



Nature in Neighborhoods Capital Grants Handbook Full Application

Program Summary and Grant Guidelines

Due 4 p.m. on May 2, 2023

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SUMMARY

Funded through the 2019 bond measure, the Nature in Neighborhoods Capital Grants program will support community-led projects that benefit historically marginalized communities, protect, and improve water quality and fish and wildlife habitat, support climate resilience and increase people's experience of nature at the community scale. Chosen projects will emphasize community engagement, racial equity and climate resilience as well as meet the requirements of the 2019 Parks and Natural Areas bond measure for capital grants listed below. The projects funded will fulfill the purposes, principles, and criteria of the voter-approved 2019 parks and nature bond, centering community engagement and racial equity, to protect and improve water quality and fish and wildlife habitat, support climate resiliency, and increase people's experience of nature at the community scale.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Proposed projects must fulfill the following minimum requirements to be considered:

- The total project award must be at least \$100,000.
- The project must be on property owned by a state or local government and is within Metro's jurisdictional boundary.
- The project must demonstrate public and private partners (e.g. nonprofit or community-based organization).
- Matching funds must be identified and close to secured at the time of full application. Metro will provide no more than one-third of the total project costs of the capital project. Metro may consider flexible match for equity for the full application or future funding cycles.
- A project must have minimal feasibility challenges and able to be constructed within three years. Contracts must be executed within two years of Metro Council grant award. Contract must be executed by 2025 and the grant awarded portion of the project must be completed by 2028.

SCHEDULE

Pre-application due 4 p.m. Tuesday, February 14, 2023

Full applications due 4 p.m. Tuesday, May 2, 2023

Recommendation to Metro Council in June 2023

Grant agreements and notice to proceed by Fall 2023 to Fall 2025

PURPOSE, PRINCIPLES AND CRITERIA

Projects must meet the purpose and some of the principles, racial equity, community engagement and climate resilience and program area criteria. The whole package of Nature in Neighborhoods Capital Grants investments must meet the purpose, principles, community engagement and racial equity criteria, and at least one each of the climate resilience and program area criteria.

INTRODUCTION

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

2019 PARKS AND NATURE BOND

Since 1995, voters in greater Portland have passed three Parks and Nature bond measures that protect the region's air and water, restore fish and wildlife habitat and connect people with nature. In November 2019, voters in greater Portland approved a \$475 million bond measure to further protect clean water, restore fish and wildlife habitat and provide opportunities for people to connect with nature close to home.

THE NATURE IN NEIGHBORHOODS CAPITAL GRANTS PROGRAM

Across greater Portland, some of the best conservation and nature work is created by community members. Nature in Neighborhoods provides grants to projects led by neighborhood groups, community organizations, schools, park providers, soil and water conservation districts, local governments, and others. The capital projects must protect water quality and fish and wildlife habitat, support climate resiliency, and/or increase a community's connection to nature. Metro will provide up to \$40 million for grants funding community-led projects, with an emphasis on benefitting historically marginalized communities over the next ten years.

While the grants only fund capital investments, a wide variety of projects may qualify. Following the successful capital grants program from 2006 to 2016, four major categories of projects will be considered: [Land acquisition](#) (e.g. Nadaka Nature Park, White Oak Savanna), [Urban transformations](#) (e.g., ReGreening I-205), [Restoration](#) (e.g. Mitchell Creek, Wapato Marsh), and [Neighborhood livability](#) (e.g., Westmoreland Park, Hawthorne Park).

This handbook describes and defines the 2023 Nature in Neighborhoods Capital Grants competitive grant program for the Metro region.

In addition, the bond also included a Nature in Neighborhoods Community Choice (i.e. Capital Grants Pilot) program that will be designed by community members and award grants through a participatory process in 2023 in Metro Council District 4 (Washington County).

NATURE IN NEIGHBORHOODS CAPITAL GRANTS PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The roots of Metro's Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants program can be found in the Regional Framework Plan which unites all of Metro's adopted land use planning policies and requirements including the 2040 Growth Concept and is designed to create sustainable and prosperous communities for present and future generations. Included in these plans is Metro's commitment to protect farm and forest land outside the urban growth boundary, while also preserving the character of urban neighborhoods inside the boundary. Metro has authority from the State of Oregon for managing the Metro region's urban growth boundary (UGB) and meeting the state's land use planning goals.

