



GASTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
BOARD ACTION

County Admin Building
128 W. Main Avenue.
Gastonia, NC 28052

Board of Commissioners

File #: 16-005

Commissioner Carpenter - To Approve the Crowders Mountain Township Grant Recommendation **(\$500,000 Fund Balance Appropriation)**

STAFF CONTACT

Earl Mathers, County Manager (704) 866-3101

BUDGET IMPACT

Reduces Fund Balance by \$500,000.

BUDGET ORDINANCE IMPACT

Authorizes County Manager to make necessary budget amendments to move funds into the appropriate project accounts/sub-accounts.

BACKGROUND

During its 10/27/2015 Regular Meeting, the Board of Commissioners adopted Resolution 2015-292, to approve a Township Improvement Grant Program to be funded from the proceeds of the CaroMont Lease and authorized \$3,500,000 from the proceeds to be distributed within each township. Each Township is eligible for \$500,000 in grant proceeds (with the exception of Gastonia Township, which is eligible for \$1,000,000). At the direction of the Board, the County Manager facilitated an application process and grant requests were accepted until December 31, 2015.

The following project(s) were recommended for the Crowders Mountain Township (See the Attached Project Recommendations Packet for more detail)

- Bessemer City North Park Land Acquisition & Construction - \$500k

Approval of this request authorizes the County Attorney to draft the necessary contracts and authorizes the County Manager to execute said contracts on behalf of Gaston County.

Approval of this request also authorizes the County Manager to prepare the necessary budget changes to commit funds for these projects. These budget changes will be submitted to the BOC at the 2/9/2016 Regular Meeting for informational purposes only.

POLICY IMPACT

N/A

I, Donna S. Buff, Clerk to the County Commission, do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of action taken by the Board of Commissioners as follows:

NO.	DATE	M1	M2	Brown	Carpenter	Fraley	Keigher	Philbeck	Price	Williams	Vote
2016-034	01/26/2016	JW	MP	A	A	A	N	A	A	A	6 - 1

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**Gaston County
Township Investment Grant Applications**

Crowders Mountain Township

Project	Requested Amount	Recommended Approval
Bessemer City North Park Land Acquisition & Construction	\$ 500,000	\$ 500,000
Total:	\$ 500,000	\$ 500,000

Township Grant Program Proposal
Gaston County Board of Commissioners
City of Bessemer City, North Carolina
December 31, 2015



Project/Program Name:

Bessemer City North Park Land Acquisition and Construction

Sponsoring Commissioner:

Joe Carpenter

Applicant Organization, Contact Information and Contact Person:

City of Bessemer City, North Carolina
132 W. Virginia Avenue
Bessemer City, NC 28016

James Inman, City Manager
(704) 629-5542
jinman@bessemercity.com

Township Name:

City of Bessemer City, North Carolina

Township Tax ID:

56-6001187

Amount Requested:

\$500,000

Program/Project Description:

Bessemer City North Park Land Acquisition and Construction – The City of Bessemer City would like to purchase land for a new park that will include baseball and softball fields, soccer fields, tennis complex, and walking trail. Please see attached narrative for more details.

Estimated Duration of the Project or Program:

We anticipate the project taking 24 months to complete; Once complete, the park, sports and fitness facilities will continue to serve Bessemer City and Gaston County in perpetuity.



Project Overview

Bessemer City is a place that celebrates its family-oriented, small town character. The City supports a strong educational system and welcomes a broad range of businesses and industries, which are fundamental to building a great community and in providing opportunities to residents. As a way to build-on, protect, and promote the City's unique assets, Bessemer City is seeking funding assistance for the acquisition and construction of North Park.

The 39.4-acre proposed site for North Park is located at 940 North 9th Street in Bessemer City, which is parcel number 217759. Currently, the proposed site is privately owned. The owners have expressed interest in selling the parcel to Bessemer City. The wooded acreage has been conserved as farm land and contains no buildings on site. The current market land value is \$136,627 according to data from the Gaston County GIS.

Upon acquiring this site, Bessemer City plans to construct North Park. The proposed park will contain four baseball diamonds for baseball and softball programs, tennis courts, soccer fields, and a walking trail around the perimeter of the park. North Park will be a catalyst for economic growth, job creation, healthy living, and connectivity by serving as a bridge between varying socio-economic neighborhoods, providing educational, youth development and fitness opportunities to adjoining schools, and increasing the quality of life for all members of the community.

Impact: As a small suburban city in Gaston County, over 5,400 residents call Bessemer City home. The North Park project addresses a community development need that applies to one-hundred percent (100%) of the area that constitutes Bessemer City. The proposed location of the park is strategically located between socio-economically distinct neighborhoods and will serve as a bridge to low, moderate, and over income families living in adjoining neighborhoods. Furthermore, the park is directly connected to Bessemer City Central Elementary and Bessemer City Primary Schools, and is in walking distance to Bessemer City High School, surrounding churches, and the community garden. The accessibility of the park will open the door to increased opportunities for local students and families to engage in recreational and youth development activities. The project was chosen because it will benefit the entire community and will act as a catalyst for economic development, thereby benefitting areas surrounding Bessemer City as well. Residents of this community need and desire a combination of recreational and self-help opportunities to improve their quality of life. In addition, to combat crime rates among youth, it is widely known that young people need something in which to become engaged, like organized sports leagues. It is also true that seniors and other adults can benefit mentally, socially and physically from a flexible, multi-use park that can offer a range of activities that are open to the public. Bessemer City North Park will bring diverse user groups together to assist in the revitalization and economic prosperity of this small, rural community.

