USING THE COUNCIL’S ONLINE GRANT APPLICATION

Regional Solicitation

Log in

User ID: 
Password: 
Log In

Forgot Password?

New to WebGrants - Metropolitan Council?
Register Here

January 2022
The Council’s mission is to foster efficient and economic growth for a prosperous metropolitan region.

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The Metropolitan Council is the regional planning organization for the seven-county Twin Cities area. The Council operates the regional bus and rail system, collects and treats wastewater, coordinates regional water resources, plans and helps fund regional parks, and administers federal funds that provide housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income individuals and families. The 17-member Council board is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the governor.

This publication printed on recycled paper.

On request, this publication will be made available in alternative formats to people with disabilities. Call Metropolitan Council information at 651-602-1140 or TTY 651-291-0904.
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About the Regional Solicitation Application

Who is eligible for Regional Solicitation grants?
Cities, Counties, transit providers and qualified non-profit organizations in the seven-county metro area are eligible for Regional Solicitation grants.

What is the map generation tool?
The map generation tool is a web-based GIS tool developed by the Metropolitan Council. Applicants must select a project type, enter in their project location with this tool, and download PDFs of the maps automatically generated for the project prior to beginning the WebGrants application forms.

What is WebGrants?
WebGrants is a software product developed by Dulles Technology specifically for government grants that the Council is implementing across all of its grant programs, including those in the Regional Solicitation, Livable Communities, Parks, the Infiltration and Inflow and Watershed Outlet Monitoring Programs, and Transit. When fully implemented, it will be used by applicants and grantees for all phases of their grants, from applications to requesting payments to submitting reports. For the Regional Solicitation, only the application format is implemented.
Step 1: Register to Use the System
All applicants and their collaborators must be registered prior to accessing the new online application. See below for step-by-step instructions.

How do I register?
Registration is a two-part process – you, as an external party, complete the first portion of the process by submitting an online form. Once you register, Metropolitan Council staff will then review and prepare your account. You will be emailed a login and password within approximately two business days.

There are two important notes regarding registration:

⚠️ The process is slightly different – and slightly longer – for independent grant writers than for employees of an eligible organization. This is because the host organization must contact Council staff for permission to allow independent grant writers the ability to begin drafting an application on behalf of the organization. The process takes a little longer – perhaps a full day’s turnaround – because we need to receive the request from the appropriate organization contact and get approval before we can “connect” you with an organization in the system. Please allow enough time for this process to be completed, because you will not be able to begin work without it.

⚠️ Independent grant writers need individual approvals from each organization they work with. If you are an independent grant writer and are already approved to work on an application for one organization, you will still need additional authorization to begin work for another. For the Regional Solicitation, the new organization must contact Elaine Koutsoukos at Elaine.Koutsoukos@metc.state.mn.us for each new authorization needed and remember to allow enough time to obtain the organization’s approval.

To Register:

- Go to [https://metrocouncilgrants.org](https://metrocouncilgrants.org)
- Click on Register Here
- There are two parts to the registration screen:
  - The “Personal Information” section of the screen relates to the person registering.
  - The “Organization Information” section of the screen relates to the organization on whose behalf the person is registering.
  - If you work for an eligible organization, the information you enter in both parts will be similar. If you are an independent grant writer, use the “Personal Information” section to inform us about you; use the “Organization Information” section to inform us about the organization you will be working with.

After you complete the registration form and receive your log in information from the Metropolitan Council, you may begin working an application. You may work on more than one application at a time; independent grant writers may work on applications for more than one organization at a time.
Security
With the exception of independent grant writers, no one outside your organization can see any of your applications. Even the Council cannot see the applications until after they have been submitted. Council staff cannot see your passwords, either. Independent grant writers can see only the applications they are working on – this is why it takes a little longer to register an independent grant writer. After you submit an application, only authorized Council staff can see the application.
Step 2: Generate Maps

A set of maps must be generated for each project application PRIOR to filling out the application. Complete this step before beginning the application process (Step 3). Applicants will need to attach the maps they create to the application. Click here to generate maps for your project application.

