

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

Date: April 22, 2026

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

From: Guy Smith, Executive Director, Milwaukee County Parks

Subject: Authorization to retroactively submit and accept a Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant.

File Type: Action Item

REQUEST

Authorization to retroactively submit and accept a Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant in the amount of \$752,783 to support the redesign and construction of a splash pad at Washington Park Pool.

POLICY

§ 59.17(2)(b)3., Wis. Stats., states that the “county board may continue to exercise the authority under s. 59.52(6) with regard to land that is zoned as a park...”. In the law of property, authority over “land” include authority over all rights appurtenant to the land.

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

BACKGROUND

Milwaukee County Parks has applied for Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant funding to support the redesign and construction of a new splash pad at the existing Washington Park Pool site. Retroactive authorization is requested to apply for and receive grant funding to meet the LWCF application deadline of May 1, 2026.

This project is informed by recommendations identified in the 2025 Milwaukee County Parks Aquatics Study, which evaluated the County’s aquatic amenities and long-term capital planning needs. The study noted that splash pads provide a modern, low-maintenance aquatic amenity with reduced staffing requirements compared to traditional pools and wading pools, while improving accessibility and providing heat

relief and recreational opportunities for families. The Aquatics Study further emphasized strong public support for continued investment in aquatic facilities and recreational cooling amenities. Additional support for the project is anticipated through partner funding commitments from Milwaukee Parks Foundation.

Milwaukee County Parks is requesting \$752,783 in LWCF grant funding through the Wisconsin DNR. The LWCF program may reimburse up to 50% of eligible project costs.

In addition to grant funding, approximately \$377,000 in project support is anticipated from Milwaukee Parks Foundation contributions and other partner funding sources to cover the grant match requirement.

LWCF funds are reimbursed to Milwaukee County upon completion of eligible project work and submission of required documentation to the Wisconsin DNR.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

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

- 1A: Reflect the full diversity of the County at every level of County government
- 1B: Create and nurture an inclusive culture across County government
- 1C: Increase the number of County contracts awarded to minority and women-owned businesses
- 2A: Determine what, where, and how we deliver services to advance health equity
- 2B: Break down silos across County government to maximize access to and quality of services offered
- 2C: Apply a racial equity lens to all decisions
- 3A: **Invest “upstream” to address root causes of health disparities** - increasing community access to outdoor recreation, cooling, and wellness amenities
- 3B: **Enhance the County’s fiscal health and sustainability** – leveraging LWCF grant funding and partner support to advance implementation of Aquatics Study recommendations
- 3C: Dismantle barriers to diverse and inclusive communities

FISCAL EFFECT

Grant funding in the amount of \$752,783 is requested through the Wisconsin DNR Land and Water Conservation Fund Program. Additional project support in the amount of approximately \$377,000 is anticipated from Milwaukee Parks Foundation.

TERMS

If awarded, LWCF grant-funded projects are expected to be completed by 2030.

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

PREPARED BY:

Robert Senglaub, Contracts Manager, Milwaukee County Parks
Delaney Pichotta, Grants Coordinator, Milwaukee County Parks

APPROVED BY:

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

ATTACHMENTS:

Resolution
Fiscal Note
PowerPoint
DNR Application

CC: David Crowley, County Executive
Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, County Executive's Office
Priscilla Coggs-Jones, Committee on Parks & Culture Member
Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
Janelle M. Jensen, Legislative Services Division Mgr, Office of the County Clerk
Nicholas Sinram, Executive Director, Department of Administrative Services
Vince Masterson, Fiscal & Strategic Asset Coordinator, DAS
Pamela Bryant, Capital Finance Manager, Comptroller's Office
Justin Rodriguez, Capital Finance Analyst, Comptroller's Office
Kelsey Nyen, Committee Coordinator, Office of the County Clerk
Anthony Rux, Budget & Management Analyst, DAS-PSB
Sandy Saltzstein, Research and Policy Analyst
Anthony Rux, Budget & Management Analyst, DAS-PSB
Sandy Saltzstein, Research and Policy Analyst
Sheldon Wasserman, Committee on Parks & Culture Chairperson