



MEMORANDUM

To: MCWD Board of Managers
From: Renae Clark, Planner/Project Manager
Date: July 13, 2017
Re: Arden Park Project Briefing

Purpose:

Provide an update on the Arden Park concept planning process, schedule and budget planning.

Summary:

Pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the City of Edina, the District and City have produced a draft concept plan for Arden Park which includes removing the existing dam at W. 54th Street and integrates creek restoration, stormwater management and recreational improvements. Since the MCWD Board and City Council review of the draft plan in February, the concept plan has been revised to account for input received, presented to the public at the third of three planned community meetings, and presented to the Edina Parks Commission.

Following the third community meeting there has been substantial new neighborhood conversation and input on the concept plan. There are specific community concerns regarding dam removal and the ecological benefits of the project. In effort to have an open and inclusive public process to inform the concept plan, staff have delayed the concept plan approval process and are hosting additional community meetings. The final community meeting, in follow up to the June 13 meeting, is scheduled for Monday July 17, 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM at Edina Public Works. Staff is planning to bring a request for approval of the concept plan to City Council on August 1 and to the Board of Managers on August 10.

Budget Planning Process:

The preliminary project cost estimates are divided into categories of park facilities, trails, creek and vegetation restoration, and stormwater management. The draft funding and District budgeting plan assumes City cost share, District levy split over 2018 and 2019, and grant funds. Several grant funding sources have been identified for the project. Many grants have application deadlines which we are tracking, to potentially secure funding for late 2018 – 2019 construction should the project be advanced by the City and District.

The Board of Managers has requested that they be notified of grant opportunities and, when time allows, authorize staff to apply for grants. According to the MOU, the City and MCWD are working cooperatively to identify and solicit grant funds that may be available to fund the improvements identified in the concept plan. Grant funds identified include:

- BWSR Clean Water Fund
- Hennepin County Natural Resources Grant Program
- MN DNR Outdoor Recreation Grant Program
- Metropolitan Council Stormwater Grant
- Metropolitan Council Green Infrastructure Grant

The Board has previously authorized submission of applications for BWSR Clean Water Funds and Hennepin County Natural Resources Grant applications for this project. District staff will be working with the City of Edina on the preparation and submittal of a City grant application next week for the Metropolitan Council Green Infrastructure Grant. If the project is selected for grant funds, project grant agreements will be executed after concept plan approval if the project is advanced.