

Missoula Parks and Recreation Board Referral

Citizen or Organization Name: Missoula Parks and Recreation Board

Main Contact: John Conner

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Parks & Recreation Staff Contact: Morgan Valliant

Referral to: Missoula Parks and Recreation Board

Requested date for Board consideration: 9/8/20

Referral Item: Addition/update to the 1996 Bancroft Ponds master plan

Motion/Action requested: I move the Missoula Park and recreation board amend the adopted master plan for the Bancroft Ponds Natural Area to allow for the addition of an outdoor classroom of natural stone benches located in the Northeast corner of the park.

Brief Statement regarding the action you want taken by the Park Board:
Approve an amendment to the Bancroft ponds master plan to provide a more formal gathering space for student groups visiting Bancroft Ponds Park.
Encourage Park's staff to work with the Lewis and Clark Neighborhood to design, fund and build an outdoor classroom in the park.

Background information: In 1996, the City adopted a management plan for Bancroft Ponds Park. This plan was developed by the Lewis and Clark Neighborhood. For the past 4 years, City staff have been working closely with the Lewis and Clark neighborhood and local schools on improvements in Bancroft Ponds Park. A steering committee from the neighborhood has successfully received multiple grants to improve trails, Improve habitat and increase signage within the park (as per the 1996 master plan). Based on input from over a dozen neighborhood meetings and collaborations with local educators who use the Park for educational purposes the Bancroft Ponds Steering Committee began exploring the possibility of installing an outdoor classroom in the park. The conceptual design attached has been in development for almost two years. It is strongly supported by local educators, the L&C neighborhood and Missoula's Conservation Lands Advisory Committee. In Spring 2020, CLAC voted

unanimously to recommend the MPR Board amend the 1996 Bancroft Ponds Master plan to allow for and outdoor classroom in this park. Final design and layout of this infrastructure would developed by City Staff. Development of this infrastructure would be primarily funded by grants and donations secured by the Lewis and Clark Neighborhood leadership team with in-kind donations of labor from Missoula Parks Staff.

Attachments:

Bancroft ponds outdoor classroom conceptual
1996 Bancroft_plan.pdf

Staff report:

This project has been in development for almost 2 years. There have been multiple L&C neighborhood meetings, Bancroft ponds steering committee meetings and on-site meetings with local educators. Significant public input has been received. This project I strongly supported by the neighborhood, City Staff, local educators, and Ward representatives.

Staff recommendation to Parks Board: Approve addition of an outdoor classroom to Bancroft Ponds Park.