

2016 Wakan Tipi Center Request

\$3 million in general obligation bonding to build the Wakan Tipi Center.

\$3.7 million match in private funding raised by the Lower Phalen Creek Project.

\$6.7 million Total Project Costs

Construction and operation of the interpretive center is anticipated to add 48 construction and related jobs and 20 long term employment jobs on site.

2015/2016 Bill introduced: **HF494/SF573**

Private/Public Investment at Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary

\$9.95 million has thus far been invested in the sanctuary, nearby trails and for land acquisition, including:

* \$4.32 million in federal funds for land acquisition of the sanctuary, remediation and cleanup and regional trail connections

* \$2.55 million in City of Saint Paul funding.

* \$1.74 million in state funds for sanctuary creation, additional trail extensions, ecological restoration of the site.

* \$1.54 million in private funds for acquisition, restoration, interpretation, and project planning.

Wakan Tipi Center at Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary
Nature and Culture in the Heart of the City

Suggested design by Ihrig, Panure, and Goecke

Wakan Tipi Center will be an engaging visitor center for the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary. The center will serve as a place for events, stewardship activities, educational programming, and interpretive exhibits. These events will inspire and inform audiences far beyond the hundreds of school groups and visitors that already have found the sanctuary an urban oasis in the heart of the city.

The Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary is an award-winning park located in the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area east of Downtown Saint Paul. Home to towering bluffs, spring-fed wetlands, forests and prairies, the sanctuary includes a Dakota sacred site and remnants of Minnesota's earliest rail centers and brewing operations. Situated in one of the most culturally diverse areas of the state, both Native Americans and varying immigrant communities have made their homes here.

The Wakan Tipi Center, located on the 27-acre nature sanctuary will attract new audiences and provide a vital amenity for the region.

The sanctuary is at the center of some of our region's most exciting changes and opportunities.

School children from across the region visit the sanctuary for science and social studies learning. Downtown residents, employees and tourists visit this remarkable "urban oasis" nestled between the ancient stone bluffs of Indian Mounds Park and the Mississippi River.

More than 100 miles of recreational trails converge here. The new CHS Field has already brought over a half million additional people into this area. With the recently re-opened Union Depot multi-modal transit hub and the launch of Green Line Light Rail Service just 3/4 of a mile away, the area is increasingly becoming a regional and statewide destination.

Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary is already a regional destination. Wakan Tipi Center will expand usage and programming available on-site at this unique urban oasis.

Building Features

The Interpretive Center will –

- (1) Honor, accurately interpret, and educate the community about the rich cultural and natural history features of the Lower Phalen Creek corridor.
- (2) Honor the significance of Wakan Tipi Cave as a Dakota sacred site.
- (3) Create a gathering place and visitor facility for the community and visitors from far and wide.
- (4) Pending final design approved by the community, the estimated 10,000 sq. ft. building will feature a reception area, classrooms, exhibits, a small performance area and a gallery to showcase and expand the value of the sanctuary as a place for life-long learning and inspiration.

The Urban Oasis Cafe will –

Serve visitors with an emphasis on providing food raised by local farmers. It will augment the interpretive center by offering cooking classes and workshops focusing on the growing, preparing

and serving foods that represent the many groups and cultures featured in the center.

This “Gathering Place” as part of the City of Saint Paul’s Great River Passage Master Plan – will offer dramatic views of the river and downtown, as well as opportunities for strolling through the sanctuary and biking the network of nearby trails – eventually linking the Bruce Vento Regional Trail to the Sam Morgan Regional Trail and Saint Paul’s Grand Round system.

Project Leadership

The City of Saint Paul will own the building and the Lower Phalen Creek Project will lease and operate the facility under a long-term agreement with the city.

Melanie Kleiss, Executive Director

Lower Phalen Creek Project

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