This is a simple application that allows you to find a point of interest in the Twin Cities Metro Area, locate and draw a project proposal, then save a set of maps for the project.

The process works like this:

- **Find the area** you wish to apply in by exploring the map of the Twin Cities. Information like transit routes and stations are presented for your reference.
- **Draw your project** using points and lines.
- **Create printouts** that provide metrics about your project.

Feedback

Please provide feedback on this application. We want to know what you were expecting, what you found, and how this met, exceeded or fell short of your expectations. You may also direct your technical questions regarding the mechanics and operation of the application.

Send Feedback by email

Commonly Asked Questions

1. **How do I edit or move a sketch I created on the map?**
First, position your mouse over the graphic you want to change. Right-click and a menu appears with more choices. Select **Edit**. The sketch should change color and adjustable points called vertices will appear on the sketch perimeter. To move your sketch, just click anywhere inside and drag it around. To modify the edge, click and drag one of the vertices. When you're done, click **outside the sketch** to deselect it.

2. **I want to print my map but the Create the maps button is disabled.**
You need to create all the required drawings before printing. Some application types only require a set of points -- others a point and a line. Go to the **Sketch the Project** tab to create or complete the drawing of your project. Then return to the Print tab and try to print.

3. **My sketches are a mess. How do I clear everything and start over?**
Simple. Position your mouse anywhere in the map (other than your project sketch) and right-click. Choose **Clear all and reset**. A confirmation dialog will ask if you're sure. Answer 'Yes' and any drawings and labels you've created for your sketches are removed.

4. **This is a bit of work. Can I save my work and come back and finish it another time?**
Unfortunately, no. With that in mind, it's a good idea to practice first. When you're ready to work on your project sketch, have your materials prepared ahead of time.
Exploring the Map

The primary way to find a location on the map is to search for it by entering a specific address, general landmark or street intersection. Once the map shows your target area, you can control the layers that display on the map and show a legend that explains the symbols for each feature layer.

Map navigation

There are several ways to pan and zoom the map.

- Use the mouse to click on the map and drag it to pan about.
- Use keyboard shortcuts to perform similar actions:
  - Use arrow keys to pan the map up, down, left or right
  - Press ‘+’ key to zoom in a level
  - Press ‘-’ key to zoom out a level
- For fastest navigation, use both Mouse and Keyboard:
  - Hold SHIFT + mouse drag to draw an area to zoom to
  - Hold SHIFT + mouse click to recenter
  - Hold SHIFT & CTRL + Drag to zoom out

Search

The Search function is active when you first start the application. Type in any location related information into the Search box (where it says Enter address or landmark) then press Return or click the Find button.

Examples of search locations include:

- Street addresses, like 390 Robert St. S.
- Landmarks, like Target Field
- Place names, lakes or parks, like Phalen
- Street Intersections, like Lake and Lyndale
- Geographic coordinates as latitude and longitude with no embedded spaces, like 44.90976,-93.21978
- Zip Codes, like 55106

When search results are returned, the map will zoom to and highlight the first search result. To zoom to the location of another search result, click on that row in the results table.
Layers

The Layers tab shows you the basemaps and reference layers appearing on the map. You can select alternate background maps and show the latest aerial imagery. All reference layers are visible by default, but you may turn them off here by unchecking the box next to their name. This is particularly helpful when you are defining the area around a project.

To view information about the layer, select it and right-click. A submenu allows you to:

- View Metadata for the layer in a separate window
- Zoom to the extent of that layer on the map
- View the GIS service information for the layer.

