



# Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2027 Request for Proposal

## General Information

**Proposal ID:** 2027-577

**Proposal Title:** Splash Pad Phase 3 and Silver Lake Trail

## Project Manager Information

**Name:** Britt See-Benes

**Organization:** City of Virginia

**Office Telephone:** (218) 748-7500

**Email:** britts@viriniamn.us

## Project Basic Information

**Project Summary:** Design, construction, and management of the Splash Pad Phase 3 project, including an open-air market pavilion and reconstruction of the Silver Lake Trail along the west and north shoreline.

**ENRTF Funds Requested:** \$1,023,000

**Proposed Project Completion:** October 31, 2028

**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): NE

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

Region(s): NE

**When will the work impact occur?**

During the Project

## Narrative

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

The City of Virginia has an opportunity to build on current investments in its lakefront and park system to create a more connected, accessible, and inclusive outdoor recreation environment for residents and visitors. Phase 1 of the Splash Pad project is funded and underway. Phase 2 is being advanced concurrently and seeking additional funding, while Phase 3 will add an open-air pavilion to provide needed gathering space and support year-round use. Additional improvements are needed to ensure the site functions as a complete, accessible destination.

Currently, portions of the Silver Lake Trail are aging, lack continuity, and do not adequately serve people of all abilities. Gaps in trail quality and limited gathering space reduce safe access between parks, amenities, neighborhoods, and nearby businesses. The lack of flexible infrastructure also limits community events and expansion of Virginia Market Square.

This proposal advances the design, construction, and project management of the Splash Pad Phase 3 project and reconstruction of the Silver Lake Trail along the west and north sides of the lake. Together, these improvements will enhance accessibility, improve lake access, support community events and local commerce, and strengthen Virginia's role as a welcoming, walkable recreational destination.

### **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 proposed solution is to complete key improvements that expand and connect the City of Virginia's lakefront recreation system, ensuring it functions as a safe, accessible, and year-round destination. This project will advance the design, construction, and project management of Splash Pad Phase 3, which includes an open-air pavilion, along with reconstruction of the Silver Lake Trail along the west and north sides of the lake.

The pavilion will provide flexible community space for gatherings, events, and seasonal use, supporting increased activity at the splash pad and surrounding park amenities. Additionally, trail reconstruction will address gaps in connectivity, aging infrastructure, and accessibility limitations by creating a continuous, ADA-compliant route linking neighborhoods, parks, and local businesses. These improvements will also complement the planned reroute of the Mesabi Trail into Virginia by providing a high-quality spur connection into the city's trail system and Olcott Park.

Funding will support final design, engineering, and construction activities needed to complete these improvements. Together, these investments will enhance lakefront access, improve safety, and create a more connected and inclusive recreational corridor for residents and visitors.

### **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 will enhance and protect natural resources by improving access to the Silver Lake shoreline through a reconstructed, ADA-compliant trail that reduces erosion and unmanaged foot traffic. Sustainable trail design and durable surfaces will help protect surrounding vegetation and water quality. The open-air pavilion will concentrate recreational use in designated areas, minimizing impacts to sensitive lakefront environments. Improved connectivity, including a critical connection to the Mesabi Trail, will encourage non-motorized recreation and reduce reliance on vehicle travel. Together, these improvements promote responsible use, support long-term stewardship, and enhance public engagement with Minnesota's natural resources.

## Activities and Milestones

### Activity 1: Final Design, Engineering, Permitting

**Activity Budget:** \$25,000

**Activity Description:**

Objective: Prepare construction-ready plans for the pavilion and trail improvements.

Tasks: Complete final design, engineering, permitting, and coordination with regulatory agencies (including SHPO).

Outputs: Approved plans, permits, and cost estimates.

Impact: Ensures the project is feasible, compliant, and ready for construction.

Evaluation: Completion of design documents and permit approvals.

**Activity Milestones:**

| Description                          | Approximate Completion Date |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Final design and permitting complete | January 31, 2028            |

### Activity 2: Open-Air Market Pavilion Construction

**Activity Budget:** \$600,000

**Activity Description:**

Objective: Create a flexible community gathering space.

Tasks: Construct open-air pavilion and supporting site features.

Outputs: Completed pavilion facility.

Impact: Supports community events while concentrating use to protect surrounding natural areas.

Evaluation: Final inspection and usability.

**Activity Milestones:**

| Description                            | Approximate Completion Date |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Pavilion construction complete         | September 30, 2028          |
| Final inspections and project closeout | October 31, 2028            |

### Activity 3: Silver Lake Trail Reconstruction

**Activity Budget:** \$398,000

**Activity Description:**

Objective: Improve accessibility, safety, and connectivity along Silver Lake.

Tasks: Reconstruct trail segments, install durable surfaces, improve drainage, and ensure ADA compliance.

