

Environment Committee

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of April 26, 2017

Subject: 2017 Green Infrastructure Pilot Grant

Proposed Action

The Metropolitan Council approve the process for the 2017 Green Infrastructure Pilot grant described in Attachment A, and authorize staff to advertise the availability of grant funding and solicit applications for the grant.

Summary of Committee Discussion/Questions

Staff clarified this pilot is a separate program from the stormwater grant program both managed by Environmental Services. Any community in the metropolitan area is invited to participate. To apply for the grant, a community must be able to show multiple benefits, the extent of impact, as well as technical basis for their approach.

Committee member expressed feedback for the pilot to focus more on inflow and infiltration as a wastewater system priority.

A clarification question regarding the relationship to watershed districts and the availability of funding was raised. Staff clarified funding is not currently established for integrated water initiatives that provide multiple benefits (wastewater, surface water, and water supply). This program is intended to raise interest and focus on integrated water solutions which supports several Thrive outcomes.

Motion to approve the proposed action was made, seconded, and passed.

Environment Committee

Meeting date: April 11, 2017

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of April 26, 2017

Subject: 2017 Green Infrastructure Pilot Grant

District(s), Member(s): All

Policy/Legal Reference: Water Resource Policy Plan, Minnesota Statute 473.249 (Tax Levy) and 473.505 (Total Watershed Management)

Staff Prepared/Presented: Sara Smith, 651-602-1035

Division/Department: MCES c/o Leisa Thompson, 651-602-8101

Proposed Action

The Metropolitan Council approve the process for the 2017 Green Infrastructure Pilot grant described in Attachment A, and authorize staff to advertise the availability of grant funding and solicit applications for the grant.

Background

Water problems facing the region today are often addressed as separate individual concerns and are not tied to other urban planning issues associated with land use, transit development, water infrastructure, and parks and green space.

Types of water-related problems in the region include:

- Water quantity
 - Too much: Increased frequency and intensity of floods due to extreme weather and inadequate infrastructure.
 - Too little: Limited aquifers.
- Water quality: higher levels of pollutants in our waterways and aquifers causing them to be impaired for uses such as fishing, recreation, and drinking water.
- Aging and inadequate infrastructure (wastewater, drinking water, and stormwater): Neglected and outdated infrastructure causes water quality and economic issues for the region.

Rationale

The Metropolitan Council is interested in working with communities to implement integrated solutions directed at solving our region's water-related problems in ways that provide multiple benefits, maximize extent of positive impacts, and is technically sound.

Thrive Lens

This grant will support projects consistent with Thrive MSP 2040 outcomes. Taking an integrated approach to solving water-related problems can:

- Protect the quality and quantity of the region's water resources.
- Prioritize the need for improving aging infrastructure.
- Protect the economic vitality of the region, cities, and neighborhoods.
- Protect natural ecosystems and park systems.
- Focus on engagement and collaboration.

Funding

This grant will be funded with \$1 million budgeted in the 2017 MCES operating budget from the Council's general fund.

Know Support / Opposition

There is no known opposition.

Attachment A: Green Infrastructure Grant

Grant Program Objective

Support the implementation of an approach to solve water-related problems that acknowledges the connection between wastewater, stormwater, drinking water, and groundwater and surface water.

Legislative Authority

Authorized by Minnesota Statute section 473.505, the Metropolitan Council may enter agreements with other government bodies and spend funds to implement total watershed management. This includes the authority to make available grants to other government bodies to implement total watershed management.

Metropolitan Council Interest in support approaches through this grant

Water problems facing the region today are often addressed as separate individual concerns and are not tied to other urban planning issues associated with land use, transit development, water infrastructure, and parks and green space.

Types of water-related problems in the region include:

- Water quantity:
 - Too much: Increased frequency and intensity of floods due to extreme weather and inadequate infrastructure.
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- Water quality: higher levels of pollutants in our waterways and aquifers causing them to be impaired for uses such as fishing, recreation, and drinking water.
- Aging and inadequate infrastructure (wastewater, drinking water, and stormwater): Neglected and outdated infrastructure causes water quality and economic issues for the region.

The Metropolitan Council is interested in working with communities to implement integrated solutions directed at solving our region's water-related problems in ways that provide multiple benefits, maximize extent of positive impacts, and is technically sound. Examples of water-related problem solutions include:

- Diversifying and stretching water supplies.
- Transforming wastewater into a resource.
- Utilizing green infrastructure to manage flooding and revitalize neighborhoods.
- Forging new business models.
- Integrating planning across the water cycle.
- Utilizing onsite water systems.
- Adopting a "dig-once" approach.
- Managing water to foster climate resilience.
- Deploying advanced technologies to improve decision-making on all levels.

Administration and Funding

The green infrastructure grant program will be administered by the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services (MCES) and will be funded with \$1 million budgeted from the 2017 MCES operating budget from the Council's General Fund. Grant applicants will be reviewed and ranked by a

review team comprised of representatives from the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services, Metropolitan Council Community Development, Association of Metropolitan Municipalities, and a metropolitan area community (non-proposer).

Grant will be awarded to one or more individual communities in an amount up to \$1M. The communities receiving the grant are expected to provide a 100% match to the amount requested. Payments for awarded projects will be made on a reimbursement basis.

Eligibility

This grant is available to Twin Cities Metropolitan communities. The number of communities receiving the grant will depend on the projects proposed. The Council may divide the \$1M available for this grant among multiple projects or it may select a single project to receive the full \$1M.

Application Process

- May 2017 – June 2017 – Grant application open for proposals
- June 2017– July 2017 – Selection period
- August – Environment Committee/Council approval grant recipient(s)
- September – Agreement execution

Project Requirements

- Must be able to identify and quantify at a watershed level (1) sources of pollution, (2) causes of conditions that may or may not be a result of pollution, and (3) means of reducing pollution or alleviating adverse conditions. (Minnesota Statutes, 473.505 Total Watershed Management).
- Must be able to provide a 100% match to the dollars requested.
- Community must be able to enter an agreement with the Metropolitan Council, using the Council's standard contract terms.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the extent and degree to which they identify or address the following criteria:

- **Multiple Benefits:** Extent to which the proposed project:
 - Involves multiple partners;
 - Solves/addresses multiple regional or community water-related problems; and
 - Shows the connectedness of all water.
- **Extent of Impacts:** Extent to which the proposed project:
 - Benefits more than one community;
 - Results in long-term benefits to the community or region; and
 - Positively impacts lower income areas.
- **Technical Basis:** Extent to which the proposed project:
 - Reflects technological knowledge, standards, and best practices; and
 - Can measure impacts of solutions (beyond those required).
- **Project Timeline:**
 - Readiness of the project to start.