

# Regional Parks System 2024 Fishing Piers Grant Program Notice of Funding Availability

Business Item 2024-275 SW  
Community Development Committee

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October 21, 2024



# Background

- In 2024, the Minnesota Legislature appropriated \$500,000 for new fishing piers on lakes in the metropolitan parks system to increase fishing opportunities
- One-time appropriation
- Funds must be spent by June 30, 2026
- Legislation requires the Council to solicit applications but does not require a competitive grant review process
- Staff considered different approaches to provide a fair program for the agencies that would fit with the short funding period
- Ultimately staff, with consultation from the implementing agencies, landed on a lottery approach

# Data gathering



- Council staff reached out to DNR for fishing piers cost estimates
  - Basic floating fishing piers ~ \$50,000
- Council staff engaged the implementing agencies
  - To add minimum access features and/or custom builds on the shoreline, projects can range from \$100,000 to \$175,000
  - Staff proposed funding between 3 and 5 projects of equal value
  - Discussions led to consensus that \$125,000 would be an amount that would allow for 4 fishing piers of high quality

# Proposed funding scenario



- Each agency is allowed to submit one application
- Council staff will review for eligibility (and work with agencies to address any issues)
- A lottery will be held at an MPOSC meeting
- 4 projects will be randomly selected
- Each project will be funded at \$125,000
- Agencies may provide local funding for project costs that exceed \$125,000

# Eligibility criteria

- Proposals must be for new fishing piers
- Proposals must clearly demonstrate a need and describe how the new fishing pier will increase fishing opportunities
- Proposals must address one or more equity focus area (age, race, ethnicity, income, national origin, or ability)
- Proposal must demonstrate how a new fishing pier will contribute to additional programming opportunities and awareness building for the regional parks system
- Projects must be ready to start so that they can be completed by June 30, 2026
- Projects must be consistent with a Council-approved long-range plan

# Anticipated timeline and Next Steps



- October: bring NOFA to MPOSC, CDC, and Council
- November-January 10: application open
- January: staff review
- February MPOSC: lottery
- February: grant agreements out

# Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission



## October MPOSC meeting

- Discussion around using Council funds to match the state appropriation so that more agencies could receive a fishing pier grant
- Recommendation was modified to include a third action to reflect this
- Since MPOSC meeting, parks staff has consulted with finance staff and determined it is not possible to provide matching funds for this particular appropriation due to Council budget timelines
- Staff recommends that the Council consider matching future state appropriations with Council funds

# Recommendations

## That the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the 2024 Regional Parks System Fishing Piers Grant Program Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA).
2. Approve the funding and awarding of four grants selected through a lottery as outlined in the NOFA.
3. Consider using Council funds to match state funding to expand the fishing pier opportunity to more residents.