Outputs: Continuous, accessible trail system.

Impact: Reduces erosion, protects natural resources, and provides a critical connection within the local and regional trail network, including the Mesabi Trail.

Evaluation: Inspection for ADA compliance and construction quality.

**Activity Milestones:**

| Description                            | Approximate Completion Date |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Trail reconstruction complete          | September 30, 2028          |
| Final inspections and project closeout | October 31, 2028            |

## 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.**

Project results and products will be shared with the public and relevant stakeholders through on-site signage, educational kiosks, and city communications. ENRTF-funded improvements, including the pavilion and reconstructed trail, will feature acknowledgement of the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund. Educational materials developed as part of the trail and lakefront enhancements will highlight sustainable recreation, conservation practices, and responsible use of natural resources. Information about the trail system, connections to the Mesabi Trail, and park amenities will be disseminated via the City's website, social media, and community events. These efforts ensure the public, local organizations, and neighboring communities can benefit from project outcomes and promote long-term stewardship of Minnesota's natural resources.

## 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?**

Project results will be implemented through construction of the pavilion and reconstructed trail, which will be incorporated into the City of Virginia's existing park and trail system for immediate public use. Ongoing maintenance, operations, and programming will be funded through the City's general fund, park and recreation budgets, and potential partnerships. The improved trail and lakefront amenities will support long-term use, community events, and connectivity, including integration with the Mesabi Trail. Any additional improvements or future phases will be pursued through a combination of local funds, state and federal grants, and other funding partnerships.

## Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

**Project Manager Name:** Britt See-Benes

**Job Title:** City Administrator

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

Britt See-Benes, City Administrator, will serve as the project manager for the Splash Pad Phase 3 and Silver Lake Trail project. In this role, she will provide overall project oversight and coordination for the City's recreational and community-focused improvements, including the multi-modal trail connection, open-air market amenities, and associated public spaces.

Britt has served as City Administrator for the City of Virginia since 2016 and brings more than a decade of experience in municipal administration, budgeting, and project coordination. She holds a Master of Arts in Leadership and Management from Concordia University–St. Paul and has extensive experience managing capital improvement projects, coordinating consultants, and overseeing compliance with local, state, and grant requirements.

As City Administrator, Britt is responsible for day-to-day municipal operations, long-range planning, and coordination of infrastructure and community development projects. For this project, she will oversee coordination with engineering and design consultants, guide decisions related to project scope and phasing, and ensure alignment with City priorities and available funding.

Britt will also coordinate improvements that support the rerouting of the Mesabi Trail into Virginia and its integration with the City's existing trail system. This includes ensuring the proposed trail spur provides safe access to Olcott Park, the Splash Pad Phase 3 area, the planned open-air market, and the reconstructed trail corridor along the west edge of

Silver Lake. She will serve as the primary point of contact for LCCMR, oversee grant compliance and reporting, and ensure the project delivers meaningful recreational, environmental, and community benefits.

**Organization:** City of Virginia

**Organization Description:**

The City of Virginia is a Home Rule Charter city located in St. Louis County in northeastern Minnesota. Governed by a Mayor–Council form of government, the City provides a full range of municipal services to residents, businesses, and visitors, including public works, parks and recreation, public safety, utilities, planning, and community development. The City’s mission is to maintain and enhance a safe, healthy, and vibrant community by investing in infrastructure, public spaces, and amenities that improve quality of life and support long-term sustainability. Virginia places a strong emphasis on outdoor recreation, environmental stewardship, and community-focused development, with ongoing efforts to improve parks, trails, and public gathering spaces throughout the city.

Through careful planning, regional collaboration, and responsible use of public resources, the City works to support economic vitality, recreational access, and environmental protection for current and future generations. The proposed project aligns with the City’s goals of expanding accessible recreational opportunities, strengthening trail connectivity, and enhancing public spaces that serve residents and visitors alike.

