

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission

Meeting date: June 4, 2013

For the Community Development Committee meeting of June 17, 2013

Subject: Request for Reimbursement Consideration for Dakota County Regional Park and Trails Projects

District(s), Member(s): MPOSC District H, Barbara Schmidt

Policy/Legal Reference: MN Statute 473.315

Staff Prepared/Presented: Jan Youngquist, AICP, Planning Analyst (651-602-1029)

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

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council consider reimbursing Dakota County up to \$6,303,480 from its share of future Regional Parks Capital Improvement Programs for the following projects:

1. Whitetail Woods Regional Park construction \$5,453,480
Site grading, access drive, parking lot, play area, trails, sledding hill, site furnishings, utilities, landscaping, signage, picnic shelter, restroom building, camper cabins and associated phase 1 improvements.
2. Mississippi River Regional Trail-trailhead construction \$450,000
Parking lot, bathroom building, utilities, signs, landscaping, trails, site furnishings and miscellaneous site amenities to serve the regional trail at Swing Bridge Park in Inver Grove Heights.
3. Mississippi River Regional Trail -Spring Lake Park engineering \$400,000
Design and engineering for regional trail from Schaars Bluff picnic area to the western park boundary.

However, the Council does not under any circumstances represent or guarantee that reimbursement will be granted, and expenditure of local funds never entitles a park agency to reimbursement.

Background

Dakota County has requested that the Metropolitan Council consider reimbursing the County up to \$6,303,480 from its share of future regional parks capital improvement programs for three projects as follows as described in **Attachment 1**:

1. Whitetail Woods Regional Park construction \$5,453,480
Site grading, access drive, parking lot, play area, trails, sledding hill, site furnishings, utilities, landscaping, signage, picnic shelter, restroom building, camper cabins and associated phase 1 improvements.

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|---|-----------|
| 2. Mississippi River Regional Trail-trailhead construction | \$450,000 |
| Parking lot, bathroom building, utilities, signs, landscaping, trails, site furnishings and miscellaneous site amenities to serve the regional trail at Swing Bridge Park in Inver Grove Heights. | |
| 3. Mississippi River Regional Trail -Spring Lake Park engineering | \$400,000 |
| Design and engineering for regional trail from Schaars Bluff picnic area to the western park boundary. | |

Rationale

Dakota County is requesting that these costs be considered for reimbursement from its share of future regional parks capital improvement programs. The request for reimbursement consideration is consistent with Finance Strategy 6 from the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*, which states:

Finance Strategy 6: Reimbursement

“...Reimbursement will be considered for development provided the project in question is consistent in timing, scale, type and cost with an approved master plan; that all information required for the development grant is submitted to the Council prior to the regional park implementing agency undertaking the project; and that the Council approves the project...”

This request meets the terms of Finance Strategy 6 for the following reasons:

1. The timing, scale and cost for the projects are consistent with the Metropolitan Council approved master plans for Whitetail Woods Regional Park (Project 1) and Mississippi River Regional Trail (Projects 2 and 3). The Whitetail Woods Regional Park master plan was approved in May 2012 (Referral No.50024-1) and the Mississippi River Regional Trail master plan that includes projects 2 and 3 was approved in July 1999 (Referral No. 15553-5).
2. Sufficient information has been submitted in this request regarding what would be financed with a Council grant to meet the requirements of Finance Strategy 6. In this case, that information is contained in the County’s letter **Attachment 1**.
3. Dakota County is requesting Metropolitan Council approval for County expenditures on this project prior to undertaking it.

Funding

Funding for the future reimbursement of the projects may be awarded through Dakota County’s share of Regional Parks Capital Improvement Programs (CIP). Metropolitan Council action is required to approve specific grants to Dakota County. The Council does not under any circumstances represent or guarantee that reimbursement will be granted, and expenditure of local funds never entitles a park agency to reimbursement.

Known Support / Opposition

There is no known opposition to this request as it is consistent with Finance Strategy 6 from the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*.

Attachment 1: Letter from Steve Sullivan, Dakota County Parks



May 28, 2013

Physical Development Division
Lynn Thompson, Director

Dakota County
Western Service Center
14955 Galaxie Avenue
Apple Valley, MN 55124

952-891-7000
Fax 952-891-7031
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Environmental Resources
Land Conservation
Groundwater Protection
Surface Water
Water Regulation
Environmental Initiatives

Office of Planning

Operations Management
Facilities Management
Fleet Management
Parks

Transportation
Highways
Surveyor's Office
Transit Office

Arne Stefferud
Planning Analyst – Parks
Metropolitan Council
390 North Robert Street
St. Paul, MN 55101

Dear Arne:

Dakota County requests Metropolitan Council consideration for authorizing eligibility for future reimbursement for the following projects and amounts. The approved Dakota County Park Capital Improvement Budget includes the use of County funds for the following projects:

-Whitetail Woods Regional Park construction \$5,453,480
Site grading, access drive, parking lot, play area, trails, sledding hill, site furnishings, utilities, landscaping, signage, picnic shelter, restroom building, camper cabins and associated phase 1 improvements.

-Mississippi River Regional Trail-trailhead construction \$450,000
Parking lot, bathroom building, utilities, signs, landscaping, trails, site furnishings and miscellaneous site amenities to serve the regional trail at Swing Bridge Park in Inver Grove Heights.

-Mississippi River Regional Park-Spring Lake Park engineering \$400,000
Design and engineering for regional trail from Schaars Bluff picnic area to the western park boundary.

Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

Steve Sullivan, Director of Dakota County Parks

Cc: Taud Hoopingarner, Operations Management-Parks Director
Stacy Reilly, Financial Analyst