Scenarios Discussion

Competitive Equity Grant Pilot Program

May 2, 2019

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission
Today

• History
• Discuss program scenarios
  – Consider how each could increase equitable use
  – Focus on policy-level advice

Searching for tadpoles, Three Rivers Park District
Program Goals

Create a grant program to increase equitable use of regional parks and trails.
• Different than other grant programs in parks
• Competitive
• Innovative
• Capacity building
• $300,000 Council capital bonds
• Award in 2019
Program Development
January–June 2019
- Question Burst
- Prioritization Exercise
- Develop Fund Distribution Plan
- Adopt Fund Distribution Plan

Application Process
July–December 2019
- Implementing Agencies Apply
- Review Committee Assembled
- Applications Reviewed
- Grants Awarded

Project Implementation
Early 2020
- Funds Available
- Projects Implemented

Evaluation/Refinement
Late 2020 and Beyond
- Program Evaluation
- Project Evaluation

*As of April 25, 2019
Step One: Question Burst - “Wall of Voices”

- January-February
- 4 groups
- 257 questions
- Four categories
- Eleven themes
## Sample Question Burst Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equity Advisory Committee</th>
<th>Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission</th>
<th>Met Council staff</th>
<th>Implementing agencies staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Will agencies act in a new way?”</td>
<td>“Will the program address awareness?”</td>
<td>“Who will be served by this grant?”</td>
<td>“What definition of equity are we using?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Why only $300,000?”</td>
<td>“How does focusing on just capital projects address equity?”</td>
<td>“Is $300,000 enough to make a difference?”</td>
<td>“What are the max and min grant limits?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Who will review proposals and is there a way to attract equity leaders to review (aka sniff out the…)?”</td>
<td>“Can Council require community partnerships?”</td>
<td>“How do we get this program “in the field” by the end of the year”</td>
<td>“Can multiple agencies apply together?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“$300,000 is peanuts.” “How can more money be added?”</td>
<td>“How will equity be evaluated?”</td>
<td>“How will we measure success?”</td>
<td>“Will this program grow in the future?”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Themes from Step One - Question Burst

- Community engagement
- Community partnership
- Evaluation and accountability
- Geographic distribution
- Links to other park programs
- Matching funds
- Broad/specific equity focus
- Timeline
- Grant amount/grant number
- Capacity building
- Grant review process
Step Two: “Priorities and Values” Exercise

- Themes from question burst
- Ranking reveals relative priorities
- Comments show underlying reasons and finer distinctions
- Leads toward scoring criteria, weighting and descriptive text
Step Two: Priorities and Values Findings

- Highest
  - Community engagement
  - Broad/specific equity focus
  - Community partnership
  - Evaluation and accountability
  - Grant review process

- Lowest
  - Links to other programs
  - Matching funds
  - Timeline
Step Three: Scenarios for possible structure

Given
- 2019 awards
- $300,000
- Capital projects
- Competitive
- Awarded to Implementing Agencies

Advised
- Community engagement
- Equity issue named and addressed
- Range of award sizes
- Scalable
- Accountable

Regional Equity Collaboration
Community Engagement for Capital Projects
Community-led Projects
Public Art
Open Call
Your input needed

In these scenarios:

• How do they reflect your policy values?
• How would they increase equitable use of Regional Parks and Trails?
• What strengths and challenges do they have?
• How are the themes addressed?
Regional Equity Topic

• A single equity topic is selected by an inclusive committee each year.
• All ten agencies work together with advisors to explore that topic.
• Each agency can apply for capital funding to address the topic.

Scenario One

Themes Emphasized
Community engagement
Community partnership
Evaluation and accountability
Geographic distribution
Links to other park programs
Matching funds
Broad/specifc equity focus
Timeline
Grant amount/grant number
Capacity building
Grant review process

Universal access playground at Wabun Picnic Area
Community Engagement for Capital Projects

- Agencies apply for in-depth engagement to shape capital projects already in line for funding through other programs.
- Program funds support refinement of capital projects to increase equitable use.

JXTA youth bring creative visions to complex design problem and look to make a section of the riverfront accessible to the Northside community

Themes Emphasized
- Community engagement
- Community partnership
- Evaluation and accountability
- Geographic distribution
- Links to other park programs
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- Broad/specific equity focus
- Timeline
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- Grant review process
Public Art

• Arts and culture used as a vehicle to welcome under-represented communities to regional parks and trails.
• Artists can translate and transcend difficult equity conversations to bring new ideas and perspectives.

Themes Emphasized
- Community engagement
- Community partnership
- Evaluation and accountability
- Geographic distribution
- Links to other park programs
- Matching funds
- Broad/specific equity focus
- Timeline
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- Capacity building
- Grant review process

Angela Two Stars’ Dakota language stamp in Bde Maka Ska sidewalk
Community-led Projects

- Agencies partner with a community-led effort in a regional parks or trail to produce a capital project.
- Community organizations lead discussions, shape processes, and share in decision making.

Themes Emphasized
- Community engagement
- Community partnership
- Evaluation and accountability
- Geographic distribution
- Links to other park programs
- Matching funds
- Broad/specific equity focus

Timeline
- Grant amount/grant number
- Capacity building
- Grant review process

Signage in Indian Mounds Regional Park is being updated to reflect cultural plan.
Open Call

- Implementing Agencies propose equity-focused projects.
- Highest competitively-scored projects are awarded funding.
- Program structure decided as part of grant reviews.

Increasing opportunities for winter recreation activities across all communities.

Themes Emphasized
- Community engagement
- Community partnership
- Evaluation and accountability
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- Broad/specific equity focus
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- Grant review process
Additional comments

In these scenarios:
• How do they reflect your policy values?
• How would they increase equitable use of Regional Parks and Trails?
• What strengths and challenges do they have?
• How are the themes addressed?
Step Four: Fund Distribution Plan

- What we’re working toward now
- An official step, adopted by Council
- Vetting of program ideas with rules on grant administration, council policies, fiscal requirements
- Council adoption by end of June

Fund Distribution Plan will include:
- Program vision and goals
- Available funds
- Grant minimum, maximum
- Eligible projects
- Review committee
- Scoring criteria
## Next Steps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Committee/Agency</th>
<th>Meeting Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 2</td>
<td>Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission</td>
<td>Scenarios discussion (information item)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 6</td>
<td>Community Development Committee</td>
<td>Scenarios discussion (information item)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 20</td>
<td>Community Development Committee (possible)</td>
<td>Follow-up discussion (information item)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 21</td>
<td>Equity Advisory Committee (possible)</td>
<td>Update/discussion (information item)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 25</td>
<td>Implementing Agencies (possible)</td>
<td>Update/discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 6</td>
<td>Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission</td>
<td>Recommend Fund Distribution Plan (business item)</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 17</td>
<td>Community Development Committee</td>
<td>Recommend Fund Distribution Plan (business item)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 26</td>
<td>Metropolitan Council</td>
<td>Adopt Fund Distribution Plan (business item)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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*As of May 2, 2019*