



MICHIGAN SENATE

Appropriations Requests for Legislatively Directed Spending Items

Date Submitted: 03/30/2026

1. Sponsoring legislator's full name:

Senator Ruth Johnson

2. Cosponsoring legislators' names (if applicable):

N/A

3. Intended legislatively directed spending item recipient:

Huron-Clinton Metroparks Authority/Wolcott Mill Metropark

4. Physical address of legislatively directed spending item recipient and the intended location of the project or activity:

13000 High Ridge Drive, Brighton, MI 48114; 65775 Wolcott Road, Ray, MI 48096

5. The recipient's employer identification number:

386005602

6. Requested amount of the legislatively directed spending item:

\$1,000,000.00

7. What is the purpose and how does the legislatively directed spending item provide a public benefit that is an appropriate use of taxpayer money?

Project Summary: The project will renovate the Wolcott Mill Farm Center to improve accessibility and overall circulation for use for its many agricultural education programs. The proposed improvements will also boost animal wellbeing and provide more learning opportunities for the public. The project expands outdoor learning and recreational opportunities, a vital part of the local, regional, and state economy which helps drive economic development. Specifically, Wolcott Mill Metropark's Farm Center provides programming to school groups and the public to learn about Michigan's rich agricultural heritage. Visitors can come to the Farm Center to see sheep, cows, pigs, chickens, goats, donkeys, ducks, and horses. The 250-acre working farm brings you face-to-face with these animals and provides opportunities to learn about the origins of food and fiber. The interpretive staff conducts

programming on a wide variety of subjects including milk production, lamb and wool production, soil and water conservation, sustainable agriculture, food processing, and modern farming techniques. Project Details • A widened accessible walkway throughout the Farm Center • An accessible garden area usable for programs and public use • A new small animal barn, pens, and pasture area • Improved drainage areas using green infrastructure • A cow maternity building and associated access for the public Community Impact: The requested funding will create a universally accessible, family-friendly facility that serves all park visitors. The improvements detailed above ensure that individuals of all ages and abilities, including seniors, people with disabilities, caregivers, and families with young children, can safely access and enjoy one of Southeast Michigan's most heavily used public recreation facilities. This project provides clear public benefit by expanding access to outdoor recreation, improving public safety, and supporting regional agritourism and economic activity. Wolcott Mill Metropark serves residents from across Southeast Michigan and beyond, and the Farm Center is a year-round attraction. By improving accessibility, safety, and operational efficiency, the renovation increases educational opportunities, promotes physical activity and wellness, and ensures compliance with federal and state accessibility standards. The project also extends the useful life of a public asset. The funding request is an appropriate use of taxpayer dollars because the improvements serve a broad public population without discrimination and is not for private gain. The spending item does not violate Article IV, Section 30 of the Michigan Constitution because the funds will be used exclusively for infrastructure improvements at a publicly owned facility that serves the public. No funds will be directed to private individuals or entities for private benefit. Community Support: HCMA regularly conducts region-wide surveys across Macomb, Oakland, Livingston, Washtenaw, and Wayne counties to better understand community needs, interests, and recreational priorities for the 13 Metroparks. Survey responses consistently show strong public support for investing in and improving existing parks and for developing modern recreational facilities that serve residents of all ages and abilities. The latest regional community survey was completed in the fall of 2025. This project directly advances both priorities. It represents a significant reinvestment in an existing public asset, and for the animals who call this place home. It also modernizes the facility to increase accessibility to enhance the visitor experience and for the educational programs it provides. This investment will restore and significantly improve a popular outdoor recreation facility, ensuring it can safely serve the public for decades to come. In addition to survey-based input, HCMA is currently underway in updating Wolcott Mill Metropark's Master Plan. The public will be invited during the spring and summer of 2026 to provide feedback on the park's master plan, including the Farm Center. During the last master planning process in 2016, both the public and staff prioritized investing in the Farm Center, and for increased accessibility.

- 8. Has the legislatively directed spending item previously received or been awarded any of the following types of funding in the past 5 years? If so, how much? Check all that apply:**

N/A

Amount

N/A

- 9. Estimated time frame for completion of the legislatively directed spending item project:**

Fall 2027

- 10. Is the recipient a nonprofit corporation?**

No

Additional Information for Nonprofit Corporations (if applicable)

The answer to questions 1 to 3 must be "Yes" for the nonprofit corporation to qualify for a legislatively directed spending item.

- 1. Has the nonprofit corporation continuously operated in this state for the preceding 36 months?**

No

- 2. Has the nonprofit corporation had a physical office in this state for not less than the preceding 12 consecutive months?**

No

- 3. Does the organization have a board of directors?**

No

- 4. List all of the officers and active members on the board of directors:**

N/A

Certification By Sponsoring Legislator

"I certify that my immediate family members, legislative staff members, and I have no direct or indirect pecuniary interest in the requested legislatively directed spending item."

"I certify that the intended recipient of this legislatively directed spending item is not a for-profit entity."

"I certify that the information in this form is true to the best of my knowledge."

Senator Ruth Johnson