



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2024 Request for Proposal

General Information

Proposal ID: 2024-191

Proposal Title: Pierz Park Master Plan and Acquisition

Project Manager Information

Name: Bob Otremba

Organization: City of Pierz

Office Telephone: (320) 468-6471

Email: bobo@pierzmn.org

Project Basic Information

Project Summary: Create a Park Master Plan for a regional park with connections to local, regional, and statewide trails and acquire a 33.53-acre parcel of land for the future park.

Funds Requested: \$198,000

Proposed Project Completion: September 30, 2025

LCCMR Funding Category: Small Projects (H)

Secondary Category: Land Acquisition, Habitat, and Recreation (G)

Project Location

What is the best scale for describing where your work will take place?

Region(s): Central

What is the best scale to describe the area impacted by your work?

Region(s): Central

When will the work impact occur?

In the Future

Narrative

Describe the opportunity or problem your proposal seeks to address. Include any relevant background information.

The City of Pierz has a remarkable opportunity to create a regional park on the east side of the community near the Skunk River and adjacent to both an existing City-owned park and the elementary, middle, and high school in Pierz. The 33.53-acre parcel is currently a gravel pit and presents the chance to expand the existing park into a regional amenity within a half-mile of the Soo Line Trail. The gravel pit currently is mostly used to temporarily stockpile material. Acquisition of the property would allow the City to substantially increase the park and recreational amenities offered to residents and visitors, while simultaneously reclaiming the property from its former use. The Park Master Plan will incorporate feedback from Pierz residents and other stakeholders about future uses and plans for the park. The Master Plan will include a natural plan and analysis of the potential for natural flood storage.

What is your proposed solution to the problem or opportunity discussed above? Introduce us to the work you are seeking funding to do. You will be asked to expand on this proposed solution in Activities & Milestones.

The City of Pierz is proposing to undertake a Park Master Planning process for the gravel pit property. The planning process would include opportunities for community feedback regarding the future recreational reuses and layout of the property, as well as determining opportunities for restoration and natural flood storage. Evaluation of options will include discussion with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and Morrison County regarding the most appropriate options and connections to existing regional and state amenities. The City is also proposing to acquire the property from the current owners, Knife River Corporation, to allow the property to be reclaimed from gravel mining into public ownership, allowing access for various recreational opportunities and enjoyment of natural areas.

What are the specific project outcomes as they relate to the public purpose of protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's natural resources?

The project outcomes will include the public purpose to protect and enhance the state's natural resources through the acquisition and reclamation of a gravel pit into public land that can be enjoyed by residents and visitors alike. Through the Park Master Planning process, various recreation opportunities will be considered, as will natural restoration options and natural flood storage. This could include portions of the property being restored with native plants and habitat that were never possible during the many years of gravel pit operations.

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Park Master Plan

Activity Budget: \$58,000

Activity Description:

Completion of the Park Master Plan for the 33.53-acre site. The planning process will include community engagement to ensure resident and stakeholder feedback is included. It will also look at restoring natural areas and the potential for natural flood storage.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Select consultant through qualifications process	August 31, 2024
Planning process kick-off meeting	September 30, 2024
Park Master Plan complete and approved by Pierz City Council	March 31, 2025

Activity 2: Purchase property for regional park

Activity Budget: \$140,000

Activity Description:

The City of Pierz would purchase the 33.53-acre property from the current owner, Knife River Corporation, to be publicly-owned and maintained for both natural restoration and recreational uses. Prior to purchase, the City will complete due diligence using local funds.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
City enters into purchase agreement	August 31, 2024
Due diligence completed	November 30, 2024
Acquisition completed	December 31, 2024

Long-Term Implementation and Funding

Describe how the results will be implemented and how any ongoing effort will be funded. If not already addressed as part of the project, how will findings, results, and products developed be implemented after project completion? If additional work is needed, how will this work be funded?

The City of Pierz would oversee the implementation of the Park Master Plan. The planning process would begin after securing a qualified consultant. The City would also engage an attorney to proceed with purchasing the property. The Park Master Plan will lay out the future restoration and improvements. Implementation funding for the various recommendations from the plan would come from a variety of sources, including local funds, as well as grant dollars sought through DNR and other state agencies. The types of grant funding sought will depend on the recommended activities from the Park Master Plan.

Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

Project Manager Name: Bob Otremba

Job Title: City Administrator

Provide description of the project manager's qualifications to manage the proposed project.

City Administrator Bob Otremba is responsible for all city staff and executive oversight of all city contracts, financials, grant administration, and project management for the City of Pierz. The city has administered and reported on several grants and state allocated funds in the past years.

Bob started his career with the city in 2000 as the Assistant Park Complex Superintendent at the Pierz Golf Course and Campground. From 2003-2019 Bob served as the city's public works director and in 2019 was hired as the city administrator. He has lead multiple grant projects in public works and parks.

In 2013, Bob lead the city through a Safe Routes to School grant project that included approximately one mile of new sidewalk in Pierz, reconstruction of the traffic flow adjacent to Pierz schools, and traffic control improvements to assist children to safely walk to school. Bob worked through another Safe Routes to School grant project in Pierz that was constructed in 2021. This project included construction of Segment 2 of the Pierz Trail Loop Plan that will eventually create a 5-mile trail loop around and through many of the beautiful areas that Pierz has to offer including the gravel pit that is sought to be purchased through this grant. In 2020, Bob received an award from the Minnesota Erosion Control Association for leadership on the Hillman Creek restoration project on the Pierz Golf Course. The grant project accomplished much needed creek bank restoration on a sensitive golf course site with many issues. As the secretary for the Pierz Fire Department, Bob was involved with a FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant to procure extrication equipment. He has successfully implemented numerous public projects and administered grants from several state and federal agencies.

