



**BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF MERCER ISLAND**

**AB 6502
July 2, 2024
Consent Agenda**

AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

TITLE:	AB 6502: Resolution to Apply for Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office’s grant funding programs for Luther Burbank Park Access Improvements	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resolution
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Adopt Resolution No. 1662.	

DEPARTMENT:	Public Works
STAFF:	Jason Kintner, Chief of Operations Kellye Hilde, Deputy Public Works Director Paul West, CIP Project Manager
COUNCIL LIAISON:	n/a
EXHIBITS:	1. Project Limits Map 2. Resolution No. 1662
CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:	3. Make once-in-a-generation investments to update and modernize aging infrastructure, capital facilities, and parks.

AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE	\$ n/a
AMOUNT BUDGETED	\$ n/a
APPROPRIATION REQUIRED	\$ n/a

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda bill is to seek City Council approval to apply for grant funding for the Luther Burbank Park Access Improvements project from the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office’s (RCO) Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP).

- The Luther Burbank Park Access Improvements project (Exhibit 1) addresses accessibility concerns, improves overall safety, and meets the anticipated demand from eight new pickleball courts opening this summer (PA0143) by:
 - Constructing new curb ramps and sidewalks, delineating ADA-compliant pathways in the parking lot, and installing a new raised crosswalk.
 - Installing a new electrical panel, Dark Sky-compliant lighting for the parking lot, pickleball courts, and central campus pathways, and upgrading existing park lights to energy-efficient LED fixtures.
 - Installing new parking lot surfacing and restriping to increase parking stall capacity and improve circulation patterns.
 - Implementing a suspended pavement system within the expanded center median island to maximize tree root area and integrate LID stormwater solutions.

- Improving parking lot landscaping and irrigation.
- Installing a new park entrance kiosk and parking lot signage.
- This scope builds upon the Luther Burbank Parking Lot Lighting project, which is included in the 2023-2024 Biennial Budget and Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for \$133,000 (PA0144).
- To secure additional funding, staff submitted preliminary applications for two RCO grant opportunities. An overview of the programs, funding opportunities, budget summary, and commitments, if applications are successful, are provided in this agenda bill.
- RCO requires a City Council Resolution (Exhibit 2) authorizing staff to submit grant applications for the Luther Burbank Park Access Improvements project. Upon authorization, staff will finalize the grant applications and submit by the deadline on July 18, 2024.

BACKGROUND

Built in 1972, the Luther Burbank Park north parking lot, which serves as the main access point to the park, requires significant improvements to enhance accessibility, safety, and capacity. Currently, the parking lot's surface is comprised of uneven pavement due to settling subgrade, causing cracks and deterioration. Furthermore, the parking lot does not include designated ADA-accessible routes through the parking lot and into the park, forcing visitors to navigate through vehicle traffic aisles to reach the park's facilities.

Access and safety concerns are heightened by insufficient lighting, which is particularly problematic during peak use times in the early mornings and evenings, and more so in the winter months. Both the parking lot and the new pickleball courts are not illuminated, and while there is minimal lighting on the main pedestrian access route from the parking lot to the Administration Building, it is inadequate and discontinuous. Additionally, the existing electrical panel is undersized, further complicating efforts to address these lighting issues. Feedback from police, staff, and community members has highlighted this concern.

With the opening of eight new pickleball courts this summer (PA0143), an increase in park visitors is expected. The current layout and circulation of the parking lot are inefficient for handling current and anticipated demand. Additionally, the mature oak and pine trees in the center median of the parking lot are adversely affected by overcrowding, as the limited space for root expansion has stunted their growth, signaling the need for better growing conditions.

The [2022 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan \(PROS Plan\)](#) prioritizes the Luther Burbank Parking Lot Lighting project (PA0144). Initially, this project aimed to address two issues: the lack of lighting in the north parking lot and the energy inefficiency of existing lights along the covered walkway to the Administration Building. These improvements were deemed necessary to enhance safety for City staff accessing the building and for park users during early mornings, evenings, and particularly during the winter months, when daylight hours are limited.

The project's scope has since expanded beyond the original Luther Burbank Parking Lot Lighting project to address accessibility and the needs of the new pickleball courts. To ensure the park is accessible and inclusive for everyone, improvements will be made to comply with the City's [ADA Transition Plan](#). Additionally, lighting for the pickleball courts will fulfill the City Council's directive from July 2023 ([AB 6309](#)), extending their usability during standard park hours (6:00 am to 10:00 pm). Finally, the project includes renovations to the parking lot to accommodate the anticipated rise in visitors due to the eight new pickleball courts.

ISSUE/DISCUSSION

PROPOSED PROJECT SCOPE OF WORK

The expanded scope of work for the Luther Burbank Park Access Improvements project (see Exhibit 1 for project limits map), includes the following key elements:

- Enhance pedestrian safety and accessibility by constructing new curb ramps and sidewalks, delineating ADA-compliant pathways in the parking lot, and installing a new raised crosswalk.
- Utilizing the existing footprint, without increasing the impervious surface area, modify parking configurations to increase parking lot capacity and improve circulation patterns.
- Install new parking lot surfacing.
- Install a new electrical service panel, and Dark Sky-compliant lighting for the parking lot, pickleball courts, and central campus pathways. Upgrade existing park lights to energy-efficient LED fixtures.
- Expand the center median island to include a suspended pavement system, which will expand rooting area for trees and integrate Low Impact Development (LID) stormwater management.
- Improve parking lot landscaping and irrigation systems.
- Install a new park entrance kiosk and update parking lot signage.

