



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

100 East Erie Street
Chicago, IL 60611

Legislation Text

File #: 14-0283, **Version:** 1

TRANSMITTAL LETTER FOR BOARD MEETING OF APRIL 3, 2014

COMMITTEE ON REAL ESTATE

Mr. David St. Pierre, Executive Director

Authority to: (1) issue a three (3) month permit to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on 52 acres of District real estate located at Ridgeland Avenue and 119th Street in Alsip, Illinois and known as the Ridgeland Avenue Drying Beds to perform soil borings and (2) designate the Ridgeland Avenue Drying Beds site comprising 93+/- acres as a Corps regional sediment management facility. Consideration shall be \$10.00

Dear Sir:

This letter relates to the District's obligations as a local sponsor under the Calumet-Sag Navigation Project. The Cal-Sag Navigation Project was approved by the U.S. Congress in 1967, which authorized the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers ("Corps") to widen and dredge the Cal-Sag Channel, improve a portion of the Little Calumet River and that portion of the Calumet River between Calumet Harbor and Lake Calumet. Maintenance of the waterways involves periodic dredging and depositing of the silt and dredgings upon maintenance areas.

As local sponsor, the District is statutorily obligated to furnish, free of cost, to the Corps all lands, easements, rights-of-way and soil disposal areas necessary for the work and for subsequent maintenance by the Corps. The District has purchased two maintenance areas; one is the 73-acre site located at 138th Street and Halsted Street in the Village of Riverdale ("Riverdale Site") purchased in 1967, and the other is the Lucas Berg site located at 111th Street and Southwest Highway in Worth, IL ("Lucas Berg Site") purchased in 1975 and deeded to the Corps at that time. The Corps did place dredging at the Riverdale Site between 1970 and 1974. The Corps has indicated that it has no further interest in the Riverdale Site due to the complexities of mobilizing thereon. The Corps constructed certain facilities for a dredging disposal facility at the Lucas Berg Site in the 1970s and the 1980s but did not deposit dredgings thereon. There is pending federal legislation that would prohibit any future use of the Lucas Berg Site for these purposes.

Until recently, the Corps was unwilling or unable to project for the District when or if the Riverdale Site would be required for use. Because of the lack of information, the District was reluctant to sell the parcel. The Corps has now provided the District with information that allows for an informed decision to be made with respect to the future disposition of the Riverdale Site. The Corps has indicated that this parcel is not sufficient for its maintenance of the waterways and has indicated that it is no longer required by the Corps. After the Corps formally relinquishes the site, the District is statutorily required to sell the land because it does not have a corporate use need for it.

Because of the pending legislation affecting the use of the Lucas Berg Site, the Corps has requested to explore the possibility of using the Ridgeland Avenue Drying Bed site ("Ridgeland Site") as a regional sediment disposal facility. The Ridgeland Site comprises 93+/- acres of District land along the north side of the Cal-Sag Channel. Currently the Corps is only proposing to develop a 52-acre portion of the site for a regional facility, but has indicated that it does not want to rule out using the entire 93+/- acres at some future point.

A regional facility would include placement of sediment from not only the Cal-Sag Channel and certain portions of the Little Calumet River and Calumet River, but also from the Calumet Harbor and portions of the Calumet River, areas for which the District is not required to furnish disposal areas. The Corps is working with the Illinois International Port District and the City of Chicago to locate and develop a regional facility to provide for a place to deposit dredging from the Calumet Harbor and the portions of the Calumet River. Because the District's obligations as a local sponsor do not involve the Calumet Harbor and certain portions of the Calumet River, it would look for reimbursement from the Corps, the Port District or the City of Chicago if the Ridgeland Site is used for dredging from those areas.

The Corps has requested a three (3) month soil boring permit to conduct boring work at the Ridgeland Site to help aid in its determination as to whether it is an appropriate location for the management of the dredged material. Approval by the Corps of the Ridgeland Site is contingent upon the results of these investigations and the evaluation of any significant environmental impacts. At this time, the Corps is currently only proposing to conduct borings on and develop 53 of the 93+/- acres at this location.

The technical departments have reviewed the Corps' request to conduct soil borings at the Ridgeland Site and there were no objections thereto, subject to certain conditions.

Additionally, the Corps has requested that the District designate the Ridgeland Site as a potential regional sediment management facility before it continues its evaluation and determination as to whether it is a suitable location for such a project. The District's technical departments have indicated that there are no objections to designating the Ridgeland Site as a Corps dredge disposal facility.

It is requested that the Executive Director recommend to the Board of Commissioners that it authorize: (1) the issuance of a three (3) month permit to the US Army Corps of Engineers on 52 acres of District real estate located at Ridgeland Avenue and 119th Street in Alsip, Illinois and known as the Ridgeland Avenue Drying Beds to perform soil borings and (2) the designation of the Ridgeland Avenue Drying Beds site comprising 93+/- acres as a Corps regional sediment management facility. Consideration shall be \$10.00.

It is also requested that the Executive Director recommend to the Board of Commissioners that it authorize and direct the Chairman of the Committee on Finance and the Clerk to execute said permit agreement and any other documents necessary to effectuate the designation of the site as a regional sediment management facility after they are approved by the General Counsel as to form and legality.

Requested, Ronald M. Hill, General Counsel, RMH:SM:vp

Recommended, David St. Pierre, Executive Director

Respectfully Submitted, Mariyana T. Spyropoulos, Chairman Committee on Real Estate Development

Disposition of this agenda item will be documented in the official Regular Board Meeting Minutes of the Board of Commissioners for April 3, 2014

Attachment