well as a summary of the feedback from the October meeting on the 3 options proposed. One significant concern brought forward at that meeting was how potential changes in the City campus might impact school vehicle traffic, bussing and pedestrian safety, especially for the children. Based on those concerns, a traffic consultant was hired with the permission of the Council. It is important to understand how the potential plans could be less impactful to the school and what might be the best site access.

Bryant Ficek from Spack Consulting presented information on the traffic study as it relates to the connection to 154th Avenue. Mr. Ficek stated that information was collected over two days, with averaging highs and lows. The following peak times were studied: morning commute, afternoon commute, and during the time that school is letting out. The peak time was the morning commute because of the combination of school traffic and those commuting to work. Computer

models were created using the data. Hanson Boulevard and 154th Avenue achieved a "D" rating in the morning. Afternoon and evening received a letter "B" rating and is more acceptable.

If a connection was made to 154th Avenue, their firm then projected volumes when additional elements were considered such as: a resident using it as a cut-through, Public Works use, school redirection, additional growth in the community and community center growth. The result was an increase of 100 – 300 vehicles dependent upon the time of the day. The real issue is the internal intersections within the school grounds. Based on the impact to the school, the recommended solution for consideration includes a one-way street, northbound only. This option addresses the potential traffic back-ups and pedestrian safety. This is really the only acceptable option for making the connection to 154th Avenue.

Mr. Berkowitz said that a decision on this can be made in the future if the one way street is part of the Master Plan and decide if it is feasible at a date to be determined. The Master Plan goes 30 years out. He said that they would pursue other options at the intersection to allow for more direct access to the Community Center area without utilizing Tower Drive.

Councilmember Goodrich asked if this is an effort to avoid Nightingale Street. Mr. Berkowitz responded that the purpose was to distribute some Public Works vehicles to Hanson Boulevard.

Mr. Berkowitz reiterated that if the one-way street is put into the Master Plan, then a decision can be made on phasing in the Plan.

Councilmember Knight stated his concern about City trucks coming on to the street in the round-a-bout in the southwest corner of the drawing. Mr. Berkowitz responded that there is an option to send public works vehicles south on Hanson Boulevard, north or south on Nightingale Street and then look at using off peak hours and going through a gate to Crosstown Boulevard, providing multiple options.

Nate Ekhoff reviewed the new concept plan. "Option D" is a hybrid option based on input. This option accommodates the one-way street, and as a result of that, a ball field was shifted to the west into a tree stand, continuing the connection to Hanson Boulevard through a possible round-a-bout, Public Works moves to the west side of the campus area, which opens up a performance area and a large flexible green space, Tower Drive moves west, and there is room to expand the Community Center with more room for parking. There is room for a potential ball field, playground space, restrooms, a bandshell, concessions, and parking lot islands. This plan would bring people out into the open space and connect people back to the Community Center. There would be room for ice sheets outdoors in winter months. Gym expansion could be accommodated, as well as expanded parking, a splash pad, large green space would be maintained to the north as a buffer to residential property and could have picnic tables.

Mr. Berkowitz commented that this plan has nice green space, and could accommodate the City's Family Fun Fest, soccer fields, and is centrally located within the City.

Councilmember Knight asked about the Veteran's Memorial. Mr. Berkowitz replied that there is plenty of space to consider various options including gardens.

Mayor Trude asked for clarification about Purple Park's location. Mr. Berkowitz stated that there is a lot of "drive" to protect Purple Park. He said that the pavement could be removed and trees could even be planted now and then there would be significant trees there in 15 years when the park moved.

Mr. Ekhoff presented Option E, pointing out that the main difference between Option D and Option E is that it does not include moving Public Works. There would be no through road. This plan also opens up some flexible green space with multiple opportunities for uses. A splash pad is shown in the south part of the campus. The outdoor ice sheets move in this plan and would be close enough to the indoor sheets to share the Zamboni. Recycling would be in the footprint of Public Works. There would be a three-quarter traffic light to City Hall, eliminating a left out option from City hall because it's dangerous. This might be at City expense. With the improvements to Hanson Boulevard coming up in 2019, this may be more possible and would provide access for City Hall and the Community Center. It is too close to the intersection to really do "right-in and right-out." It is also worth noting that less people are actually visiting City Hall because more business is done online and it is really a destination location.

