

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

Date: February 18, 2022

To: Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

From: Guy Smith, Executive Director, Milwaukee County Parks

Subject: McKinley Beach Study

File Type: Informational Report

REQUEST

Sharing findings from the ongoing study of McKinley Beach including but not limited to swim safety, beach sustainability, and water quality.

POLICY

Specific Adopted Budget Amendment:	2020 Budget amendment 1A020
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BACKGROUND

Related File No's:	21-97, 21-227
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McKinley Beach was constructed in 1989 and serves to not only provide a recreational resource along the lakefront, but also functions as a buffer between Lake Michigan and Lincoln Memorial Drive. Since its construction, the beach has experienced changing lake levels and site conditions. In August of 2020 McKinley Beach was closed due to riptide hazards, several near drownings, and multiple fatal drowning incidents. Milwaukee County Parks takes park user safety very seriously and has begun considering what remedies to the site conditions are necessary in order to have a safe, active, and sustainable beach. The beach continues to remain barricaded and closed.

Through contingency action, the County Board has funded an effort to both study the conditions present at the beach as well as identify potential solutions that can increase swim safety while addressing beach sustainability and water quality. Initial findings have shown that water depth has increased at the jetty line by approximately 4' since the creation of the beach. This increased depth as well as multiple wave current factors have created dangerous conditions that cannot be visually observed by swimmers. Solutions have been identified that range from modifications and new constructed elements within the lake to operational changes that may include warning systems and methods of partial site closure.

The project team will be present at the March 2022 Parks, Energy, and Environment

Committee to detail study findings. As of the date of this memo, modeling analysis of final conceptual solutions is underway. The Parks Department is striving for a final report and recommendation that may be considered for a 2023 capital budget request.

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

Clif Janssen, Milwaukee County Architecture & Engineering
Chris Kubacki, Milwaukee County Parks Engineer
Heather Stabo, SEH Senior Engineer I & Project Manager, hstabo@sehinc.com

PREPARED BY:

Sarah Toomsen, Manager of Planning & Development

APPROVED BY:

Guy Smith, Parks Executive Director *Guy Smith*

ATTACHMENTS:

PPT Presentation of Report Findings (To Date of Report)

cc: David Crowley, County Executive
Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, County Executive's Office
Sheldon Wasserman, Parks, Energy & Environment Chair, Supervisor District 3
Steven Shea, Parks, Energy & Environment Committee Vice-Chair, Supervisor District 8
Felesia Martin, Parks, Energy & Environment Committee Member, Supervisor District 7
Sylvia Ortiz-Velez, Parks, Energy & Environment Committee Member, Supervisor District 12
Liz Sumner, Parks, Energy & Environment Committee Member, Supervisor District 1
Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
Janelle M. Jensen, Legislative Services Division Manager, Office of the County Clerk
Aaron Hertzberg, Director, Department of Administrative Services
Joseph Lamers, Fiscal & Budget Director, DAS
Vince Masterson, Fiscal & Strategic Asset Coordinator, DAS
Pamela Bryant, Capital Finance Manager, Comptroller's Office
Justin Rodriguez, Capital Finance Analyst, Comptroller's Office
Kelsey Evans, Committee Coordinator, Office of the County Clerk
Ciara Miller, Research & Policy Analyst, Office of the Comptroller
Anthony Rux, Budget & Management Analyst, DAS-PSB