



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2027 Request for Proposal

General Information

Proposal ID: 2027-219

Proposal Title: Camp Katharine Parsons - Main Road and Parking Lot

Project Manager Information

Name: Aaron Raivo-Lynch

Organization: Phyllis Wheatley Community Center

Office Telephone: (612) 400-1454

Email: aaronrl@phylliswheatley.org

Project Basic Information

Project Summary: Project will include road improvements and new parking lot that were included in conditional use permit. Upon completion, tours will be regularly provided by MAAHMG to the MN community.

ENRTF Funds Requested: \$1,052,000

Proposed Project Completion: July 31, 2030

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?

Statewide

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.

Camp Parsons legacy and existence stand as testament to Black Minnesotans enduring connection to nature and time spent outdoors, which can be extrapolated out as an uplifting lesson for all Minnesotans. As we work to restore Camp Parsons, we have used the refrain that “we want to help create pathways for ALL Minnesotans to be environmental stewards”, and this infrastructure improvement is foundational to PWCC once again welcoming community to the shores of Oak Lake.

In April of 2023 PWCC received a conditional use permit from Carver County for the Camp Katharine Parsons property. Design work was funded in May of 2023 and will be concluding in March of 2026. Improving the road is the first thing that needs to happen before any additional work on the property can take place. The improvement of the road, and addition of dedicated parking will allow PWCC, in collaboration with the Minnesota African American Heritage Museum and Gallery (MAAHMG), to provide tours of the space celebrating and sharing its unique history while building excitement for its restoration.

For additional historical information about Camp Parsons and PWCC's legacy of outdoor programming, please visit:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/8b563e3e7d0445e7a340847c520b8a90>

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 Camp Parsons Property occupies a peninsula that Oak Lake wraps around. This property was gifted to PWCC in 1956 after 15+ years of the organization seeking a summer camp property. At that point, the property was built out to 1950 standards and ran for over 4 decades before deteriorating infrastructure forced its closure. As we pursued restoration, the road became a unique challenge due to its width (single lane), proximity to the lake, and importance to compliance with our conditional use permit and related emergency access. Additionally, we cannot pursue restoration of the main camp space, until the road is improved to accommodate the level of traffic that restoration will involve.

The other component of this project is a 25-car parking lot. For the decades that Camp Parsons operated, the lack of parking on-site severely limited the programming that could take place. This addition will allow CKP to welcome guests on-site who have transported themselves, rather than being reliant on having a bus bring participants out. We plan to use this as soon as possible in our collaboration with MAAHMG, but it is also a key component to programming of Camp Parsons (outside of the day camp program).

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?

In 2019, the bulk of the Camp Parsons property was put into a conservation easement with the MN Land Trust, ensuring its protection. As great as this was, the end goal is resurrecting the camp program itself so that once again children can be welcomed to the shores of Oak Lake. The legacy of Camp Parsons directly refutes the harmful narrative that Black people do not camp or spend time in nature. This misplaced mindset can be self-fulfilling, stunting the opportunities (and associated benefits) that young people might find within nature before they even begin to discover them.

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Camp Parsons: road & parking lot construction - pre-work

Activity Budget: \$19,000

Activity Description:

Although we have taken many of the steps to prepare this project to be shovel ready, there are two steps that are outstanding. The first of these is consultation with SHPO, which timeline wise is the first milestone listed in activity 1. The second item is amending the conditional use permit we received in April of 2023 for the 25-vehicle parking lot on the camp property from 8,800 sq/ft to 9,800 sq/ft. This needed expansion in size is detailed on pages 10 and 11 of the attachment Design Development Renderings.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Consultation with SHPO	August 31, 2026
Receive CUP amendment for expanded parking lot	October 31, 2026
Approval of Final Plans	November 30, 2026
Advertisement for Bid	December 31, 2026
Construction Contractor Selected	February 28, 2027

Activity 2: Road and parking lot construction

Activity Budget: \$1,006,500

Activity Description:

