3W4LAKEFRONT DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION

Report of Recommendation of the Lakefront Development Advisory Commission

City of Milwaukee Environmental Collaboration Office (ECO) proposal for EV Charging Stations in Veterans Park

The Recommendation. At its September 9, 2025, meeting the Lakefront Development Advisory Commission passed by a vote of 7 to 3 a resolution recommending approval of the proposed project for two level 2 chargers for four automobiles within the parking lot adjacent to the Kite rental facility in the NE part of Veterans Park.

THE COMMISSION'S PURPOSE. THE LAKEFRONT DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION'S PURPOSE IS TO APPLY THE CRITERIA THAT HAVE BEEN APPROVED BY MILWAUKEE COUNTY AND THE CITY OF MILWAUKEE AND MAKE NONBINDING RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COUNTY, CITY AND/OR THE STATE RESPECTING WHETHER A DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL FOR THE LAKEFRONT SHOULD BE APPROVED. TO ACCOMMODATE CONSIDERATION OF ITS RECOMMENDATIONS, THE COMMISSION ISSUES A REPORT THAT PROVIDES THE BASIS FOR ITS RECOMMENDATION. THE REPORT INCLUDES THE COMMISSION'S UNDERSTANDING OF THE FACTS AND RECORDS THE VOTE OF EACH MEMBER ON THE RECOMMENDATION.

Commission consideration of the proposal. The EV Charging Stations development project is proposed by the City of Milwaukee's Environmental Collaboration Office (ECO). ECO submitted a Request for Review of the proposal that was made available to the public and is attached hereto. The Request for Review was posted on the Milwaukee County Legislative Information Center (CLIC) website with the agenda of LDAC's Sep. 9, 2025, hearing. The Commission sought public comment on the matter prior to its public hearing.

Public Hearing, Sep. 9, 2025.

The meeting and hearing were conducted on Microsoft Teams and in person. At the conclusion of presentation of the proposal and discussion of it with the Commission, Supervisor Anne O'Connor and five members of the public appeared and presented their views. The minutes of the Sep. 9th meeting are attached.

Public hearing attendance. The members of LDAC present for the Sep. 9th, hearing were Chairman Bill Lynch, Gregory Patin on behalf of Lafayette Crump, Tim Hoelter, Kurt Mihelich, Guy Smith, CoryAnn St. Marie-Carls, Michael C. Thompson, ex officio, Michael

O'Connor, Amy Turner, Supervisor Sheldon Wasserman, and Brenda Coley. Rep. Ryan Clancy was appointed to the Commission, ex officio, and participated in discussion.

At the hearing Erick Shambarger, Director of Environmental Sustainability, Environmental Collaboration Office (ECO), City of Milwaukee and Nathan Coe, Environmental Sustainability Coordinator, ECO, City of Milwaukee, presented on behalf of the City of Milwaukee.

Project description. The proposal is for an electric vehicle charging station within the parking lot next to the kite shop in Veteran's Park. The installation of the chargers will result in the designation of **four existing parking spaces** for EV charging use, including **two dual-port chargers** and an adjacent **access lane to accommodate ADA accessibility**. The City of Milwaukee's Environmental Collaboration Office (ECO) has been awarded a $15 million Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) grant from the US Department of Transportation to build a public electric vehicle charging network throughout Milwaukee, consisting of chargers at approximately 53 sites. The proposed installation would be one of the first 13 projects. The City's ECO proposes that the City would sustain almost all the costs of installation and maintenance. Eighty percent of the costs of installation would come from the federal grant. The city is not asking the County to supply the 20% match. Private operation and maintenance would come from a qualified EV service provider, selected through a competitive RFP or cooperative procurement contract. The only County costs proposed would be for pavement marking, signage, and ADA access estimated at $5,000–$10,000. Users will be charged for the service. The basis for the charge, whether by time or by amount of electricity, and the amount have not been determined, nor has the contractor's lease payment and/or revenue sharing. Those will be matters for agreement with the company that is chosen from the RFP process.