Legend

The Legend tab illustrates the symbology used to display. Note that you must have a thematic layer on for the legend to show information.
Sketch the Project

Select a Grant Type

Click on the arrow to the right of this pull-down list and select one of the grant types:

- Roadway Expansion (Strategic Capacity)
- Roadway Reconstruction/Modernization
- Roadway System Management (Traffic Management Technologies)
- Roadway Spot Mobility & Safety
- Bridges
- Transit Expansion
- Transit System Modernization
- Travel Demand Management
- Safe Routes to Schools
- Multiuse Trails and Bicycle Facilities
- Pedestrian Facilities

Name your project

You must assign a name to your project. This project name shows up on the heading of all your maps. It is also stored with the digital version of the map drawings. We strongly recommend that you name your project using references to specific project details. For example, name the map “Whoville Spot Mobility project at Main and Oak streets” so that you can easily identify which map goes with a specific application. This is particularly important for larger cities and counties where there may be several instances of a type of project.
Create your drawing

Depending on your grant type, you will be prompted to Draw points or Draw a line to define your project. Press the button to start your drawing. Then move your cursor over the map.

- Clicking a point will leave a circle on the map. Double-click to stop adding points.
- Click one to start a line drawing and continue clicking to extend it. Double-click to complete the line.

You may also be prompted to draw an additional line.

- Double-click to complete your sketch anytime you have at least two points.
- Press ESC to discard a sketch and start over.
Once you have completed a drawing, click **Delete points** or **Delete line** to remove your drawing.
**Edit or Move a Sketch**

You can also easily move or modify a drawing by editing. To **edit** your drawing, position your cursor over the particular line or polygon graphic and right-click. Choose **Edit**.

To **move the drawing**, click and drag it to its new location. To modify its shape, click to select it and points will appear along the boundaries. Click and drag an individual point to modify the edge of the drawing.

To **delete individual points in your drawing**, hover the cursor over the point and right-click to see more actions. Select **Delete** to remove the one point from your sketch.
Delete a Part of the Drawing

To delete a part of drawing, position your mouse over the specific sketch, right-click and select Delete. The sketch is removed and any remaining sketches are redrawn and labeled.

To delete ALL your sketches and reset the project, position your mouse anywhere on the map other than over your project sketch and right-click. A map menu appears. Select Clear all and reset. Answer 'Yes' to the confirmation dialog and all your sketches and labels are removed.
Print

Once all required parts of a project drawing are complete, you create the set of printable maps in PDF format. Depending on your grant application type, two, three or four maps are created.

- Regional Economy displays the relationship of the project to Post Secondary Educational centers, Manufacturing/Distribution concentrations, and Job concentrations.
- Area Definition shows the site with information on length and area.
- Socio-Economic Conditions displays the relation of the project to concentrated areas of poverty.
- Transit Connectivity lists existing and planned transit near the project site.
- Population Summary calculates totals for population and employers.
- Regional Bicycle Transportation Corridors illustrates the project relationship with these particular corridors.

To generate the map set, click the Create the maps button.

PDF files are created that you can download and print.

It takes about a minute to produce these files. When complete, click each of the icons to view the map. Once in the PDF viewer, you will have additional options to save and print your map. Take care to name your map file using both the project specific details and the map type. For example, name your file “Whoville Spot Mobility at Main and Oak RegEcon” so you can easily identify the file you need to upload without having to open each file.

If the browser has problems with opening and viewing PDF files, hover your cursor over the PDF icon, right-click and select Save Link As…. This will download the file to your local computer and you should able to double-click to open it there with Adobe Reader.

If you print these, try using a color laser printer for best results.
Step 3: Log in and Complete the Online Application

Once you have completed steps 1 and 2 and reviewed this User Guide, click here to log in to the online application system with the WebGrants login information provided by Metropolitan Council staff.

Select the Appropriate Funding Opportunity
WebGrants refers to each separate application as a Funding Opportunity. After completing the registration, receiving your login, and completing the map-generation process, log into the WebGrants homepage: www.metrocouncilgrants.org. From the Welcome Screen, click on Funding Opportunities to see the list of available Regional Solicitation application opportunities. Disregard the other Livable Communities funding opportunities listed on this page.

