

City Council Introduction: November 7, 2016

BILL NUMBER: 16-103

Public Hearing: November 21, 2016

Date Factsheet Prepared: November 1, 2016

FACTSHEET

TITLE: Construction and Lease Agreement for Lincoln Children's Zoo

BOARD/COMMITTEE: Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Pedestrian Bicycle Advisory Committee, Urban Design Committee

APPLICANT: Parks and Recreation Dept.

RECOMMENDATION: See discussion below

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: For

OTHER DEPARTMENTS AFFECTED: None

SPONSOR: Parks and Recreation Dept.

OPPONENTS:

REASON FOR LEGISLATION

Approval of Construction and Lease Agreement for Lincoln Children's Zoo, governing the lease of both the current and expanded footprint of the Zoo, together with the Science Focus Program known as the "Zoo School" operated by Lincoln Public Schools on an area generally bounded by 27th Street, Normal Boulevard, and "A" Streets.

DISCUSSION / FINDINGS OF FACT:

This is a 50-year construction and lease agreement that will allow the Zoo to move forward with an expansion and significant improvements to continue growth and remain sustainable into the future. This lease agreement, together with the proposed operating agreement with LCZ, will supersede Chapter 12.36 LMC which dates back to 1961 and is proposed to be repealed. LCZ will make a payment to the City in the amount of \$1,250,000 as part of this agreement, a portion of which will cover the cost of relocating staff from Lincoln Parks and Recreation and the Lincoln Parks Foundation to new office space at 3140 'N' Street, with the remainder to be directed to the advance acquisition fund for the purchase of additional green space.

The agreement spells out the terms of the Zoo's construction work and responsibilities and gives LCZ the right to construct additional improvements in the future, subject to review by the City. It also spells out the cost and responsibilities for parking and landscape screening, and use of the Ager building. Under the agreement, the City agrees that the Parks and Recreation administration building will be vacated by March 20, 2017, and the Ager building will be available for the Zoo's use beginning May 1, 2017. The Zoo's master plan retains and protects the public gardens, Cascade Fountain and associated parking for continued use as Parks and Recreation facilities for use by the public, with the zoo responsible for landscape screening for these facilities.

During the past two years, input has been sought through subcommittees of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, and through meetings of the full board on multiple versions of the plan, which were each revised in response to input. Since May, input was sought in a broader public review process from the neighborhood and through multiple meetings with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Pedestrian Bicycle Advisory Committee, Urban Design Committee, Historic Preservation Commission, and the Great Plains Trails Network. A revised plan was developed in response to many of the issues raised during the summer's public review process. In early September, the Mayor contacted these advisory groups to thank them for their input and to describe the changes that occurred to the plan as a result of the input received.

The Lincoln Children's Zoo is the third most visited arts and cultural attraction in the state, attracting millions of dollars of new spending to Lancaster County. No City tax dollars support the Zoo's general operations. The facility offers opportunities for children and families to connect with the natural world and supports important science education programs. This Construction and Lease Agreement, together with the related applications, facilitate the continued success of the Lincoln Children's Zoo going forward into the future.

POLICY OR PROGRAM CHANGE: ___ Yes X No

The Lincoln Children's Zoo has been operating on the Antelope Park Triangle for over 50 years, and was previously operated as a City Zoo. Accommodating the expansion will allow LCZ to continue to be sustainable into the future.

OPERATIONAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT: Relocation of the Parks and Recreation administration and Lincoln Parks Foundation offices to 3140 'N' Street.

COST OF TOTAL PROJECT: \$16 million, based upon a private fundraising goal of the Lincoln Children's Zoo

RELATED ANNUAL OPERATING COSTS: Private

SOURCE OF FUNDS:

CITY: \$0

NON CITY: \$1,250,000

FACTSHEET PREPARED BY: Nicole Fleck-Tooze

DATE: 11/1/16

REVIEWED BY: Lynn Johnson 

DATE: 11/1/16