

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission

Meeting date: May 2, 2017

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of May 24, 2017

Subject: Battle Creek-Indian Mounds Regional Park, Project Scope Grant Amendment (Parks Grant SG-03653), City of St. Paul

District(s), Member(s): MPOSC District G, Vacant

Policy/Legal Reference: MN Statute 473.315

Staff Prepared/Presented: Tori Dupre, Senior Planner-Regional Parks (651-602-1621)

Division/Department: Community Development, Regional Parks and Natural Resources

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council approve an amendment to grant agreement SG-03653 to modify the project scope to support preparation of a cultural resource study and interpretive program at Battle Creek-Indian Mounds Regional Park.

Background

The City of St. Paul requested the Metropolitan Council's approval of an amendment to modify the project scope for parks grant SG-03653. The City's request to amend the grant scope was necessitated by ongoing regional park master plan community engagement work as described in Attachment 1.

Battle Creek-Indian Mounds Regional Park is jointly managed by Ramsey County and the City of St. Paul and includes Indian Mounds Regional Park. Designated as a regional park in 1974, the Indian Mounds portion of the regional park is located east of downtown St. Paul and is the site of Indian burial mounds dating to the Hopewell Indians of more than 2000 years ago. In 2011, the City of St. Paul updated the Indian Mounds Regional Park Master Plan as shown in Attachment 2.

The Park master plan's guiding principle is to "*recognize, celebrate, interpret and seek to preserve the historic, cultural and natural resources in a way that fosters stewardship while providing recreational amenities appropriate for a regional park*". The master plan lists future development priorities that include a cultural and historic interpretive signage plan, and a splash pad water feature, among others.

As the City moved forward with their original project idea to develop a splash pad/water feature, staff held public meetings with the Native American community, the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, four Tribal Historic Preservation Officers, the neighborhood district council and City Council Ward 7 members. In these meetings, participants expressed concerns with the initial plans for a water feature, and provided important testimony in support of modifying this proposal to focus instead on preparing a cultural assessment study and management plan.

The City is committed to meaningful public engagement and they seek to be sensitive to community desires to honor significant cultural sites as well as protect water supplies. Therefore, the City requested the Metropolitan Council approve its proposed amendment to the grant project scope.

The St. Paul City Council approved the proposed grant amendment in part because the proposed project does not warrant a budget change, and it honors the Park master plan's guiding principle to preserve historic, cultural, and natural

resources. Preparing the cultural assessment study and management plan will help the City instill and preserve an understanding of the history of the site, and will identify ways in which the City can celebrate that history in future capital projects.

Rationale

Parks grant SG-03653 was executed on February 23, 2016 and amended September 1, 2016, to provide \$662,000 to the City to construct a splash pad/ water feature. The grant is funded by State Fiscal Year 2016 and 2017 Parks and Trails Legacy Funds, and is one of 12 projects comprising the City of St. Paul's share of the Legacy fund appropriation.

The appropriation was approved in 2015 MN Session Law which references a report listing each park agency's share of the appropriation and the associated list of regional park or trail projects. The report includes this project. The session **law specifies** that projects funded by the appropriation must be substantially consistent with the project description and dollar amounts in the report.

The grant agreement terms may be amended by mutual agreement of the parties if the changes are consistent in both scope and budget. Amendments become effective following Metropolitan Council approval and upon execution of written amendment(s) signed by authorized representatives of the Council and the Grantee.

Staff finds that the City's proposed grant amendment is substantially consistent in both scope and budget because it is reasonable given the outcomes of the City's public participation efforts, it supports the master plan's guiding principles for preserving historic, cultural and natural resources, it is located within the Indian Mounds portion of the regional park, and is in a Council-approved master plan.

Thrive Lens Analysis

The proposed grant amendment for the cultural assessment study and management plan enhances quality of life in the region (Livability) through the identification of important cultural sites and resources that offer insights into the region's history within the regional recreation system.

Funding

The grant is funded by fiscal years 2016 and 2017 Parks and Trails Legacy Fund appropriation, authorized by MN Laws 2015, chapter 2, article 3, section 4.

Known Support / Opposition

The City has support for the proposed project from the Native American community, the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, Tribal Historic Preservation Officers, the Neighborhood District Council and City Council Ward 7. There is no known opposition.

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION DIVISION



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April 25, 2017

Emmett Mullin, Manager
Regional Parks & Natural Resources
Metropolitan Council (Met Council)
390 Robert Street North
St. Paul, MN 55101

RE: Fiscal Year (FY) 2016-17 Parks and Trails Legacy Fund - Parks Grant SG-03653

Dear Mr. Mullin:

The Department of Parks and Recreation (the Department) received funding during FY 2016-17 to construct a splash pad at Battle Creek Indian Mounds Regional Park. As part of our public process, three meetings were held in February, March, and April 2017 with representatives from the Native American Community, Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, four Tribal Historic Preservation Officers, the neighborhood, district council, and City Council Ward 7. During these meetings, the City heard very important testimony requesting that we halt the current work on the splash pad and reallocate funds towards a cultural resource study and interpretative program.

With the support of the Native American Community, Planning District and Council Ward; the Department strongly believes that the correct course of action is to shift the scope of the grant towards a cultural resource study and interpretive program to instill and preserve an understanding of the sacred lands.

The Department requests the Metropolitan Council to amend executed grant SG-03653 by changing the project description to remove the splash pad feature, and substitute a master plan approved cultural resource study and interpretive program. The proposed amendment does not change the budget but reallocates funds for high priority project items.

Authorization to reallocate funds on Indian Mounds Regional Park prior to completion of the grant contract will enable the City of Saint Paul to achieve the improvements as desired by the community. If you have further questions or would like official letters of support, please contact me at 651-266-6412. I appreciate your time and consideration in this matter.


Sincerely,

Alice Messer, ASLA
Manager, Design and Construction

c: Ellen Stewart, Senior Landscape Architect
Brett Hussong, Project Manager

Attachment 2: Proposed Grant Project Location



 = Limits of cultural assessment

INDIAN MOUNDS REGIONAL PARK