Sustainability: The North Park project began at the behest of the City Manager, James Inman, supported by involvement from the Economic Development Director and the Parks and Recreation Director. The key players in this project are the City's administrative staff and the advisory group partners which provided citizen input into project planning and conceptual design. The City Manager will serve as the project director, acting on behalf of the City of Bessemer City. Ultimate responsibility for the success and sustainability of this project will rest with Bessemer City's administrative staff. Upon completion, North Park will be maintained by the Parks and Recreation Department, which is funded by the City's taxpayers.



The Recreation Director, Jo D Franklin, will be involved in the construction aspect of this project and he is directly responsible for the programming of the park and its efficient operation. For this project, key players were identified and asked to provide critical input to the City's administration staff and City Council regarding the recreational needs of the community. The key players include:

BC Administration	Gaston County School System	Gaston County Pickleball Association
BC Parks and Recreation Department	BC Primary School	Nations Baseball Association
BC Public Works Department	BC Elementary School	
BC Police Department	BC High School	
	BC Optimist Club	

A strong working relationship has been formed between the City and these partners. All partners and their representatives will coordinate activities with Mr. Franklin's staff.

With the Parks and Recreation Department's current budget over \$558,000, here is an excerpt of programs it offers which will be enhanced by the North Park project:

BASEBALL – SOFTBALL FIELDS

Youth Recreation Leagues (March – July)

- Girls Softball ages 4 – 18
- Youth Baseball ages 4 – 16
- Adult Softball

Weekend Tournaments (Feb. – Nov.)

- Sanctioned Youth Tournaments
- Adult Sanctioned Tournaments

Other Uses throughout the Year

- Kickball Leagues
- Wiffle Ball Leagues
- Youth Cheerleading Practice
- Corporate Outings

PICKLEBALL COURTS

General play year round (All Ages)
 Host regional tournaments

Host Senior Games practice and local games competition

MULTIUSE FIELDS – (Soccer/Football)

Youth Recreation Soccer Leagues (Spring/Fall)

Youth Recreation Football League (July – Nov.)

High School Soccer Program

Elementary and Primary School daily physical activity (August – June)

Recreation Flag Football (May – August)

FITNESS TRAIL & WALKING TRACK

Elementary and Primary School daily physical activity (August – June)

General use from citizens (Toddler – Senior Citizen)

Parents of those children participating in other activities

Bessemer City High School Cross Country

Match / Leverage: The total cost of the North Park Land Acquisition and Construction project is estimated at \$3,013,271. A general project budget is attached. The City is requesting \$500,000, or approximately 17% of the total project cost, from the Gaston County Township Grant. The remaining funds include a potential grant contribution from the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund for \$500,000 (May 2016 cycle) and a local match from Bessemer City for the remaining amount.

Job Creation / Economic Development: The City of Bessemer City is in need of revitalization. This area has been hurt by plant closings and many residents have left for economic opportunity, however the City is actively recruiting potential industrial employers to the area to help stimulate job creation and combat poverty. Economic developers have learned that companies will locate in rural areas, but one of the key factors they look at is the quality of life, such as park and recreational amenities, for the employees' families. This is critically important as businesses are being recruited to the nearby industrial park and residents are evaluating local opportunities and resources. As an economic catalyst, the City leaders need this park to create



opportunities that improve the environment for business development thus creating jobs, increasing the tax base, and improving the economic well-being and quality of life for the citizens of Bessemer City.

Spurring development following the economic downturn has been challenging in small communities. One avenue that many small communities now utilize to generate revenue and boost their local economy is by hosting youth athletic competitions. The economic impact of hosting soccer, baseball, and softball tournaments can be quantified through spending by visitors, participants, and allied businesses. Revenue examples include money spent on hotel stays, restaurant and fast food, retail, entertainment, and gasoline. The North Park project has the potential to enable the City to host athletic competitions that will attract visitors, who will spend money in the community within and beyond the park facility. This new stream of outside revenue will aid in creating income and jobs for residents inside the community.

Education: The proposed parcel is positioned to the east and southeast of the Bessemer City Central Elementary School and the Bessemer City Primary School. As shown on the GIS map, it is also located within walking distance of the Bessemer City High School. The accessibility of this location will allow schools to utilize North Park to further incorporate activities for healthy living into traditional education. Through recreational and organized programming, there will be significant educational gains associated with this project.



Quality of Life / Health / Safety: This project is dedicated to the concept that "quality of life" matters in critical ways to an area's ability to weather an economic downturn, sustain programs through job creation, and provide healthy educational opportunities to members of the community. North Park will improve the quality of life for residents in Bessemer City and in Gaston County through health, social, economic, and environmental benefits.

