



Legislation Text

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Title
Authorizing Staff to Approve Temporary Land Use Permit to Community Development Authority for purposes of conducting geothermal test boring in Brittingham Park

Body
Located across West Washington Avenue from Brittingham Park, the Madison CDA's Triangle public housing site will begin a phased redevelopment beginning in 2025, known as "Taking Shape, Our Triangle." The redevelopment project will provide a safe, decarbonized, and long-lasting affordable housing community to nearly 1,500 residents. During the ongoing master planning phase, a community geothermal system has been identified as potential cost-effective solution to electrify approximately 90-100% of heating and cooling demands while keeping operating costs to a minimum for CDA and reducing energy bills for many of its low-income tenants.

Preliminary studies are underway to design and implement a new, networked geothermal heating and cooling system for the Triangle community redevelopment, which for maximum efficiency may be primarily located under Brittingham Park. This system would be entirely subterranean, and would not impact the long-term usability of the park. However, it would require a portion of the athletic fields to be offline for a period of approximately six months while a series of boreholes is created, all infrastructure is buried, and the site is regraded and seeded. CDA expects to retain ownership of the system and assume all future maintenance costs for any infrastructure located under the park.

CDA's development team provided an introductory overview of this system at the BPC meeting of December 2023. Since that time, CDA has worked to refine the practical scope and budget for Triangle geothermal, which will require test soil borings in the park. The tests will be conducted to get a sense of the ideal scale and potential output of the larger geothermal field. As a first step, CDA will commission an ALTA survey of a 3-to-6-acre area of the park (see attached map) and work with Parks staff to determine the exact location of the test bores, taking care to avoid critical infrastructure and minimize downtime (if any) for public use of park greenspaces. CDA requests authorization to submit a temporary land use permit application to conduct the test bores for administrative approval by Parks staff, with any future installation of the fully designed geothermal system in Brittingham Park subject to formal agreements.