

C Community Development Committee

Meeting date: March 19, 2007

ADVISORY INFORMATION

Date:	March 12, 2007
Subject:	Request for reimbursement consideration in a future regional parks CIP for the removal of structures and site restoration at Lake Waconia Regional Park, Carver County
District(s), Member(s):	District 4, Jules Smith
Policy/Legal Reference:	MN Statute 473.313
Staff Prepared/Presented:	Jan Youngquist, Senior Planner– Parks (651-602-1029)
Division/Department:	Community Development/Regional Systems Planning and Growth Strategy, Parks

Proposed Action/Motion

That the Metropolitan Council approve the request to consider reimbursing Carver County up to \$200,000 for the removal of structures, which may include two homes, a pole barn, and other related farm buildings, and site restoration at Lake Waconia Regional Park in a future regional parks 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.

Issue(s)

Should the Metropolitan Council consider reimbursing Carver County up to \$200,000 for the removal of structures and site restoration at Lake Waconia Regional Park in a future regional parks capital improvement program?

Overview and Funding

Carver County has requested that expenses related to removal of structures and subsequent site restoration on the former farm site at Lake Waconia Regional Park be declared grant eligible in a future regional parks CIP. Metropolitan Council park funds of up to \$200,000 are requested to reimburse Carver County for the cost of project, which is described as follows:

Description	Estimated Cost
Demolition and removal of buildings, including foundations and removal of concrete slabs	\$110,000
Hazardous material assessment and abatement	\$30,000
Site restoration: fill in foundations, grade, topsoil area and seed	\$40,000
Miscellaneous: well and septic system abandonment, utility line relocation	\$5,000
Contingency	\$15,000
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST	\$200,000

This project is consistent with the terms of the Reimbursement Strategy 2(f) from the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan* for the following reasons:

1. The timing, scale and cost of these projects are consistent with the development master plan approved by the Metropolitan Council in October 2001.
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).
3. The County is requesting Metropolitan Council approval of the project prior to undertaking the project.

Approval of this project for up to \$200,000 in Metropolitan Council funds at this time does not commit the Council to finance this project ahead of other projects in the regional parks CIP. This reimbursement would be considered and ranked with other projects when preparing the 2008-2013 regional parks CIP. The timing of when the County is reimbursed is dependent on when this project is funded in a 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.

The attached staff report dated March 6, 2007 indicates that the pole barn on the site would be used as an interim park maintenance storage facility. Subsequent conversations with Carver County Parks revealed that if it is allotted storage space in the upcoming expansion of the County Public Works facility, the pole barn would not be needed for storage. Carver County would remove the pole barn when it removes the other structures. Due to the economic efficiencies of removing all the structures at the same time, the County projects that the estimated budget of \$200,000 for the project would remain the same.

The Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission reviewed this request at its meeting on March 6. Since the recommendation in the attached staff report was written with the assumption that the pole barn would not be removed from the site, a revised recommendation was written that gives Carver County flexibility to remove the pole barn if needed. The Commission unanimously approved the revised recommendation cited above.

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL
390 North Robert Street, St. Paul, MN 55101
Phone (651) 602-1000 TDD (651) 291-0904

DATE: March 6, 2007

TO: Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission

FROM: Jan Youngquist, Senior Planner- Parks (651) 602-1029

SUBJECT: Request for reimbursement consideration in a future regional parks CIP for the removal of structures and site restoration at Lake Waconia Regional Park, Carver County

INTRODUCTION

Carver County has submitted a request for the Metropolitan Council to consider reimbursing the County up to \$200,000 in a future regional parks capital improvement program for the removal of structures and subsequent site restoration at Lake Waconia Regional Park under the terms of Strategy 2(f) of the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*. (See **Attachment 1**, a letter from Marty Walsh).

This memorandum contains a review of the request for reimbursement authorization under applicable terms in Strategy 2(f) 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

Lake Waconia Regional Park is located on the southeastern shore of Lake Waconia in north central Carver County. Carver County purchased a farm site on Lake Waconia in 1987. The farm site and a portion of the farm acreage were included in the Lake Waconia Regional Park acquisition master plan, which was approved by the Council in 1995. The development master plan, approved by the Council in 2001, called for the removal of most of the existing built features within the regional park.

The farm buildings and grounds were used for educational and health programs until the summer of 2006. The buildings are now vacant. Two homes and other related farm buildings on the site are in poor condition and are not suitable for reuse as park facilities. A pole barn on the site is planned to be used as an interim maintenance storage facility for the park system.

REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST ANALYSIS

Carver County has requested that expenses related to removal of the structures described in the previous section of this memo and subsequent site restoration be declared grant eligible in a future regional parks CIP. Metropolitan Council park funds of up to \$200,000 are requested to reimburse Carver County for the cost of project, which is described as follows:

Description	Estimated Cost
Demolition and removal of buildings, including foundations and removal of concrete slabs	\$110,000
Hazardous material assessment and abatement	\$30,000
Site restoration: fill in foundations, grade, topsoil area and seed	\$40,000
Miscellaneous: well and septic system abandonment, utility line relocation	\$5,000
Contingency	\$15,000
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST	\$200,000

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 these projects are consistent with the development master plan approved by the Metropolitan Council in October 2001.
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).
3. The County is requesting Metropolitan Council approval of the project prior to undertaking the project.

CONCLUSION

The *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan* requires that requests for CIP reimbursement are consistent with the terms of Strategy 2(f). This review concludes that the reimbursement request for the removal of structures and site restoration at Lake Waconia Regional Park is consistent with the terms of Strategy 2(f) of the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*. Approval of this project for up to \$200,000 in Metropolitan Council funds at this time does not commit the Council to finance this project ahead of other projects in the regional parks CIP. This reimbursement would be considered and ranked with other projects when preparing the 2008-2013 regional parks CIP. The timing of when the County is reimbursed is dependent on when this project is funded in a 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 approve the request to consider reimbursing Carver County up to \$200,000 for the removal of structures and site restoration at Lake Waconia Regional Park in a future regional parks 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.

