



**Recreation Committee Minutes  
Tuesday, July 11, 2023  
6 P.M.  
Via Teleconference – Zoom**

Members Present: Ifeolu Claytor, Council Member Chairperson  
Alison Bibb – Carson, School Board Member  
Alexandria Nichols, Recreation Department Director  
Sean Malone, City Council Member  
Jonathan Kraft, Citizen Member  
Jeri Chaikin, CAO  
Troy Neujhar, Citizen Member  
David E. Weiss, Mayor

Others Present: Jan Devereaux, League of Women Voters Representative  
Kara Hamley O'Donnell, Principal Planner, Planning Dept.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Ifeolu Claytor, Council Member Chairperson

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm by Council Chairperson, Ifeolu Claytor

**Review and Approval March 1, 2023 Minutes**

Ifeolu Claytor, Council Member, Chairperson

It was moved by Councilman Malone and seconded by citizen member Jonathan Kraft that the minutes from March 2023 be approved as written.

**Recreation Strategic Plan Recommendation to Award Planning Contract and to Appropriate Funds**

The Recreation Strategic Plan will be informed by robust community engagement to reflect needs in all parts of the community. This Plan will include a community engagement strategy and summary, community needs assessment, assessment of existing conditions and trends, priority uses for each potential site, site plans, and recommendations for multiple options for selected sites. There will be a comprehensive analysis of recreation needs including community support for certain facility types and locations.

The Recreation Strategic Plan will build upon *Forward Together: A Vision for Community Facilities* (Vision Plan, October 2019) and work on a Joint Facilities Plan (2022). It is important to coordinate with the Shaker Schools' plans to update educational buildings with the potential opportunity to redevelop the Middle School site for recreation. The Plan will coordinate with the school facility plans as well as incorporate City facilities not impacted by school decisions, focusing on key

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locations. The plan will investigate the four (4) most likely sites for future recreational facilities or amenities: the Shaker Heights Middle School, Thornton Park, Chelton Park/Shaker School District Bus Depot, and the Stephanie Tubbs Jones Community Building/Colonnade area. In addition, two (2) additional sites may be determined during the plan process and would also be evaluated. The plan will include costs and options for renovation and/or building new at each site.

Phase 2, under a separate contract and not as a part of this plan, will include a phasing plan, financing plan, operations plan, and partnership best practices. If Phase 2 moves forward, a new RFP will be issued.

A Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued in May, to 72 planning, architectural, landscape architecture, and community engagement firms. Six teams submitted proposals on June 20:

After interviews, the Selection Committee determined that MKSK provided a proposal that best met the RFP requirements and demonstrated the best qualifications for the project. MKSK has experience undertaking similar recreation strategic plans and recreation master plans, includes a multipronged approach to community engagement, and has roots and experience in our community. MKSK has completed many similar plans.

The team includes sub-consultant RDL Architects and Pros Consulting. RDL will work on the site plans, layouts and renderings. Pros Consulting will contribute to park and recreation planning. The team was selected due to extensive experience with creating high-quality recreation plans that incorporate extensive community engagement.

The City has worked with MKSK on the landscape design for the Van Aken District, the Warrensville Multipurpose Path design and is currently engineering the Van Aken District Public Realm project.

It is anticipated that the Recreation Strategic Plan will be a 12-month process, with community engagement throughout the year. It is anticipated that project kick-off will take place in September with plan completion fall of 2024.

This is a request for the Recreation Committee to recommend that Council award the Phase 1 recreation strategic planning contract to MKSK for a not-to-exceed amount of \$130,000. References were checked and are excellent. This is a request to recommend to Council the appropriation of \$130,000 in the General Capital Fund for this project.

**Questions:**

In Phase 1 will there be some information about cost for specific sites and types of buildings?

**Answer: Yes, as a part of the plan the firm will look at sites based on the feedback from the community engagement portion of the plan and some recommendations as well as rough cost estimated will be available.**

Other than the four specific sites already selected are there additional potential sites being looked at?

**Answer: Yes, it is believed that other potential sites will identified after the community engagement portion of the plan.**

Was there a community attitude survey sent out earlier in 2023 that had a recreation component?  
**Answer: Yes, this survey is sent out every 5 years and this year a recreation question was added to the survey. The City was looking for more details regarding recreation from the residents.**

When was the last time the City did a comprehensive recreation study?  
**Answer: The last recreation study was conducted in 2005.**

MKSK's other work seems to be predominately dealing with parklands. What is their past work with facilities?

**Answer: There were concerns with this same question before the interviews took place. However MKSK was able to articulate to the interview panel that the parks they were doing work on also included actual facilities as well. The only work they had not done thus far was an ice rink.**

Did MKSK give any indication of what their potential community engagement ideas are?

**Answer: The idea seemed to be meeting people where they are and not assuming everyone will have unlimited access to the survey. This included going to various events around the city as well as placing QR codes at different locations throughout the city.**

Why was the most expensive firm selected?

**Answer: MKSK was selected because their plan was the best tailored to the actual community. The other two firms were lacking key components that the city was looking for. The project manager lives in Shaker Heights and is very familiar with the city.**

Has a board or advisory group being put together for the strategic plan been discussed with MKSK?  
**Answer: Yes, a stakeholder group has been discussed but no further details have been discussed.**

Is the expectation that there be a deliverable at the end of this plan?  
**Answer: Yes, there will be a deliverable at the end of the plan.**

The committee also discussed keeping City Council involved throughout the entire process.

The Recreation Committee was supportive in moving forward with the Recreation Strategic Plan moving forward to The Finance Committee. The item was moved by citizen member Troy Neujhar and seconded by council member Sean Malone. The committee unanimously voted to move forward with MKSK conducting the Recreation Strategic Plan.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:34 pm.

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Ifeolu Claytor, Council Member  
Chairperson, Recreation Committee