

MEMORANDUM

TO: Howey-in-the-Hills Parks and Recreation Board
Howey-in-the-Hills Planning Board
CC: J. Brock, Town Clerk
FROM: Thomas Harowski, AICP, Planning Consultant
SUBJECT: Parks Master Plan
DATE: April 20, 2023

Last year the Town applied for a technical assistance grant from the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) to prepare a park master plan for the Town. The Town was not awarded a grant, but the DEO is expected to announce another round of grant funding shortly. The hope is that the Town can update and resubmit the grant application for consideration. If a grant is awarded, the funds will need to be used during the 2023 - 2024 state fiscal year. If the program rules remain the same, there is no matching fund requirement. Typically, the projects are under contract to begin in October or November and need to be concluded by the end of April at the latest.

A copy of the grant application submitted last year is attached for your review. The proposed work program includes an active role for the Parks Board and the Planning Board working jointly to encourage and manage citizen involvement in the program and formulating plan recommendations. The proposal follows generally accepted planning methodology including the following steps:

- Inventory of facilities and recreation/parks assets
- Review of current comprehensive plan requirements
- Needs survey
- Alternative choices for parks and programs
- Recommended Plan
- Final report

The needs survey is proposed to include a general community survey using Survey Monkey or a similar service where residents can participate online. The survey content will be developed with staff and the advisory boards. Once the alternatives have been narrowed, the recommended plan and final report will include concept plans for some of the park facilities. These plans and overall report can be used to prioritize projects and include proposed projects in the Town's capital improvements program.

The objective of this report is to advise the two boards of the prospective application including the role the Board will have in the program and to seek the two boards' support for the overall project.