

Business Item

Community Development Committee



Committee Meeting Date: September 2, 2025

For the Metropolitan Council: September 10, 2025

Business Item: 2025-209

Signature Authorization for State Fiscal Year 2026 Regional Parks Grant Programs

District(s), Member(s):

All

Policy/legal reference:

Minn. Stat. §§ 473.325 and 85.53; Minn. Const. Article XI, Section 15; Minn. Laws 2025, Regular Session, Chapter 36, Article 3, Section 4; Minn. Laws 2025, 1st Special Session, Chapter 1, Article 1, Section 5; 2050 Regional Parks Policy Plan Finance Policy, Section 8; Council Business Item 2025-194 JT, 2025 Budget Amendment – 3rd Quarter Community Development; FM 14-2 Expenditures for the Procurement of Goods and Services Policy

Staff prepared/presented:

Erin Acton, Parks Grant Administrator, 651-602-1938

Division/department:

Community Development / Finance and Administration

Proposed action

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Community Development Executive Director to execute grant agreements and amendments for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2026 Parks and Trails Legacy Fund Program (Legacy).

Background

This action pertains to formula-based grant programs for the regional parks and trails system.

The Council executes grant agreements with Regional Parks Implementing Agencies to pass through funding granted by the legislature. The Community Development Executive Director is currently authorized to execute agreements and amendments for amounts up to \$500,000. Council action is required for execution of grant agreements and amendments exceeding \$500,000.

Execution of Legacy grant agreements is the final step after multiple reviews, discussions, and other actions.

1. Council staff review Legacy projects for conformance with the *Regional Parks Policy Plan* and eligibility with funding source rules and regulations.
2. Council staff and the Parks Implementing Agencies present proposed Legacy projects lists to the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission and Community Development Committee.
3. The Council adopts funds into the Council's Authorized Budget.

Parks and Trails Legacy Fund

The Council distributes Legacy dollars to Parks Implementing Agencies based upon a formula set in [Minn. Stat. § 85.53, subd. 3](#). Table 1 lists agency allocations.

The appropriation states this SFY 2026/2027 funding “must be used only to fund the list of projects approved by the elected representatives of each of the metropolitan parks implementing agencies.”

Table 1. SFY 2026 Legacy Grant Program Agency Shares for Eligible Projects

Agency	State Fiscal Year 2026
ANOKA COUNTY	\$1,962,960
BLOOMINGTON, CITY OF	\$343,333
CARVER COUNTY	\$625,972
DAKOTA COUNTY	\$1,932,120
MINNEAPOLIS PARK & RECREATION BOARD	\$4,940,557
RAMSEY COUNTY	\$1,890,775
SAINT PAUL, CITY OF	\$2,596,039
SCOTT COUNTY	\$932,514
THREE RIVERS PARK DISTRICT	\$5,426,311
WASHINGTON COUNTY	\$1,228,419
TOTAL	\$21,879,000

Rationale

Council staff previously brought each individual grant, or small batches of grant agreements, to the Council to obtain signature authorization for the Community Development Executive Director for agreements exceeding \$500,000.

This action increases efficiency by authorizing the Community Development Executive Director to execute grant agreements and amendments up to the amounts listed in Tables 1 and 2, rather than bringing multiple requests to the Council for signature authorization as individual grant agreements are ready for execution. This is the final non-discretionary step in the process. To the extent that the Council has any input in these projects, it is done at other, earlier stages in the process.

This action will improve customer service to Parks Implementing Agencies through reduced subrecipient agreement processing time. It will also reduce administrative processing work of Council staff. The Council's Procurement Department supports this action.

Thrive Lens Analysis

On February 12, 2025, the Council adopted Imagine 2050, which builds on the policy direction in Thrive MSP 2040. Regional Parks and Trails funding advances the Imagine 2050 goals “We protect and restore natural systems” and “Our communities our healthy and safe” by enhancing the quality of life in the region through increasing access to nature and outdoor recreation. This funding advances the development of the regional parks and trails system plan defined in the 2050 Regional Parks and Trails Policy in Imagine 2050.

Funding

Projects are funded with Legacy funds. The Council has approved the funding through its authorized capital program.

Small Business Inclusion

There are no small business contracting goals associated with this action.