While adding electric vehicle (EV) charging stations is part of the expanded scope of work, they are not eligible for grant funding from this program. These stations will be funded through the capital improvement fund or other grant opportunities.

Staff have completed the preliminary grant applications and once the resolution is approved, will submit the final applications to meet the July 18, 2024, deadline.

OVERVIEW OF GRANTS

The Luther Burbank Park Access Improvements project qualifies for two grant programs administered by the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), which offer funding opportunities every two years. The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) provides federal funding to preserve and develop outdoor recreation resources, including parks, trails, and wildlife lands. Congress created the fund in 1965 with the passage of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act, which authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to provide financial assistance to states for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas.

The Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) provides state funding for a broad range of land protection and outdoor recreation, including local and state parks, trails, water access, and the conservation and restoration of state land. The WWRP was envisioned as a way for the state to accomplish two goals: acquire valuable recreation and habitat lands before they were lost to other uses and develop recreation areas for a growing population.

The table on the following page summarizes key information related to both grants.

Grant Program	Source of Funds	Grant Limit	Estimated Request	Match
Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)	Federal	\$2,000,000	\$1,700,000	50%*
Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP)	State	\$500,000	\$500,000	50%*

** To meet the 50% match requirement, several options are available, including city labor, equipment, materials, budget appropriations, bonds, donations, and other public or private grants.*

COMPETITION

Both grant programs are highly competitive. For the current grant cycle, the LWCF received 27 applications requesting \$36.9M, with only \$14M available. Similarly, the WWRP received 194 applications totaling \$182.5M in requested funds, while only \$100M is available. Despite the competitive nature of both programs, staff remain confident that this project's focus on accessibility, safety, and capacity makes it a strong contender for grant funding.

GRANT PROGRAM TENURE REQUIREMENTS

Property developed with WWRP funds must be kept and maintained for public outdoor recreation for at least fifty years. Long-term obligations for structures or facilities for outdoor recreation will be tied to a reasonable, agreed upon service life for the structure or facility. Property developed with LWCF funds must be permanently dedicated to public outdoor recreation use, which represents a more stringent requirement compared to the WWRP.

Adhering to these requirements is not an issue for the City. Development of Luther Burbank Park has partially been funded through past RCO grant cycles, and existing restrictions from a King County deed already limit the use for park and recreation purposes.

BUDGET

The total planning level cost estimate for the Luther Burbank Park Access Improvements project is \$3.4 million. This is an early-stage estimate reflecting the current conceptual understanding of the project. Costs may vary as the project details are further defined.

If awarded both grants, the City could receive up to \$2.2 million, though the actual award amount may be lower. These grants can be used to reimburse project costs and to provide the required 50% match for each other. The table below identifies planning level cost estimates for the specific elements of the project.

Description	Planning Level Cost Estimate
Design, Consultant Services, Project Administration, and Permitting	\$650,000
General Site Preparation (Demolition, Mobilization, Surveying, Traffic Control)	\$800,000
Pedestrian Circulation, Accessibility, and Signage	\$205,000
Lighting and Utilities	\$520,000
Landscaping and Irrigation	\$260,000
Parking Lot Circulation and Layout	\$395,000
Stormwater System	\$570,000
Total	\$3,400,000

This project is drafted as part of the 2025-2030 Capital Improvement Program and is completely dependent upon grant funding. If the grant is not awarded, staff will continue to pursue other funding options, including reapplying to these grant programs in 2026.

RESOLUTION

RCO requires City Council authorization by Resolution (Exhibit 2) to accompany each grant application. The language in the body of the resolution is verbatim as requested by RCO and includes the following provisions:

- Authorize various City staff positions to serve in specific roles on behalf of the City for this grant application.
- Acknowledge the conditions included in a future grant agreement between the City of Mercer Island and RCO.
- Acknowledge the timing for certifying the availability of matching funds.

NEXT STEPS

The total amount of grant funds requested from Land and Water Conservation Fund is \$1.7 million and from the Washington State Wildlife and Recreation Program is \$500,000. If awarded, the grants require a 50% percent local match, which is contingent on future City Council budget approval.

The grant application deadline is July 18, 2024. The application materials will be submitted after receiving City Council approval. Project rankings for the grant programs will be made public in October 2024.

The City must certify the availability of matching funds by September 30, 2024, to be recommended for funding by the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board on October 30, 2024. If awarded, funding will become available in July 2025, coinciding with the State fiscal year.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. Adopt Resolution No. 1662 authorizing the application for grant funds in the amount of \$2,200,000 from the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Washington State Wildlife and Recreation Program, subject to conditions described in Resolution No. 1662, for the Luther Burbank Park Access Improvements project.
2. Authorize the City Manager, and their designees, to execute all necessary documents to apply for the grant and accept the grant and conditions of the grant, if awarded.