

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

Date: June 21, 2024
To: Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
From: Guy Smith, Executive Parks Director for Milwaukee County Parks
Subject: 2024 Parks Demo Capital Project (WP055001)
File Type: Action Report

REQUEST

From the Executive Director of Milwaukee County Parks requesting authorization to dispose of various capital assets to promote the long-term sustainability.

POLICY

Wisconsin State Statutes:	
Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances:	
Specific Adopted Budget:	
Specific Adopted Budget Amendment:	
Specific Adopted Capital Project:	WP055001

BACKGROUND

Milwaukee County Parks (MCP) covers more than 15,000 acres of land throughout Milwaukee County. On these acres of land are more than 460 buildings that have approximately 1.4M square feet of space. In addition to these buildings, MCP maintains a significant amount of paved assets throughout the system.

While a significant number of buildings and accompanying paved assets are used for programming, public rentals, or MCP operations, many are no longer used. These buildings that are unoccupied are vulnerable to graffiti, vandalism, arson, and create a negative impact on park users and the adjacent neighborhoods. In addition, there is continued decline of these physical structures, which pose additional deferred maintenance costs and increased safety concerns. Removing these assets aligns with MCP 2024-2026 Strategic Plan. Objective One seeks to equitably balance the parks system to be sustainable. Parks sees these as opportunities to convert an underused or neglected park asset with something more modern and attractive to park users. Parks has been making small progress at various parks where neglected assets are improved in Cathedral Square, Dineen, McCarty, Scout Lake, St Martins, Tubman, and Wedgewood Parks.

In the 2024 Capital Budget, MCP received \$500,000 in funding through WP055001 (Parks

Demo Capital Project). This project calls for Parks to prioritize the demolish “no longer in use buildings, assets, or areas of pavement.” Over the past few months, Parks has been working with the Department of Administrative Services’ Architecture and Engineering Team to develop priorities for converting some sites to a more active use, and has also gathered information on permits, fixture removals, demolition costs.

For some assets recommended for this project, Parks has set aside funds to develop replacement assets. Parks’ Engagement Team would work with impacted Supervisors, friends groups, and community members to determine potential replacement options.

Parks has identified the following buildings, assets, and pavement as candidates for demolition:

- Comfort Building (Cupertino Park) – 907 square foot building that has been unused for more than 15 years. This building is located 930 feet north of the South Shore Fish Cleaning station that has restrooms available for public use. Removing this building would allow for the placement of a public asset such as picnic tables that would provide a scenic view for users.
- Utility Building/Comfort Building (Manitoba Park) – 896 square foot building that has not been opened in recent years due to deteriorating condition. Replacing this building with another amenity such as an open-air shelter or hard surface court would enhance use of the park and adjacent playground.
- Pump House (Lincoln Park Golf Course) – This abandoned pump house has not been used by MCP since the early 1990s. Removing this 140 square foot structure would remove this from the Milwaukee River floodplain and eliminate a public safety hazard.
- Pavilion (St. Martins Park) – This building is not used by MCP and has significant safety concerns, including a failing roof. Removing this 1,190 square foot structure would complement the already removed asphalt pad at this location and provide additional green space at this park adding more recreational space adjacent to a school.
- Pool Basin (Holler Park) – This facility at Holler Park is no longer in operation by the Easter Seals. With the main building being used by the Office of Emergency Management for short term emergency shelter operations through the Red Cross, removing the 7,290 square foot pool basin could provide space for another asset for park users.
- Tennis Courts (KK Parkway) – These courts (located on KK Parkway between 20th and 22nd Streets) are in deteriorating condition and have not been operable for more than 10 years. Removing these courts would eliminate 31,000 square feet of pavement and provide additional green space adjacent to the 100-year floodplain.
- Asphalt path (Estabrook Park) – removing this old service road and asphalt path and restore to turf would eliminate approximately 4,650 square feet of pavement.
- Parking lot (Hales Corner Park) – this parking lot on the west side of the park off Godsell Avenue is in deteriorating condition and is not used for any active programming since there is redundant parking on the east side of the park. Removing approximately 22,000 square feet of pavement would allow for

additional green space at this park.

- Asphalt pad (Indigenous Peoples' Park) – removing an asphalt pad and abandoned batting cages would create an additional 12,000 square feet of green space in the park that could provide another park amenity, including a hard surface court.
- Parkway trail conversions (Lincoln Creek Parkway and Little Menomonee Parkway) – Parks is currently in the final stages of design of the hike and bike trails to replace the existing parkways at Lincoln Creek Parkway (between 23rd Street and 26th Street) and Little Menomonee Parkway (between Appleton Road and Leon Terrace Drive). Funding from this capital project would support the demolition efforts of these American Recovery Program Act (ARPA) projects so that new trail improvements can be fully funded.

All proposed demolitions and conversions would include a due diligence review of historical requirements, including coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for clarification of resulting mitigation needs. Removing these buildings and assets would enhance MCP's long term operational sustainability. Removing five buildings with approximately 3,500 square feet would reduce the maintenance footprint of the department. Eliminating seven asphalt assets would convert approximately 85,000 square feet of paved areas into two acres greenspaces.

Once these projects are approved by the Board, MCP will move forward with the approval process for any demolitions. MCP will also work to engage the public on any asset replacements at various parks.

Related File No's:	23-889 (Adopted 2024 operating and capital budget)
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](#):

- 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
- 3B: Enhance the County’s fiscal health and sustainability
- 3C: Dismantle barriers to diverse and inclusive communities

FISCAL EFFECT

Funded through 2024 Capital Budget (WP055001)

TERMS

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

Sean Hayes, Director of Architecture and Engineering Services, Department of Administrative Services

PREPARED BY:

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

APPROVED BY:

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

ATTACHMENTS:

Power Point

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
Felesia Martin, Committee on Parks & Culture Member
Juan Miguel Martinez, Committee on Parks & Culture Member
Jack Eckblad, 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
Ciara Miller, Research & Policy Analyst, Office of the Comptroller
Anthony Rux, Budget & Management Analyst, DAS-PSB