
Sponsor: Parks & Recreation

Meeting Date: 8/26/2025

Title: Sanitary Sewer Pipeline Right of Entry Agreement with the Metropolitan Council for Access to Grass Lake section of Vadnais-Snail Lakes Regional Park

File Number: 2025-311

Background and Rationale:

The Metropolitan Council (Met Council) owns and operates an existing underground sanitary sewer utility that currently runs through the Grass Lake section of Vadnais-Snail Lakes Regional Park. The Met Council has a need to undertake a public improvement project (MCES Project No. 808861), for Grass Lake Interceptor Relocation Project within the park for the purposes of maintaining existing infrastructure and protecting public health and the environment.

This project need was identified during a recent (2011-2020) decade long flooding event that affected public infrastructure in the area ranging from public roadways, park infrastructure, private residences, and regional utility infrastructure owned and operated by multiple public agencies. Through collaboration of these agencies, the infrastructure in and around Vadnais Snail Lakes Regional Park has been undergoing replacement, relocation in an effort to make it more resilient future high-water events.

The Met Council has prepared project plans, specifications, and necessary agreements in coordination with Parks & Recreation, and the Ramsey County Attorney's Office. The project includes replacement and relocation of the regional interceptor sewer pipe within the park, reconstruction of new manhole structures and associated infrastructure, vegetation removal, site and trail relocation, vegetation restoration and may also include the installation and operation of temporary conveyance systems (pumps and piping). To complete the project, Met Council will need to have access to existing manhole locations and to a proposed new interceptor alignment in the park defined by the access agreement. Due to the complexity of the construction and the potential for unforeseen circumstances, a permanent easement will be established for the new relocated infrastructure following the conclusion of the project in 2027.

The Temporary Right of Entry Agreement enables the required rehabilitation work to be completed on county property, provides access locations, and establishes construction requirements for the sanitary sewer project. The project construction extents shown on Exhibit A and C will be used as the boundary for the Temporary Right of Entry Agreement. Construction staging for equipment and materials will be allowed within the park as defined by the approved plan construction extents and authorized by county staff. Met Council will notify Parks & Recreation, 72 hours prior to the start of construction. Met Council will be responsible for all restoration costs of impacted areas including hard surface bituminous and concrete pavement areas, turf, natural areas, and park related site amenities within the project area.

A new trail will be constructed by Met Council to replace an existing trail through the park. The proposed trail will be constructed such that it will facilitate future Met Council maintenance vehicles while still serving recreational park users. The trail will be owned, operated and maintained by the county at the conclusion of the project.

The Temporary Right of Entry Agreement area for purposes of constructing the project, which may include e.g. staging construction materials and equipment, banking soil or project debris, construction project staff parking, installation of utilities, or other specific purposes.

A compensation agreement has been developed as part of the Temporary Right of Entry agreement and is included within the agreement as an Exhibit B Compensation. The total amount of compensation is estimated at \$598,218 for tree replacement and native vegetation restoration. To complete agreed upon restoration activities, Parks & Recreation is requesting a project number be established to hold the funds so county staff and its contractors, can utilize them to complete tree planting restoration, landscape planting and maintenance, and post project restoration. Met Council will compensate the county based on final project unit prices and final quantities after work is completed in the fall of 2027.

Recommendation:

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners resolved to:

1. Approve a Temporary Right of Entry Agreement with the Metropolitan Council for access to Grass Lake section of Vadnais-Snail Lakes Regional Park for the completion of a sanitary improvement project.
2. Authorize the Chair and Chief Clerk to execute the Temporary Right of Entry agreement.
3. Authorize the County Manager to enter into agreements and amendments in accordance with the county's procurement policies and procedures, provided the amounts are consistent with compensation requirements within the Right of Entry Agreement with the Metropolitan Council.
4. Authorize the County Manager to accept compensation funds from the Metropolitan Council to be given to the Parks & Recreation department to complete work identified within the compensation section of the Temporary Right of Entry Agreement with Metropolitan Council.
5. Authorize the County Manager to establish a project number for restoration compensation funds in the Parks and Recreation budget.

A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Jebens-Singh, seconded by Commissioner Xiong. Motion passed.

Aye: - 5: Jebens-Singh, McGuire, Miller, Moran, and Xiong

Excused: - 2: McMurtrey, and Ortega

By: 
Jason Yang, Chief Clerk - County Board