Councilmember Holthus asked what the school district representative in attendance thought about the frontage road and one-way street option. Steve Anderson, representing the Anoka Hennepin School District said that there are concerns about cars backing up and children safely crossing traffic in some of the options. He said that the one-way option is preferred and may require adding another crossing guard.

Dan Lind with HCM reviewed the costs for both options. Kraus Anderson was consulted on Public Works costs and they are feeling that the estimates are accurate at a high level, with a contingency built in to them.

Construction costs for the plan that keeps Public Works in the same relative location (Option E) would total $12,007,850 at today's costs and then you would need to add 5% each year for inflation. This total does not include soft costs such as furniture, equipment, testing. Those would be estimated to be at 20%. There would also be permit costs. In addition it would cost an extra $800,000 so that the current campus can stay open and there is also the inconvenience of working within a space when you are doing construction. Other costs were detailed including paving parking lots, fencing, lighting and demolition.

Mr. Berkowitz asked how much it would cost to build the Community Center again. Mr. Dickinson replied that it would cost about $40,000,000 in today's dollars and it cost $18,500,000 when built 10 years ago.

Mayor Trude commented about the value of remodeled buildings not being as valuable as new construction with energy savings, newer materials and technology being built into the construction. She asked if the "life" of the building played into the value of the buildings. The consultant responded that it was not figured into the value.

Mayor Trude stated that the City does not depreciate its assets from a financial perspective, but they do depreciate.

Mr. Dickinson commented that the Master Plan is a long-term plan and to keep that in mind and to consider how the plan could be phased in. The Master Plan is about making sure that there is space available on the site so that future improvements are put in the right locations.

Construction costs for the plan that would move Public Works to a new location (Option D) were presented. The final cost would be $14,500,000 and it would include a new cold storage building, as well as new office space, which would have a higher value with more longevity. So the difference between the two options is $2,500,000.

Mayor Trude commented that there would be more square footage with the new buildings and that the energy costs would be less. Longevity is also something to be considered as a value.

Councilmember Knight asked if the bid included earthwork. Mr. Ekhoff stated it was included.

Mr. Dickinson pointed out that with new construction the City could go out longer with debt issuance as opposed to remodeling. Brand new construction qualifies for terms of 25 – 30 years.

Mr. Berkowitz stated that moving Public Works could be phased in, with vehicle maintenance being the first area to be addressed, and cold storage replacement next.

Mayor Trude commented that the Master Plan allows the City to deal with areas as they come to the forefront.

Councilmember Knight asked about the multipurpose recreation area. Mr. Berkowitz indicated that it could include an ice rink or soccer field.

Councilmember Goodrich asked for clarification on costs beyond the Public Works option. Mr. Berkowitz said that had not been requested at this time.

Mr. Dickinson stated that the focus of the work was to get a cost differential on remodeling versus new for Public Works and how does that relate to a Master Plan for the City campus. The desire is to look at what plan is favored. Mr. Berkowitz reiterated that the decision is essentially between Options D and E.

Councilmember Bukkila asked if anyone had considered what the occupational benefits might be of staying in the same location or relocating, such as tools being located where they should be.

Mr. Lind replied that sometimes they document unacceptable safety conditions or consider costs for deferred maintenance items in a facility. The City could look at what is budgeted for the next five years for maintenance of the building as a benefit that could be applied to new construction. That has not yet been considered but could be looked at further.

John Wallace, Vehicle Maintenance Supervisor for the City stated that he feels that it would be acceptable to work in separate buildings, but being close by creates efficiency.

Councilmember Bukkila asked if they are currently co-located and would moving to a new co-location be a factor in efficiency. She also asked for clarification as to what currently inhibits work productivity that could be improved in a new facility.

Mr. Wallace replied that access and the size of the doors are what "hurts" Public Works right now with only 6 inches of clearance on each side for plows. Staff can spend 20 minutes simply moving vehicles around.

Mr. Berkowitz followed up by stating that the way a new building is laid out can be a big savings as it relates to staff time and moving multiple vehicles around.

Mr. Wallace stated that the ladder truck had to be worked on outside in the cold because it had to be lifted up and therefore could not be done inside due to height limitations. Mr. Berkowitz stated that the ceiling is not high enough and mechanics have to work basically crouched under a firetruck. The space is cluttered in the building and there is hazard potential.

