

MEMORANDUM



TO: VICTOR CARDENAS, INTERIM CITY MANAGER
FROM: JEFF MUCK, PRCS DIRECTOR
SUBJECT: PRCS GRANTS UPDATE
DATE: MAY 18, 2023

Mayor and Council –

FYI on PRCS efforts to secure various grant opportunities.

- Victor

Oakland County Senior Centers Grant

In December 2022, the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Department (PRCS) submitted a grant application for \$250,000 to the Oakland County Senior Centers Grant Program for the development of pickleball courts at Meadowbrook Commons Activity Center. In late January, PRCS was notified that upon recommendation of the Healthy Aging Oakland County Ad Hoc Committee, the grant application was approved in the amount of \$150,000. The grant will help fund the addition of four courts with nets, fencing, shade, benches, and connector pathways.

PRCS and KMG staff have met twice with a focus group of four Meadowbrook Commons residents who have provided input on court design, programming, rules, and other items. Based on their feedback, the location of the courts is being moved to the northeast corner of the property (Meadowbrook Road and Cherry Hill) due to concerns with sound and disruption of the natural area in the area originally planned by the gazebo. The group also discussed expanding the parking lot in front of the Meadowbrook Activity Center as part of the project. An expansion will allow closer proximity parking to the center, which is frequently filled during classes and special events.

The conceptual plan will be shared with the PRCS Commission for input at their May meeting. PRCS staff plans to bring design award and updated project estimates to City Council this spring/summer. If approved, construction will take place in 2024.

Oakland County Northwest Park Grant

In April 2022, PRCS received a grant from Oakland County in the amount of \$100,000 for the development of Northwest Park, located on 12 Mile Road east of the Andelina Ridge Subdivision. The grant will be used towards park improvements, including gravel and natural walking paths as well as a nature-based play structure. A gravel parking lot was constructed in 2022 as part of the 12 Mile Road paving project. Currently, Spaulding DeDecker is working on the design of the trails, surveying trees, and determining the clearing and grading needs for the play structure. Additionally, the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Commission recommended working with Nature Playscapes to construct the play structure, and a motion is anticipated to be on the June 5 City Council Agenda. Construction will begin after July 1 as part of the FY 23-24 Capital Improvement Program. Oakland County will disburse grant funds as we provide documentation. Novi's disbursement will be received in late 2023, following the development of the trails and play structure.

State of Michigan Spark Grant for Wildlife Woods Parking and Pickleball Court Expansion

The DNR announced the results of the first round of applications for the Michigan Spark Grants in March. More than 460 applications totaling more than \$280 million in requests were received from across the state. **Novi's application was not funded.**

The response to the initial round of Michigan Spark Grants was much stronger and the ask much higher than with traditional DNR recreation grant programs. The program is made possible through American Rescue Plan Act funding, which is aimed at providing resources to communities negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

To embrace that intent, the DNR leveraged and combined public information and data sets about communities identified by the Spark Grant advisory group when establishing the program's financial and social considerations scoring category. This blend of local health and economic information, combined with a lack of access to nearby public park space, is one way to identify a subset of Michigan communities – “opportunity communities” – eligible for an additional path to support.

The data sets used (including those from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the United Way) in both the Spark Grant financial and social scoring category as well as in identifying opportunity communities include:

- **Park density by municipality** – Those with fewer accessible public park spaces ranked higher on the list.
- **Financial considerations** – ALICE by census tract (based on the [United Way's "Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed"](#) standard for households earning just above the federal poverty level but not enough to make ends meet).
- **CDC Mental Health Disparity by census tract** – Communities with a higher percentage of residents living with mental health challenges ranked higher.
- **CDC Physical Health Disparity by census tract** – Communities with greater physical inactivity ranked higher.

As one of six scoring categories, this financial and social data ultimately helps determine which communities receive DNR-administered Spark Grant funding to build and improve public recreation spaces and facilities for their residents; the data also identified the top 39 communities – the “opportunity communities” – that will have the chance later this year to apply for \$27.5 million in Spark Grants through a partnership with the Council of Michigan Foundations. Only identified “opportunity communities” are eligible to apply for CMF-administered Spark Grant funding. Novi is not listed as an “opportunity community.”

Based on the scoring results of the application (Novi scored in Tier 10), the number of applicants versus limited funds, and the unlikelihood of receiving any funding, staff plans to not re-submit for the second round. Following are the first-round scoring statistics for reference:

Tiers	Score Range	Number of Apps	Cumulative	Total Request	Cumulative
Tier 1	Funded	21	21	\$14,178,900.00	\$14,178,900.00
Tier 2	83-89	10	31	\$4,804,600.00	\$18,983,500.00
Tier 3	80-82	20	51	\$11,729,600.00	\$30,713,100.00
Tier 4	77-79	39	90	\$27,618,200.00	\$58,331,300.00
Tier 5	74-76	45	135	\$28,802,100.00	\$87,133,400.00
Tier 6	70-73	62	197	\$39,466,100.00	\$126,599,500.00
Tier 7	67-69	55	252	\$32,215,400.00	\$158,814,900.00
Tier 8	64-66	55	307	\$33,418,400.00	\$192,233,300.00
Tier 9	60-63	56	363	\$36,648,900.00	\$228,882,200.00
Tier 10	0-59	99	462	\$52,115,700.00	\$280,997,900.00
		462		\$280,997,900.00	