

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

Date: August 28, 2024

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

From: Guy Smith, Executive Parks Director, Milwaukee County Parks

Subject: Bender Park

File Type: Informational Report

REQUEST

This report is for informational purposes, there is no action request at this time.

POLICY

Specific Adopted Budget:	2023; 2024
Specific Adopted Capital Project:	WP0748; WP0778; WP0750

BACKGROUND

Boat Park Boat Launch Sediment Abatement (Dredging) WP0778

Funded in the 2024 capital budget, plans for dredging of the Bender Park Boat Launch are approximately 85% complete, and have been submitted to both the Wisconsin DNR for a General Waterway Permit and the Army Corps of Engineers for a Nationwide Permit 35. Construction is expected to take place in late 2024 and early 2025.

Plans under permit review include management of anticipated spoils, to be distributed in the upper parking lot of the park. The result will raise the parking lot site, reduce the oversized lot to a more appropriate size for the passive park use present, and will allow opportunities for native restoration that will be complementary to the adjacent Primary Environmental Corridor.

The current project to dredge the launch is being planned to remove 2 to 3 times as much sediment as was done in 2007, 2011, and 2013. With the larger volume of sediment being addressed, it possible that this solution will yield another 10 years of navigability for the launch area. The 10+ year solution window leaves Parks with a reasonable amount of time to evaluate the need for a redesign or yet another dredge and reflect that need in the department's CIP outlay. The 2024 cost estimate for reconfiguration of the launch was \$5.9m, so Parks has chosen to evaluate the site conditions over time against the other urgent needs in the system, provided that the dredging solution is still effective.

Oak Leaf Trail Connectivity through Bender Park WP0748:

Parks was granted 80% project funding in 2020 for a 1.9-mile Oak Leaf Trail extension through Bender Park. Having recently completed trail connections to the north end of Bender Park, this extension towards the south edge of County is a desired connection for the greater trail network in Milwaukee County. Public engagement for the selected route through the park was conducted in early 2024. Plans are currently at 60% design and construction is planned in spring and summer of 2025.

Bender Park Roadway and Adjacent Drainage Corrections WP0750

Funded in 2023, design solutions for both the Bender Park Roadway and adjacent drainage area are in development and planned 90% completion in early 2025 in order to make a departmental request for 2026 construction through the capital budget process. Due to the multiple projects in Bender Park, it was determined that the best construction sequence would have the roadway reconstruction after the approximately 1000 truckloads of sediment are transported through the park. Construction is expected in spring and summer of 2026.

Swim Safety Concerns:

Since August 14, 2024, there have been four water rescues, five EMS, and one fire response to the Bender Park beach area. Working with the Oak Creek Fire Department other emergency response agencies; hazards were identified, and recommendations were made. The Parks Department has ordered replacement signs, increased the frequency of life ring inspections, and are working with forestry to manage vegetation along the rocks and adjacent land to the beach to improve the site lines and the overall visibility for increased awareness and response to distressed individuals.

Related File No's:	23-308 ; 22-40 , 22-391 , 15-772 , 15-771 , 23-789 ; 20-413
Associated File No's (Including Transfer Packets):	
Previous Action Date(s):	

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

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

3B: Enhance the County's fiscal health and sustainability

FISCAL EFFECT:

N/A

ATTACHMENT:

PowerPoint to be presented September 3, 2024

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APPROVED BY:

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