



January 24, 2020

Rep. Paul Marquart
Chair, House Taxes Committee
3225 Minnesota Senate Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Rep. Greg Davids
Ranking Minority Member
House Taxes Committee Member

Representative Heather Edelson
District 49A representing Edina

Representative Steve Elkins
District 49B representing Edina

Honorable Representatives,

Enclosed is a resolution of support seeking the authority to establish a Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) to fund infrastructure improvements with regional significance. This resolution was passed by the Edina City Council on January 22, 2020.

This resolution, 2020-15, supports the authority to impose a local sales tax to fund specific capital improvements providing regional benefit, to establish the duration of the tax and the revenue to be raised by the tax, and to authorize the City of Edina to issue bonds supported by the sales tax revenue.

Specifically, Edina has identified four infrastructure projects to be funded by LOST.

I. Fred Richards Park Master Plan (\$17.7M)

Fred Richards Park is being created from the former Fred Richards Golf Course, which closed in 2014. The 43-acre site, almost double the size of Centennial Lakes Park, will become a multi-use park for a variety of activities year-round. This site is connected regionally by the Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail Corridor, built in partnership with Nine Mile Creek Watershed District and Three Rivers Park District, which bisects the site. Fred Richards Park will subtly divide into sections, providing different experiences for people and nature. The vision includes features and amenities envisioned for the site to meet current and anticipated park and recreational demands. The Master Plan adopted July 2017, includes:

- Central Green – (\$9.9M)
- Nature Bank – (\$1.9M)
- Great Lawn and Loop Area (\$5.9M)

Regionally, this community asset is directly connected via the Nine Mile and Three Rivers Park District Trail to Minnetonka, Hopkins and Richfield. The park is also connected to the

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Minneapolis Grand Rounds, Nokomis-Minnesota River Regional Trail, Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail, Cedar Lake LRT Regional Trail and Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail. The park is adjacent to the Pentagon Park office project, home to numerous business organizations and employees.

2. Braemar Park Master Plan including Braemar Arena complex (\$20.9M)

At 500 acres, Braemar Park is the largest recreational space in the City of Edina. It is home to Braemar Golf Course, Braemar Golf Dome, Braemar Arena, Braemar Sports Dome and Field, and Courtney Fields. Improvements to the park includes improving the connectivity of trail systems, access, and wayfinding to park amenities and facilities; providing separated use trail systems to accommodate walkers, mountain bikers and cross-country skiers; identifying new site improvements and recreational amenities to enhance existing facilities; developing and improving the quality of natural resources in the park; incorporating sustainable site improvements to promote land water resources; and investing in facility infrastructure are goals of the masterplan. Masterplan adopted January 2018, includes:

Master Plan – (\$8.1M)

Arena Complex Infrastructure – (\$12.8M)

Home to Edina High School, the Edina Youth Associations and the Braemar City of Lakes Figure Skating Club, regionally, this community asset draws recreational visitors from the entire Metro area, Greater Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa and Canada. These park and recreation amenities are available for use by residents, business community members and school programs.

3. Weber Woods Park and Storm Water Facilities (\$2M)

At just over 14 acres, Weber Woods was jointly purchased by the City of Edina and the City of St. Louis Park in 2016. The site is located adjacent to and between Weber Field Park in Edina and Minikahda Vista Park in St. Louis Park. Over 9 acres of the site is located within the City of Edina and its intended use is restricted to park, recreation, open space or storm water management. In 2019, The Edina City Council approved a flood reduction task force, to address the impacts of storm water throughout the city and Weber Woods was a focus area as it is adjacent to St. Louis Park and the City of Minneapolis. By developing park amenities at this location, the residents, businesses and visitors of Edina, St. Louis Park and Minneapolis would be served by these offerings.

4. Municipal State Aid Street Reconstruction (Projects total \$39.2M)

MSA street reconstruction is an eligible use of LOST funding. Staff projects little to no growth in the Highway Users Tax Distribution Fund, from which MSA funding originates. Without an increase in funding, the pace and scope of these projects will slow. Engineering staff identifies approximately 28 miles of future MSA street reconstruction projects estimated at \$56M. LOST Funds could cover approximately \$39.2M, with the remaining \$16.8M covered by existing MSA Funds.



The City of Edina recently completed an analysis conducted by the University of Minnesota Extension for the use of LOST and has estimated that to fund the \$79,800,000 in identified projects, a local sales tax of 0.5 percent would generate the necessary \$4,000,000 annually over 20 years.

In accordance with Minn. Stat. § 297A.99 the City has passed resolution 2020-15 supporting the use of LOST and requests authorization by the Minnesota Legislature to authorize the imposition of a general sales tax if approved by a local ballot referendum.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James Hovland".

James Hovland
Mayor

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read "Scott H. Neal".

Scott Neal
City Manager