Mr. Wallace explained that the biggest challenge is working on the vehicles and positioning them around lighting and heating and lifting them up for access to repair and maintain them.

Mayor Trude asked if Councilmember Bukkila would like a list of public safety needs.

Councilmember Bukkila responded by saying that she is looking for justifications to make up for work productivity and safety. She said that she wants to start thinking about how to begin to talk to the public about these issues. Stating it is important to know how many staff it takes to move a vehicle to a position that is safe.

Mr. Berkowitz indicated that there are also costs when a door gets hit and that does happen due to the size constraints.

Mayor Trude wondered what kind of savings might be realized with energy bills going down, noting that the City's energy costs are pretty steep and that there are currently 4 different systems connected together.

Mr. Dickinson recognized that there were stakeholders in attendance and there were 2 new concepts presented and that it would be good to get feedback and any concerns to give back to the designers and if any clarification was needed to understand the costs of what was presented.

Councilmember Knight asked the consultants their opinion on which option is more efficient.
Mr. McIlwain responded by saying that the biggest difference between Option D & E is taking down the existing Public Works building to expand the green space, which includes moving Tower Drive. In addition, the safety of the Public Works environment and energy efficiency is important. The question is: is $2,500,000 worth creating a central core to the City campus? The Master Plan also allows for the expansion of the Community Center over the long-term. There is a benefit to the community and it allows for expansion long term. He asked if it was important that people are able to go from Hanson Boulevard to Nightingale Street on a parkway setting. As consultants they can provide information to help build the case. Typically, Public Works facilities were built in the 1960s and 1970s and the staff do what they can and make things work, but vehicles are getting bigger and more expensive and need to be inside to protect those assets. Welding work also requires proper ventilation for safety.

Tony Howard, a member of the Andover Community Center Advisory Commission addressed the group and stated that he felt the proposed roads were safer for pedestrians. He likes Tower Drive moving over, the synergy with the Community Center, the big open space, and the fact that the plan does not hinder expansion of the Community Center long term. He said that he hates to piecemeal resources for Public Works and that time versus money is a big factor. He likes the road that goes all of the way from Nightingale Street to Hanson Boulevard but is unsure about the round-a-bout. In summary he felt that Option D had a lot of positives. He supported the future road to the middle school and the only change he recommended was that the splash pad be closer to the YMCA so that it would be closer to the locker rooms. He would like to maintain the right-in and right-out to City Hall so people would not have to drive all the way around to go to City Hall and he would prefer the left-in at the Community Center. In summary he said that there would be expense to move things around, but long-term it fits the City's opportunity for growth.

Mr. Berkowitz wondered if the City would be better off with the rinks side by side for efficiency, also referred to as the "multipurpose facility" on the plans.

Mr. Tony Peterson, Hockey Association representative on the Andover Community Center Advisory Commission said that this is literally how it will be used, programmatically. If a rink is not being used, another program will be created to generate income and it can be used for so many different things. He said that he likes the rink positioning, giving synergy to the two rinks.

Councilmember Bukkila asked about Purple Park. Mr. Peterson suggested planting some big trees. He said that he feels sorry for the guys in Public Works and that he has toured the buildings, and noted the millions of dollars spent on City vehicles and understands the need to protect those assets.

Joy Orvis, member of the Andover Community Center Advisory Group, stated that she likes where the playground is and recommends that the splash pad be closer to the YMCA. She feels that the green space would be "amazing" and would work well for the Family Fun Fest. She also is in support of biking and walking connections.

Shane Stenzel spoke from a Park and Recreation Commission perspective stating that he appreciates the green space, but recognizes that Family Fun Fest is only one weekend out of the year. He would like to look at more programming for the green space throughout the year.

Steve Anderson, from the Anoka Hennepin School District said that they are excited to see the plan that the City is putting together. It was good to see the difference between new versus remodel, where more is spent up front, but more efficiency is gained and there are less liability issues. He also felt that it was good to move the field as it helps to enhance what the school is doing on their side of the property.

Tony Peterson, of the Andover Youth Hockey Association spoke to the addition of the outdoor rinks and suggested positioning the rinks to allow a Zamboni to drive out there and condition them so they could be enjoyed after school and all night long.

