

NATURE IN NEIGHBORHOODS CAPITAL GRANTS PILOT

Capital Grants Pilot Request for Proposals Q&A

Please see the program website for news and additional resources: [Metro Capital Grants Pilot](#)

Please see the program guidebook for additional information and details: [Program Guidebook](#)

Please see the program guidebook brief for an overview of the Capital Grants Pilot: [Program Brief](#)

Please see the Request for Proposals for details and to apply: Capital Grants Pilot [Request for Proposals](#)

The following information is a summary of the questions and answers from an August 2022 pre-proposal conference for RFP 4001. All questions should be directed through [BidLocker](#).

Q: Is this project exclusively focused on Metro District 4?

A: Yes, this initial round of funding for the Capital Grants Pilot will use Metro District 4 as the program area. Often, participatory budgeting modeled programs specify a program area to ensure that funded projects reflect the interests of specific communities and reduce geographic competition for funding. Metro leadership chose for this initial round of funding of \$2 million to focus on Metro District 4. Future rounds of funding could potentially rotate among all Metro districts.

Q: Does Metro have a preference that the prime contractor be from the technical expert side (landscape architecture or civil engineering) or the community engagement side?

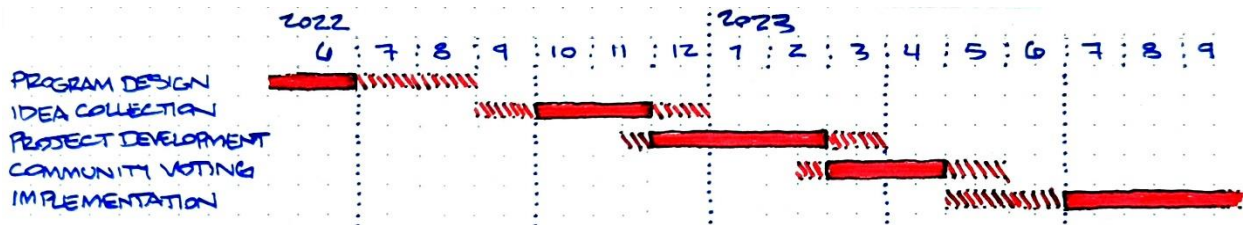
A: No, Metro does not have a preference of whether the prime is from the technical side or the community engagement side. As outlined in the Request for Proposals, both will be needed for this project over the next year. Metro hopes to identify proposers that have both, whether as the prime or through sub-contractors. The participatory budgeting model is really based on robust community engagement and direct democracy, so whether it is through the prime or a sub, the proposer should have a really robust experience and understanding of community engagement, especially with historically underrepresented communities.

Q: Has Metro done a process with participatory budgeting before?

A: No, this is Metro's first process based on a participatory budgeting model.

Q: To confirm, the expected timeline for the contractor is from September 2022 through May 2023, depending on the funding recommendation?

A: Correct. The contractor will be expected to work through this process starting in September of this year through the funding recommendation next summer, anticipating implementation of chosen project to begin in July of 2023, the beginning of the next fiscal year. The graphic below shows the anticipated timeline, outlined below.



- Idea Collection: October 2022 to November 2022
- Project Development: December 2022 to March 2023
- Community Vote: March 2023 to May 2023
- Implementation: Beginning July 2023

Q: How will conflict of interest be dealt with since a lot of consultants work for agencies that might be submitting projects?

A: For past grant programs, we have asked that anyone with a conflict of interest to recuse themselves when in a decision-making position. In the case of the Capital Grants Pilot, the contractor will not be the final decision maker. For the Capital Grants Pilot, the community members recommend projects through the community vote to the program design and review committee, which recommends projects to the Metro Council for final decisions on grant awards. As such, contractors can act both in their role with this program and for public agencies applying for grant funds.

Q: How will the program design and review committee be involved during implementation?

