



2050 Planning Assistance Grant Program and Small Communities Planning Program: Funding Award Recommendations

Community Development Committee

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Recommended Funding Scenario

Rationale

- Minor reduction in planning grant awards far outweighed by benefit to small communities
- Prevents disinvestment in wastewater and water supply facilities in region's smallest communities
- Difference between Scenarios B and C from Scenario A (baseline) is a 34% increase and a 25% increase, respectively, over what was provided in the previous planning cycle

# of Eligible Participants*	Community type	Scenario A		Scenario B		Recommended: Scenario C	
		2040 Plan Levels	Total	Inflation-Adjusted	Total	Adjusted for Programs	Total
60	Sewered	\$32,000	\$1,920,000	\$43,000	\$2,580,000	\$40,000	\$2,400,000
4	Unsewered	\$20,000	\$80,000	\$27,000	\$108,000	\$25,000	\$100,000
3	County/Consortium	\$84,000	\$252,000	\$112,000	\$336,000	\$110,000	\$330,000
67			\$2,252,000		\$3,024,000		\$2,830,000

**Based on eligibility criteria adopted by the Council on 10/22/2025*

Overall Program Budget for Recommendation

Overall 2050 Planning Assistance Grant Fund Budget is \$5.64 Million

Programs	Overall Budget Based on Recommended Award Scenario (C)
Planning Assistance Grant Program	\$2,830,000
Incentive Grants Opt-in Program	\$938,000
Small Communities Planning Program	\$1,870,500
Wastewater Plan Estimated Costs	\$982,000
Water Supply Plan Estimated Costs	\$294,000
Surface Water Management Plan Estimated Costs	\$594,500
	\$5,638,500
Remaining Budget	\$1,500

Funding Priorities for the Small Communities Planning Program

Engineering Cost Estimates by Community Type

- Recommendation for a not-to-exceed (NTE) engineering budget allocation for program participants.
- Cost estimates are based on type of community services (below), expected planning effort, and need.
- Prioritizes small communities and provides the highest allocation possible within overall program budget.

Type of Community Services	# of comms	Wastewater+ Water Supply Estimates	Recommendation Scenario C	
			Addl \$20,500 for Surface Water Mgmt	Estimated Total Cost
Sewered + Public (municipal) water supply	10	\$76,000	\$96,500	\$965,000
Sewered + Public water supply from neighbor	3	\$63,000	\$83,500	\$250,500
Sewered + Private water supply (wells)	2	\$61,000	\$81,500	\$163,000
Unsewered +Public (municipal) water supply	3	\$26,000	\$46,500	\$139,500
Unsewered + Public water supply from neighbor	3	\$13,000	\$33,500	\$100,500
Unsewered + Private water supply (wells)	8	\$11,000	\$31,500	\$252,000
29				\$1,870,500

Planning Assistance Incentive Grants

Advancing Regional Goals

- People-centered regional goals:
 - Our region is equitable and inclusive.
 - Our communities are healthy and safe.
 - Our region is dynamic and resilient.
- Opportunities to support Regional Goal Frameworks for Equity, Environmental Justice, Anti-Displacement, Community Centered Engagement, and Commitments to American Indian communities
- **Recommendation:**
\$10,000 per eligible grant participant

Early Plan Completion

- Statute requires Council to provide its completeness determination in 15 business days which challenges technical reviewer capacity
- Staggered deadline spreads out plan submissions
 - Increases efficiency and accuracy in plan reviews
 - Allows Council staff to better serve local governments and continue high levels of service throughout the planning process
 - Supports better relationships with local governments
- **Recommendation:**
\$4,000 per eligible grant participant

2050 Program Summary

Supporting the smallest communities with the most demonstrated financial need

Planning Assistance Grant Program

- Funding to 67 eligible participants
 - Supports 103 local governments
 - Similar level of eligible participants as in 2040 cycle
- Individual community base grant award increases by 25%
- County/Consortium base grant award increases by 31%
- Incentive grants further increase funding availability by \$14,000 per eligible grant participant

Small Communities Planning Program

- New opportunity for smallest and most financially constrained communities
- Direct professional planning and engineering support
- 29 eligible participants
 - 21 small city grants in 2040 cycle

2050 Programs Overall

- Support 2/3 of region's communities (124 of 188)
- 20% increase in communities from 2040 cycle (103 to 124)



Rationale

Planning Assistance Grant Program

Minnesota Statutes Section 473.867, subd. 2, authorizes the Metropolitan Council to establish a Planning Assistance Fund to provide grants and loans to local units of government. The primary purpose is for reviewing and amending local comprehensive plans, fiscal devices, and official controls, as required by the Metropolitan Land Planning Act. Planning grants facilitate the local planning process to ensure that the region continues to coordinate planning across all jurisdictions focusing on the local governments most in need.

Small Communities Planning Program

Minnesota Statutes Section 473.191, subd. 1, authorizes the Metropolitan Council to enter into contracts or make other arrangements with local government units to provide services or assist with comprehensive planning. The Small Communities Planning Program provides the smallest communities with the most demonstrated need in the region, with the highest level of technical assistance in order to ensure completion of decennial planning requirements.

2050 Planning Assistance Grant Program

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council:

1. Set the grant award amounts for the 2050 Planning Assistance Grant Program as follows:
 - a. The base award amounts for eligible communities are as follows:
 - i. Sewered communities: \$40,000
 - ii. Unsewered communities: \$25,000
 - iii. County or Consortium: \$110,000
 - b. Eligible Planning Assistance Grant Program participants may choose to opt-in to either or both of the following incentive grants:
 - i. Advancing Regional Goals: \$10,000
 - ii. Early Plan Completion: \$4,000
 - iii. If an eligible participant opts into an incentive grant program and later either chooses not to or is unable to complete program requirements, they shall forfeit those grant dollars but there shall be no penalty.

Small Communities Planning Program

Proposed Action

2. Set the funding amounts for the 2050 Small Communities Planning Program as follows:
 - a. Each eligible community shall have an identified not-to-exceed (NTE) engineering budget allocation based on need and expected planning effort as determined by the type of wastewater and water supply services further described in Table 3 and Attachment 1 of this report.
 - b. Any additional engineering costs would be required to be the responsibility of the local government.



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