

COON CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT
Request for Board Action

MEETING DATE: February 12, 2024
AGENDA NUMBER: 10
ITEM: 2024 Q1 Water Quality Cost Share Awards

AGENDA: Policy

ACTION REQUESTED

Award cost-share funds to identified projects in accordance with Staff recommendations.

PURPOSE & SCOPE OF THE ITEM

To ensure progress towards achieving required pollutant reductions and addressing identified stressors to aquatic life by administering cost share program for water quality improvement and protection projects.

Specifically addresses applications submitted as part of 2024 Q1 request for proposals.

BACKGROUND

Section 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act requires states to identify waters that do not meet water quality standards in support of designated beneficial uses. Coon, Sand, Pleasure, and Springbrook Creeks were listed as impaired for both aquatic life and recreation in 2006 and 2014, respectively. The Coon Creek Watershed TMDL and WRAPS, approved in 2016, established pollutant load allocations and implementation strategies to reduce total suspended sediments, total phosphorus, and *E. coli* and to address non-pollutant stressors in all impaired streams. As part of the 2016 Twin Cities Metropolitan Area Chloride TMDL study, Sand, Pleasure, and Springbrook Creeks were designated at high risk for chloride impairment; Pleasure and Springbrook Creeks are currently pending impairment. All MS4s within the District including CCWD, Andover, Blaine, Coon Rapids, Fridley, Ham Lake, Spring Lake Park, Anoka County, and MnDOT are jointly responsible for meeting required pollutant loading allocations by the target date of 2045.

COORDINATION

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) participated in initial program development and provides feedback on any proposed revisions to program guidelines. Applicants often request pre-application meetings to discuss identified projects. Pre-application meetings were held for four of the five proposals received this round.

FACTS

In 2018, the Board approved establishment of a CCWD Water Quality Cost Share Program in the amount of \$100,000 and issuance of the first annual RFP for 2019.

In 2019-2023, \$570,905 in requests were received and the Board awarded \$394,699 to twenty water quality improvement projects by seven different applicants.

In 2023, continuation and expansion of the program was approved for 2024 totaling \$215,000 with two new cost share categories: Street Sweeping Enhancements (\$100,000) and Water Quality Improvement Planning/Feasibility (\$15,000).

During the 2024 Q1 RFP, the following applications were received totaling \$297,341.50:

Title (Applicant)	Eligible?	Description
General Projects & Practices		
Culvert Enhancement in CRDRP (Anoka Co)	\$75,000	Upgrade existing crossing over Coon Cr from 4 culverts to a bridge instead of in-kind replacement as part of trail reconstruction work in CRDRP. The proposed bridge would improve aquatic organism passage at an identified high priority barrier and reduce erosion among other secondary benefits.
Oversized stormwater basins (Ham Lake)	\$75,000	Construct oversized stormwater ponds as part of planned 2024 Hwy 65 frontage road construction project (171st to Chisholm). The basins are 20% oversized compared to permit requirements for the road project AND for post-development conditions.
<i>Sum</i>	<i>\$150,000 (\$100,000 available)</i>	
Street Sweeping Enhancements		
Leaf Vacuum (Fridley)	\$60,341.50	Purchase of equipment (vacuum, chipper, box) to convert existing dump truck into leaf vacuum to improve efficiency of sweeping program, doubling the City's current capacity. Current program is limited by existing Regenerative Air Sweeper's low hopper capacity and resulting need for additional staff for hauling.
Trommel Screener (Coon Rapids)	\$72,000	Purchase of trommel screener to enable sorting of sweepings to address the primary constraint limiting the City's ability to pursue enhanced sweeping strategies. Presently, the City does not have space or funding to manage additional sweepings material. This equipment will allow for "additional sweeping effort in priority zones".
<i>Sum</i>	<i>\$132,341.50 (\$100,000 available)</i>	
WQ Improvement Planning		
I&I investigation of private laterals (Coon Rapids)	\$15,000	City to purchase push camera (\$2K) to televise and clean private sanitary services in target neighborhoods and hire contractor to expand capacity for this work. City (and contractor) will focus on homes (n=48) in the 2024 and 2025 street reconstruction neighborhoods to incentivize getting these inspections done to identify repair needs prior to largescale construction in the area (potential for cost-savings). City to further incentive identified repair work by allowing repair costs to be added to road project assessments
<i>Sum</i>	<i>\$15,000 (\$15,000 available)</i>	
TOTAL	\$297,341.50 (\$215,000 available)	

SCORING RESULTS & AWARD RECOMMENDATIONS

The District Engineer and Staff determined eligibility and scored all proposals. Funding recommendations are listed below:

