

Committee Report

Environment Committee



Committee Meeting Date: October 25, 2022

For the Metropolitan Council: November 09, 2022

Business Item: 2022-278

Metro Water Conservation Utilizing MnTAP Interns, Contract 14I007 Amendment No. 5

Proposed Action.

That the Metropolitan Council authorizes the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute Amendment No. 5 to Contract 14I007 with Minnesota Technical Assistance Program (MnTAP) at University of Minnesota to extend contract until December 31, 2025 and to increase the contract in an amount not to exceed \$315,500 for a total contract amount not to exceed \$1,062,500.

Summary of Environment Committee Discussion/Questions

- Chair Lindstrom asked: Is this entirely funded by the Clean Water Fund?
- Staff responded: Yes, Mr. Chair
- CM Sterner asked: How many companies have been recommended for the service or applied for the service since it started?
- Staff responded: In 2022, at the beginning of the program when they advertised, they received about 9 applications and only had five spots. The remain four are put on the short list for next year. Over the years the number of years the participation of companies go up and down, for example during the pandemic. It's now not only the business but anyone who is seeing issues with their water use or energy use and they want to hire an intern via MnTAP.
- General Manager Leisa Thompson: I wanted to thank Ali and John for their partnership and all that they've done in helping achieve our vision of, "Clean water for future generations." She wished Ali good luck as he moves on to the next chapter of his career in California.

It was moved by the consensus. Motion carried.

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District(s), Member(s):	All Districts
Policy/Legal Reference:	Minnesota Legislature, 2021 First Special Session, Chapter 1, Article 2, Section 8 (a); FM14-2 – Expenditures for the Procurement of Goods, Services, and Real Estate Policy
Staff Prepared/Presented:	John Clark, Principal Environmental Scientist, 651-602-1452 Ali Elhassan, Manager, Water Supply Planning, 651-602-1066 Leisa Thompson, General Manager, 612-349-7510
Division/Department:	Environmental Services

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Background

MnTAP is an outreach and assistance program that helps Minnesota's businesses develop and implement industry-tailored solutions that maximize efficient use of resources and reduce costs to improve public health and the environment. MnTAP has enjoyed a successful, supportive partnership with the Metropolitan Council Water Supply Planning Unit, working together to address metro-area needs for industrial water efficiency. The launch of this industry-focused technical assistance project began in 2012 with MnTAP being tasked with analyzing metro-area private industrial well water use, identifying industry barriers and opportunities, conducting technical water conservation site assessments, and designing and implementing summer internships for engineering students focused on water efficiency. This first contract was for \$52,500 and was amended in 2015 for \$185,000, in 2017 for \$195,000 and again in 2019 for \$315,000.

Our collaboration has grown to include site assessments or summer engineering interns at 60 metro businesses between 2012 and 2021. These businesses receive water and energy efficiency recommendations from MnTAP staff and student interns. This partnership has helped Minnesota businesses save over 240 million gallons of water and \$1.7 million each year. In addition, this partnership has provided 40 college students the opportunity to work with MnTAP's engineers to gain real-world experience in businesses around the metropolitan area.

Rationale

The Water Supply Planning Unit believes there is significant value in pursuing water efficiency at metro area businesses. Water savings reduce businesses' operational costs on both the water and energy sides of the water-energy nexus. For many businesses this also enables a reduction in wastewater generation, thereby freeing existing wastewater capacity for future population growth. Our collaboration with MnTAP allows us to utilize the expertise of Minnesota's premier industrial efficiency organization to connect with those businesses most interested in participating. MnTAP summer engineering interns gain valuable experience, businesses are able to obtain their services at a low cost, and the region's water supplies reap the benefit. Over the next three years, 15 additional summer interns will benefit from participating in our program. This amendment is needed to continue. Extending the contract term will allow us to continue these efforts. The Pandemic has slowed activities in last two years preventing some businesses from participating in the program. As businesses resume normal activities the demand for this program is expected to increase.

The amendment of this contract exceeding 10% of the original authorized value requires Council approval.

Thrive Lens Analysis

This action supports the Thrive MSP 2040 stewardship and sustainability outcomes and the water sustainability goal of the Water Resources Policy Plan. Increased industrial water efficiency will help protect our aquifers and save money for our businesses.

Funding

The Metro Water Conservation Utilizing MnTAP Interns Program is funded by Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment funds through the Minnesota Legislature, 2021 First Special Session, Chapter 1, Article 2, Section 8 (a): \$919,000 the first year and \$919,000 the second year are to implement projects that address emerging threats to the drinking water supply, provide cost-effective regional solutions, leverage interjurisdictional coordination, support local implementation of water supply reliability projects, and prevent degradation of groundwater resources in the metropolitan area.

