

**LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU FISCAL ANALYSIS**

**PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE**

**ITEM 35 FILE # 060437**

**JULY 19, 2006**

**JEFF OSTERMAN**

File Number 060437 is a resolution relating to application for, and acceptance and funding of, a USDA Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Grant titled "Green Schools".

**Background**

1. Many Milwaukee Public Schools playgrounds are primarily covered with asphalt. By replacing asphalt surfaces with trees and turf, MPS and the City of Milwaukee can reduce stormwater runoff from playgrounds, reduce the "urban heat island effect" created by paved surfaces and provide much-needed shade and attractive green space for the use and enjoyment of surrounding neighborhoods.
2. The Department of Public Works-Operations Division (Forestry Section) has determined that the City of Milwaukee is eligible for a 2006 USDA Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Grant to retrofit MPS playgrounds by replacing portions of asphalt surfaces with green spaces consisting of trees and turf.
3. The City will partner with MPS to apply for and expend this grant, which is known as "Green Schools".
4. In addition to retrofitting asphalt playgrounds with trees and grass, this grant program will also include an education component that aims to expose children to forestry-related careers. Children from selected schools will participate in the landscape design process, the selection of appropriate plant materials and tree harvesting and planting activities.

**Discussion**

1. This grant would fund personnel costs and operating expenses (asphalt removal, landscaping materials and maintenance) for the retrofitting of MPS asphalt playgrounds to landscaped playgrounds.
2. Initially, this grant would replace portions of the asphalt playgrounds at Lewis Playfield (1424 East Prior Avenue) and Norris Playfield (936 North 19<sup>th</sup> Street) with trees and grass. Additional sites will be selected based on a survey of schools to determine interest in program participation.
3. In addition to benefiting students from the selected schools and school-age children in general, this grant program is also intended to improve the quality of life in

neighborhoods surrounding the selected playgrounds by creating attractive and useful community “pocket parks”.

4. The grant period for this project will extend from September 1, 2006, through September 3, 2009.

**Fiscal Impact**

1. **This is a new grant.**
2. The total cost of this grant-funded project is \$690,000, of which \$345,000 (50%) will be provided in-kind by the City and its project partner, Milwaukee Public Schools, and \$345,000 (50%) will be provided by the grantor, the USDA Forest Service.
3. The in-kind contributions from the City and MPS will be as follows:

Personnel costs (City)	\$97,888
Playground retrofit/asphalt removal (MPS)	\$100,000*
Trees (City)	\$122,820
Tree maintenance (City)	\$10,544
Site maintenance (MPS)	\$10,000
<u>Site materials (City)</u>	<u>\$3,750</u>
TOTAL	\$345,000

\* Note: The asphalt removal work will be performed by either a subcontractor or MPS, depending on cost.

4. The federal grant funds will be used as follows:

Trees	\$222,180
Playground retrofit/asphalt removal	\$74,170
<u>Turf and topsoil</u>	<u>\$48,650</u>
TOTAL	\$345,000

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