Business Item 2025-52 SW:

Approval of Application Process for Equity-Focused Water Efficiency Grant Pilot Program

Environment Committee: February 11, 2025

Henry McCarthy, Senior Environmental Scientist, Water Resources Jennifer Kostrzewski, Assistant Manager, Water Resources





Overview



- Minnesota Session Law 2023, Chapter 40, Article 2, Section 8(b)
 - \$750,000 the first year and \$750,000 the second year are for the water demand reduction grants to assist municipalities in the metropolitan area with implementing water demand reduction measures to ensure the reliability and protection of drinking water supplies.
- Goal: support technical and behavioral changes in underserved and disproportionately burdened communities that improve municipal water use efficiency in the seven-county metropolitan area

Total appropriation of \$1.5 million



Program plan for 2024-2026

- \$400,000 for the Equity-Focused Water Efficiency Grant Pilot Program
 - (UPCOMING) •
 - Surveyed communities in Summer 2024
 - Held conversation with communities in November 2024
 - Program design and comments from communities December 2024 thru January 2025
- \$1,100,000 for traditional Water Efficiency Grant Program lacksquare
 - (ONGOING) •
 - 41 communities in this grant cycle
 - Began in July 2024



Award and selection details



Awards

\$400,000 available July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026

- Any municipality served by a municipal public water supply system is eligible to apply
- Grant award range: up to \$100,000
- No required match from municipalities, no cost requirement for residents

Selection criteria note

Competitive grant program. Criteria used to inform selections and amount granted:

- Equity focus •
- Ease of participation for residents
- Estimated water savings ullet
- Estimated number of participants •
- Ease of implementation of project •

Eligible Expenses for 2025 - 2026



- Toilet replacement with a water efficient alternative
 - Installation / plumber costs included

Anticipated timeline and next steps

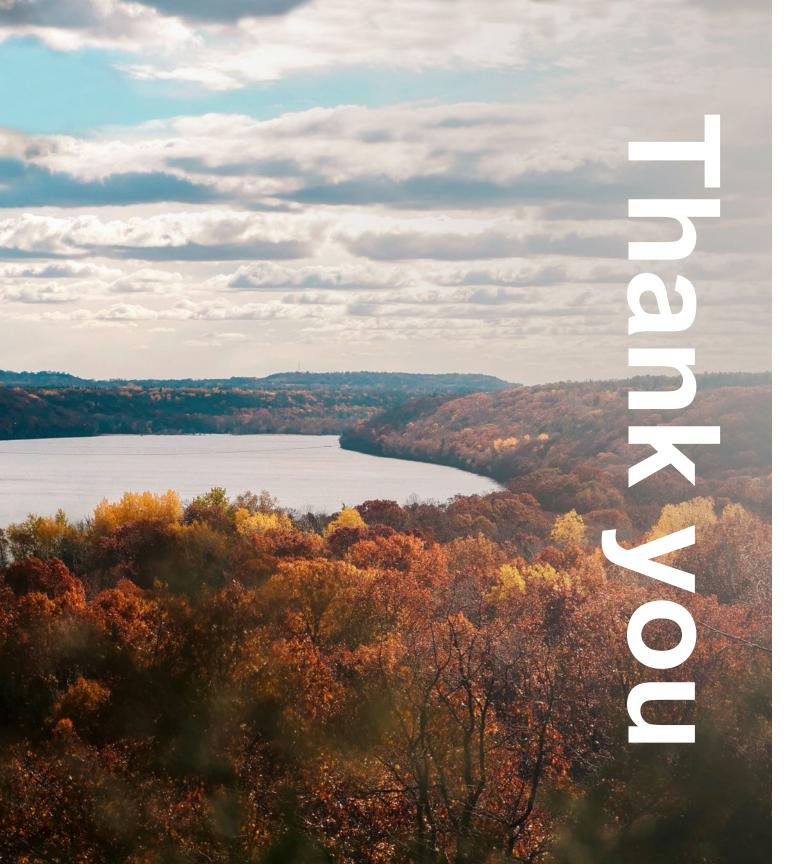


- Environment Committee: February 11th ullet
- Council Approval: February 12th
- Announce Program: week of February 17th
- Application Deadline: March 28th
- Grant Decisions Complete: April 26th
- Environment Committee: May 13th ullet
- Council Approval: May 14th \bullet
- Grants Awarded: around May 15th / 16th lacksquare
- Program Begins: July 1st

ropolita

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council approves Business Item 2025-52 SW on the process for the 2025-2026 Equity-Focused Water Efficiency Grant Pilot Program and authorizes staff to advertise the availability of grant funding and solicit applications.



Henry McCarthy

Senior Environmental Scientist, Water Resources henry.mccarthy@metc.state.mn.us

Jennifer Kostrzewski

Assistant Manager, Water Resources jennifer.kostrzewski@metc.state.mn.us