Attachment 1



CARVER COUNTY PARKS

11360 Highway 212 West, Suite 2
Cologne, Minnesota 55322
Phone (952) 466-5250 Fax (952) 466-5223
www.co.carver.mn.us/parks

Department of Public Works

11360 Hwy. 212 West, Suite 1
Cologne, Minnesota 55322
Phone (952) 466-5200
Fax (952) 466-5223

February 9, 2007

Arne Stefferud
Metropolitan Council
390 North Robert Street
St. Paul, MN 55101

Dear Arne:

Carver County is planning to remove buildings on an old farm site located inside the boundary of Lake Waconia Regional Park.

In 1987, Carver County purchased a farm on Lake Waconia. The County made use of the farm buildings by allowing educational and health programs to be conducted in them and on the grounds of the former farm site.

In 1995, the farm site and a portion of the farm acreage was included in the acquisition master plan for Lake Waconia Regional Park.

This past summer, all educational and health programs moved from the farm site. The buildings have been vacated.

Excepting one pole barn, the two homes and other related farm buildings are in poor condition and would not be suitable for reuse as park facilities. The pole barn is planned to be used as an interim maintenance storage facility for the park system.

The removal of the structures from the site will reduce operations and maintenance expenditures as well as reduce risks associated with vacated buildings and other farm facilities.

Carver County is requesting that expenses related to removal of structures and site restoration be declared grant eligible in a future Metropolitan Council capital improvement plan. The estimated cost for removal and site restoration is \$200,000.

Sincerely,

Martin J. Walsh
Parks Director

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Attachment 2: Excerpt from Lake Waconia Regional Park Development Master Plan— approximate park boundaries

SECTION II – SETTING / TRENDS / PUBLIC PROCESS FINDINGS

Historical Land Uses

Prior to the adoption of the Acquisition Master Plan, the park land owned along the lakeshore by Carver County was only eight acres. From a land use perspective, the land designated for acquisition for creating the regional park has been used for a variety of purposes over the years, as reflected in the aerial.

Aerial view of Lake Waconia Regional Park as it exists in 2001. (Approximate park boundary shown in red.)



As the aerial illustrates, much of the land has been either developed or used for agricultural purposes over the last 40 or more years. Under this master plan, virtually the entire site will be either redeveloped for recreational use or restored to natural ecological systems.

Attachment 3: Excerpt from Lake Waconia Regional Park Development Master Plan—Developed Land Uses

SECTION III - EXISTING CONDITIONS OF THE SITE AND ECOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The existing site conditions and land cover mapping shown in figures 3.1 and 3.2 represent the findings of field reconnaissance that was conducted in the fall of 2000 to discover the general condition of the park and define the native ecological communities that remain. This investigation proved fruitful in documenting the existing conditions found across the site and the ecological issues being faced. The information and mapping presented in this section was prepared for master planning purposes and to establish an underpinning for the ecological stewardship plan defined in Section IV. Although much has been learned about the park, there is also much to learn about its ecological systems, especially in the context of restoring a disturbed landscape back to a more natural character. Given this, the information presented here serves primarily as a primer for developing a stewardship program that is specifically tailored to the scientific nuances and challenges affecting the park.

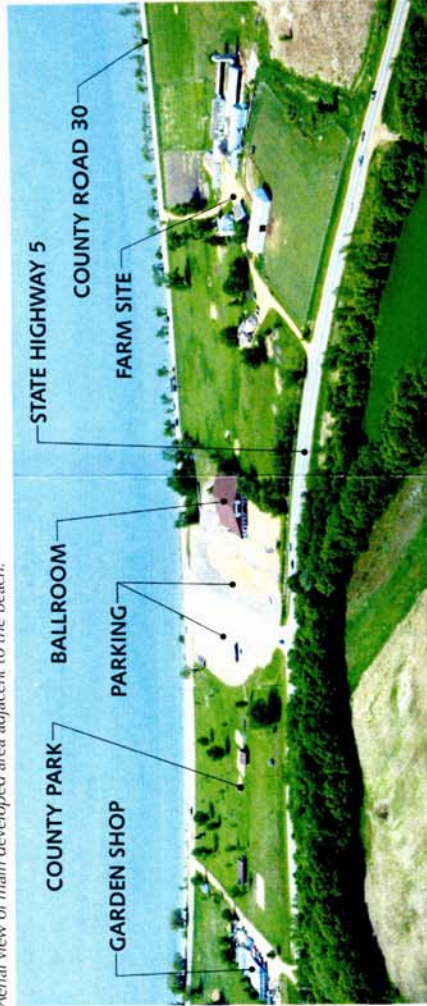
Although much has been learned about the park, there is also much to learn about its ecological systems.

The following considers the general condition of the predominant land uses and vegetative communities found within the park as defined by the four categories.

Developed Land Uses

Developed uses within the park are fairly extensive and include the County Park and ballroom and associated parking lots and turf areas. A farm site with a house, outbuildings, and mowed lawn also exists. Development within the park also includes a garden shop with assorted structures. As noted earlier, there are several roadways that cut through the park, each of which will be ultimately eliminated as part of a larger transportation plan for the county. The following aerial and accompanying photos on the next page highlight many of the built features found on the site.

Aerial view of main developed area adjacent to the beach.



Developed uses within the park are fairly extensive.

Attachment 4: Aerial Photo of Farm Site

