



# CITY OF CONCORD

## REPORT TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** David Gill, Parks and Recreation Director  
**DATE:** November 27, 2017  
**SUBJECT:** Update on the design of Terrill Park (CIP 59)

### **Recommendation:**

Accept this report and approve continuing with design for Terrill Park.

### **Background**

In the FY17 budget there was \$125,000 approved for the full design of Terrill Park. The park would include an artificial turf field with flood lights, new parking and other park improvements. VHB from Bedford NH was selected last winter to update the master plan for the park, coordinate the required permits and create the necessary design plans for construction. The FY18 CIP has construction beginning in FY19 and funded over three fiscal years for a total project cost of \$3,925,000.

Terrill Park is in an ideal location for an improved park as it is centrally located within Concord and has easy access from I93 and downtown Concord. The Park along with the new Greenway Trail and future improvements at Kiwanis Riverfront Park/Arena will be a wonderful recreation corridor for the entire community. This new recreation corridor will improve how we live, work and play.

Terrill Park encompasses 21 acres of land along the Merrimack River, mostly undeveloped and over all in poor condition. The park is the home of Concord's only Dog Park, has a walkway along the Merrimack River with great views of downtown Concord and the State House. The park has two parking areas, the old snow dump area is used for parking by the users during the spring, summer and fall, the upper parking lot is in very poor condition with partial pavement and reclaim. During the warmer months there are several picnic tables available for residents to enjoy along the walking trail.

Working with VHB several goals were developed for Terrill Park:

Create a plan that encourages all ages of the community to enjoy the park.

Create our first artificial athletic field that is consistent with current and future needs of leagues.

Develop a park that will be a "Gateway" to the new recreation corridor along the Merrimack River.

Connect with the new Merrimack River Greenway Trail.

Improve parking for park users.

Be consistent with prior plans for the park (2005 and 2009).

Improve the overall appearance and reputation of Terrill Park.

## **Discussion**

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee met with members of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail at their November 2017 meeting. Each group recognizes that both projects will play an important role in bringing the community to the river and will increase the quality of life for all our residents. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee recognizes that without improving Terrill Park and its reputation, the community may decide not use the new trail and boardwalk.

In November, staff from the Engineering Division and Parks and Recreation Department also met with VHB staff to ensure both projects are coordinated. On November 22 the City of Concord was notified by NH Department of Environmental Services that the permit for the Merrimack River Greenway Trail has been approved. This approval will allow staff from the city's Engineering Division and VHB to finalize the necessary paper work to advertise the Request for Proposal this winter with construction occurring in 2018.



Improving Terrill Park will also create recreational opportunities for these residents as they currently do not have a neighborhood park located nearby.

There are currently just over 700 households living in a triangle area along Manchester Street, up to and along Airport Road and down Old Turnpike Road.

Recent research has shown that access is key to the myriad health and social benefits of parks. Living close to parks and recreation facilities is consistently related to higher physical activity levels for both adults and youth. One study showed children living within walking distance of park or playground are 5 times more likely to be a healthy weight as compared to children who did not have a park nearby.



There is currently enough onsite parking spaces to accommodate the different types of events the park can host. The new plan shows the ability to park 167 cars in the main parking area. Any additional or overflow parking can be directed to the upper two parking areas.

In October, staff tracked attendance at several locations for multiple sporting events. There were six attendance categories measured; Less than 50, 50-100, 100-150, 150-200, 200-300 and over 300 spectators. The results are as follows:

Memorial Field Complex (average # spectators per game)

CHS Boys Soccer: 70

CHS Girls Soccer: 75

CHS Football: 150

CHS Playoff soccer: 150

Bishop Brady Football: 200

Youth Football Leagues: 150

Various Parks (White, Keach or Merrill) (average # spectators per game)

Parks and Recreation Youth Soccer: 50.

The City of Concord currently does not have an artificial turf field and the all-weather properties of these types of fields make them particularly ideal for our region. Currently our regular grass fields do not open until mid-April. When heavy rain occurs most of the fields are closed resulting in the need for practices and/or games to be rescheduled, canceled or moved to another town. Artificial fields are all weather and are useable almost year round as the fields can be plowed when there is snow on the ground. Artificial turf fields in New Hampshire typically are useable in late February and early March and well into December.

VHB and the Parks and Recreation Department staff presented an updated park plan to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee.

Changes to the park design included:

- Additional 32 “green” parking for use for larger events
- Added a bus turnaround lane
- The Splash Pad was removed
- Highlighted the Merrimack River Greenway Trail through the park

The new plan continued to show the following park amenities:

- Multi-sport Artificial Athletic Field with flood lights. New field will be useable for many different sports, such as: Field Hockey, Rugby, Soccer, Lacrosse, Football and will allow multiple cross field youth games.
- Support buildings (bathrooms, maintenance building and concessions area)
- New larger Dog Park located near the middle parking lot
- Two parking lots, lower lot for 135 cars and middle lot 20 cars
- New Playground
- Workout stations along the river walk

Improvement shown but not included in budget for new park:

- The plan continues to incorporate the future double right turn lane from old turnpike road onto Manchester Street (future CIP in Engineering Division)

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee voted to approve the plan as presented. The committee recommended continuing with final design, permitting, finalize construction costs and develop annual operating expenses for the new park. This winter VHB will also need to review with Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee different artificial turf options that are available for the new field.

VHB has also updated their preliminary cost estimates for the new concept for Terrill Park. We are currently recommending a three phased approach for the construction of the new riverfront park. Please note as the plans continue to be developed, the cost estimates will firm up. VHB working with staff will also help project annual ongoing operating costs.

Phase 1: \$2.4 to \$2.9 million

Artificial Turf Field with light bases installed (multi-sport field)

Fence around field with safety netting on each end

Maintenance/storage building

Bleachers for 140 spectators with room for additional portable bleachers.

Press box with score board,

Walkways including the river trail in the park to be consistent with layout of the MRGT.

New 135 car parking lot and “green” parking for another 32 cars

Relocated Dog Park within park

Improved middle parking lot for 20 cars

Phase 2: \$300,000 - \$800,000

Install lights on the field (light bases and underground power installed as part of phase 1)

Concession stand with bathrooms

Phase 3: \$150,000 - \$250,000

Workout stations on the trail along the river

Playground

Picnic Shelter

Over the next several months VHB along with staff will be presenting the approved park plan for review and permitting with both the City and the State agencies. It is anticipated final design documents along with required permits will be completed spring 2018.