



Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission

MEMO

To: BCWMC Commissioners and Alternate Commissioners
From: Laura Jester, Administrator
Date: June 8, 2023

RE: Sochacki Park Water Quality Project Background, CIP Funding, and Feasibility Study

At the March meeting, the Commission approved the TAC recommendation to add the Sochacki Park Water Quality Project to the 5-year CIP and earmarked \$600,000 in CIP funding. In order to officially add the project to the CIP, a minor plan amendment was proposed. The comment period for the minor amendment was extended to August 8th to accommodate Hennepin County’s process. Other state agencies reviewing the proposed amendment commended the Commission for keeping an updated CIP and had no concerns with adding the project to the CIP.

Because there are multiple partners on this project and because the timeline for the feasibility study, minor plan amendment, and setting the levy amount is not typical for BCWMC CIP projects, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) among BCWMC, Three Rivers Park District (TRPD), Golden Valley, and Robbinsdale was recently executed.

A feasibility study is underway and is being funded by TRPD (see the memo with feasibility study update attached). The kick off meeting for the study was held June 5th and was attended by me, Commissioner Sicora, Commissioner Pentel, and Chair Cesnik along with TRPD, Golden Valley, Robbinsdale, and Barr Engineering. Commission staff and commissioners will continue to be very involved as the study progresses. A draft feasibility study will be presented at the August meeting.

A BCWMC project webpage is now posted that describes the project and provides a link to the subwatershed analysis on which the project is based:
<https://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects/all-projects/sochacki-park-water-quality-improvement-project>.

The original CIP project fact sheet is attached again here for additional reference.

Staff recommends that the Commission include \$300,000 in its 2024 levy and \$300,000 in its 2025 levy for this project. With the overall project cost estimated at \$2.3M, the BCWMC funding represents about 25% of the total project costs. Additional project funding is expected from TRPD, the cities, and grants.

Project Category: Water Quality

Project Title: Sochacki Park Water Quality Improvements

Total Estimated Cost: \$2,300,000 (multiple funding sources)

BCWMC Project Number: [Staff will assign number]

Description:
 This project in the cities of Robbinsdale and Golden Valley will reduce total phosphorus by approximately 67 lbs/year, improving water quality within MnDNR protected wetlands and Bassett Creek, reducing chronic erosion and sedimentation, enhancing buffers and wildlife habitat, and improving recreation and educational opportunities. This is a joint project with multiple partners seeking grant funds from multiple sources. BMP recommendations are based on a subwatershed assessment completed in 2022.

Source of Project Funding	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
CIP Account – BCWMC ad valorem tax levy through Hennepin County					

Staff will assign funding year.

Justification:

Public wetlands within this highly-used regional park are ecologically degraded, negatively impacting Bassett Creek which is impaired for biota. Wetlands do not meet the subwatershed assessment study goals for total phosphorus (concentration of 75 µg/L), chlorophyll a (concentration of 40 µg/L), or secchi disk transparency (1 meter). This highly-collaborative project seeks to protect and improve DNR wetlands and Bassett Creek with a holistic approach while enhancing existing and planned nature-based programming in the park. Partners include the cities of Robbinsdale, Golden Valley, and Crystal, Three Rivers Park District (TRPD), MnDNR, and potentially others.

Scheduling and Project Status:

Subwatershed assessment completed by partners in 2022. TRPD is funding the engineering and permitting to a 90% design level in 2023, consistent with BCWMC feasibility study parameters, to improve and strengthen grant applications.

Relationship to BCWMC Plan and Other Projects:

Project is part of the BCWMC trunk system. Project improves or protects water quality in a priority waterbody (Bassett Creek) Project addresses erosion and sedimentation issues. Project addresses multiple Commission goals (e.g., water quality, runoff volume, aesthetics, wildlife habitat, recreation, education) Subwatershed draining to project includes more than one community (three cities)

Effect on Annual Operations Costs:

This project is anticipated to have no effect on BCWMC Annual Operations Costs.



Sochacki Park in Robbinsdale and Golden Valley, showing Grimes, North Rice, and South Rice Ponds. Yellow markers show proposed sites for pond creation and restoration activities. Bassett Creek is immediately downstream (south) of South Rice Pond.