If successful with receiving LCCMR funding to support road expansion and parking lot construction, we would aim to begin the work as soon as possible and hope to have it concluded in 2027. This would set us up to begin offering tours of the property with the Minnesota African American Heritage and Culture Museum (MAAHMG) beginning in the spring of 2028. Our intention would be that tours would continue through the next two years on the weekends, as construction work took place during the weekdays, aligning with a grand re-opening of the property in 2030.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Permits Secured	April 30, 2027
All construction funds legally secured	May 31, 2027
Construction, Oversight & Administration Begins	July 31, 2027
Staking, Mobilization, and Site Preparation	July 31, 2027
Final Grading	October 31, 2027
Substantial Completion	November 30, 2027
Ongoing Reporting/Notice of Funding Restriction Recorded	December 31, 2027
Certificate of occupancy or equivalent received	April 30, 2028
Stabilization & Punch List Items	May 31, 2028
As-builts Survey	May 31, 2028
Construction, Oversight & Administration Ends	June 30, 2028

Activity 3: Tours continue as main camp renovation takes place

Activity Budget: \$26,500

Activity Description:

Currently at Camp Parsons, there is very limited parking, the road does not allow for 2-way traffic, making us non-compliant with emergency access requirements. The improvement of the road and the addition of dedicated 25-vehicle parking will allow us to welcome tour guest onto the property in a manner that was never possible in the past. We would continue to offer tours of Camp Parsons with the MAAHMG over 2028 and 2029 as construction work takes place in the main camp area.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Signage installed with ENRTF Language or Logo	April 30, 2028
Open for intended use - MAAHMG/PWCC tours of CKP begin	May 31, 2028
Construction/renovation of Camp Parsons buildings begins	June 30, 2028
Ongoing Reporting/Notice of Funding Restriction Recorded	December 31, 2028
Restoration/construction of buildings #1, #4 & #6 complete	November 30, 2029
Camp Parsons summer camp open	June 30, 2030

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Coventry Cowens	Minnesota African American Heritage Museum & Gallery	Co-leading historical tours of Camp Katharine Parsons with a focus on people and places of significance as it relates to Black Minnesotans relationship and connection with nature and the outdoors.	Yes

Dissemination

Describe your plans for dissemination, presentation, documentation, or sharing of data, results, samples, physical collections, and other products and how they will follow ENRTF Acknowledgement Requirements and Guidelines.

If awarded LCCMR funding for this project PWCC would have a press release sharing the great news and acknowledgement of ENRTF as the funder who made it possible. A portion of this press release acknowledging ENRTF would continue to live on PWCC's website for the Camp Parsons project. Once the road is done, we plan on holding a ribbon cutting ceremony (with media) and in addition to highlighting ENRTF at this, we would love to have a representative or two in attendance. Tours would begin at this same time and in addition to putting signage up, we would highlight ENRTF as a funder to all participants of Camp Parsons tours. Lastly, we would plan on including mention and information about ENRTF in our annual reports for all years that the funding is active.

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?

Although dormant for too long, credit must be given to PWCC for holding on to Camp Parsons through challenging times for the organization and the Northside. The 'results' of this restoration effort will be the continued programming of Camp Parsons. In our design work we strived to maximize the potential of the property while keeping initial cost and operational cost low. This is especially critical for the summer camp program, which we plan to run similarly to our current summer program. By working with established youth groups, we can remove registration as well as much of summer staffing costs.

Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

Name	Appropriation	Amount Awarded
Camp Parsons Mississippi Summer	M.L. 2025, First Special Session, Chp. 1, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 05k	\$225,000

Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

Project Manager Name: Aaron Raivo-Lynch

Job Title: Senior Director of Camp Katharine Parsons

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

Aaron has been a leader within camping and youth programming for over 20 years. This leadership has covered both recreational programming as well as property management. For the intents of this proposal, his most relevant

experience is the 6 years he spent as a Property Manager for the YMCA of the Greater Twin Cities/YMCA of the North. This work has included both the demolition of buildings past their useful life as well as the management of construction of new spaces. Aaron has been shepherding the Camp Katharine Parsons restoration project since August of 2022, which has included both the successful application for a conditional use permit (Carver County) as well as securing funding for design work that has allowed us to reach the point the project is at today.