Title (Applicant)	Eligible?	Average Score (out of 30)	Water Quality Benefits & Notes	Funding Recommendation (of requested amount)
General Projects & Practices				
Culvert Enhancement in CRDRP (Anoka Co)	Y	28.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> improved aquatic organism passage from Miss. Rv to Coon Cr (highest priority barrier to address Districtwide) reduced TSS, TP by 12 tons, 4.8 lbs per yr reduced localized flooding, maintenance, & improved recreation potential/aesthetics limited time opportunity as part of planned 2024 trail improvement work 	\$75,000 (of \$75,000)
Oversized stormwater basins (Ham Lake)	Y, partial	20.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> basins sized for 96% TSS reduction under post-development conditions compared to required 80% reduction reduced TSS, TP, volume to D58/ Coon Cr limited time opportunity as part of planned 2024 city rd project cost to oversize basins estimated at \$84,270, reducing eligible cost share amount to \$42,135 	\$25,000 (of \$75,000)
Street Sweeping Enhancements				
Leaf Vacuum (Fridley)	Y	24.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> enables enhanced sweeping to reduce TSS, TP, Cl, and debris to Springbrook Cr & Miss Rv sweeping up to 12x/yr vs current 7.5x results in estimated reductions of 0.7 tons TSS & 30 lbs TP per yr for Springbrook & Mississippi Rv (within CCWD only) 24% of road miles with CCWD 	\$50,000 (of \$60,341.50)
Trommel Screener (Coon Rapids)	Y	23.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> enables enhanced sweeping to reduce TSS, TP, Cl, and debris to all 4 impaired streams & Mississippi Rv Increasing sweeping effort by 13% in priority areas results in estimated reductions of 8 tons TSS & 76 lbs TP per yr for all receiving waters combined 100% of road miles within CCWD 	\$50,000 (of \$72,000)
WQ Improvement Planning				
I&I investigation of private laterals (Coon Rapids)	Y	23.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify sources of human sewage contamination (TP, E. coli + pathogens) into shallow Groundwater/ Surface water Cost savings to taxpayers and homeowners by reducing inflow & infiltration through targeted approach 	\$15,000 (of \$15,000)
TOTAL Recommended Awards				\$215,000

ISSUES/CONCERNS

There are two issues and concerns:

Eligibility

The proposal submitted by City of Ham Lake was determined to be partially ineligible because it was based on the total cost to construct the four stormwater ponds as part of the road construction project instead of the cost to oversize these basins above and beyond permit requirements. Staff worked with the project engineer to estimate the costs associated with oversizing these basins to be \$84,270, with fifty percent or \$42,135 eligible for cost-sharing.

During the review process, staff had lengthy discussion about appropriate eligibility criteria for equipment used partially outside of the District boundary such as sweeping or de-icing equipment. Staff considered reducing City of Fridley's eligible amount for the leaf vacuum to \$28,964 based on the proportion of city-maintained road miles within the District (24%), but it was acknowledged that this approach may deter equipment upgrades and associated benefits for priority drainage areas within the District. The ultimate staff recommendation was to split the available funding 50-50 between the two enhanced sweeping proposals which both scored very competitively. This decision was based on follow-up discussions with City staff indicating that these award amounts would likely allow each City to pursue the proposed equipment upgrades, resulting in the greatest benefit to District receiving waters. Staff intend to revise the eligibility criteria in future RFPs for better clarity.

Cost Share Demand

The amount of funding requested exceeded budgeted cost share funds for both the 'Projects and Practices' and 'Sweeping Enhancements' categories, resulting in three proposals being recommended for partial awards: Ham Lake's oversized stormwater basins at 33%, Fridley's leaf vacuum at 83%, and Coon Rapid's trommel screener at 69%. It will be at the discretion of the applicant whether the proposal can be implemented with a reduced award, shelved for a future attempt at cost share funds, or canceled. Any unused funds would revert back to the cost share program budget.

PRIOR DECISIONS

1. September 11, 2023: Approval of the 2024 budget including \$215,000 to implement the cost share program to support water quality improvement projects

OPTIONS

1. Award cost-share funds to identified project in accordance with Staff recommendations.
2. Award cost-share funds to projects in accordance with amended recommendations:
3. Do not award cost-share funds to identified project with explanation and direction for refinement of qualification and/or allocation criteria.

RECOMMENDATION

Award cost-share funds to identified projects in accordance with Staff recommendations.

IMPLICATIONS

If the \$215,000 in cost share awards recommended by Staff are approved, there would be \$0 in budgeted funds remaining for 2024, closing the cost share program for the year.

ACTION/IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

1. Execute cost share agreements with awarded applicants
2. Consider revising criteria for 2025 RFP