Gary Wrobel and Angie Sedesky spoke on behalf of the Andover Family Fun Fest. Mr. Wrobel stated that he really liked Option D and the room for expansion that it provides on the City campus. He wondered if there were plans for a band shell in the big open space in the center. He acknowledged that it is a big area to keep mowing all summer. Ms. Sedesky stated that it would be advantageous to have one area for the Family Fun Fest and still be within walking distance and Crosstown Boulevard would not have to be closed as much. She also supported a band shell so that make-shift staging would not need to be constructed. She supports Option D.

Councilmember Goodrich said that he is "Mr. small government," and doesn't like to spend any more dollars than are needed. That being said, he feels that Public Works is one of the purposes of government, and that it pained him to think that staff is currently working in unsafe conditions and that time and money are being wasted. He likes the road going through and does not want to

lock the City into anything that it will regret. In summary he stated that he likes Option D, as long as the City does not bite off more than it can financially manage as it goes along.

Councilmember Holthus commented that the cost difference between repairing existing facilities and new construction is not that significant, relatively, and if the City could get better financing building new, it might make the project more doable. Her preference is for Option D.

Councilmember Knight stated that solar panels should be considered because there would be a lot of roof space.

Councilmember Bukkila said she is leaning towards Option D and that it is more of a question of how to make it work, how it is paid for, what are the justifications and how does it affect the budget over 25 years. She said that she is "on board" to explore it.

Mayor Trude expressed a preference for Option D and reiterated her concern about Public Works and how important safety is to her. She continued by stating that she believes that the City staff deserves a better facility for more efficient operations. Residents have said in the past that they do not want us to do the cheapest solution, but rather make a decision that would withstand the test of time and to do it right. She would like to see the primary campus access be separate from Public Works and she would like to see narrower roads as residents drive safer and slower. Energy and borrowing costs are low now and a lot of cities are doing these types of projects at this time.

Mr. Berkowitz confirmed that the Council is in favor of Option D and they would like to move forward with the consultant to finalize the Master Plan and staff can provide to the Council some of the efficiencies and benefits of a new facility. This information could be provided in a memo outside of a Council meeting so it could be provided to constituents. The next step would be consideration in the Capital Improvement Plan.

Mayor Trude indicated that she has had quite a few questions from residents asking when we are going to do something on the Community Center. This process is really to help determine what all of the "boxes" are. The YMCA has not really been saying that they are ready to expand yet.

Mr. Dickinson said that the YMCA is looking at the facilities in their whole system now and are looking at their ROIs. It would be unusual for them to go back and add to a newer facility again so soon. They are interested in enhanced day care facilities in their building because it generates income and are interested in having additional programming space. They want to bring the money to the table and not borrow money for facilities expansion. They do not want to borrow again. Once there is a Master Plan, then the staff will begin to work on how it can be implemented financially and look at for the long-term.

Mr. Berkowitz thanked the stakeholders and consultants for their participation acknowledging that there was a lot of work done by a lot of people.

Mayor Trude said that there would be finalization done of the Master Plan and then it would be formally brought back to the City Council for approval at a future Council meeting.

DECEMBER 2015 BUDGET PROGRESS REPORT

The 2015 General Fund budget contains total revenues of $9,876,575 and total expenditures of $10,364,730. This includes a $26,000, 2014 carry forward budget item, so a decrease in the fund balance is planned.

DECEMBER 2015 CITY INVESTMENTS REVIEW

The City of Andover 2015 General Fund Budget contains total revenues of $9, 876,575 and total expenditures of $10,564,730 (including $26,000 of 2014 budget carry forward and a $200,000 Trail Fund transfer); a decrease in fund balance is planned. The December 2015 report is unaudited.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mayor Trude discussed her thoughts around the "name the pond" contest. She said she had spoken with Lyle Bradley's wife, and a few others, and wondered if the City might want to name a canoe launch site to honor him. She had read a news article about him. When the EDA meets, several names will be considered, including Mr. Bradley, as it relates to naming the pond. She would like to advocate for naming something more fitting in his honor, as opposed to a man-made pond. He lives in Andover on the Rum River and many long-time residents know him and he is still active in the community. He is a Korean War fighter pilot, naturalist and former school teacher at Anoka High School. Mayor Trude stated that she would bring material forward and look for an opportunity in the future with a natural connection.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Goodrich, Seconded by Holthus, to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marlene White, Recording Secretary