Metro has also used its land use authority to protect natural resources inside the region's urban growth boundary. Most significantly is the adoption by the Metro Council of Ordinance 05-1077B (a.k.a. Nature in Neighborhoods) in September 2005. The ordinance established standards for development in streamside and wetland areas to conserve and protect fish and wildlife habitat and included Title 13 of Metro's Urban Growth Management Functional Plan, which implements Oregon Statewide Planning Goal 5 (natural resources, scenic and historic areas and open spaces) and Goal 6 (air, water and land resources quality). Through Title 13, Nature in Neighborhoods, the framework plan includes

requirements for conserving, protecting and restoring the region’s fish and wildlife habitat. In adopting Nature in Neighborhoods, the Metro Council chose to rely on a combination of land use protections designed to conserve the highest value habitats and voluntary measures to be implemented by public and private partners, including land acquisition, habitat friendly development practices, and restoration and stewardship.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY

The Nature in Neighborhoods Capital Grants metro-wide program will provide approximately \$2.7 million for capital projects throughout the Metro region for the initial 2023-2024 round of competitive funding.

The intent of this grant program is to fund capital projects. Therefore, the minimum grant request eligible for funding is \$100,000 and a maximum grant request eligible for funding is \$1 million for the 2023-24 Capital Grants program. Available funds will be divided into two funding areas, one for small projects and one for large projects. Small projects must have project grant requests between \$100,000 and \$250,000. Large projects must have project grant requests between \$250,000 and \$1 million.

PROGRAM UPDATES

This handbook is intended to address a first-year funding cycle with the goal of clarifying programmatic elements that best achieve the program goals. Aspects of the program as defined in this handbook will need to be updated from time to time to best reflect the needs of Metro and the community.

WHO CAN APPLY?

Capital grants are intended to support community-driven initiatives; therefore, partnerships are key to a successful proposal. Tribal governments, public schools, non-profits, community-based organizations, local governments, and special districts can apply for grants.

The final capital asset must be publicly owned by a state or local government. Tribal governments, which have not yet been established as eligible state or local government for the purposes of the lending of credit prohibition in the Oregon Constitution, along with non-profits, and community-based organizations, must partner with a state or local government to apply for the capital grants.

PARTNERS

The project must demonstrate public and private partners who will leverage human and financial resources. A partner is not simply an organization or individual that writes a letter of support. Partners are actively engaged in leveraging financial or in-kind services in order to make the project a success.

MINIMUM PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

Grant applications must fulfill the following minimum requirements to be considered.

- To maximize the impact of investments, projects must demonstrate strong partnerships between community-based organizations and state or local government.
- Grant funds must be expended within the Metro jurisdictional boundary.
- Projects must be clearly achievable given the knowledge, skills and resources available or other organizational preparedness among project partners.

- Expenses must be associated with capital projects only. Funds cannot be used for general operating expenses. Administrative costs -directly related to the capital project are only eligible for up to 10% of the total grant award for reimbursement, this can include project management staff time or other expenses as outlined below.
- Administrative costs are defined as: costs including staff costs and Overhead and Indirect Costs, up to a maximum of ten percent (10%) of the total Project Cost for each project. Metro will apply the 10% cap on a project-by-project basis and each Grantee will be responsible for tracking and accounting for its costs to ensure compliance with the 10% cap.
- Projects that involve the acquisition of properties or easements must be negotiated with willing sellers.
- Grantees will be required to evaluate and report progress on their projects
- Upon entering into a grant agreement with Metro, the grantee will have up to three years to complete the project. Contracts must be executed within two years of Metro Council grant award. Metro's Chief Operating Officer may approve extensions up to a maximum five-year term if a project encounters unforeseeable delays.

TYPES OF CAPITAL PROJECTS FUNDED

The project must result in a publicly owned capital asset within Metro's jurisdictional boundary. The definition of a capital asset may vary depending on how the public agency accounts for the project. The chief financial officer for the public agency must confirm that the line items funded by the capital grants is properly recorded as assets in the jurisdiction's audited financial statements and that the accounting treatment for this project is consistent with other similar transactions. Metro will require a letter of support from the jurisdiction will be required to meet this requirement.

Metro may fund four types of capital projects:

LAND ACQUISITION OR CONSERVATION EASEMENT

Acquisition of real property (including easements) by a state or local government. Acquisition projects may include natural areas, wildlife habitat and trail corridors, nature-related parks or other opportunities for increasing people's connections to nature and/or restoring ecological systems. State or local governments may use funds acquire any interest in land only with willing sellers.

