



Legislative Fiscal Bureau

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February 15, 2023

TO: Members
Joint Committee on Finance

FROM: Bob Lang, Director

SUBJECT: Natural Resources: Stewardship Grand Chute Arrowhead Park -- Agenda Item I

On November 14, 2022, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) requested approval under s. 23.0917(6m) of the statutes to provide a local assistance grant of \$663,800 from the property development and local assistance subprogram of the Warren Knowles-Gaylord Nelson Stewardship Program to the Town of Grand Chute for the Arrowhead Park redevelopment. Notice of an objection to the proposed grant was made on December 5, 2022.

BACKGROUND

Local Assistance Grants

Under the property development and local assistance subprogram, DNR may award stewardship grants to local units of government (LUGs) for acquisition and nature-based recreational development of local conservation land. DNR may award up to \$9.25 million in local assistance grants each fiscal year through 2025-26. Funding obligated for local assistance may be used for: (a) grants for acquisition of urban green space; (b) grants for acquisition and development of local parks; (c) grants for acquisition of property development rights; and (d) grants for acquisition and development of sites along urban rivers. Stewardship funds may generally be provided for up to 50% of eligible project costs.

Arrowhead Park

Arrowhead Park is a 12.9-acre park in a residential section of the Town of Grand Chute. The park amenities include tennis courts, basketball courts, a pavilion, restrooms, and a baseball diamond. Additionally, the park includes a 0.75-mile path system which connects the park to adjacent residential areas through privately owned wooded areas. The path systems consist of asphalt and boardwalk trails that were constructed with stewardship funds approximately 20 years ago. The trail surfaces are nearing the end of their useable lives and require reconstruction.

Grand Chute plans to restore the trails by removing old boardwalk sections, regrading the trail base, rebuilding the boardwalk, and repaving asphalt sections of trail. The Town plans to install concrete ramps to make the trails wheelchair-accessible. Additionally, plans call for the installation of lighting. The Town estimated that the project would cost \$1,327,500 and applied for a stewardship grant of \$663,800, for 50% of the estimated costs. The following table shows the estimated cost for each element of the project.

Arrowhead Park Trails Cost Estimate

<u>Element</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>
<i>Pre-Construction</i>	
Engineering	\$210,000
Mobilization and Erosion Control	82,000
Demolition and Excavation	<u>64,650</u>
Subtotal	\$356,650
 <i>Construction</i>	
Boardwalk	\$750,000
Lighting	120,000
Concrete	45,000
Restoration	32,000
Asphalt Surfacing	12,750
Aggregate	9,375
Ramp and Connections	<u>1,700</u>
Subtotal	\$970,825
Total	\$1,327,475

As shown in the table, the boardwalk reconstruction is the project element with the highest estimated cost. The Arrowhead Park trails system runs through wetlands, so much of the trail must be elevated. Grand Chute estimates that rebuilding 2,500 linear feet of boardwalk will cost \$750,000, or \$300 per linear foot. Costs include both labor and materials. The current boardwalk consist of wood, which has rotted in some areas and poses safety risks to trail users. Grand Chute plans to replace the wooden boardwalk with composite materials, which are more durable, less susceptible to weather damage, and have a longer lifespan.

The Town also plans to install lighting on the trail to improve safety. Currently, the trail is unlit. Site plans show that lights will be installed in nine locations throughout the trail, including all three trail entrances, at the junction where one section of the trail meets the trunk of the trail, and periodically throughout both legs of the trail.

It should be noted that the estimated costs shown in the table are an engineer's estimate of probable costs. The actual project costs may differ after the Town receives bids for the project. Stewardship grants to local units of governments are awarded based on the estimated construction costs but paid on a reimbursement basis for actual costs. Therefore, if the grant is approved as requested [Alternative 1] and bids come in higher than estimated, the Town will only be eligible to receive a stewardship grant up to \$663,800. If final costs are lower than estimated, the Town will be

eligible to receive a stewardship grant for 50% of actual project costs, up to \$663,800.

The Committee could consider alternate grant awards [Alternative 2]. Depending upon the bids for the project, if funding is reduced, the Town might be required to provide additional funding to complete the project as originally proposed or reduce the scope of the project. The Town anticipates beginning construction in March, 2023. Without restoration, the Town anticipates that the boardwalk will deteriorate to the point that it must be closed to the public in a few years.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve the DNR request to provide a \$663,800 grant from the local assistance subprogram of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program to the Town of Grand Chute for the Arrowhead Park trail renovation.
2. Provide an alternative grant amount, not to exceed the requested \$663,800.
3. Deny the request.

Prepared by: Eric Hepler