

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

Date: 4/22/2022

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 final report on findings from 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 permanent closure to constructed elements within the lake.

The project team presented a preliminary presentation at the March 2022 Parks, Energy, and Environment Committee, and will return to the May PEEC meeting to provide information on report conclusions. Through a detailed site analysis to identify the problem(s) at the beach, 5 potential options have been evaluated against the goals of the study, and rough cost estimates have been provided.

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, Executive Director Milwaukee County Parks



ATTACHMENTS:

McKinley Beach Study – Final Report

cc: David Crowley, County Executive
Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, County Executive's Office
Parks, Energy and Environment Committee Members
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