

**COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE**  
Inter-Office Communication

Date: April 19, 2024

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

From: Guy D. Smith, Executive Director, Milwaukee County Parks

Subject: Holler Park Easter Seals Building Use by Office of Emergency Management

File Type: Information Report

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**REQUEST**

This report is for informational purposes, there is no request at this time.

**POLICY**

Wisconsin State Statutes:	
Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances:	
Specific Adopted Budget:	
Specific Adopted Budget Amendment:	
Specific Adopted Capital Project:	

**BACKGROUND**

Holler Park is a 16-acre park on the southside of the City of Milwaukee that was created in 1936 when the Town of Lake transferred acreage to Milwaukee County Parks. From the creation of the park, this site has been used in partnership with other organizations, including the Milwaukee County Association for the Disabled, which opened a recreational day school in 1938 that was largely built by the National Youth Administration (NYA) program. This program eventually evolved into the Easter Seals Program, which assisted in the development of a swimming pool in 1962. Easter Seals offered programming at this site through 2015, at which time programming was shifted to the Wil-o-way Centers at Grant and Underwood Parks.

Since the departure of Easter Seals from Holler Park, Parks has been working to find another use for the building connected to the pool facility. Over the past year, Parks has worked with the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) to open the building as an emergency shelter for residents displaced by fires. Twice in 2023, the Red Cross operated this building to assist residents who needed shelter after a fire that occurred at senior apartment facilities in various parts of Milwaukee County. By establishing an agreement between the two departments, this partnership will better support Red Cross efforts to assisted displaced residents impacted by emergency events.

Having developed this partnership with OEM, Parks is looking to support additional efforts to improve Holler Park to make it a more appropriate site for this use. These efforts include:

- Repaving the existing parking lot to ensure improved accessibility to the building;
- Converting the non-functioning aquatic facility to greenspace to remove a safety hazard, provide additional tree canopy and offer some recreational activation for people experiencing distress;
- Replacing the existing benches within the park to provide ADA-compliant additional respite areas for park users.

Related File No's:	
Associated File No's (Including Transfer Packets):	
Previous Action Date(s):	

**ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN**

Describe how the item aligns to the objectives in the [strategic plan](#):

1B: Create and nurture an inclusive culture across County government

3B: Enhance the County's fiscal health and sustainability

**VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES**

Paul Riegel, Director, Office of Emergency Management

Natalie Meier, Emergency Management Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management

**PREPARED BY:**

Peter Bratt, Director of Operations and Skilled Trades, Milwaukee County Parks

**APPROVED BY:**

Guy Smith, Executive Director Milwaukee County Parks *Guy Smith*

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Presentation

CC: David Crowley, County Executive  
 Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, County Executive's Office  
 Committee on Parks and Culture Members  
 Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors  
 Janelle M. Jensen, Legislative Services Division Mgr, 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  
 Allyson R. Smith, Committee Coordinator, Office of the County Clerk  
 Ciara Miller, Research & Policy Analyst, Office of the Comptroller  
 Anthony Rux, Budget & Management Analyst, DAS-PSB