

Public Works Department

To: Chairman Board and Commission Members

From: Andrew Beyer, P.E.

Date: January 9, 2025

Subject: Public Works Commission Meeting of January 14, 2025

Review and take possible action: Lake Victoria vegetation control request

Background

The City has received a request for assistance with aquatic vegetation and algae treatment of Lake Victoria. The request letter is attached as a reference. Local residents have been hiring a licensed commercial aquatic herbicide applicator and obtaining a Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) Aquatic Plant Management Permit annually to manage aquatic plants and algae in riparian areas of Lake Victoria. The Parks, Recreation, and Forestry (PRF) Commission reviewed this item in late 2024 and moved to table the item. PRF meeting minutes on the item are as follows:

B. Review and recommend: Lake Victoria plant management

Kristine Butteris discussed letters from citizens requesting city assistance in the treatment of Lake Victoria for health and safety purposes. It is also stated in the letter that treatment of lake weeds and algae would be a benefit to both the 10 homeowners along Lake Victoria and community benefit as there is public access to the area. Treatment of the lake doesn't affect the city access path in a positive or negative manner. Majority of public use of Lake Victoria is for fishing which treatment would undermine. It was recommended that the city not assist in the treatment of Lake Victoria due to limited recreational use by the community and hinderance of use if treatment occurred. Treatment is also not currently within city budget. This request will be tabled.

Managing a pond or other waterbody for recreational purposes requires a balanced approach, as an improved waterbody for some activities may negatively impact other activities. For example, fish populations that utilize aquatic plants for cover and habitat may be negatively impacted when large areas of plants are removed for swimming and water sport activities.

The City does not currently chemically manage aquatic plants and algae each year in any other waterbodies. The City does not have a licensed commercial aquatic herbicide applicator for aquatic plant and organism management on staff. City staff do routinely cut terrestrial vegetation and

cattails above the water line near inlets and outlets and around the perimeter of city-owned stormwater ponds.

After review, the Public Works Department recommends denying the request for assistance with the aquatic plant treatment. Chemical control of vegetation could negatively impact the sporting and recreational opportunities of Lake Victoria. Additionally, vegetation control is not currently within City budget.

Budget Goal

1. Proactively maintains and improves our parks and infrastructure in an effort to ensure quality, safety and compliance

Financial Impact

The Public Works Department does not have funds allocated for aquatic plant management of Lake Victoria in the 2025 budget.

Recommendation

The Public Works Department recommends to deny the request for assistance with the aquatic plant treatment. Chemical control of vegetation could negatively impact sporting and recreational opportunities of Lake Victoria. Additionally, vegetation control is not currently within City budget.