

Committee Report

Community Development Committee



Committee meeting date: September 8, 2026

For the Metropolitan Council: September 23, 2026

Business Item: 2026-166

Signature Authorization for State Fiscal Year 2027 Regional Parks and State Pass-Through Grant Programs

Proposed action

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Community Development Executive Director to execute grant agreements and amendments for:

1. State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2027 Parks and Trails Legacy Fund Program (Legacy),
2. SFY 2027 Regional Parks Bonding Program (Bonding), and
3. SFY 2027 Legislatively Designated Pass-through Program (Pass-Through), and in accordance with, Tables 1, 2, and 3.

Summary of Community Development Committee discussion/questions

This item was on the Consent list.

Motion by Wulff, seconded by Carter. Motion carried.

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District(s), member(s):

All

Policy/legal reference:

Minn. Stat. §§ 473.325 and 85.53; Minn. Const. Article XI, Section 15; Minn. Laws 2025, Regular Session, Chapter 36, Article 3, Section 4; Minn. Laws 2025, 1st Special Session, Chapter 1, Article 1, Section 5; Minn. Laws 2024 Chapter 125 Article 8 Section 6; Minn. Laws 2026 Chapter 129 Article 3 Section 24; Minn. Laws 2026 Chapter 130 Article 1 Section 17; 2050 Regional Parks Policy Plan Finance Policy, Section 8; Council Business Item 2026-124 JT, 2026 Budget Amendment – 3rd Quarter Community Development; FM 14-2 Expenditures for the Procurement of Goods and Services Policy

Staff prepared/presented:

Erin Acton, Parks Grant Administrator, 651-602-1938

Division/departments:

Community Development / Finance and Administration

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3. SFY 2027 Legislatively Designated Pass-through Program (Pass-Through), and in accordance with, Tables 1, 2, and 3.

Background

This action pertains to formula-based and legislatively designated parks grant programs.

The Council executes grant agreements with Regional Parks Implementing Agencies, or other legislatively named grant recipients, to pass through funding granted by the legislature. The Community Development Executive Director is currently authorized to execute agreements and amendments up to \$1,000,000, Council action is required for execution of grant agreements and amendments exceeding \$1,000,000.

Execution of Legacy and Bonding grant agreements is the final step after multiple reviews, discussions, and other actions.

1. Council staff review Legacy and Bonding projects for conformity with the *Regional Parks Policy Plan* and eligibility with funding source rules and regulations. This review could include a combination of Legacy, state bond, and regional Council bond funding rules.
2. Council staff and the Park Implementing Agencies present proposed Legacy and Bonding project lists to the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission and Community

Development Committee.

3. The Council adopts funds into the Council's Authorized Budget.
4. Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) reviews and approves any projects funded by state bonds, as required.

Legislatively named pass-through projects do not allow or require Council review or approval but rather are legislatively directed. The Council acts as the fiscal agent for these grants.

Parks and Trails Legacy Fund

The Council distributes Legacy dollars to Parks Implementing Agencies based upon a formula set in [Minn. Stat. § 85.53, subd. 3](#). Table 1 lists agency allocations.

The appropriation states this SFY 2026/2027 funding "must be used only to fund the list of projects approved by the elected representatives for each of the metropolitan parks implementing agencies."

Table 1. SFY 2027 Legacy Grant Program Agency Shares for Eligible Projects

Agency	State Fiscal Year 2027
ANOKA COUNTY	\$2,198,096
BLOOMINGTON, CITY OF	\$384,460
CARVER COUNTY	\$700,954
DAKOTA COUNTY	\$2,163,561
MINNEAPOLIS PARK & RECREATION BOARD	\$5,532,367
RAMSEY COUNTY	\$2,117,263
SAINT PAUL, CITY OF	\$2,907,008
SCOTT COUNTY	\$1,044,216
THREE RIVERS PARK DISTRICT	\$6,076,308
WASHINGTON COUNTY	\$1,375,567
TOTAL	\$24,499,800

Regional Parks Bonding Program

The Council distributes Regional Parks Bonding funds to Implementing Agencies based on a formula set in the 2050 Regional Parks Policy Plan. Table 2 lists agency allocations.

Table 2. SFY 2027 Regional Parks Bonding Program Agencies Shares for Eligible Projects

Agency	State Fiscal Year 2027
ANOKA COUNTY	\$1,601,103
BLOOMINGTON, CITY OF	\$408,749
CARVER COUNTY	\$619,113
DAKOTA COUNTY	\$1,869,222
MINNEAPOLIS PARK & RECREATION BOARD	\$3,369,668
RAMSEY COUNTY	\$1,352,681
SAINT PAUL, CITY OF	\$1,779,847
SCOTT COUNTY	\$733,348
THREE RIVERS PARK DISTRICT	\$3,735,457
WASHINGTON COUNTY	\$1,197,479
TOTAL	\$16,666,667

Legislatively Designated Pass-Through Program

Through appropriation language, the Legislature determined legislatively designated pass-through grant project descriptions and award amounts. Table 3 lists legislatively designated pass-through



projects and amounts for SFY 2027.

Table 3. SFY 2027 Legislatively Designated Pass-Through Grant Projects

Grantee	Project Description	Amount
CHAMPLIN, CITY OF	Elm Creek Greenway	\$500,000
MINNEAPOLIS PARK & RECREATION BOARD	North Commons Park	\$6,000,000
MINNEAPOLIS PARK & RECREATION BOARD	Cedar Riverside Recreation Center	\$1,500,000
MINNEAPOLIS PARK & RECREATION BOARD	Loring Park	\$1,800,000
RAMSEY COUNTY	Boulevard Trail	\$4,750,000
SAINT PAUL, CITY OF	Como Zoo	\$9,350,000
WASHINGTON COUNTY	Brown's Creek State Trail Connection	\$2,931,000
WASHINGTON COUNTY	Hardwood Creek Regional Trail Extension	\$1,000,000
MINNEAPOLIS PARK & RECREATION BOARD*	Cedar Riverside Recreation Center	\$5,000,000
TOTAL		\$32,831,000

*This project funded by State General Funds, all other projects funded by State General Obligation Bonds.

Rationale

Council staff previously brought each individual grant, or small batches of grant agreements, to the Council to obtain signature authorization for the Community Development Executive Director for agreements exceeding \$1,000,000.

This action increases efficiency by authorizing the Community Development Executive Director to execute grant agreements and amendments up to the amounts listed in Tables 1, 2, and 3, rather than bringing multiple requests to the Council for signature authorization as individual grant agreements are ready for execution. This is the final non-discretionary step in the process. To the extent that the Council has any input in these projects, it is done at other, earlier stages in the process.

This action will improve customer service to Parks Implementing Agencies through reduced subrecipient agreement processing time. It will also reduce administrative processing work of Council staff. The Council's Procurement Department supports this action.

Thrive lens analysis

On February 12, 2025, the Council adopted Imagine 2050, which builds on the policy direction in Thrive MSP 2040. Regional Parks and Trails funding advances the Imagine 2050 goals “We protect and restore natural systems” and “Our communities our healthy and safe” by enhancing the quality of life in the region through increasing access to nature and outdoor recreation. This funding advances the development of the regional parks and trails system plan defined in the 2050 Regional Parks and Trails Policy in Imagine 2050.

Funding

Projects are funded with Legacy, State General Fund, State General Obligation Bond, and Council Regional Park Bond funds. The Council has approved funding and it is available in the authorized capital program.

Small business inclusion

The Council does not apply Metropolitan Council Underutilized Business (MCUB) goals to locally funded grant agreements.