Summary and Planning Level Costs of Proposed Activities, February 17, 2023

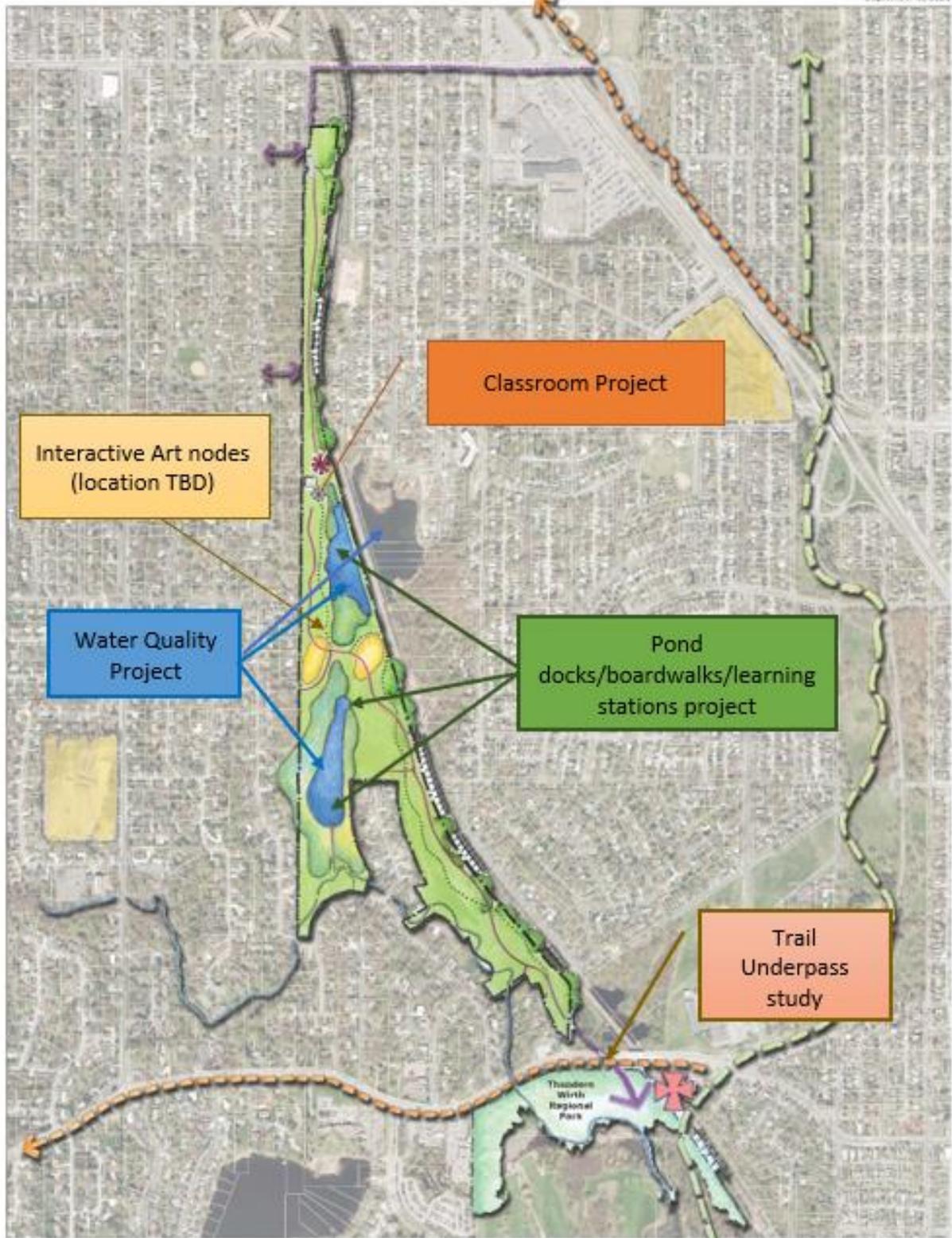
BMP ID/ Location	Estimated Annual TP Removal (lbs/yr)	Planning Level Capital Cost Estimate	Recommended Sequence for Implementation
Revegetate/control upland soil erosion	NA	\$ 10,000.00	1a
Increased Street Sweeping in untreated subwatersheds	NA	NA	1b
Clear inlet/outlet debris, remove sediment deltas and stabilize erosion	NA	\$ 100,000.00	1c
Conduct pond water level drawdowns	NA	\$ 154,000.00	1d
Dredge/expand existing SR4 pond (Basin J)	33.5	\$ 456,000.00	2a
Construct stormwater pond at GR6	14.9	\$ 684,000.00	2b
Construct stormwater pond at NR1	3.8	\$ 287,000.00	2c
Construct stormwater pond at SR3	3.7	\$ 392,000.00	2d
Alum Treatment of Grimes, North and South Rice Ponds	11.2	\$ 217,000.00	3
TOTAL	67.1	\$ 2,300,000.00	

