



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

Date: June 26, 2017

To: Jason Haas, Chair, Parks, Energy and Environment Committee

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

Subject: **Fund Transfer Request to Recognize the Award of United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) Grant Funding for the South Shore Park Beach Improvements Project (INFORMATION)**

ISSUE

Informational report on the Fund Transfer Request to recognize the award of EPA GLRI grant funding for planning and design related to near-shore water quality improvements that address beach-related Beneficial Use Impairments (BUIs) at the South Shore Park Beach.

BACKGROUND

The Milwaukee County Parks and the Architecture, Engineering & Environmental Services Section of the Department of Administrative Services request a fund transfer to create expenditure authority for a Capital Project WPXXX-South Shore Park Beach Improvements. Permission to apply for the grant was authorized as part of County Board File 16-533.

The GLRI was launched in 2010 by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) to accelerate efforts to protect and restore the Great Lakes, the largest system of fresh surface water in the world. Working through GLRI Action Plans, Federal agencies use GLRI resources to strategically target the biggest threats to the Great Lakes ecosystem and to accelerate progress toward long term goals. A major focus has been on cleaning up Great Lakes Areas of Concern (AOC).

The U.S.-Canada Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (Annex 1 of the 2012 Protocol) defines AOCs as "geographic areas designated by the Parties where significant impairment of beneficial uses has occurred as a result of human activities at the local level." An impairment of beneficial uses means a change in the chemical, physical or biological integrity of the Great Lakes system. Examples of beneficial use impairments



(BUIs) include degraded fish and wildlife populations, restrictions on drinking water consumption or taste and odor problems, and beach closings.

There are 27 U.S. AOCs in the Great Lakes basin, including the Milwaukee Estuary AOC. The EPA provides direct funding to states for implementing the AOC program. The state then distributes those funds to local groups to implement the AOC program. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is tasked with implementing the AOC in Wisconsin. In performance of that role, the DNR has taken the initiative to apply for \$350,000 in GLRI Noncompetitive AOC funds on behalf of Parks for the South Shore Park Beach Improvements Project.

Improvements to the South Shore Park beach and water quality have been identified as necessary to address the Beach Closings/Recreational Restrictions BUI in the Milwaukee Estuary AOC. The 1.7-acre South Shore Park Beach regularly ranks among the worst in the nation in water quality testing and closures. The DNR has secured \$350,000 to hire a qualified consultant to perform planning, design, bidding and permitting services to study and make recommendations that address beach-related BUIs at the park.

The primary goal of the project is a reduction in the frequency of beach closings in Southshore Park. The beach study would complement efforts already underway by Parks to improve aging facilities, repair failing infrastructure and update the design of the South Shore Park waterfront area to better accommodate facility users.

There are no County funds required for this project, although Milwaukee County staff will play an active role in project implementation in the form of input and oversight.

RECOMMENDATION

No action requested. Informational item unless further action required.

Prepared by: Jill Organ, Chief of Planning and Development

Approved by:



John Dargle, Jr., CPRP, Director

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- Marina Dimitrijevic, Supervisor, District 4
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