



Project Name: Parks Safety and ADA Accessibility Compliance Study

Precinct(s): Countywide

Investment Area: General Governance and Customer Service

Managing Entity: County Engineer **Add'l Investment Requested:** \$ 1,050,000

Requesting Entity: County Engineer **Total Estimated Cost:** \$ 1,050,000

Requesting Entity Head: Loyd Smith, Acting County Engineer

Project ID (if applicable): 200287

Vendor Legal Name (if applicable): W-T Group, LLC

MWDBE Participation (if applicable): N/A

Request Summary:

..title

Request for approval of Final Investment Memo for the Parks Safety and ADA Accessibility Compliance Study project for \$1,050,000 and request for approval of commercial paper funding for OCE the project in the initial amount of \$350,000.

..end

Project Description:

This is a Countywide study to evaluate Harris County Parks and Trails in terms of how well they comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations on accessibility, and how well playgrounds comply with safety regulations. The study aims to provide guidance on which playground safety and ADA regulations are pertinent to Harris County, how to perform safety and ADA inspections, and which tools or methods are best suited to perform these inspections.

The study will evaluate all parks and trails in terms of their ADA compliance and playground safety and will develop an action plan in both areas to bring all parks and trails into compliance with the identified regulations.

The end benefit of the project will be the creation of a standard for accessibility and playground safety for all Harris County Parks and Trails. This project will have two phases and has a 2-year timeline for completion.

Current Approved Budget	\$0
Requested Budget Increase	\$1,050,000
New Total Budget Request	\$1,050,000



Justification:

Harris County contains a vast number of parks and trails that vary in size, type, age, and condition. They also vary in the manner they are maintained. This project aims to ensure that all Harris County Parks and Trails meet the necessary regulations for playground safety and comply with ADA regulations on accessibility. Playground safety constitutes a life safety issue and ADA compliance is a legal obligation for the County.

It is anticipated that the this study will provide prioritized recommendations for the County to implement in order to meet or exceed playground safety and accessibility regulations. In terms of safety, this will allow the County to make repairs or adjustments before accidents may occur. In terms of accessibility, this will allow the County to be in more control of it's own schedule on implementing accessibility improvements.

This project supports the following Strategic Objectives:

- SO20. Improve communication internally and externally.

This objective relates to Goal 7 – “Increase community engagement, customer service, and public access to services.” One of the aims of this study is to increase public access to parks and trails. This is in line with communicating externally Harris County’s commitment to increasing public access to services.

The success of the project can be measured through the following performance metrics:

- The success of this project can be measured by the County’s ability to successfully perform playground safety and accessibility inspections in the future and its ability to implement measures to adjust any areas within Harris County Parks and Trails that do not comply with current playground safety and ADA regulations.

Project Scope:

The project has two phases. The first phase is estimated to take 8 months. The second phase is estimated to take 12 months.

In phase one, this project will inform Harris County of the relevant regulations for safety at playgrounds and accessibility at parks and trails. It will provide educational modules that document and explain these regulations, any necessary protocols and procedures, and best practices to follow in order to meet and exceed safety and accessibility standards.

The project will provide a review of manual inspection processes for safety inspections and for ADA accessibility inspections. It will also provide a review of digital inspection tools for both playground safety inspections and ADA accessibility inspections and will provide input into the benefits and drawback of each method in order to allow the Precincts to make an informed decision on which method will be best suited for them.



The project consultant will then perform safety and accessibility inspections on a select number of parks and trails in each Precinct. While doing so, it will train Precinct staff on how to perform both safety and accessibility inspections. It will also provide this information in the form of a documented educational module.

In phase two, the project consultant will conduct playground safety inspections in all Harris County Parks and accessibility inspections at all Harris County Parks and Trails. They will then provide a playground safety site report and an action plan to address safety issues for all Precincts. It will similarly provide an accessibility compliance report and an action plan to address all areas of non-compliance with planning level cost estimates.

Phase two also has an option for Precincts to include community engagement. This would allow the consultant to lead a community meeting on accessibility standards and hear feedback on which issues are most important to the community for Precinct consideration.

Alternatives and Engagement:

No alternatives have been identified for this project.

The impacts of delaying the project would be to delay awareness of playground safety and accessibility compliance.

This study impacts parks and trails that are maintained by Harris County. Representatives of the Precincts and the Office of the County Judge have been engaged and have composed the steering committees during scoping, bidding, and negotiation.

More widely, Harris County resident groups most affected by this study are children and caregivers who primarily use playgrounds as well as residents with disabilities, the elderly, and individuals with limited abilities.

Anticipated Project Expenditures and Timeline:

The total project budget is anticipated to be \$1,050,000. No costs have been spent to date. The Court is being asked to approve the total cost in the amount of \$1,050,000. Costs shown are estimates from W-T Group, LLC. No non-County funding is anticipated.

Scope of Work	Estimated Cost*	Estimated Completion
Data collection, staff training, and standards specification by Precinct, HCE	\$69,000.00	4 months
Inspection tools review by Precinct, HCE	\$67,000.00	2 months
Develop and implement training material, pilot test audit tools in each Precinct	\$198,000.00	4 months



HARRIS COUNTY

CIP Final Investment Memo

10-12-2021

Access audits of all parks and trails, playground safety inspections, site reports for each by Precinct	\$508,000.00	7 months
Final reporting, ADA Action Plans, playground safety plans	\$155,000.00	5 months
Community engagement	\$35,000.00	1 month
Project Management	\$18,000.00	2 years
Total	\$1,050,000.00	2 years

* Costs shown reflect W-T Group, LLC's cost estimate.

The project could be delayed if inclement weather slows down the inspections.

If the Precincts choose to use a digital inspection tool they would then have to pay for the subscription.

Previous Court Action:

Authorization to Negotiate, 4/13/2021

HB 1869 Approval by: Michael James, Assistant County Attorney, 9/22/2021

Commercial Paper Requested: \$350,000

Department Approval by: Grace Tsai, Manager of Design Services, 10/05/2021

OMB Approval by: William McGuinness, 9/29/2021



Commercial Paper Funding Request

Request for Court Action: Initial Commercial Paper Funding Request

Department: County Engineer

Type of Request: Commercial Paper

Project Name: Parks Safety and ADA Accessibility Compliance Study, 200287

CP Series Description: Commercial Paper Series D-2 can be used for (1) construction of public works, (2) the purchase of automobiles, equipment and machinery, including computers, materials and supplies for the operation of the County's precincts and departments (3) Professional services, including services provided by engineers, architects, attorneys, auditors, financial advisors, and fiscal agents, in connection with the contractual obligations described in (1) and (2).

Commercial Paper is being requested for Parks Safety and ADA Accessibility Compliance Study project and is expected to be repaid within the next three fiscal years either through bonds, budgetary means or pay-as-you-go sources.

HB 1869 compliance confirmed by: Michael James, Assistant County Attorney, September 22, 2021

Financial Management contact(s): Amy Perez, Director, Financial Management, Office of Management and Budget

Request Summary: Request for approval of commercial paper funding for the Office of the County Engineer for the Parks Safety and ADA Accessibility Compliance Study in the initial amount of \$350,000 contingent upon project approval.