

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

Date: June 18, 2025

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

From: Guy Smith, Executive Director, Milwaukee County Parks

Subject: State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Urban and Community Forestry Grant

File Type: Action Report

REQUEST

From the Executive Director of Milwaukee County Parks requesting authorization to apply for and accept State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Urban and Community Forestry Grant

POLICY

State statute provides that the County Board may accept donations and grants for any public governmental purpose within the powers of the county.

Wisconsin State Statutes:	59.52 (19)
Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances:	

BACKGROUND

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) administers the Urban Forestry Grant under Wisconsin State Statute 23.097 and Chapter NR 47.

The DNR's Urban Forestry Grant program is designed to support projects and programs that improve a community's capacity to manage its trees. Toward that end, the Parks Department seeks Urban Forestry Grant support to assist with tree purchasing in efforts to mitigate the impact of trees removed due to the Emerald Ash Borer. The program will expand the capacity of Parks' forestry operations by:

- Improving the ability for Parks to replace trees removed due to the Emerald Ash Borer;
- Increasing tree diversity and implementing the department's forestry management plan;
- Promoting Parks' financial sustainability by securing alternative funding sources for tree purchases;
- Support reforestation efforts by friends groups throughout Milwaukee County.

The estimated cost of the project is \$50,000, with a DNR share of no more than \$25,000

and a local match of \$25,000, which will be provided through in-kind staff labor. In accordance with grant requirements, Milwaukee County Parks identifies the Operations Manager – Land Resource Division as the Authorized Representative to complete the following:

- Sign and submit the grant application;
- Sign a grant agreement between Milwaukee County Parks and the DNR;
- Submit interim and/or final reports to the DNR to satisfy the grant agreement;
- Submit grant reimbursement request to the DNR;
- Sign and submit other required documentation.

Projects may start no earlier than January 1, 2026 and must be completed by December 31, 2026.

Related File No's:	24-721, 19-778, 14-810
Previous Action Date(s):	

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

This request aligns to the strategic plan by enhancing the county's fiscal health and sustainability. Parks is looking to be as efficient and creative as possible to fund improvements to existing infrastructure.

FISCAL EFFECT

The grant requires a 50% local match. The match would be provided through in-kind staff labor.

TERMS

Applications are open on an annual basis.

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

None

PREPARED BY:

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

APPROVED BY:

Guy Smith, Executive Director Milwaukee County Parks

ATTACHMENTS:

Resolution

Fiscal Note

Presentation

CC: David Crowley, County Executive
Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, County Executive's Office
Sheldon Wasserman, Committee on Parks & Culture Chairperson
Steve Taylor, Committee on Parks & Culture Vice Chairperson
Priscilla Coggs-Jones, Committee on Parks & Culture Member
Jack Eckblad, Committee on Parks & Culture Member
Felesia Martin, Committee on Parks & Culture Member
Juan Miguel Martinez, Committee on Parks & Culture Member
Anne O'Connor, 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
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
Anthony Rux, Budget & Management Analyst, DAS-PSB
Sandy Saltzstein, Research and Policy Analyst