Allowable costs

Costs associated with the acquisition including appraisals, appraisal review, surveys, environmental review and closing costs.

Costs necessary to "stabilize" the property including a survey, the demolition of unwanted structures and other hazards, installation of signage and fencing to control access and the initial removal of invasive species and planting of natives.

Required conservation easement.

Government agencies taking fee title ownership to property being acquired with grant funds shall grant Metro a conservation easement. If the agency is acquiring a conservation easement of their own from the property owner, then this requirement does not apply.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Projects will result in the creation of a capital asset such as a park, natural area, trail, boardwalk or nature play area, with a discrete useful life of at least 20 years; OR projects will significantly extend the useful life of an existing capital asset.

Allowable costs

A project must have a grant request of at least \$100,000. Such costs can include design and engineering costs, bid documents and permits, as well as materials and construction expenses.

The project must be consistent with the intent of the bond measure under which the project was acquired and the management goals at the time of acquisition. If an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with a local jurisdiction for the management of the property is in place, the project must comply with that agreement.

- **Restoration** projects that either create or renovate an asset to enhance fish habitat and/or wildlife connectivity such as enhancing stream complexity with large woody debris, removing or replacing culverts, and providing viewing platforms to reduce people's impact on sensitive habitat.
- **Urban transformation** projects that seek to change development norms in the region's most urban settings by balancing human needs with the health of natural systems and providing people with opportunities to learn about and experience nature.
- **Neighborhood livability** projects that give people a place to walk, reflect and connect with nature close to home.

SELECTION CRITERIA

FUNDING PURPOSE, PRINCIPLES AND CRITERIA SUMMARY

Since 1995, voters in greater Portland have passed three bond measures that protect the region's air and water, restore fish and wildlife habitat and connect people with nature. When voters overwhelmingly passed the 2019 bond measure, they endorsed three critical aspects to this work: racial equity, community engagement and climate resilience.

PURPOSE

These projects will protect and improve water quality and fish and wildlife habitat, support climate resiliency and/or increase people's experience of nature at the community scale.

The Nature in Neighborhoods Capital Grants program will fund community-led projects, with an emphasis on benefitting historically marginalized communities.

PRINCIPLES

Based on community and partner engagement and input from stakeholders, the Metro Council approved the following principles to guide the 2019 parks and nature bond measure.

All of the following principles will guide the Nature in Neighborhoods Capital Grants program in its selection of the whole package of grant investments. Individual projects must meet one or more of the following principles.

- Serve communities through inclusive engagement, transparency and accountability.
- Advance racial equity through bond investments.
- Protect clean water for people, fish and wildlife.
- Protect and restore culturally significant native plant communities.
- Protect, connect and improve habitat for native fish and wildlife.
- Take care of what we have.
- Make parks and natural areas more accessible and inclusive.
- Connect more people to the land and rivers of our region.
- Invest in trails for biking and walking.
- Support community-led parks and nature projects.
- Make communities more resilient to climate change.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND RACIAL EQUITY CRITERIA

The whole package of Capital Grants investments must satisfy **all of the following community engagement and racial equity criteria**. *Individual projects must meet one or more of the following criteria.*

- Meaningfully engage with communities of color, Indigenous communities, people with low incomes and other historically marginalized communities in planning, development and selection of projects.
- Prioritize projects and needs identified by communities of color, Indigenous communities, low-income and other historically marginalized groups. Metro has found ways to prioritize these communities in ways that do not violate the law, like outreach or reducing barriers.
- Demonstrate accountability for tracking outcomes and reporting impacts, particularly as they relate to communities of color, Indigenous communities, people with low incomes and other historically marginalized communities.
- Improve the accessibility and inclusiveness of developed parks.
- Include strategies to prevent or mitigate displacement and/or gentrification resulting from bond investments.
- Set aspirational goals for workforce diversity and use of COBID contractors and work to reduce barriers to achieving these goals; demonstrate accountability by tracking outcomes and reporting impacts.

CLIMATE RESILIENCE CRITERIA

The whole package of Capital Grants investments must satisfy **at least one of the following climate resilience criteria**. *Individual projects must meet one or more of the following criteria.*

- Protect, connect and restore habitat to support strong populations of native plants, fish and wildlife that can adapt to a changing climate.

