



## Legislation Text

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An Emergency Ordinance Amending Ordinance No. 16-116 (2017 Appropriation Ordinance) for a Supplemental Appropriation to the Public Space and Development Fund in the Amount of \$450,000 to Fund the Completion of the John Venezia Community Park

**Presenter:**

Karen Palus, Director - Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services

Britt Haley, Design, Development and TOPS Manager - Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services

**Summary:**

The John Venezia Community Park, located at the southwest corner of Briargate Parkway and Union Boulevard, has been on the Parks Master Plan since the 80's. Development of this new community park provides much needed multi-use sport fields in the northern part of our community. Currently families have to travel to the southern portion of the community to participate in team sports. Due to this, many families do not participate in team sports because they do not have the time or ability to travel across town. This park provides pavilions for both small and larger scale events. Currently Palmer Park is the furthest northern facility that houses larger scale pavilions.

The community park is also home to the City's second Universally Accessible Playground and Sprayground. The first Universally Accessible Playground and Sprayground is also located within the southern portion of the City, which prohibits many families from utilizing these amenities. The new Children's Hospital is being constructed across the street from the John Venezia Community Park. With the new Universally Accessible Playground, children attending therapy sessions or children visiting loved ones in the Children's Hospital or Memorial Hospital can burn some energy as they run around the park. Doctors and nurses have already expressed their excitement to be able to utilize this park with their patients.

The new tennis and pickleball courts at John Venezia Community Park will be the furthest north within our community. When the master plan process was revisited in 2013, strong advocacy from the community was offered and as a result, one of the revisions made, was to add pickleball courts to the park's design.

Completion of phase two of John Venezia Park Community Park will be in October 2017. Upon completion it is anticipated that revenue generated from pavilion and field rentals will be used to help off-set ongoing maintenance costs.

During the construction of the park and since the opening of phase one in July 2017, we have experienced a series of vandalism events of which current damages totals over \$80,000. To deter ongoing vandalism, the Parks Department has been paying for off duty officers to protect the facility from 10pm to 6am daily. We determined it would be in the best interest of the facility to install

surveillance cameras such as we have done in downtown parks, Memorial Skate Park and recently Garden of the Gods Park. The request for camera's was reviewed and approved by the IT prioritization committee. At this time, we are asking to appropriate the funding required to cover the security, technical work, installation and operation of the cameras for this facility. The costs for off duty officers are proving beneficial but costly (security services at \$500-\$800 a day). The sooner we can have the cameras installed the quicker we can reduce our ongoing security costs. These cameras will be monitored by the Police Department on an ongoing basis at \$1,200 annually.

**Previous Council Action:**

City Council has approved an ordinance for the funding of the phase two of John Venezia Community Park.

**Background:**

The Parks Department began engaging the community in the design of the John Venezia Community Park in 2006. After working for two years on the financing and design of the park, the City worked out a financial plan that would fund construction. Unfortunately, within two weeks of the park going out for a public bid, the economy declined and the financial institution financing the construction decided it would no longer finance municipalities. As a result the construction of the park was put on hold.

Since 2010, the Parks Department has not been able to construct additional neighborhood parks, due to the cost of on-going maintenance. This slowdown in development of neighborhood parks, allowed the Parks Department to slowly build the fund balances up within the TOPS (Trails, Open Space and Parks) Program, within the Parks Category in the PLDO (Public Space and Development) Fund. In 2014, the Parks Department was able to pull together enough funding from these two funds to construct the first phase of this community park.

In addition to the funding sources growing, the agreement between the Parks Department and the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs (UCCS) expired for the use of the 4-Diamonds Sports Complex. The closure of this sports complex allowed the Parks Department to move the maintenance crew from the 4-Diamonds Complex, to the John Venezia Community Park.

This item supports the City's strategic goal relating to investing in infrastructure by expanding the City's number of community parks.

**Financial Implications:**

The cost to construct the John Venezia Community Park is \$13 million. Prior to 2017, the Parks Department had appropriated \$10.8 million for construction of the park. In the 2017 budget, the Parks Department requested \$822,000 from the PLDO account and \$62,000 from the TOPS Trails Category, to complete the Briargate Trail along Briargate Parkway. The funding from the trails category will be coupled with \$62,000 from the missing sidewalk fund. The GOCO grant was awarded at \$350,000 and a supplemental of \$800,000 allowed the Parks Department the ability to construct the tennis courts and pickleball courts, as well as a small shade shelter to support the use of the courts. This additional request for security cameras at \$450,000 will assist in protecting those assets from further vandalism.

The PLDO funding comes from development of residential housing within our community. The PLDO available fund balance prior to this supplemental appropriation is \$508,878 and the Parks Department is confident this appropriation will complete the construction of the John Venezia Community Park.

**Board/Commission Recommendation:**

N/A

**Stakeholder Process:**

The Parks Department has engaged the public in several community meetings, in 2006 and again in 2013. The Parks Department engaged the community again in 2015 to help design and develop the Universally Accessible Playground to ensure it meets the needs of all children.

**Alternatives:**

Council could deny the supplemental appropriation. If denied the Parks Department will complete construction of Phase two, continue to pay for additional security services at \$500-\$800 a day and the department will place the cameras on the Unfunded List and wait future funding.

**Proposed Motion:**

Move approval of the supplemental appropriation for the John Venezia Community Park in the amount of \$450,000 with PLDO funds.

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