

## Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission Report

For the Community Development Committee meeting of July 15, 2019

**Subject:** Future Reimbursement Consideration for Carver County, Lake Waconia Regional Park

### Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council:

1. Consider reimbursing Carver County up to \$400,000 from its share of a future Regional Parks Bonding Program for costs it incurs for development of Coney Island, Lake Waconia Regional Park; and
2. Inform Carver County that the Council does not under any circumstances represent or guarantee that it will reimburse the County and that expenditure of local funds never entitles a park agency to reimbursement.

### Summary of Committee Discussion/Questions

Emmett Mullin, Regional Parks Manager, presented this item to the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission (MPOSC) at its meeting on July 9, 2019. Marty Walsh, Carver County Parks Director, was present and responded to questions. Council Member Liaison Atlas-Ingebretson asked about the Governor's new policy on government to government tribal relations, and its relationship to cultural resources on Coney Island. Community Development Director Lisa Barajas responded that this policy sets a direction for how the Council will work with tribal nations. Additionally, Walsh responded that the historic preservation work on the island is occurring in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer, as the island is on the National Historic Register.

The Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission voted unanimously to recommend the proposed action.

## Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission

Meeting date: July 9, 2019

For the Community Development Committee meeting of July 15, 2019

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of July 24, 2019

**Subject:** Future Reimbursement Consideration for Carver County, Lake Waconia Regional Park

**MPOSC District:** B – Robert Moeller

**Council District:** 4 – Deb Barber

**Policy/Legal Reference:** Minn. Stat. § 473.315; 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan Finance Strategy 6

**Staff Prepared/Presented:** Emmett Mullin, Regional Parks Manager (651-602-1360)

**Division/Department:** Community Development / Regional Planning

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1. Consider reimbursing Carver County up to \$400,000 from its share of a future Regional Parks Bonding Program for costs it incurs for development of Coney Island, Lake Waconia Regional Park; and
2. Inform Carver County that the Council does not under any circumstances represent or guarantee that it will reimburse the County and that expenditure of local funds never entitles a park agency to reimbursement.

### Background

Carver County bought the 34-acre Coney Island in 2016, after the island was added to the Council-approved master plan boundary in 2015. The County now plans to develop the island, and to do so expeditiously, it is requesting future reimbursement consideration so it can begin work in 2019.

The island is on the National Register of Historic places, and the County must proceed carefully to honor the history of the site. They have undertaken extensive data collection through a Phase III Cultural Mitigation Study, as required by the State Historic Preservation Office, to plan their work and minimize damage to historic and archeological features on the island. This investigative and data recovery work is expensive; the County has already invested about \$100,000 in the overall work.

Working on an island presents increases the costs due to the expense associated with mobilizing equipment and personnel and delivering and removing materials. Carver County is working to reduce the amount of future mobilization costs by completing as much activity as reasonably possible in this first construction phase. The County has solicited bids for Phase I development, which will focus on cleaning up island debris, removing hazardous materials, preserving historic sites and artifacts, and beginning site development.

The County is requesting future reimbursement consideration for up to \$400,000 of expenses related to cleaning up island debris, removing hazardous materials, providing historic preservation, and developing the site for public use. A copy of the County's request is attached to this item (Attachment 1).

## Rationale

Minn. Stat. § 473.315 authorizes the Metropolitan Council with the advice of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission to make grants from any funds available for recreation open space purposes to cover any portion of the cost of developing regional recreation open space in accordance with the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* (Policy Plan).

The Policy Plan authorizes the Council to consider reimbursing an implementing agency for costs incurred in an eligible project if:

- *The project is consistent in timing, scale, type and cost with a Council approved master plan.* The most recent master plan amendment for the Lake Waconia Regional Park was approved by the Council on March 8, 2017 ([Business item 2017-40](#)).
- *All information required for the development grant is submitted to the Council prior to the implementing agency undertaking the project.* The project will commence during the summer of 2019 and has submitted all of the required information.
- *The Council approves the project.*

## Thrive Lens Analysis

This action supports the Livability outcome in *Thrive MSP 2040* by increasing access to nature and outdoor recreation, thereby enhancing the region's quality of life.

## Funding

There is no funding impact until and unless Carver County requests reimbursement out of future Regional Parks Bonding, the County submits documentation of eligible costs, and the Council approves that future request. A request for "future reimbursement consideration" is the first step in a process Agencies may use to request repayment of their costs in a future bonding cycle. Because the Council issues bonds to match every \$3 of state bonding with \$2 of Council bonds for a given state bonding cycle, such reimbursements are limited. The Council is under no obligation to reimburse this amount.

## Known Support / Opposition

There is no known opposition.



## CARVER COUNTY PARKS

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Fax (952) 466-5223

June 6, 2019

Mr. Emmett Mullin  
Parks Manager  
Metropolitan Council  
390 North Robert Street  
St. Paul, MN 55101

Dear Mr. Mullin:

Carver County intends to move forward with the development of Lake Waconia Regional Park at Coney Island. Bids have been received for Phase I development. This first phase of construction responds to extensive work needed to clean up island debris, remove hazardous materials; provide historic preservation, and site development. Budgeted funding through local and regional sources are insufficient to achieve a desired level of completion.

Coney Island is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The effort to clean up and develop the island is considered to have adverse effects to historic and archeological features of the island. As a result, extensive data collection through a Phase III Cultural Mitigation Study is required by the State Historic Preservation Office. This investigative and data recovery work is extremely expensive and has greatly reduced available funding to prepare the island for public use.

Second, due to the nature of an island site, mobilizing equipment, personnel; along with the delivery and removal of materials comes at a premium price. We are working to reduce the amount of future mobilization costs by completing as much activity as reasonably possible in this first construction phase.

Carver County is requesting eligibility in a future CIP of the Metropolitan Council of up to \$400,000 due to the complexity of developing historic Coney Island.

Sincerely,

Martin J. Walsh  
Parks Director

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