Public Hearing: Eric Shambarger and Nathan Coe presented the proposed project. The Veterans Park location is one of 6 sites in Milwaukee County Parks for which EV charging stations are proposed. The Milwaukee County Parks Director submitted a letter in support of the federal grant. Access to the sites must be open to the public and free. The chargers cannot be a proprietary system (e.g., not only for Teslas). The chargers can be either level 2 (220 alternating current) or level 3 (direct current fast charge). Level 3 chargers would require a larger transformer. The parking lot already has wiring capacity for level 2 chargers. Level 2 chargers take considerably longer than level 3 chargers for a full charge. Level 3 chargers are so fast that visits to the park while charging would be quite brief. The McKinley Marina parking lot was considered as an option but is slated for reconstruction soon. A goal of the project is to welcome people to the park and Lakefront and as an amenity for them.

The Commissioners asked questions and made comments. The chargers would be available only during the hours the park is open. Lighting not provided for in the proposal may be necessary for security. The contract between the City and the provider will be for five years with an option for a City buyout. The cost of the project was discussed. Although larger figures were discussed (e.g. Sup. Wasserman: $200,000 per

unit), the proposal is that start-up/one-time costs are estimated to be $85,000-$108,000 and annual operating and maintenance costs are estimated to be $5,500-$9,500. All these expenses are proposed to be borne by the City and the private operator except that the County would be responsible for marking the pavement and for signage, including what will be needed for ADA access compliance, in total estimated at $5,000–$10,000. The new construction would be for five of the parking lot's spaces, four spaces for charging and one for ADA access. The new construction would include EV chargers, pedestals, and associated components (including signage, bollards, and payment systems) and utility cabinets, transformers, and conduit installed for the chargers. Level 3 chargers would require larger electrical transformers than level 2 chargers. No paths or grass covered areas would be required.

Discussion. Commissioner Guy Smith, Milwaukee County Parks Director, indicated that the Parks Department supports the program. Supervisor Anne O'Connor spoke in favor of the proposal. She said it was consistent with the climate equity plans of both the City and the County. She mentioned that charging stations are in National Parks.

Public testimony. Jennifer A. Evans, President of Our Future Milwaukee testified in favor because of the proposal's positive environmental impact and because it was not taking additional parkland. She mentioned that apartment dwellers need EV chargers and that the proposal supports environmental equity. Molly Collins, Director of Advocacy for the American Lung Association testified in support. She stressed that EV's support clean air and reduce the impact of climate change, including reduction of asthma, a lung disease suffered disproportionately by low-income communities and people of color. Charles Kamps testified that Preserve Our Parks upon whose Board of Directors he serves had not had an opportunity to take a position on the matter of EV stations in lakefront parks. He requested that the Commission hold the matter open for ten days for additional public comment. He opposed the proposal personally. He raised the concern that if the proposal were successful the project would expand with lighting, signage and other such development. Mr. Kamps stated his belief that lakefront land is sacred land. Mary Kamps testified against the proposal, stressing that EV stations could go elsewhere. She said it was shocking to consider lakefront for commercial enterprises, and that cars there would obstruct views of the Lake and contribute lighting to the night sky. The EV chargers would take up scarce parking spaces. Ted Kraig, Citizen Action of Wisconsin, registered as speaking in favor, but did not appear.

Commission discussion. Commissioner Tim Hoelter indicated his opposition primarily on the basis that other locations not on lakefront parkland are available. Commissioner Supervisor Wasserman indicated his opposition. He expressed the view that use would be unlikely in bad weather. He argued that the investment was $200,000 per unit. Mr. Shambarger was recognized and indicated that installation would cost $50,000-$60,000. The proposed sources for payment of costs are discussed above. Mr. Greg Patin, appearing for Commissioner Lafayette Crump, indicated that the City was in support of EV chargers and they should be recognized as a normal part of parking lots. Discussion of the proposal disclosed that the option of level 3 fast chargers was not preferred by many commissioners. The shorter charging time would lessen the

probability that users would explore the park and lakefront while their automobile charged, thereby reducing the impact of the project on encouraging park use and exploration of the lakefront. **Mr. Shambarger withdrew the option of level 3 chargers.**