Organization: Phyllis Wheatley Community Center

Organization Description:

Phyllis Wheatley Community Center debuted as Phyllis Wheatley Settlement House in October of 1924. Originally founded to support Black women, the organizations expanded almost instantly to serve the broader community, with a specific focus on the growing Black population of Minneapolis. The settlement house programming was incredibly broad and crucial, given the limited social services offered at that time. Camping programming was foundational to many of the settlement houses that served the white/European Immigrant population of twin cities, and Phyllis Wheatley was no different. Outdoor programming begun in 1929, and at the organization's 25th anniversary it was remarked, "With ten thousand lakes in Minnesota, we do not regard it as a dream to look forward to having a camp on one of Minnesota's beautiful lakes". Seven years later, Katharine Parsons helped made this aspiration a reality.

Today, Phyllis Wheatley Community Center provides a range of programs that include childcare, restorative justice and domestic violence classes, covid testing, truancy support, parenting classes, basketball programming, e-sports, environmental programming and a host of stand-alone community events. The possibility of re-adding Camp Parsons to the programming space of the organization will be transformational for PWCC and the community we serve.

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
Senior Director of Camp Katharine Parsons		Coordinate road work and historical tours			11%	0.75		\$57,000
							Sub Total	\$57,000
Contracts and Services								
Minnesota African American Heritage Museum and Gallery	Subaward	MAAHMG will co-lead 40 tours of Camp Katharine Parsons over the course of 2 years, primarily focused on Saturdays and primarily over the months of May-Oct, but likely excluding August. Up to two tours may be offered on the same day.				0.2		\$7,500
TBD	Service Contract	Construct new road (on overlay of existing) that will meet emergency access requirements, present road is single width and severely degraded. Project will include the addition of a 25 vehicle parking lot as well.				3		\$987,500
							Sub Total	\$995,000
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
							Sub Total	-
Capital Equipment								
							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	\$1,052,000

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				
Cash	Minneapolis Foundation Donor Advised Fund - Camp Katharine Parsons	Any expenses related to restoration of Camp Parsons (except for program director salary) including covering PWCC's 25% of this project's costs.	Secured	\$283,000
Cash	MNLT Easement Funds	To help cover PWCC's 25%	Secured	\$67,550
			Non State Sub Total	\$350,550
			Funds Total	\$350,550

Total Project Cost: \$1,402,550

This amount accurately reflects total project cost?

Yes

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [c74448f3-921.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

Aerial map of Camp Parsons (within Carver County) showing the location of the road and parking lot that we are requesting funding for....

Financial Capacity

Title	File
MN Secretary of State	6692bbf4-b13.pdf
2024 Audit	f755fa8e-4d7.pdf
2024 Form 990	2f2c0acf-921.pdf

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
Board Letter	5f9bae9c-443.pdf

Supplemental Attachments

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

Title	File
Capital Construction Budget Addendum	da9cd238-129.xlsx
MAAHMG Mission Statement	d52582b1-724.docx
Capital Construction Project Questionnaire	708b2bce-87c.pdf
Phyllis Wheatley Community Center - Camp Parsons predesign	a96b7ea8-b98.pdf
Camp Parsons Road and Parking Lot estimate	33d72170-ffe.pdf
Conditional Use Permit - Map	ce1609af-065.pdf
Camp Parsons - Conditional Use Permit	d8ed0479-c9c.pdf
Design Development Renderings	1bbb19a1-046.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")?

Yes

Do you certify that background checks are performed for background check crimes, as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 299C.61, Subd. 2, on all employees, contractors, and volunteers who have or may have access to a child to whom children's services are provided by your organization?

Yes

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

Patricia Harris, Bryan Tyner, Joe Jeruzal, Minnesota African-American Heritage Museum & Gallery, Coventry Cowens

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