- Protect and restore floodplains, headwaters, streams and wetlands to increase their capacity to handle stormwater to protect vulnerable communities from flooding.
- Increase tree canopy in developed areas to reduce heat island effects.
- Use low-impact development practices and green infrastructure in project design and development.

PROGRAM CRITERIA

The whole package of Capital Grants investments must satisfy **at least one of the following program criteria**. *Individual projects must meet one or more of the following criteria.*

- Build wealth in communities of color, Indigenous communities, low-income and other historically marginalized communities through contracting and jobs.
- Improve human mental and physical health, particularly in communities of color, Indigenous communities, low-income communities and other historically marginalized communities.
- Nurture a relationship with land and create educational opportunities (including Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math [STEAM] opportunities) and promote careers in the environmental and agricultural sector, especially for people and youth of color.
- Demonstrate leadership by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color in project identification, selection, design and implementation.
- Increase accessibility of public, park, and other natural spaces.
- Create easy access to nature from transit and for people walking or biking.
- Consider and approach the issue of houselessness in a sensitive and humanizing way.

PROJECT PLANNING

The strongest projects have been well thought-out and based on thorough research and planning. This includes looking at the project in the broadest context and framing the need for the project within the entire watershed basin or the needs of the surrounding neighborhoods. Building relationships with a variety of stakeholders can allow the project to more holistically address multiple elements of a livable community such as public safety, health, affordable housing and jobs. Metro is willing to provide suggestions to potential applicants and help to identify potential resources. Applicants are encouraged to contact Metro staff as early in the project planning phase as possible.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTIES

Each party will have responsibilities in alignment with their strengths and capacities.

LOCAL JURISDICTION

LEADING GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION

Local governments will lead government-to-government consultation with Tribes that have interest in the project area.

HOLDING FEE TITLE OR EASEMENT

Local governments must hold a real estate interest in the site sufficient to comply with state law regarding bond expenditures.

FORMAL RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF PROJECT

State and local government partners must take legislative action to support the project, such as a formal resolution, letter of support, or other documentation of support of the project prior to the full application submission.

ENSURING PROJECT COMPLIANCE WITH THE FOLLOWING RULES AND REGULATIONS, IF APPLICABLE:

- Protections for Native American burial sites and objects (Oregon Revised Statute 97.740 et seq.)
- Protections for archaeological objects and sites (ORS 358.905 et seq.), permit requirements for site alteration (ORS 390.325 et seq.), and permit requirements for state public and private land (Oregon Administrative Rule 736-051-0080 to 0090)
- National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 United States Code 470 et seq.)
- Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (16 USC 470 et seq.)
- Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (25 USC 3001 et seq.)
- Other applicable local, state, and federal regulations

COMMUNITY PARTNER

The specific roles of the community partner are much more flexible depending on the capacity and relationship of the organization.

ROLES DETERMINED BY PROJECT NEEDS

Many roles for delivering a capital project of this scale are necessary. However, this handbook is not intended to prescribe those roles, rather to simply identify a few key roles that are necessary. The organization responsible for these roles should be determined based on negotiations amongst the project partners.

- Project Management
- Community Engagement Lead
- Operations and Maintenance Lead
- Project Fiduciary
- Project Attorney
- Other roles as determined necessary by the partnership and as may be recommended by Metro Staff

DEFINITION OF CAPITAL PROJECT AND EXPENSES

Land or other assets acquired or created with Metro bond funds must be owned by the public and capitalized by a state or local government.

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. 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.

FUNDING SOURCE LIMITATIONS

Metro is constrained by legal and fiscal constraints around the use of parks and nature bond funding. Per the Metro bond measure and the Oregon constitution (ORS 310.140), bond proceeds must be spent on ‘capital costs.’ Funding for project scoping, feasibility studies, and other preliminary project development costs are not considered capital costs and thus will need to be paid for from a source other than bond funds. Capital projects funded by the bond measure must also be on public land, meaning a state or local government agency are the landowners or easement holders of the land. Therefore, the project development process is adapted to meet those constraints.

WHAT ARE THE BUDGETS THAT WILL BE REQUIRED FOR CAPITAL GRANT PROJECTS?

