

Memo

To: Mayor Hall
From: Sanya Vitale
cc: City Council
Date: 05/09/2023
Re: MDNR Spark Grant

The City has been named as 1 of only 39 communities Statewide as eligible for a MDNR Spark Grant <https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/buy-and-apply/grants/rec/sparkgrants> (parks and recreation). Here is a List of Eligible Communities: <https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/buy-and-apply/grants/rec/sparkgrants/cmfp-pathway/list-of-communities>

This is an amazing opportunity as it is a **match-free** grant that can range from \$100,000-\$1 million. Marcy Hamilton from Southwest Michigan Planning Commission and Mickey Bittner from Wightman have both stated what an incredible opportunity this is for the City of Hartford and have offered to provide assistance. The City has to control the property, it has to be a park and the idea is that should an event like COVID happen again, that people could use the area for outdoor recreation.

I have attached the original deed to Lots 1 & 2 of Block 9 which are the *only ones* with the associated deed restriction.

The other document that I have attached is from the most recent grant application to the MDNR for upgrades at Ely Park in which the former City Attorney signed off on the application noting that the only restriction at the time of application was that the Park remain a Park.

Should the Council authorize Wightman to apply for the MDNR Spark grant on the City's behalf? Based on the idea that Lots 1& 2 of Block 9 of Ely Park has to stay greenspace and given the location of current amenities, memorials and features, I recommend asking Wightman to put together a plan to install a ground-level fountain with a lighting system that would provide a water feature that could be enjoyed in the warmer months and a lightshow that anyone could enjoy year-round for the west side of Ely Park adjacent to the southernmost lot of the park most recently acquired due to a house fire, which could be rehabbed and used for additional parking. Danny and I talked over appropriate locations in Ely Park and discussed the portions with the original deed restriction.

For example:

<https://aquatix.playlsi.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/special-effects-spray.jpg>

<https://dev.landscapearchitect.com/landscape-product/fountains-splash-pads/waterworks-international-inc/waterworks-international-inc>

<https://image.made-in-china.com/202f0j00KdPiZVACPJpD/Floor-Dry-Ground-Music-Dance-Ground-Water-Fountain.jpg>

<https://i.pinimg.com/originals/bf/06/5b/bf065b6bc0e91fb5c1f4fb846580e7a1.jpg>