

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission

Meeting date: April 4, 2019

Subject: Competitive Equity Grant Program Update

District(s), Member(s): All

Policy/Legal Reference: 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan, Chapter 8, Strategy 4

Staff Prepared/Presented: Emmett Mullin, Regional Parks Manager (651-602-1360), Amanda Lovelee, Senior Outreach Coordinator (651-602-1375), Dan Marckel, Planning Analyst (651-602-1548)

Division/Department: Community Development / Regional Planning

Proposed Action

Information item; no action is proposed.

Background

The *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* commits the Council to developing a set-aside, competitive equity grant program in 2019. This program will be designed to explicitly strengthen equitable usage of the Regional Parks System. To develop this grant program, the Council is working in close collaboration with regional park implementing agencies, community-based organizations, advocacy groups, and other partners to formulate criteria and measures for awarding grants to regional park implementing agencies for projects aimed at advancing equitable usage of the Regional Parks System.

The Council originally introduced the idea to establish an equity grant program in February 2015, as part of the original 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan. The Council has not yet established this program, but staff conducted extensive community engagement that laid the groundwork for this year's efforts.

This presentation will review the 2019 process, findings to date, and the schedule and timeline for the remainder of the year. Council staff will also solicit feedback from the members of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission.

Rationale

The *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*, Finance Chapter 8, Strategy 4 states that equity is a consideration in the Regional Parks System funding and investment. The equity grant program is one Council strategy for advancing equity in the region.

Thrive Lens Analysis

The competitive equity grant program seeks to advance the *Thrive MSP 2040* outcome of equity by increasing the equitable usage of the Regional Parks System by all residents of the region.

Funding

There is \$300,000 for the equity grant program included in the Council's adopted 2019 budget.