



Madison Parks Division

210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Room 104
Madison, WI 53703
608-266-4711 • cityofmadison.com/parks



Date: February 9, 2021

To: Board of Park Commissioners

From: Eric Knepp, Parks Superintendent

Re: Reindahl Park Imagination Center Project

As you are aware, Madison Public Library is pursuing an Imagination Center at Reindahl Park. The Imagination Center concept was derived from a two year long planning process conducted by Madison Public Library that resulted in *Communities Inspiring Libraries: A Strategic Plan for Eastside Growth*. Within this study, the Library identified northeast Madison as an area in need of a library and expanded library service, but learned that other civic and social services are needed as well. Preliminary conversations with Parks staff also identified that the existing public shelter and restrooms at Reindahl Park are in need of replacement and a new vision. As a result, the concept of the Imagination Center was born, the concept was intentionally meant to be opened-ended while additional planning ensued. The scoping study for the facility was completed in March 2020. It defined the Imagination Center at Reindahl Park as a place for the community to gather and learn. It will be a safe place for social interaction, civic engagement, and cultural expression.

Originally, the Parks Division envisioned a Master Planning update effort for the Park to evaluate the potential for locating the Center in the Park and to better inform how it would serve the park through gathering spaces, public restrooms, and other amenities. Given the current planned uses of the Park, there are limited options for where such a facility could be located without major changes to the existing uses or significant impacts to the tree canopy. Parks is prepared to commence a master plan update process in 2022 that would not only evaluate the Imagination Center (with significantly more details available), but would engage diverse park users regarding their vision for the future of the park. The timing of the master plan would also allow for sufficient detail to appropriately locate the planned fully accessible playground at the same time as consideration of parking and facilities information is available.

The Library requested that this item be taken up at a joint meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners and the Madison Public Library Board. This request is rooted in ensuring that there is shared awareness of the need to have this facility be more than a library and the desire of the Library to have it serve the park well. The legislative item before the joint meeting is a resolution¹ that authorizes the City to enter into a professional architectural and engineering design services contract. The ability to have a professional design team engaged to work on this project will significantly increase the ability of Parks staff and the Board of Park Commissioners to evaluate the project and determine how it serves a park purpose. Parks staff recommends that the Board recommend adoption of this item and allow design development to move forward. This work would significantly improve the ability of parks staff and Commissioners to engage with the design process to better evaluate the project as it relates to serving Reindahl Park and its diverse users.

¹ [Legistar 63945](#)