Each grant recipient jurisdiction will be required to submit a project budget with their full application. The project budget submitted should outline the total project cost summarized by major spending category and should include whether each line item is a direct project cost or an administrative capital cost and whether that cost will be covered by the grant or match. Metro will provide a template and instructions for the budget document. The grantee should prepare project scopes and budgets with care, applying conservative estimates. A percentage of project budget should be set aside as contingency to cover unforeseen expenses. The amount of contingency should be based on each jurisdiction’s standard project management practices. It is anticipated that project budgets will be best estimates and construction costs will likely fluctuate over the life of each grant agreement (e.g. intergovernmental agreement (IGA) or grant contract. If a grantee has received upfront funds and the project becomes infeasible or otherwise did not utilize the upfront payment, grant recipients will return the unspent funds. Alternatively, Metro does not have additional funds to cover added expenses or project budget overages. Budget overages are the responsibility of the grant recipient.

WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF CAPITAL COSTS FOR THE CAPITAL GRANTS?

“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 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 related administrative costs.*

MATCH

WHAT ARE THE FUNDING REQUIREMENTS AND MECHANISMS FOR THE CAPITAL GRANTS?

- The program will encourage projects that leverage additional government and private funding to increase the overall program impacts. Match may be cash, in-kind donations of goods or services, staff time or volunteer hours. Funds from other Metro programs or Metro staff time can be utilized in the project but cannot be counted as matching funds.
- Metro will provide no more than one-third of the total project costs of the capital project (i.e., 1:2 Match). Metro may consider flexible match for equity for the full application or future funding cycles. Matching funds must be identified and close to secured at the time of application.
- Metro may award funds to a project with conditions of approval, including the need to meet matching requirements.
- Applicants must demonstrate that there are long-term designated funds available to maintain the project for its intended purpose. Examples of this include a commitment in writing of who is paying long term maintenance (e.g., government asset owner, applicant or partner) and audited financial statements from the organization who is paying for the long-term maintenance with a clean audit opinion.
- Grant funds are typically provided on a reimbursement basis.
- No more than 10 percent of grant funds will be used for staff time directly related to a project.

TYPES OF MATCH ALLOWED

- The match can be a combination of financial resources and in-kind services.
- The match needs to be identified and close to being secured at the time of application.
- The value of donated or acquired property can be used as a match if the property was donated or acquired within one year of the grant application, as long as no Metro funds were used to acquire the property.
- Volunteer time should be valued based on the Independent Sector's value of volunteer time. The most current information can be found at: <https://independentsector.org/resource/value-of-volunteer-time/>
- Metro funds or in-kind support of Metro staff cannot be used as a match.

APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

Application review

A Review Committee, staffed by Metro, will be established to review all projects and make funding recommendations to the Metro Council. With support from Metro staff, the Review Committee comes from a wide variety of backgrounds including those with academic, professional and lived experience on best practices related to racial equity, community engagement, and climate resilience and water quality, habitat restoration and traditional ecological knowledge to create the greatest benefits for people, plants and wildlife. Committee members are committed to Metro's parks and nature mission and to supporting opportunities for communities of color and other historically marginalized groups to design and build access to nature for their communities. This group will review applications and make funding recommendations to the Metro Council.

Applications and pre-applications will be evaluated based on the information submitted, responsiveness to the grant's purpose, principles and criteria and the review committee's professional and collective judgment. It is up to the applicant to ensure the proposed program is sufficiently defined so the review committee can understand how well it meets the grant program purpose and evaluation criteria.

The application process has two stages: a pre-application phase and a full application phase. Potential applicants must submit a pre-application that describes how the program meets the purpose of the grant program and is achievable.

Full applications will only be accepted from applicants who have been invited to apply. Feedback from the grant review committee about how well the pre-application meets the program purpose and criteria may be provided. Upon request, information about other funding sources or suggestions for strengthening an application for a subsequent funding cycle may be provided.

During the full application period, the Review Committee may conduct site visits. Site visits are intended to provide a more in-depth understanding of the proposal in order to form a stronger basis for comparison with other proposals.

The Metro Council will make all grant awards.

Review of your pre-application and full application

The grant review committee will use following evaluation questions to review applications.

Project narrative and scope of work: How well does it describe the project and its importance? For example, does it describe how the activity will be organized, best practices, and the importance for the organization and community?

Purpose and criteria and evaluation outcomes: How well does the project address the grant purpose, principles and criteria? For example, does it demonstrate how the project aligns to the grant purpose, principles and program area criteria? Does the organization's strategic mission, project expected results and outcomes and plans to evaluate project effectiveness align with the grant goals?

Meaningful community engagement and racial equity: How well does the project address the Parks and Nature Bond criteria of meaningful community engagement and racial equity? How and by whom is the need for this proposal being identified? Who is designing and implementing the project? Is diversity, equity and inclusion part of the applicants' vision, mission, or objectives?