In rural communities where public transportation is not available, connectivity of areas by walking trails is imperative to keep students and citizens safe from vehicular traffic. This park project will promote safety by enabling students and citizens to access schools and surrounding neighborhoods through walking trails.

The health benefits of North Park are endless. Studies have shown that when people have access to parks they exercise more, leading to weight loss, increased energy, better overall health, and lower healthcare costs. To further promote health and safety, City administration is also moving to adopt ordinances that will prohibit the use of tobacco products in City parks. In addition to improved health, parks provide a meeting place where community members can develop social ties, and where healthy behavior is modeled and admired. Community members have the opportunity to share experiences, socialize, and build community bonds in common green spaces. As an economic catalyst, North Park will improve the economic value of private property. The park will make the community more livable and desirable for businesses and homeowners. North Park will create a sense of place by connecting residents to one another and to their larger environment. In small, rural communities there are fewer opportunities for youth, adults, or seniors to use their time constructively. Therefore, increased recreation and parks opportunities can be a positive tool to enhance the quality of life within a community. North Park will help residents keep and increase tax dollars in the community and improve the quality of life and play in Bessemer City.

PROBABLE CONSTRUCTION COST ESTIMATE

North Park

Bessemer City, NC

PREPARED BY MCGILL ASSOCIATES, P.A.

December 18, 2015

	DESCRIPTION	QTY.	UNITS	UNIT COST	TOTAL
	Mobilization (3%)	1	LS	\$68,040	\$68,040
Sub-total					\$68,040
General Construction					
1	Erosion Control	20	AC	\$2,000	\$40,000
2	Clearing and Grubbing	10	AC	\$3,000	\$30,000
3	Soccer Parking Area	4,000	SYD	\$32	\$128,000
4	Baseball Parking Area	6,500	SYD	\$32	\$208,000
5	Drainage	1	LS	\$75,000	\$75,000
6	Driveway	1,600	LF	\$60	\$96,000
7	Sidewalk	1,400	LF	\$20	\$28,000
8	Walking Trail	3,500	LF	\$25	\$87,500
9	Hiking Trail	1,200	LF	\$15	\$18,000
10	Stormwater Wet Pond	1	LS	\$15,000	\$15,000
11	Site Electric Allowance	1	LS	\$10,000	\$10,000
12	8" Waterline Extension	2,300	LS	\$40	\$92,000
13	Site Lighting	10	EA	\$2,000	\$20,000
14	Park Signage	1	AL	\$1,000	\$1,000
15	Gravity Sanitary Sewer	900	LF	\$35	\$31,500
16	Entrance Gate	1	AL	\$10,000	\$10,000
17	Grass - Common Areas	6	AC	\$3,500	\$21,000
18	Landscaping (trees and shrubs)	1	AL	\$20,000	\$20,000
19	Mass Grading	1	LS	\$200,000	\$200,000
Sub-total					\$1,131,000
Baseball/Softball Field Construction - (4) 300' fields					
1	Field-Laser grading, Sand, Sod, Pitchers Mound, etc.)	4	EA	\$80,000	\$320,000
2	Irrigation	4	EA	\$10,000	\$40,000
3	Dugouts	8	EA	\$4,000	\$32,000
4	Scoreboards (4 Total)	4	AL	\$5,000	\$20,000
5	Benches and Bleachers (4 Fields)	4	AL	\$5,000	\$20,000
5	Field Fencing	4	EA	\$30,000	\$120,000
6	Batting Cage	2	EA	\$2,500	\$5,000
Sub-total					\$557,000
Soccer/Football Field Construction - 2 fields					
1	Laser grading	2	EA	\$10,000	\$20,000
2	Irrigation	2	EA	\$10,000	\$20,000
3	Soccer Goals	2	EA	\$2,500	\$5,000
4	Scoreboard (2 Total)	2	AL	\$5,000	\$10,000
5	Benches and Bleachers	2	AL	\$5,000	\$10,000
6	Field Bermuda sod and growth-in	2	EA	\$40,000	\$80,000
Sub-total					\$145,000
Other Recreation Facilities					
	Pickleball Court	2	EA	\$50,000	\$100,000
	Cornhole	2	EA	\$2,500	\$5,000
	Miscellaneous (Benches, Trash Receptacles, Drinking Fountains)	1	AL	\$15,000	\$15,000
Sub-total					\$120,000
Support Facilities					
	Baseball - Restroom/Concession/Storage Building/Pressbox (3,000 SF)	1	LS	\$200,000	\$200,000
	Soccer - Restroom/Concession Bldg. (25'x20')	1	EA	\$100,000	\$100,000
	Tennis - Picnic Shelter (20'x20')	1	EA	\$15,000	\$15,000
Sub-total					\$315,000
SUBTOTAL CONSTRUCTION ESTIMATE					\$2,336,040
Contingency (10%)					\$233,604
Design and Construction Phase Engineering Services					\$257,000
Funding Assistance					\$50,000
Property Acquisition					\$136,627
TOTAL PROJECT ESTIMATE					\$3,013,271

