



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2026 Request for Proposal

General Information

Proposal ID: 2026-262

Proposal Title: Lake Byllesby Regional Park Accessibility and Resiliency Improvements

Project Manager Information

Name: Niki Geisler

Organization: Dakota County

Office Telephone: (952) 891-7088

Email: niki.geisler@co.dakota.mn.us

Project Basic Information

Project Summary: Lake Byllesby Campground improvements will include construction of a new bathhouse and severe weather shelter building to improve accessibility, erosion concerns, climate resiliency and services.

ENRTF Funds Requested: \$3,100,000

Proposed Project Completion: May 31, 2029

LCCMR Funding Category: Education and Outdoor Recreation (C)

Project Location

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

Region(s): Metro

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

Region(s): Metro

When will the work impact occur?

During the Project and In the Future

Narrative

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

Lake Byllesby Regional Park is a 1,300-acre reservoir of the Cannon River. The Regional Park offers diverse outdoor recreation opportunities and direct access to Lake Byllesby. One of the many high-demand outdoor recreation destinations is the Lake Byllesby Campground located in the eastern portion of Lake Byllesby Regional Park. Annually, there's approximately 250,000 visitors a year with more than 9,000 being overnight campers for each camping season. This proposal responds to priorities identified in the Lake Byllesby Regional Park Long-Range Plan (2018) that seek to improve the camping experience at Lake Byllesby while balancing preservation of the Regional Park's natural areas. The existing campground building is more than 30 years old and is built in a low-lying area that is prone to flooding. During large rainfall events, drainage from the roof falls directly around the foundation of the building; increasing the rate at which the stormwater accumulates, causing the building to sink into the ground. The facility is also currently undersized for the campground's needs, improvements could address accessibility and the lack of a storm shelter. This concept aligns with LCCMR's strategic goals surrounding long-term ecological benefits for fish, wildlife, and enhancing recreation for people.

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.

Increased visitor counts and the associated maintenance needed to keep up with increased demand are the drivers for the proposed campground bath and shelter building that will serve park visitors, campers, and staff. The proposal seeks funding to construct a new facility, which will include a 2,500 square foot Bathhouse building that has space for six single-occupant bathrooms with showers, three individual shower stalls, and mechanical and electrical rooms. These improvements are essential for enhancing visitor experience and elevating Lake Byllesby's recreational value. The construction of the proposed facility will allow park staff to better serve park visitors and campers and provide enhanced safety and accessibility features, such as having the building designed to serve as a severe weather shelter. By prioritizing this project, Dakota County shows its commitment to high-quality recreational services and natural resource access. These improvements will ensure the area's resilience, will benefit future generations of park visitors, and will maintain Lake Byllesby as a premier destination for outdoor enthusiasts, campers, and day users.

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?

This project will meet the outcomes of LCCMR's constitutional purpose through responsible land stewardship and the preservation of the Regional Park's natural environment. Replacement of the proposed facility will move it out of a flood prone area, improve stormwater management in the vicinity, and ensure sanitary services are safely addressed. Improvements will continue to meet the needs of the users who frequent the area and encourage appreciation of Minnesota's natural resources, which will in turn contribute to the long-term ecological health of the area, benefiting fish, wildlife, and people.

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Design and Approvals

Activity Budget: \$100,000

Activity Description:

The objective of this activity is to complete final design of the project, obtain necessary approvals, and advertise the bid for the Lake Byllesby Regional Park Campground Building. Tasks include completing design review with the Department of Administration and SHPO, approving final designs, and going out to bid for the project. The design process will be led by Dakota County and include design development through construction documents and incorporate community feedback, building on the existing efforts of Dakota County. County Park staff will work with design consultants to finalize design plans and prepare all necessary documentation for reviews and going to bid. The design will comply with local and state regulations, be ADA compliant, and will meet the State's energy code. A soil report and geotechnical reports will support the final engineering design. Park staff will oversee the advertising of the bid and move the project into the pre-construction phase. The design phase of this project will incorporate feedback from community and stakeholder engagement and the expertise of park staff into final designs.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Design review processes including consultation with SHPO, predesign review with the Dept. of Administration	December 31, 2026
Enrollment in the Minnesota B3 Guidelines Tracking Tool	December 31, 2026
Development and approval of final designs (DD-CDs)	March 31, 2027
All construction funds legally secured	April 30, 2027
Preparation and advertisement of bid	May 31, 2027

Activity 2: Bidding and Pre-Construction

Activity Budget: \$100,000

Activity Description:

Once the design and construction documents are finalized, the second main activity of this project will address the bidding process and contractor preparation for construction. Tasks include contractor selection, acquiring all necessary permits and funding, and construction preparation.

County Park staff will oversee the selection of contractors during the bidding process and help as agreed upon with construction administration and oversight. Contractors will complete pre-construction tasks including site preparation.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Selection of contractors for pre-construction and construction of project	September 30, 2027
Pre-construction processes, permit acquisition, all funds secured	October 31, 2027
Construction preparation (RFIs, shop drawings, submittal review)	December 31, 2027

Activity 3: Construction

Activity Budget: \$2,900,000

Activity Description:

This activity brings the proposed improvements through construction to project completion. Tasks include construction, construction oversight and administration, and project close-out.

Construction of the Lake Byllesby Regional Park Campground Building will involve installation of necessary utility infrastructure to support the building and site design. Additional exterior improvements related to the building will require reestablishing concrete pathways, landscaping and native plantings.