## Budget Summary

| Category / Name  | Subcategory or Type | Description   | Purpose | Gen. Ineligible | % Benefits | # FTE | Classified Staff? | \$ Amount          |
|--|---------------------|---|---------|-----------------|------------|-------|-------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Personnel</b>   |                     |   |         |                 |            |       |                   |                    |
|  |                     |   |         |                 |            |       | <b>Sub Total</b>  | -                  |
| <b>Contracts and Services</b>                                  |                     |   |         |                 |            |       |                   |                    |
| Engineer hired through a competitive process                   | Service Contract    | Provide final design, engineering, permitting support, and construction oversight for the trail and pavilion improvements.                  |         |                 |            | 6     |                   | \$53,000           |
| General Contractor hired through a competitive bidding process | Service Contract    | The General Contractor (and the General Contractor's hired subcontractors) will be responsible for all aspects of the project construction. |         |                 |            | 20    |                   | \$970,000          |
|  |                     |   |         |                 |            |       | <b>Sub Total</b>  | <b>\$1,023,000</b> |
| <b>Equipment, Tools, and Supplies</b>                          |                     |   |         |                 |            |       |                   |                    |
|  |                     |   |         |                 |            |       | <b>Sub Total</b>  | -                  |
| <b>Capital Equipment</b>                                       |                     |   |         |                 |            |       |                   |                    |
|  |                     |   |         |                 |            |       | <b>Sub Total</b>  | -                  |
| <b>Acquisitions and Stewardship</b>                            |                     |   |         |                 |            |       |                   |                    |
|  |                     |   |         |                 |            |       | <b>Sub Total</b>  | -                  |
| <b>Travel In Minnesota</b>                                     |                     |   |         |                 |            |       |                   |                    |
|  |                     |   |         |                 |            |       | <b>Sub Total</b>  | -                  |

|   |  |  |  |  |  |  |                        |                    |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Travel<br/>Outside<br/>Minnesota</b> |  |  |  |  |  |  |                        |                    |
|   |  |  |  |  |  |  | <b>Sub<br/>Total</b>   | -                  |
| <b>Printing and<br/>Publication</b>     |  |  |  |  |  |  |                        |                    |
|   |  |  |  |  |  |  | <b>Sub<br/>Total</b>   | -                  |
| <b>Other<br/>Expenses</b>               |  |  |  |  |  |  |                        |                    |
|   |  |  |  |  |  |  | <b>Sub<br/>Total</b>   | -                  |
|   |  |  |  |  |  |  | <b>Grand<br/>Total</b> | <b>\$1,023,000</b> |

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

| Category/Name | Subcategory or Type | Description | Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request |
|---------------|---------------------|-------------|--|
|---------------|---------------------|-------------|--|

## Non ENRTF Funds

| Category         | Specific Source                                    | Use  | Status                     | Amount             |
|------------------|--|--|----------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>State</b>     |  |  |                            |                    |
| Cash             | DNR Outdoor Recreation Grant                       | Design and construction of Phase 2 park equipment, benches, picnic tables, other accessories | Potential                  | \$500,000          |
| Cash             | MPCA Implementation Grant for Community Resilience | Construction of Phase 1 splash pad, utilities, and associated equipment                      | Secured                    | \$500,000          |
|                  |  |  | <b>State Sub Total</b>     | <b>\$1,000,000</b> |
| <b>Non-State</b> |  |  |                            |                    |
| Cash             | Local, Private Funds                               | Pre-design, design   | Pending                    | \$60,000           |
| Cash             | Local, private funds                               | Construction of Phase 1 splash pad, utilities, and associated equipment                      | Pending                    | \$111,400          |
| Cash             | Private grants                                     | Construction of Phase 1 splash pad, utilities, and associated equipment                      | Pending                    | \$80,000           |
|                  |  |  | <b>Non State Sub Total</b> | <b>\$251,400</b>   |
|                  |  |  | <b>Funds Total</b>         | <b>\$1,251,400</b> |

**Total Project Cost: \$2,274,400**

**This amount accurately reflects total project cost?**

Yes

## Attachments

### Required Attachments

#### *Visual Component*

File: [bd90b1c7-54d.pdf](#)

#### *Alternate Text for Visual Component*

The visuals include a conceptual rendering of Silver Lake Park showing the phased splash pad development with shade structures, parking, play features, and the open-air market pavilion, along with an aerial map highlighting the location and extent of proposed trail reconstruction along the Silver Lake shoreline in Virginia, Minnesota....

#### *Financial Capacity*

| Title                 | File                             |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Virginia - Audit 2024 | <a href="#">16e6f6d9-3e7.pdf</a> |

#### *Board Resolution or Letter*

| Title                       | File                             |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Virginia - Applicant Letter | <a href="#">bca8e161-d14.pdf</a> |

### Supplemental Attachments

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

| Title                                      | File                             |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Capital Construction Budget Addendum       | <a href="#">d52472e4-8a5.pdf</a> |
| Capital Construction Project Questionnaire | <a href="#">d1176aa3-dac.pdf</a> |
| Letter of Support - Resident Taube         | <a href="#">e5b5d3cf-380.pdf</a> |
| Letter of Support - IROMA                  | <a href="#">d2bf2754-a2e.pdf</a> |
| Letter of Support - ERATS                  | <a href="#">754e4876-b0a.pdf</a> |
| Letter of Support - Discover the Range     | <a href="#">8ca8d06c-754.pdf</a> |
| Letter of Support - Resident Herhusk       | <a href="#">61b4647f-92d.pdf</a> |

### 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:**

Matt Reid, PE - Short Elliott Hendrickson, Inc. (SEH)

**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