

Request for Board Action Details

File #: 2022-496
Type: Administrative Item **Status:** Passed
In control: Board of Commissioners
On agenda: 9/20/2022 **Final action:** 9/20/2022
Title: Cooperative Agreement with the City of Saint Paul for Winter Recreation Operations
Sponsors: Parks & Recreation
Indexes:
Code sections:
Attachments: 1. Cooperative Agreement, 2. Resolution

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
9/20/2022	1	Board of Commissioners	approved	Pass

Sponsor: Parks & Recreation

Title

Cooperative Agreement with the City of Saint Paul for Winter Recreation Operations

Recommendation

1. Approve the Cooperative Agreement with the city of Saint Paul, 15 West Kellogg Boulevard, Saint Paul, MN 55102 for a joint ski pass system and shared use of the Battle Creek Recreation center for the period of September 1, 2022, through August 31, 2023.
2. Authorize the Chair and Chief Clerk to execute the cooperative agreement.
3. Authorize the County Manager to renew the cooperative agreement up to four additional one-year terms with all other terms and conditions remaining the same, in a form approved by the County Attorney's Office.
4. Authorize a one-time payment of \$25,000 to the city of Saint Paul to support winter sports programming capital investments at Battle Creek Recreation Center.

Background and Rationale

In 2021, Ramsey County Parks & Recreation secured funding from the Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Amendment from the Metropolitan Council and Minnesota State Legislature bonding funds to build snowmaking infrastructure at Battle Creek Regional Park on 4 kilometers of cross-country ski trails and a sledding hill that is free to the public. Following other similar park agencies with manmade snow operations, such as at Theodore Wirth, Hyland Hills and Elm Creek, Ramsey County Parks & Recreation proposes to enact fees for use of this new facility to offset operational costs. The fees proposed are in line other similar facilities.

Additionally, Ramsey County Parks & Recreation and Saint Paul Parks and Recreation are partnering to offer a joint ski pass system. These ski passes grant access to Ramsey County and the city of Saint Paul's winter recreation areas: Vadnais-Snail Lake Regional Park, Tamarack Nature Center, Battle Creek Regional Park, Como Park Ski Center, Highland 9 Ski Area and Phalen Regional Park, and offers annual passes for skiing solely on natural snow, an "All-Access" pass that includes natural and manmade snow loops, day passes and student passes, as well as ski rentals, giving residents a variety of options for participating in winter recreation.

Passes will be sold jointly online, as well as onsite at Saint Paul's Battle Creek Recreation Center and Como Ski Area, and Ramsey County's Tamarack Nature Center. This joint ski pass is a Resident's First solution that is comprehensive and simple for residents in the county. Additionally, this agreement identifies some shared use of the Battle Creek Recreation Center for Winter Recreation Area operations. City of Saint Paul Recreation is making investments in the Battle Creek Recreation Center including providing areas to store and check out cross country ski equipment for trail users. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation is cost sharing for a total of \$25,000 for the investments being made in the Battle Creek Recreation Center. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation and Saint Paul Parks and Recreation have agreed upon a revenue share from the ski pass sales as is illustrated within the cooperative agreement.

County Goals (Check those advanced by Action)

☒ Well-being

☒ Prosperity

☒ Opportunity

☐ Accountability

Racial Equity Impact

Ramsey County and Saint Paul are working together to provide free programming options and ski passes to residents. On April 15, 2022, the Ramsey County Board approved racial equity grant funds of \$164,000 from the Metropolitan Council to develop an equitable learn-to-ski program. This program will not only serve an established audience of youth and adult cross-country skiers but will provide free healthy amenities locally for racially diverse communities that may not have the funds, access, or the cultural tradition to make winter recreation a part of their lives. In addition, the sledding hill that has been used in recent years will remain free and open for public use.

Community Participation Level and Impact

In May 2022, meetings were held with high school coaches, event organizers and ski community enthusiasts to solicit feedback on fee structure and other operational considerations for the Winter Recreation Area. Additionally, during the Battle Creek Master Plan process (November 2019 through October 2021), numerous pop-up workshops, community meetings and collaborative design sessions were held at Battle Creek Regional Park and nearby areas to gather community feedback and share their vision of what the park should look like. Some participant feedback mentioned partnering with the city of St. Paul to offer programs and services for the Winter Recreation Area.

☒ Inform

☐ Consult

☐ Involve

☐ Collaborate

☐ Empower

Fiscal Impact

The proposed cooperative agreement is a cost-effective way of providing onsite amenities at the Battle Creek Winter Recreation Area. The revenue budget of \$171,016 which will be generated from ski pass sales was already approved in the 2022-23 budget process. One hundred percent of revenue from online sales of All-Access Passes, and 95% of revenue from in-person sales of All-Access Passes at the Battle Creek Recreation Center will be retained by or paid to the county; five percent of revenue from in-person sales of All-Access Passes at the Battle Creek Recreation Center will be retained by or paid to the city of Saint Paul. The city of Saint Paul will retain all revenue from Battle Creek Recreation Center rental of cross-country skis. The \$25,000 cost share investment will be made utilizing Battle Creek Winter Recreation Area Capital Project funding.

Last Previous Action

On August 16, 2022, The Ramsey County Board approved the updated fee schedule for Cross-Country Ski and Battle Creek Winter Recreation Area Operations which also introduced a joint ski pass system with the city of Saint Paul. (Resolution B2022-190).

On June 1, 2021, The Ramsey County Board approved Design/Build Part 1 for the Battle Creek Winter Recreation Area to install a permanent snowmaking system on 2.5 kilometers of the lighted ski trail, a recreational tubing/sledding area, and an equipment/maintenance facility to support the snowmaking system operations and maintenance (Resolution B2021-120).

Attachments

1. Cooperative Agreement