The utility improvements aim to ensure the proposed campground building will have reliable and efficient sanitary and water services. A new septic system will be installed with a larger drain field and a new water main will also be installed at the building. This will guarantee a fully functional sanitary system that meets the needs of higher visitor counts and reduces environmental impact of the building. County Park staff will help as agreed upon with construction administration and oversight. Contractors will complete construction tasks.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Construction, Oversight, & Administration Begins	January 31, 2028
Construction, Oversight, & Administration Ends	January 31, 2029
Project close-out with notice of funding restriction recorded, and certificate of occupancy obtained	May 31, 2029
Signage installed with ENRTF logo	May 31, 2029
Trail and trailhead facilities open for public use	May 31, 2029

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 long-term implementation of the project will be guided through strategic actions outlined in the 2018 Lake Byllesby Park Plan. Additional capital improvements identified in the park plan will be funded through the annual capital improvement budgeting process. Long term maintenance and management of these improvements will be performed by the Dakota County Parks and Facilities Department as part of the County's ongoing management program. These activities are funded by tax levy, external grant funding, and are supported through regional parks operations and maintenance funding.

Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

Name	Appropriation	Amount Awarded
Reintroduction Of Bison To Spring Lake Park Reserve	M.L. 2021, First Special Session, Chp. 6, Art. 6, Sec. 2, Subd. 08q	\$560,000
Completing the Mississippi River Greenway: Dakota County	M.L. 2024, , Chp. 83, Art. , Sec. 2, Subd. 08h	\$657,000
Spring Lake Park Reserve Restoration and River Access	M.L. 2024, , Chp. 83, Art. , Sec. 2, Subd. 09g	\$2,925,000

Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

Project Manager Name: Niki Geisler

Job Title: Parks Director

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

As the Dakota County Parks Director, Niki directs and administers all operations, personnel, public relations, policies, and budgets for the Parks Department. Prior to joining Dakota County, Niki served as the Vice President of Camping for YMCA of the North and has 20+ years as a professional in the non-profit sector where she also held positions of Executive Director, Professional Fundraiser, Senior Program Director, and Program Director. She is an accomplished professional with experience in the areas of community-based youth development, family camping, outdoor engagement strategy advancement, grant management, and fundraising. She has a passion for connecting communities to nature and a deep commitment to equity in outdoors.

Organization: Dakota County

Organization Description:

Dakota County is part of the 7-county metropolitan area with an operating budget of \$308 million in 2023. Dakota County employs approximately 2,000 staff at three primary service center locations. Approximately 1/3 of the land area is considered developed as urban/suburban and 2/3 remain as rural/agricultural. Dakota County is the third most populous county in the state, with an estimated population of 442,038 in 2021. Dakota County is bordered by three rivers: the Minnesota River to the west, the Mississippi River to the east and the Cannon River to the south.

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
							Sub Total	-
Contracts and Services								
TBD	Service Contract	Contractor will be selected by competitive bid and will prepare the site and construct all features according to the construction plans and specifications. Contractor will provide site preparation, construction, erosion control, and other construction tasks.				0		\$2,900,000
TBD	Service Contract	Park design and engineering contractor will be selected by competitive bid and will develop the site design, engineering, and construction specifications.				0		\$200,000
							Sub Total	\$3,100,000
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
							Sub Total	-
Capital Expenditures								
							Sub Total	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship								
							Sub Total	-
Travel In Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Travel Outside Minnesota								

							Sub Total	-
Printing and Publication								
							Sub Total	-
Other Expenses								
							Sub Total	-
							Grand Total	\$3,100,000

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				
Cash	Modernizing Regional Parks and Trails Appropriation	Pre-design and schematic design of the building and utility specifications.	Secured	\$300,000
			State Sub Total	\$300,000
Non-State				
Cash	Dakota County Parks CIP	Pre-construction administration, permitting and site preparation.	Secured	\$600,000
Cash	Dakota County Parks CIP	Construction	Pending	\$200,000
			Non State Sub Total	\$800,000
			Funds Total	\$1,100,000

Total Project Cost: \$4,200,000

This amount accurately reflects total project cost?

Yes

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [c0d6d871-70a.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

Set of maps showing where the park is in Dakota County and where the proposed project is within Lake Byllesby Regional Park...

Financial Capacity

Title	File
Dakota County 2022 Financial Statement	910885a7-910.pdf
Dakota County Financial Capacity Statement	118e275b-394.pdf

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
Grant Acceptance Authorization Letter	fa4637fb-9be.pdf
Resolution No. 25-107	ac184dd3-f4c.pdf

Supplemental Attachments

Capital Project Questionnaire, Budget Supplements, Support Letter, Photos, Media, Other

Title	File
Lake Byllesby Project Summary	85ba2ee5-b08.pdf
Capital Projects Budget Addendum	a24dbb0f-e03.pdf
Capital Projects Questionnaire	4aaa48d5-640.pdf
SHPO Environmental Review Submittal	c5af195c-d25.pdf

Administrative Use

Does your project include restoration or acquisition of land rights?

No

Do you understand that travel expenses are only approved if they follow the "Commissioner's Plan" promulgated by the Commissioner of Management of Budget or, for University of Minnesota projects, the University of Minnesota plan?

N/A

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

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 pre-design, design, construction, or renovation of a building, trail, campground, or other fixed capital asset costing \$10,000 or more or large-scale stream or wetland restoration?

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 as "the provision of care, treatment, education, training, instruction, or recreation to children")?

No

Provide the name(s) and organization(s) of additional individuals assisting in the completion of this proposal:

Rita Trapp, HKGi

Do you understand that a named service contract does not constitute a funder-designated subrecipient or approval of a sole-source contract? In other words, a service contract entity is only approved if it has been selected according to the contracting rules identified in state law and policy for organizations that receive ENRTF funds through direct appropriations, or in the DNR's reimbursement manual for non-state organizations. These rules may include competitive bidding and prevailing wage requirements

Yes, I understand

