

Community Development Committee

Meeting date: July 17, 2017

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of July 26, 2017

Subject: Livable Communities Act Transit Oriented Development Livable Communities Demonstration Account Pre-Development Grant Recommendations

District(s), Member(s): All

Policy/Legal Reference: MN Statute §473.253

Staff Prepared/Presented: Erin Heelan, Livable Communities, (651) 602-1633

Division/Department: Community Development / Housing and Livable Communities

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council (1) award two Livable Communities Demonstration Account Transit-Oriented Development Pre-Development grants as follows, totaling \$200,000, and (2) authorize its Community Development Division Director to execute the grant agreements on behalf of the Council;

Recommended Projects	Applicant	TOD Predevelopment
Ramsey West/River Balcony Connection	St. Paul	\$100,000
Bassett Creek Valley Redevelopment	Minneapolis	\$100,000
	Total Requested	\$200,000
	Total Available	\$250,000
	Total Remaining	\$50,000

Background

Advancing Transit Oriented Development (TOD) along existing and emerging transitways is a priority of the Metropolitan Council. The TOD grant category funds are targeted to support TOD activities in several identified TOD areas. The Council adopted the 2017 Livable Communities Act TOD guidelines, criteria, schedule, and evaluation process as part of the [Fund Distribution Plan \(FDP\)](#) earlier this year. The FDP specifies a one-step staff evaluation process for TOD Pre-Development grants. An evaluation team of staff from Community Development and Metro Transit evaluate applications.

Rationale

On June 1, 2017, the Council received two applications for the spring round of TOD Pre-Development funding. The staff evaluation concluded that both applications met the minimum scoring threshold to be recommended for funding. Further detail is represented in the attached Review Record.

Funding

As outlined in the FDP, two rounds of TOD Pre-Development and TOD Site Investigation funding were made available in 2017, with \$250,000 available for Pre-Development and \$125,000 available for Site Investigation grants in each round. The Council did not receive any applications for the spring funding round for Site Investigation. Staff is recommending funding two TOD Pre-Development applications for a total of \$200,000. After the June 1st deadline remaining available funds were moved to the TOD Development and regular Tax Base Revitalization Account (TBRA) as provided for in the FDP.

Thrive Lens Analysis

Projects that leverage our infrastructure investments by helping increase densities and provide a mix of uses further the Thrive Stewardship Outcome.

Projects that redevelop and increase density, especially near transit stations, further the Thrive Prosperity outcome of “Encouraging redevelopment and infill development across the region.”

Projects that help produce jobs near transit further the Thrive Equity outcome of “using our influence and investments to build a more equitable region.”

Projects located near transit and that include a mix of housing and jobs further the Thrive Livability outcome of “Aligning resources to support transit-oriented development and walkable, urban places.”

Known Support / Opposition

Each applicant community submitted a resolution of support. There is no known opposition to the applications recommended for funding.

Review Record

Review Process

A notice of funding availability was issued in March 2017 following adoption of the 2017 Annual Livable Communities Fund Distribution Plan (FDP). Staff held workshops to familiarize applicants with the LCA-TOD process and criteria.

Two applications were submitted on June 1, 2017. See Table 1. Staff conducted an initial review for completeness and eligibility. An interdivisional staff team used Council-approved FDP criteria to evaluate the applications in the following categories: housing, transit accessibility, walkability, ridership, jobs, TOD design, readiness, and partnerships. All applications met the 54 point minimum score. Full funding is being recommended for both requests.

Table 1: Application Scoring Summary

Project	Applicant	Points (100 pts. Possible)	TOD Predevelopment		TOD Site Investigation	
			Amount Requested	Amount Recommended	Amount Requested	Amount Recommended
Ramsey West and River Balcony Connection	St. Paul	65	\$100,000	\$100,000	0	0
Bassett Creek Valley Redevelopment	Minneapolis	64	\$100,000	\$100,000	0	0
Total Requested				\$200,000	\$0	
Total Available				\$250,000	\$125,000	
Total Remaining				\$50,000	\$125,000	

Projects Recommended for Funding

Project summaries for projects recommended for funding are on the following pages.

Project Summary

Grant #
Type: TOD Pre-Development
Applicant City of St. Paul
Project Name Ramsey West and River Balcony Connection
Project Location Green Line – Central Station
Council District 13 – District 13 Richard Kramer

Project Detail	
Future Development Project Overview	Proposed in partnership with City of St. Paul, Ramsey County and Cardon Development Group, the Ramsey West/River Balcony project will include a 200-key 4-star hotel, 30,000 SF retail, 300 residential units (market-rate), 100,000 – 140,000 square feet of Class A Commercial Office space, an urban promenade, and parking
Jobs (FTEs)	1,162
Total housing units	300
TOD metrics	Dwelling units per acre: 88 Jobs per acre: 338 Distance to station: 350 feet Residential parking ratio: 1.25
Comments/ Demonstration value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project will add a 1.5-mile pedestrian pathway along the downtown river bluff connecting public spaces and private developments from the Science Museum to Union Depot. • The project will reconnect downtown to the Mississippi River • The project will activate and catalyze private development • High intensity, mixed use, infill, redevelopment • Significant increase in tax capacity
Funding	
Requested amount	\$100,000
Previous LCA funding	None
Use of funds	
Amount	Uses to be completed by the end of the grant term
\$100,000	Schematic Design for the River Balcony (Design, Financial Analysis, Phasing, and Community Engagement)

Project Summary

Type: TOD Pre-Development
Applicant: City of Minneapolis
Project Name: Bassett Creek Valley Redevelopment
Project Location: Green Line Extension – Bassett Creek Valley Station
Council District: District 7 – Council Member Gary Cunningham

Project Detail	
Future Development Project Overview	<p>Bassett Creek Valley redevelopment is a multiple parcel redevelopment of a blighted industrial area within the Bassett Creek Station area. The multi-phase redevelopment will include office, flex, light industrial, and makers space. District placemaking, bicycle, pedestrian, and stormwater amenities will be added to both sides of the creek.</p> <p>The first phase will include the Glen Enterprise Hub, involving two or more buildings (approximately 100,000 square feet) and over 270 jobs in office/flex space on city-owned sites. Light production and maker functions are planned to include food production, beverage (breweries and distilleries), music production (studio space) and arts organizations (photography and videography staging).</p>
Jobs (FTEs)	277 (Phase 1)
Total housing units	0
TOD metrics	Jobs per acre: 121 (Phase 1) Distance to station: 1522 (Phase 1)
Comments/ Demonstration value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redevelopment of challenging sites into a multi-use TOD • Potential to catalyze additional redevelopment • District-wide placemaking and stormwater amenities • Pedestrian and bicycle connections throughout the station area
Funding	
Requested amount	\$100,000
Previous LCA funding	None
Use of funds	
Amount	Uses to be completed by the end of the grant term
\$100,000	Stormwater management plans, utilities plans, soil borings