A: To answer that question, we will start with a little background. For the program design and review committee, we had a recruitment last fall. We were really pleased with the amount of response that we had to that recruitment. We had about 50 people apply to be on the program design and review committee from across the Metro region with a breadth of expertise, both technical expertise as well as lived experience, to bring to the discussions. That group of six that were ultimately chosen based on the combination of technical expertise and lived experience then met for around six months, from January 2022 through June, to help design the program and make decisions and recommendations that ultimately went into our program guidebook, which is our guiding document for both the process and implementation. They helped refine and interpret the purpose, principles, and criteria of the 2019 parks and nature bond and how they were applied, and all of those discussions and decisions are documented in this guidebook and now being implemented in this process.

Starting this fall and going through spring of next year, we expect to convene this committee again. There will be some turnover in the committee as previous members leave to pursue other personal and professional interests, but this newer combined group will then work on the second half of their task as the grant review committee. The Nature in Neighborhood grants programs have always had a peer review committee, so we expect that this review committee will act in a similar manner to some of our previous review committees, though with some new responsibilities while helping make decisions. For example, after the idea collection phase, the program design and review committee are tasked with vetting project ideas for eligibility, feasibility, and alignment with bond and program goals, as articulated in the program guidebook, to winnow down the pool of potential projects that move forward through the project development process. They will also help refine the process as we go along to ensure that implementation aligns with the program goals and to evaluate other program ideas as they arise.

The program design and review committee will also make a funding recommendation to Metro Council, who hold the final funding decision. So, when we get to that community vote stage, the community will select which projects they prefer to fund. The committee then reviews the outcome of the community vote, perhaps makes some alterations to ensure representation and inclusion or leaves the results as is, and then recommends to the Metro Council which projects to fund using the available grant dollars.

Q: Could you please clarify what is meant by capital projects?

A: The following definitions are from the program guidebook.

What is a capital project and what expenses can Capital Grants fund?

Land or other assets acquired or created with Metro bond funds must be owned by the public and capitalized by a non-federal public entity.

Expenses must be a capital expense. Funds cannot be used for general operating expenses.

“Bond proceeds must be spent on capital costs, which could include, but are not limited to, costs for land acquisition, design, planning and construction, general and program administrative expenses, bond issuance costs and reimbursable bond preparation expenses related to community engagement, design, planning and feasibility of the acquisition and capital construction program.” Projects may be required to partner with a jurisdiction to help develop (i.e. plan, engineering or architectural plans) and jurisdictions would be required to own the capital asset.

What is the definition of capital costs for the Capital Grants Pilot?

“Administrative Costs” means Capital Costs that are not Direct Project Costs, including program development expenses, administrative and finance staff support, expenses related to board community engagement and outreach, and any other payments that are required to facilitate bond-funded capital projects but are not directly tied to a project.

“Capital Costs” means costs that are considered capital under generally acceptable accounting principles (GAAP), which costs include the costs of capital construction, capital improvements or other capital costs, as those terms are defined by the relevant provisions of the Oregon Constitution and Oregon law (including ORS 310.140). Each jurisdiction should also ensure that the costs incurred as capital adhere to

their own internal capital policies. Capital costs can include staff time to the extent it is allowable under each jurisdiction's existing financial policies.

“Direct Project Costs” means Capital Costs that are expended for the acquisition, development, or construction of a Metro parks and nature bond-funded project.

Eligible capital costs

The Nature in Neighborhoods Capital Grants are being funded using general obligation bond proceeds. General obligation bonds (sometimes referred to as GO bonds) may only be used to pay for expenditures that constitute qualified capital costs, consistent with Oregon law. Capital costs are costs that can be capitalized under generally acceptable accounting principles (GAAP). Capital costs can include the costs of capital construction, capital improvements or other capital costs as defined by the relevant provisions of the Oregon Constitution and Oregon law (including ORS 310.140). Each grantee should refer to and abide by its own policies regarding what constitutes a capital cost.

As outlined in ORS 310.140, capital costs include land and other assets having a useful life of more than one year, and can include costs associated with acquisition, construction, improvement, remodeling, furnishing and equipping. Capital costs do not include costs of routine maintenance, supplies or general operating expenses.

Each grant recipient jurisdiction may, based on its financial policies, make its own determination as to what constitutes a capital cost, so long as it is consistent with state law. *The only reimbursable costs are related to the capital project plus up to 10 percent for project management staff time.*