Potential Funding Options

- BWSR Clean Water Funds
- Conservation Partners Legacy (for habitat components)
- Hennepin County Opportunity or Stewardship grants
- MPCA grants and MN Public Facilities Authority funds
- MnDNR short term action request grants
- Partner CIP funds (for potential grant match)

Sochacki Park Improvements

September 8, 2020



0 0.05 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 Miles



Memorandum

To: Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission
From: Barr Engineering Co. (Greg Wilson, PE, and Karen Chandler, PE)
Subject: Item 5C: Update on Sochacki Park Feasibility Study
BCWMC June 15, 2023 Meeting Agenda
Date: June 7, 2023

1.0 Project Update

At the March Commission meeting, the Commission approved adding the Sochacki Park Water Quality Treatment Project (BC-14) to the BCWMC's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for construction in 2024 – 2025, with \$600,000 of funding budgeted for the project. At the April meeting, the Commission approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Three Rivers Park District (TRPD), and the cities of Golden Valley and Robbinsdale. The MOU has since been approved by all entities.

The proposed project includes components in Robbinsdale and Golden Valley and would provide stormwater treatment for areas in both cities, while improving water quality and habitat in Grimes, North Rice, and South Rice Ponds, and the downstream biotic integrity and water quality of Bassett Creek. Grimes, North Rice, and South Rice Ponds are classified as public water wetlands by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MnDNR).

As is required for BCWMC CIP Projects, a feasibility study must be completed prior to BCWMC holding a hearing and ordering the project. Barr Engineering is preparing the feasibility study, which will meet the BCWMC feasibility study requirements, while incorporating and building on the work and information included in the Sochacki Park Subwatershed Assessment. The feasibility study process includes the involvement of BCWMC commissioners, BCWMC administrator, Golden Valley and Robbinsdale staff, and TRPD staff throughout the study process.

The schedule and status of each feasibility study step is described below.

1. Project Meetings/Preliminary Review

This step includes two meetings:

- a) A kickoff meeting held June 5 attended by Commissioners Pentel and Sicora, Chair Cesnik, the Commission administrator, Barr staff, Golden Valley and Robbinsdale staff, and TRPD staff.
- b) A technical stakeholder meeting with BCWMC commissioners, BCWMC administrator, Golden Valley and Robbinsdale staff, TRPD staff, and USACE, MPCA, MnDNR and other agency staff as necessary to discuss concept alternatives and review permit requirements. This meeting will be scheduled soon.

2. Field Investigation

Barr will complete the following field investigations and desktop studies by mid June:

- a) Sediment sampling of Grimes Pond and the SR4 basin (we expect lab results about two weeks after sampling).
- b) Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA). Because the MPCA's What's in my Neighborhood database indicates that other investigations of contamination have occurred, and due to the presence of demolition debris throughout much of the study area, Barr will perform a Phase I ESA to identify potential historical sources of contamination at the property. The ESA will provide our opinion as to whether evidence exists indicating the presence of recognized environmental conditions on the property.
- c) Topographic and utility location survey.
- d) Tree location, diameter, species, and condition survey.
- e) Threatened and endangered species and cultural resources desktop reviews.

Another consultant hired by TRPD will perform wetland delineations; they expect to submit their wetland delineation report by June 30 to the BCWMC, which is the local government unit (LGU) responsible for administering the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) in the area.

The proposed project is located on public land owned by the City of Robbinsdale and City Golden Valley. The property is managed under a joint-powers agreement with Three Rivers Park District, City of Robbinsdale, and Golden Valley. It is anticipated there will be no easement acquisition needed or required for the project.

3. Evaluation and Concept Plans

As part of the Sochacki Park subwatershed assessment, Barr developed rough concepts of each improvement option that allowed for estimating the costs and water quality benefits, but did not develop concept plans or other drawings. Barr will re-evaluate the water quality improvement options and create concept plans that build on the information from the Sochacki Park subwatershed assessment, using the new information generated from the field investigations. Barr will complete this work by mid-July.

4. Public Engagement

This step includes preparing information needed for the June Commission meeting (including this memorandum) and holding one public outreach meeting (to be scheduled soon).

5. Feasibility Report

Barr will prepare and present the draft feasibility study for Commission review at the August 17 meeting, and will prepare and present the final feasibility study for Commission review and approval at the September 21 meeting. Barr will provide drafts of both documents for review and comment by Golden Valley and Robbinsdale commissioners, the BCWMC administrator, Golden Valley and Robbinsdale staff, and TRPD staff prior to their inclusion in the Commission meeting packets.