Click on the title of a 2022 Regional Solicitation funding opportunity to begin your application. The titles of the funding opportunities are similar; be sure to select the right one. If you select one in error, return to the main menu and start again. You may withdraw an application at any time.
Beginning your application

After you have clicked on the name of the funding opportunity, a Current Applications/ Opportunity Details screen will appear. To start a new application, click on “Start a New Application.” If you have more than one application under the same funding opportunity, you will see the applications and their current status in the Current Applications list at the top of the screen.

If you have questions about a funding opportunity, the program manager’s contact information is located on this Funding Opportunity welcome screen (Elaine Koutsoukos; 651-602-1717 or elaine.koutsoukos@metc.state.mn.us).

As you enter the project title, please use a unique title or one that identifies the location of the project.

As you select the Organization from the dropdown list, please ensure that you select the organization with the correct mailing address. If you do not find the organization that you need, please contact the program manager, Elaine Koutsoukos at 651-602-1717 or elaine.koutsoukos@metc.state.mn.us.

Do not be concerned about selecting the correct Authorized Official at this point; this is a global term required by the software that we have overridden elsewhere in the application. Select the best name from the list available to you.

After completing all fields, select “Save” in the upper right-hand corner of the page to save the General Information form and proceed with the application.
The Application Forms page presents you with a list of all of the forms, or pages, within each application. As you proceed through the application forms, save your responses, and mark each page 'complete' through a prompt in the center right of the screen, a check mark will appear next to the form name on the Application Forms screen (as shown for the “General Information” and “Project Information” forms below. You may return to any page and edit it, even after you have marked it 'complete' by clicking on the page name.
Once you submit your application, you can no longer change it.

You may complete part of an application and return to it later to finish it. Most of the forms that comprise the applications have one or more required fields (denoted by a red asterisk*), and you will not be able to save a page until all required fields have answers.

As some of the pages depend upon previously-entered information for data, you may need to complete some of the application form pages in the order listed. For example, to undertake the calculations for cost effectiveness, you must have already completed the information about projects costs. When you complete the cost effectiveness page, the costs will be pulled from the project cost page so you do not have enter them twice.

Parts of the WebGrants User Interface
Although you will find WebGrants similar to other online software, a brief introduction to the parts of the user interface may help you understand it better.

Command Bar
At the top of your screen you will find a white band with several common commands it (see #1 in the illustration, above). This is the Command Bar. Any action taken here pertains to the entire page. Common commands on the Command Bar include Edit and Save. To begin editing on any of the general forms, you must click Edit in the Command Bar to begin entering in data and text responses. You must also select Save to keep your responses before proceeding to another page.
**Sections**

Each page is divided into one or more *sections*, which are bounded by a white title bar (see #2, above). Sections also have commands in them, such as *Mark as Complete*.

There are three different kinds of sections in WebGrants:

1. **Single value sections**, like the one shown to the right, make up the majority of the applications. These sections allow you to make one entry as a response to a question. This could be text, an integer, a currency value, or several paragraphs of text. If it is a text response, you will find user guidance under the answer space indicating the number of characters.

![Single value section example](image1.png)

2. **A multi-list section**, which behaves something like a table, as it allows you to add as many rows as you wish.

   As an example, the Emissions measure is a multi-list section. As shown to the right, the first step when entering this form is to click **Add** in the right of the page (highlighted yellow). This will activate the application section to complete. To **Edit** or **Delete** an entry, select the entry (example circled in red) and make change. After editing an entry, click **Save**.