Commission action: Commissioner Supervisor Wasserman made a motion to hold open the matter for 10 days for a post hearing public comment period. The motion failed on a tie vote of 5-5. Voting in favor were Hoelter, Mihelich, O'Connor, Wasserman and Lynch. Voting against were Coley, Crump, St. Marie-Carls, Smith and Turner. The Commission then considered a **motion by Commissioner Guy Smith to recommend approval of the project to install level 2 EV chargers at the specified site. The motion passed by a vote of 7-3.** Voting in favor were Coley, Crump, O'Connor, St. Marie-Carls, Smith, Turner and Lynch. Voting against were Hoelter, Mihelich and Wasserman.

The project complies with the LDAC criteria.

This project follows the criteria set forth for evaluation of lakefront development:

1. **Conform to the current laws and regulations.** Per the understanding of the Commission, the proposal so conforms.

2. **Conform to the Public Trust Doctrine**. The plans appeared to be in conformance with the Public Trust Doctrine as they are an improvement providing access to the lakefront; will not impair views of the lake or lagoon; and do not remove or repurpose any parkland currently used directly for active or passive recreation.

3. **Encourage active and passive recreation**. Provides access to active and passive recreation areas for EV users. Encourages them to experience and enjoy the lakefront.

4. **Preserve and protect the scenic and natural beauty of the lakefront**. The facility will reduce five current parking spaces for use by non-electric vehicles but will also accommodate 4 EV vehicles and their passengers. There will be no impact on or reduction of park green space or access to pathways, or other existing park uses. The charging stations will look like other such facilities. They will be located where they will have no anticipated impact on recreational water use or views of the lake or lagoon. Moreover, the continued unabated use of gasoline- and diesel-powered vehicles stands to impose significant harm to natural resources throughout the Midwest, including Lake Michigan. A robust EV charging network, including at the proposed site, can lessen global temperature rise, thereby

mitigating future intense storms, erosion, flooding, and contamination from industrial uses adjacent to Lake Michigan. As a result, the proposed EV chargers will play a role in preserving the scenic and natural beauty of the lakefront.

5. **Access to the lakefront**. The project improves access to the lakefront, by adding opportunities for access by EV users and passengers.

6. **Recognize the unique opportunities of different parts of the lakefront and allow only projects that must be at the lakefront.** Like the existing parking lot, this facility will promote and accommodate access to the Lakefront for park users, including EV users. Future stations at other lakefront locations will be reviewed when proposed.

7. **Need for public funds.** Capital funds have been awarded to the City for installing the stations. The contractor/operator is anticipated to cover the costs of upkeep and maintenance without public funds. User fees will be determined by the contract between the City and the contractor/operator. The current assumption is that they will be reasonable and will allow a broad percentage of the public to take advantage of the facility. The City has pledged that it will remove the EV stations and restore the parking lot to its current condition should that become necessary, which is highly unlikely in this case.

8. **Environmental impact.** The proposal is to install two, two-space level 2 EV chargers within an existing parking lot. One space will have an adjacent space available that will meet ADA access requirements. The chargers will be 4-5 feet tall and will be installed on newly poured concrete slabs. An electrical utility and a transformer may be necessary. There are existing electrical lines that go to the edge of the parking lot. Some surface level trenching or conduit installation may be required. The proposal minimizes environmental disruption. Electric vehicle use contributes to reduction of carbon pollution and helps lessen the adverse environmental impacts of climate change. EV use helps reduce reliance on internal combustion engines, leading to lower emissions of nitrogen oxides, particulate matter, and greenhouse gases. This contributes directly to improved air quality in and around Veterans Park and the broader Milwaukee area. Prominent public demonstration of EV charging capacity will encourage electric vehicle use. Environmental equity will be served by general public access to the site, including access by apartment dwellers who have limited access to EV charges connected with their residences. The environmental benefits of this proposal outweigh adverse environmental impacts. The highly visible location of the proposed site will enhance the lakefront as an area for

Amy Turner Oct. 13

demonstrating best environmental practices.

Respectfully submitted.

William Lynch
LDAC Chairperson