

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL
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Phone (651) 602-1000 TDD (651) 291-0904

DATE: June 26, 2007

TO: Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission

FROM: Arne Stefferud, Planning Analyst-Parks (651) 602-1360

SUBJECT: (2007-224) Request for reimbursement consideration in future regional parks CIP for site and building improvements of Wabun Picnic Area in Minnehaha Regional Park, Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board

INTRODUCTION

The Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board (MPRB) has submitted a request for the Metropolitan Council to consider reimbursing the Park Board up to \$1,059,000 in the 2008-09 regional parks capital improvement program for partial financing of site and building improvements in the Wabun Picnic area of Minnehaha Regional Park. (See **Attachment 1**, a letter from Andrew Lesch and **Attachment 2**, Map of Minnehaha Regional Park highlighting the location of Wabun Picnic Area. and Wabun Drive).

This memorandum contains a review of the request for reimbursement consideration under applicable terms in Strategy 2(f) of the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan* and recommends approval of the reimbursement request.

AUTHORITY TO REVIEW

Minnesota Statute Section 473.315 authorizes the “Metropolitan Council with the advice of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission to make grants from any funds available to it for recreation open space purposes to any municipality, park district or county located wholly or partially within the metropolitan area to cover the cost, or any portion of the cost, of acquiring or developing regional recreation open space in accordance with the [*Regional Recreation Open Space*] *Policy Plan*”.

BACKGROUND

The Wabun Picnic area in Minnehaha Regional Park is used for large group reservation picnic activities. As the MPRB letter states, up to 1,000 persons are accommodated.

On January 28, 1993 the Metropolitan Council approved an updated development master plan for Minnehaha Regional Park (Referral No. 15703-1) and approved \$1 million in grant funds to begin implementing the master plan. From 1993 to 1998 grants totaling \$6,053,000 were authorized to renovate worn out facilities in the park—focusing on the Minnehaha Falls overlook, adjacent picnic areas, internal park roads and parking lots, trails and associated utilities.

REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST ANALYSIS

On July 27, 2005 the Metropolitan Council authorized a \$925,000 grant to the MPRB from its 2004-05 regional parks CIP (SG-2005-067) to continue renovating the park—in this case for, “the renovation of Wabun Drive and Wabun picnic area and to create new park elements within Wabun including trails and picnic/maintenance shelter, plus related landscaping.”

The MPRB has awarded a bid to begin work under grant SG-2005-067 but also needs an additional \$3.1 million to completely fund the project. The Minnesota Veterans Home is providing \$300,000 since it benefits from renovation of Wabun Drive—an access road to the Veterans Home. The MPRB has proposed to finance the remaining \$2.8 million by cash flowing up to \$1,059,000 of its own funds in 2007 and early 2008 which it wants the Council to consider reimbursing in the 2008-09 regional parks CIP as part of the MPRB’s allocation. The MPRB has also requested \$1,741,000 as part of its 2008-09 regional parks CIP allocation for this project. Following is a table that illustrates total costs of \$4,025,000 and revenue sources for this project.

MPRB Costs and Revenue Sources for renovating Wabun Picnic Area and Wabun Drive in Minnehaha Regional Park

Costs

Estimated costs to renovate Wabun Drive and Wabun Picnic Area. Costs based on construction bid awarded by MPRB for work to begin on July 12, 2007	\$ 4,025,000
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Revenues

Metro Council grant SG-2005-067, which expires June 30, 2008	\$ 925,000
Minnesota Veterans Home Board	\$ 300,000
Portion of MPRB's allocation for 2008-09 Parks CIP to be considered for funding in 2008	\$ 1,741,000

<u>Funding Gap</u> to be initially financed by MPRB on cash flow basis. This is the amount MPRB requests to be eligible for reimbursement consideration by the Metropolitan Council in the 2008-09 Regional Parks CIP	\$ 1,059,000
Total	\$ 4,025,000

As noted in the MPRB letter, they have received a very competitive low bid on this project. If the Metropolitan Council approves this reimbursement, the MPRB intends to request it as part of its allocation for the 2008-09 Regional Parks CIP. The MPRB has submitted this project as its number one priority for the 2008-09 CIP.

Strategy 2(f) of the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan* states:

Strategy 2(f): 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 a 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 project is consistent with the terms of Strategy 2(f) for the following reasons:

1. The timing, scale and cost of this project are consistent with the development master plan approved by the Metropolitan Council on January 28, 1993 (Referral No. 15703-1).
2. Enough information has been submitted in this request regarding what would be financed with a Council grant to meet the requirements of Strategy 2(f) which are shown in **Attachment 1**.
3. The MPRB is requesting Metropolitan Council approval of the project prior to undertaking it. It will begin work on the project on July 12 using funds from Grant SG-2005-067 but won't use MPRB funds until after the Metropolitan Council has considered this request.

CONCLUSIONS

The *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan* requires that requests for CIP reimbursement consideration are consistent with the terms of Strategy 2(f). This review concludes that the reimbursement consideration request of up to \$1,059,000 for partially financing the renovation of the Wabun Picnic Area in Minnehaha Regional Park is consistent with the terms of Strategy 2(f) of the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*. Approval to consider reimbursing the MPRB up to \$1,059,000 in the 2008-09 regional parks capital improvement program for this project does not commit the Council to finance it at this time. The timing of when the MPRB is reimbursed is dependent on when this project is funded in the 2008-09 capital improvement program. 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.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Metropolitan Council approves the request to consider reimbursing the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board up to \$1,059,000 in the 2008-09 regional parks capital improvement program for partially financing the renovation of the Wabun Picnic Area in Minnehaha Regional Park as described in Attachment 1. 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.

Attachment 1: Electronic copy. Original on file at Metropolitan Council office



**Minneapolis
Park and Recreation
Board**

Administrative Offices
2117 West River Road
Minneapolis, MN 55411-2227
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June 18, 2007

Arne Stefferud
Metropolitan Council
390 North Robert Street
St. Paul, MN 55101
651-602-1360

Re: Reimbursement Grant Request for Wabun Picnic in Minnehaha Park

Dear Arne:

The following request is for reimbursement of \$1,059,000 of the 2008-13 Metro Regional Parks CIP for site and building improvements in Wabun Picnic within Minnehaha Park. The picnic area accommodates large groups of up to 1000 persons and is closed this year for renovation. Additional funds are needed to maximize the scope of our improvements and to award a contract to the very competitive low bidder. We would like to reopen the park in June of 2008. The project is consistent with the improvement items listed in the 1992 approved Master Plan as described in the section "The Wabun & Omemee Area, pages 50-64.

The proposed improvements include continued major rehab of the park. This phase includes Wabun Picnic area and all related site elements, and may include such facilities as removals, earthwork, site furnishings lighting, benches, entrance drives, approximately 1 mile of paths, parking, restrooms, shelters, drinking fountain, climbing structures, play structures, storm water management, signage, entry monuments, landscaping, related facilities, and tasks to include design, survey, soil borings, engineering and construction.

We would like you to take action on this request at your earliest convenience. We would also like to begin construction in Mid July.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely

Andy Lesch
RLA Park & Recreation Planner
Planning and Project Management Dept.
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
2117 West River Road
Minneapolis, MN 55411-2227
Voice 612-230-6438, fax 612-230-6506

Attachment 2: Wabun Picnic Area and Wabun Drive in Minnehaha Regional Park