![Multi-list section example](image2.png)
3. A grid section, which allows you to make entries to the entire matrix at one time. The matrix section is used in the “Project Cost Estimate” form. A grid/matrix section example is shown below. Similar to the single-value and multi-list sections, you must select Save to keep your work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fill out the scoping sheet below and provide the estimate of TAB-eligible costs for the project. Applicants are not required to fill out each row of the cost estimate. The list of project elements is meant to provide a framework to think about the types of costs that may be incurred from the project. The total cost should match the total cost reported for the project on the first page of this application. Costs for specific elements are solely used to help applicants come up with a more accurate total cost; adjustments to these specific costs are expected as the project is more fully developed. Per TAB direction, the project must exclude costs for studies, preliminary engineering, design, or construction engineering. Right-of-way costs are only eligible as part of transit stations/stops, transit terminals, park-and-ride facilities, or pool-and-ride lots. Noise barriers, drainage projects, fences, landscaping, etc., are not eligible for funding as a standalone project, but can be included as part of the larger submitted project, which is otherwise eligible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please use 2018 cost estimates for all project elements including transit vehicle and operating costs. It is important that applicants accurately break out costs for the project’s various multimodal elements. These costs will be used, in part, to help determine the score for the Multimodal Facilities scoring criterion. If no dollar amount is placed in the cost estimate form below, then it will be assumed that no multimodal elements are included with the project.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific Roadway Elements</th>
<th>CONSTRUCTION PROJECT ELEMENTS/COST ESTIMATES</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mobilization (approx. 5% of total cost)</td>
<td></td>
<td>$62,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Removals (approx. 5% of total cost)</td>
<td></td>
<td>$62,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roadway (grading, borrow, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roadway (aggregates and paving)</td>
<td></td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subgrade Correction (muck)</td>
<td></td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storm Sewer</td>
<td></td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ponds</td>
<td></td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concrete Items (curb &amp; gutter, sidewalks, median barriers)</td>
<td></td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic Control</td>
<td></td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Striping</td>
<td></td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signing</td>
<td></td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting</td>
<td></td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turf - Erosion &amp; Landscaping</td>
<td></td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridge</td>
<td></td>
<td>$825,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retaining Walls</td>
<td></td>
<td>$20,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noise Wall (do not include in cost effectiveness measure)</td>
<td></td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic Signals</td>
<td></td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When these section types are mixed on a page, you must open single value sections by clicking on EDIT in the Command Bar. If you encounter a page that doesn’t seem to accept your entries, try clicking on EDIT.
Detailed Application Instructions
Please refer to the Scoring Guidance for each application for instructions on completing the application questions.

Collaborating on applications
More than one person can work on an application at a time. If you do collaborate on entering data, we strongly recommend that you stay in close contact with your collaborators, because two people can work on the same form at the same time without being notified that this is happening, and the software will capture the changes from the user who saves the page last. Take care not to overwrite each other’s entries.

Blank applications are available in Microsoft Word to assist users in preparing their application PRIOR to accessing the online application system. There are multiple grant applications. An applicant should download the "Basic Info" word file as well as all word files for the grants which they may be considering. These files are provided as reference ONLY! All applications must be submitted using the online application software.

How are attachments handled?
WebGrants has built in upload capability for handling attachments. You will be able to upload any size file; because the files are not sent as email attachments, your organization’s email attachment size limit will not be a size boundary. Expect large files to take several moments to load.

Each application has at least one Attachments upload embedded within a form; many of these attachments are the maps generated in the map-generation process completed before beginning the application. The attachments throughout the relevant forms are required, and you will not be able to mark these forms as complete and submit your application until you have uploaded the required attachments.

To upload an attachment, click on the Upload icon at the bottom of the form, then browse through your computer to find the appropriate file. Selected attachments may also be deleted by clicking on the red “Delete” sign that appears after attaching a document.

Each application also has an “Other Attachments” form, where you can upload attachments relevant to your specific project, such as an issues map or concept drawing, travel tally documentation for Safe Routes to School projects, or others. Please check your project against the list of other attachments in this form to ensure you include any documentation needed for your project.
More information

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