



**City of Missoula, Montana
City Council Committee Agenda Item**

Committee: Climate, Conservation and Parks

Item: Grand of underground utility easement at East Caras Park

Date: February 22, 2023

Sponsor(s): David Selvage; Nathan McLeod

Prepared by: David Selvage

Ward(s) Affected:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ward 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Ward 4
<input type="checkbox"/> Ward 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Ward 5
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ward 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Ward 6
<input type="checkbox"/> All Wards	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A

Action Required:

Approve underground utility easement in favor of Blackfoot Communications and Access Montana and authorize the mayor to sign.

Recommended Motion(s):

I move the City Council: Approve an underground utility easement through a portion of East Caras Park for benefit of Blackfoot Communications and Access Montana, and authorize the mayor to sign

Timeline:

Committee discussion:	March 1, 2023
Council action (or sets hearing):	March 6, 2023
Public Hearing (if required):	Click or tap here to enter text.
Final Consideration	Click or tap here to enter text.
Deadline:	Click or tap here to enter text.

Background and Alternatives Explored:

Blackfoot Communications and Access Montana are requesting the City grant an underground communications utility easement through a portion of East Caras Park. The easement is needed for these firms to reroute their respective existing overhead lines from Pattee Street and adjoining City lands onto a newly placed 90' high power pole located in East Caras Park. Once the subject utility lines reach the power pole, the lines will be attached to Northwestern Energy's powerline facilities that cross the Clark Fork River overhead. The communications lines will then travel overhead on Northwestern Energy's poles that cross the Clark Fork River, Toole Park and the Native Prairie. Northwestern Energy's powerline route is located within established City granted utility easements.

Access Montana has existing City granted easements for utility lines crossing the North Riverside Public Parking lot, East Caras Park, and Toole Park. These easements will be abandoned after the Grantees reroutes their lines. The Access Montana underground fiber line through Toole Park's Native Prairie will be abandoned in place to protect existing resource and values of the parklands. Public benefits of this request includes continuation of services, removal of an existing overhead line crossing East Caras Park, consolidation of overhead lines crossing the Clark Fork River, and minimizing the potential for resource damage to the Native Prairie and Toole Park.

Blackfoot and Access Montana will also contribute funds towards East Caras Park's restoration to offset cost of their excavation impacts on the park.

Approval of this easement request would facilitate City plans to remove existing overhead utility lines located on Pattee Street. The City of Missoula Parks and Recreation Board heard this request at their regularly scheduled public meeting on January 10, 2023 and unanimously recommended approval to Mayor and Council.

Financial Implications:

Links to external websites: