



## REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

**To:** Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

**From:** Jason Simpson, City Manager

**Prepared by:** Johnathan Oliver Skinner, Director Of Community Services

**Date:** May 28, 2024

**Subject:** Professional Design Services for Universally Accessible Sports Fields, Playground, and Park Amenities at Christensen Park

### **Recommendation**

Approve and authorize the City Manager to execute the Professional Design Services Agreement with Community Works Design Group, LLC in an amount not to exceed \$379,580 for design services in such final form as approved by the City Attorney and authorize the City Manager to execute change orders not exceeding a 10% contingency of \$37,958 for uncertainties and adjustments.

### **Background**

An RFP was issued on March 14, 2024 soliciting the services proposals to provide universally accessible design services and construction documents for Christensen Park. Nine firms submitted proposals and, after thorough review and rating by a panel, four firms were invited to an in-person presentation and interview on May 1. These firms (Verde Design, Kimley-Horn, Schmidt Design, and Community Works Design Group) each provided a 20-minute presentation and interviewed with the panel made up of Community Services and Public Works staff. All four firms demonstrated considerable experience and in this realm and in their proposals demonstrated professionalism and a capability to successfully complete the project. Cost proposals were not considered until scoring had been completed.

### **Discussion**

The City of Lake Elsinore is recommending entering into an agreement with Community Works Design Group (CWDG) to redesign the park and amenities at Christensen Park, with a universally accessible park design concept. The term "universally accessible (UA) park/playground" is often used to describe a park/playground that offers caregivers and those they support full use of all areas, regardless of age or ability. A UA park/playground will represent and support the diversity

of our community, providing a platform for people to engage socially, physically, creatively, and playfully.

CWDG is a smaller firm with nine staff members based out of Riverside and, in addition to delivering over 35 park projects in the past 5 years, CWDG is widely renowned as Southern California's leader in accessibility consulting for recreation and park planning facilities. Established in 1985 and led by Scott Rice, Principal Landscape Architect and Certified Access Specialist (CASP), with the direct support of Allison Rush, Senior Landscape Architect and CASp, CWDG is the only park planning landscape architects with CASp credentials in all of Southern California. Additionally, CWDG serves as the primary Certified Access Specialist (CASP) consultant to the City of Los Angeles' Department on Disability (DOD) in the ongoing assessment efforts of access barriers in support of the City of Los Angeles' ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan. CWDG also continues to provide site review and recommendations for improving City of Los Angeles park sites for focused use in Adaptive Sports through the PlayLA program, sponsored by the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Christensen Park currently offers a number of amenities for families to enjoy, including large open field for baseball and soccer, play equipment, full court basketball, on-site parking, restroom facilities and a picnic area. The park opened in September 2020 and was part of the Pardee Homes development of the Canyon Hills subdivision. One community group that has utilized Christensen Park, among other parks in the City, is Elsinore Valley Champions, a special needs baseball organization that currently serves approximately 100 special needs youth and their families on eight teams. This park re-design would provide a permanent "home field" for this organization with universally accessible features designed specifically for the population they serve including field surfaces, playground, sidewalks, parking and circulation, loading/unloading zones, restrooms, concession stand, and other park features and amenities.

Additionally, the City is in the process of becoming a member of The Miracle League, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization based in Conyers, GA, is comprised of more than 350 member organizations and leagues. Their mantra is "Every child deserves a chance to play baseball." Miracle League programs have served more than 450,000 children and adults around the globe. Miracle League teams play on custom-designed, rubberized or turf fields accommodate mobility devices while helping to prevent injuries. The Miracle League also hosts an annual national All-Star Event and this redesign of Christensen Park would put the City in a position to host that event along with other regional and national events. Upon completion of the project, with 2-3 universally accessible fields Christensen Park would become one of, if not the, premier facilities in the world for hosting special needs baseball, softball, and other sports. Membership benefits include preferred partner services, including reduced pricing on field surfacing and extended warranties, project management and consultation, full or partial service construction, among other services related to league management, fundraising, and purchasing, which could be extended to Elsinore Valley Champions League.

Ultimately, the goal of the project is to design and construct a world class UA park and venue for special-needs athletes that also serves and is appealing to all residents and considers elements of the existing park that are used and loved by neighbors and community members. Retaining

features and honoring the relatively brief history of the park and the very long history of the park's namesake will be key elements of the project.

**Fiscal Impact**

The current FY 23/24 capital budget includes \$1,000,000 for this project.

**Attachments**

Attachment 1- Design Professional Services Agreement

Exhibit A- Proposal

Exhibit B- Cost Proposal