

Council Agenda Item 26-0680R



MEETING DATE: July 27, 2026

SUBJECT/TITLE: RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ACCEPTANCE OF A GRANT OF \$350,000 FROM THE MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES OUTDOOR RECREATION GRANT PROGRAM TO SUPPORT PARK IMPROVEMENTS AT NORTON PARK.

SUBMITTED BY: Allison Brooks, Project Coordinator, Parks & Recreation

RECOMMENDATION: Approve

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: N/A

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION: Resolution 25-0150R, passed March 10, 2025 – Authorized application to the MN Department of Natural Resources Outdoor Recreation Grant Program for a grant of up to \$350,000 to support park improvements at Norton Park.

Resolution 25-0402R, passed May 12, 2025 – Authorized an agreement with George Bougalis and Sons for demolition of the building at Norton Park in an amount not to exceed \$78,950.

BACKGROUND: Norton Park is located at 431 North 81st Avenue West, Duluth, MN 55807. A planning process was conducted in 2015-2016, culminating in the St. Louis River Corridor Parks Mini-Master Plans, which were adopted in 2016 and included recommendations for Norton Park. In April 2024, the City of Duluth held an interactive community meeting to renew discussions around proposed park improvements and determine current community priorities. In January 2025, a follow-up community meeting was held to review the priorities for park improvements. Accomplishing the community vision for this park requires additional funds beyond the available City funding.

In March 2025, following authorization by City Council (25-0150R), the City of Duluth applied to the Outdoor Recreation Grant Program requesting \$350,000 to support park improvements. This resolution authorizes acceptance of grant funds in an amount of \$350,000 from the Outdoor Recreation Grant Program administered by the MN Department of Natural Resources to support park improvements at Norton Park. The City will meet the required match of \$350,000 through funding from Parks Capital and the Storm Utility Fund.

The community vision for this park will effectively address deferred maintenance while better supporting community gathering. This grant funding will support the realization of community identified priorities to rehabilitate the neighborhood park through replacement of the dilapidated building that was removed in 2025 with a new pavilion, replacement of the playground that is at the end of its useful life, addressing drainage problems at the multi-use field to improve useability, resetting the lifecycle of supporting amenities, constructing new access routes, and implementing needed stormwater management practices on site.

BUDGET/FISCAL IMPACT: This grant is budgeted to support improvements at Norton Park, and the required match has been budgeted with \$310,000 from Parks Capital and \$40,000 from the Storm Utility Fund. Acceptance of this grant will allow the project to proceed as planned, designed, and communicated to the community.

OPTIONS: Authorize acceptance of the \$350,000 grant to support implementation of planned improvements at Norton Park or decline the grant funding to halt the project and require either additional City funding to complete the project or scale back the project and require redesign of improvements within the available City funding.

NECESSARY ACTION: Authorize acceptance of the grant.

ATTACHMENTS: Exhibit A – Grant Agreement