
CHRIS ABELE, MILWAUKEE COUNTY EXECUTIVE
JOHN DARGLE, JR., DIRECTOR OF PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURE

Date: April 24, 2017

To: Theodore Lipscomb, Chairman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

From: John Dargle, Jr., CPRP, Director, Milwaukee County Parks

Subject: **Authorization to Apply for a 2017 State of Wisconsin Recreational Boating Facilities Program Grant (ACTION)**

POLICY

Request authorization to apply for a 2017 State of Wisconsin Recreational Boating Facilities Program (RBF) grant.

BACKGROUND

The RBF Program encourages the development of recreational boating facilities and related activities by providing state cost sharing assistance to governmental units and qualified lake associations. The source of the funds for this purpose is a portion of a formula driven transfer of excise tax on gasoline consumed for marine purposes. The program is administered by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and is supervised by the Wisconsin Waterways Commission.

Eligible projects include feasibility studies, engineering studies, construction projects such as ramps, boarding docks, and bulkheads, dredging, and boating support facilities. Grants are awarded on a 50%:50% state-local cost-share basis, although the Waterways Commission may increase the state's share to 80% if it determines that the project is of statewide or regional significance. It should be noted that all necessary permits (Chapter 30 or 281, Wisconsin Statutes, or NR 5, Wis. Adm. Code) must be obtained before the Waterways Commission will review a project. Applications are due June 1st.

The Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture (DPRC) is seeking authorization to submit an RBF grant application for the redesign and reconstruction of the Bender Park Harbor access channel. The design and construction of the existing channel is believed to have failed to take into account the regular buildup of sediment within the channel. The accumulated sediments can prevent boats from entering or leaving the harbor. Dredging is required to clear the channel for the safe passage of boats when that level of build-up occurs. The proposed modification of the Bender Park Harbor access channel will eliminate recurring dredging costs, saving public funds over the long run.

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A 2007 study completed by JJR evaluated several potential alternatives for redesigning the harbor to decrease the buildup of sediment, with the staff-preferred having an estimated cost of \$6,377,060¹.

In addition, it is important to note that the Bender Park Harbor is considered a harbor of safe refuge. As such it is incumbent upon Milwaukee County to keep it open during the boating season so that boaters have a secure place to shelter when severe weather conditions arise. The recurrent dredging can sometimes make fulfilling this responsibility difficult in that if the sediment accumulation is not addressed in a timely manner it can lead to extended periods when the harbor is not accessible to boaters. By eliminating the need for recurrent dredging, the proposed access channel improvements will ensure that the harbor is open on a consistent basis.

A budget request for County funds to serve as match for this project has been prepared for consideration in the 2018 Milwaukee County budget. DPRC has prepared a narrative description of the project, and it is now with DAS Architecture and Engineering for cost estimating.

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize the DPRC to apply for an RBF grant. Also, authorize the DPRC, Office of Comptroller and Department of Administrative Services to execute an administrative fund transfer to recognize the receipt of revenue and apply it to improvements related to the Bender Harbor Access Redesign and Reconstruction Project to implement awarded RBF funding.

Prepared by: Bill Waldron, Natural Resources Specialist &
Sarah Toomsen, Manager of Planning and Development

Approved by:



John Dargle, Jr., Director

Attachments:

- Attachment 1 – Fiscal Note
- Attachment 2 – Resolution
- Attachment 3 – Site Map
- Attachment 4 – 2007 JJR Study *Bender Park Sedimentation Alternatives Analysis*

Copy: County Executive Chris Abele
Raisa Koltun, Chief of Staff, County Executive's Office

¹ The 2007 Estimate of Alternative 6 in the report *Bender Park Sedimentation Alternatives Analysis* was \$4,759,000. Adjusted at 3% per year, this figure is \$6,377,060 in 2017.

Jason Haas, Chairman, Parks, Energy & Environment Committee
Marcelia Nicholson, Vice-Chair, Parks, Energy & Environment Committee
Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, County Board
Allyson Smith, Committee Coordinator, Office of the County Clerk
Jessica Janz-McKnight, Research & Policy Analyst, Office of the Comptroller
Jeremy Lucas, Fiscal Mgt. Analyst, Admin & Fiscal Affairs/DAS