Organization: City of Pierz

Organization Description:

The City of Pierz is located in Morrison County and State Highways 25 and 27 connect residents to regional jobs and bring tourists through town on their way to the Central Lakes Region. The population has grown to over 1,400 residents, with a large senior base and a growing number of young families. The city operates its own police and fire department, as well as the Pierz Municipal Golf Course and Campgrounds. The city also owns and operates its own electrical utility and, in cooperation with other communities, established a Water and Sanitary Sewer district. In 2002, Pierz constructed a new Industrial Park which currently home to Smude Sunflower Oil, Smude Popcorn, Rich Prairie Wood Products, and other businesses. The Skunk River meanders its way from the east along the south side of the community and Pierz Fish Lake is located only 2 miles away and is a popular destination for water skiers, jet skiers, swimmers, boaters, and

anglers. Additionally, the Soo Line Trail, which connects through multiple Minnesota counties crossing much of the State of Minnesota, runs along the southeast edge of the community.

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
							Sub Total	-
Contracts and Services								
Planning consultant	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Completion of the Master Plan				0.25		\$58,000
							Sub Total	\$58,000
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
							Sub Total	-
Capital Expenditures								
							Sub Total	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship								
	Fee Title Acquisition	33.53 Parcels: 2						\$140,000
							Sub Total	\$140,000
Travel In Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Travel Outside Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-

Printing and Publication								
							Sub Total	-
Other Expenses								
							Sub Total	-
							Grand Total	\$198,000

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
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Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	Amount
State				
			State Sub Total	-
Non-State				
In-Kind	City of Pierz - parks budget	City staff hours and park board volunteer hours for work on the Park Master Plan. The City will budget park dollars to help facilitate staff time toward this project.	Secured	\$10,000
			Non State Sub Total	\$10,000
			Funds Total	\$10,000

Acquisition and Restoration

Parcel List

Name	County	Site Significance	Activity	Acres	Miles	Estimated Cost	Type of Landowner	Easement or Title Holder	Status of Work
Knife River Gravel Pit	Morrison	Reclamation of gravel pit allows for water features and natural restoration on portions of property.	Fee Title	33.53	-	\$140,000	Private	City of Pierz	Negotiations In Progress
Totals				33.53	0	\$140,000			

Fee Acquisition

1. Describe the selection process for identifying and including proposed parcels on the parcel list, including an explanation of the criteria and decision-making process used to rank and prioritize parcels.

This site was selected based on its potential recreational opportunities and because it is adjacent to an existing City of Pierz park and the Pierz elementary, middle and high schools.

2. List all adopted state, regional, or local natural resource plans in which the lands included in the parcel list are identified for the acquisition purposes you propose. Include the URL to the plan if one is available.

This request is to complete a local plan for the parcels. It is not currently in an existing plan.

3. For any parcels acquired in fee title, a restoration and management plan must be prepared. Summarize the components and expected outcomes of restoration and management plans for parcels acquired by your organization, how these plans are kept on file by your organization, and overall strategies for long-term plan implementation, including how long-term maintenance and management needs of the parcel will be financed into the future.

A restoration and management plan will be outlined in the Park Master Plan. The plan will be kept at City Hall after being presented to Planning and Zoning, the Park Board, and the City Council. All further actions for land management will be incorporated into City of Pierz Public Works operations. These activities will be financed by the regular city budget.

4. For each parcel to be conveyed to a State of Minnesota entity (e.g., DNR) after purchase, provide a statement confirming that county board approval will be obtained.

Not applicable. The City intends to retain ownership.

5. If applicable (see M.S. 116P.17), provide a statement confirming that written approval from the DNR Commissioner will be obtained 10 business days prior to any final acquisition transaction.

Not applicable.

Attachments

Required Attachments

Map

File: [7707ff00-10d.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Map

Map of east portion of the City of Pierz showing the boundary of the property that would be acquired with grant funds and the location of the adjacent schools, campground, golf course and Soo Line Trail. This property would be the subject of the Park Master Plan....

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
Council Resolution	0a50d4fb-065.pdf

Optional Attachments

Support Letter, Photos, Media, Other

Title	File
Pierz School District #484 Support Letter	92b1cd26-59b.pdf

Administrative Use

Does your project include restoration or acquisition of land rights?

Yes: Fee Acquisition,

Does your project have potential for royalties, copyrights, patents, or sale of products and assets?

No

Do you understand and acknowledge IP and revenue-return and sharing requirements in 116P.10?

N/A

Do you wish to request reinvestment of any revenues into your project instead of returning revenue to the ENRTF?

N/A

Does your project include original, hypothesis-driven research?

No

Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?

No

Does your project include the design, construction, or renovation of a building, trail, campground, or other capital asset costing \$10,000 or more?

Yes

Is the purpose of the acquisition for construction of a building(s), trail, campground, or other capital asset costing \$10,000 or more, either now or in the future?

Yes

Do you propose using an appropriation from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund to conduct a project that provides children's services, as defined in Minnesota Statutes section 299C.61 Subd.7?

No