Climate resilience: How well does the project address the Parks and Nature Bond criteria of climate resilience? In what ways does the project further the region’s climate resilience?

Partnerships and letters of support: How well are strong and active partnerships demonstrated? For example, how are partnerships and collaborations formed, strengthened and/or extended through the project? Are there committed partners and future funding sustainability for the operation and maintenance of the project?

Organizational preparedness and budget: How well does it demonstrate leadership support, organizational capability and experience, and landowner permission to implement the project? For example, does it describe the key personnel roles and their qualifications and confirm that leadership has given approval for the project?

GRANT APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Application assistance

Applicants are encouraged to contact Metro staff to discuss the proposed program or project, partners and grant criteria. Staff is available to help you make your application as strong as possible. Optional information sessions and office hours to assist you with your grant proposal will be announced on the website and by email. Please email CommunityInvestments@oregonmetro.gov to be added to the email list and notified of upcoming information sessions and office hours.

Online application

Metro accepts applications via the online system [ZoomGrants](#). The full application will be due by 4 p.m. Tuesday, May 2, 2023.

To access the full application, login in to your account at zoomgrants.com and click the “submitted” tab to access your application for “Metro, Parks and Nature, 2023 Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants”. You may also access your application by logging into your account at zoomgrants.com/gprop.asp?donorid=2199 and click on the title of your application in orange.

Please note that for the full application, you do not need to click to “submit” the application. The system automatically saves any changes. Once complete and after the deadline, Metro staff will download your full application.

An email will be sent within 24 hours by Metro staff via **ZoomGrants** confirming your application has been received. To ensure that you are receiving emails, please add to your “safe senders list” the email address Notices@zoomgrants.com. If you do not receive a confirmation, please let Crista Gardner know.

Important notes for working in ZoomGrants

- Each answer has a character limit, which includes spaces. For example, 4,000 characters is approximately one page.
- Answers are saved automatically when you move to another text box.
- Please remove all text formatting before cutting and pasting into ZoomGrants (e.g., bullets, hyphens).

- An applicant may add partners, a fiscal sponsor, or colleagues as collaborators on ZoomGrants. Only the applicant may submit the application.
- ZoomGrants has a file upload limit of 25 megabytes per file. If a file is larger (e.g. design plans), please add a link in ZoomGrants or contact the Grants Program Manager for access to a secure file-sharing option.
- For additional detailed questions, use the Help button at the top of the ZoomGrants page, access their ZoomGrants University tutorials at help.zoomgrants.com or contact the Help Desk at Questions@ZoomGrants.com.

FULL APPLICATION ADDITIONAL SECTIONS

The full application consists of the pre-application narrative and in addition, a detailed program budget and narrative, scope of work, evaluation measures and outcomes report, and uploads including: three (3) letters of support, and if applicable, a letter of funding match, a statement of 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status (letter of IRS determination) if the applicant is not a government agency, and letter of property permission. (See attachments section below for more details)

For your reference, please see below for the additional sections included in the full application. In ZoomGrants, these sections are under the tabs named “Budget”, “Scope of Work”, and “Document Uploads”.

Please do not revise your pre-application narrative without speaking to the Grants Program Manager.

Budget

In the online application, please provide a detailed program budget, including revenues and expenditures, which directly relates to the program narrative in your full application. Please use the budget narrative to explain how your figures are calculated.

Please list your total eligible project budget within the line items listed below as capital grants amount requested. This will be different from your overall project budget which may include items that Metro will not reimburse (such as “Capped Capital Costs” beyond the 10% limit).

Notes:

- When a line item cost exceeds the amount requested for reimbursement by Metro or is not eligible for reimbursement by Metro, add the difference to match.
- Capital Grant bond funds may not be used to pay for staff, overhead, and indirect project costs that exceed 10% of the cost of any project.
- Please do not include agency or non-profit partner staff time in any section other than “Capped Capital Costs”. Certain labor costs, such as for design consultants and construction related labor are eligible expenses
- Not all of these budget categories will be applicable to your project. Please fill out the ones that are applicable.
(Applicants may edit or add additional Item Descriptions in the budget table.)

If you have a category that does not use both capital grants or match funds, please enter 0 where needed.

- If you have prepared a full project budget, please also upload it on the next page.

BUDGET CHART

Activity	Amount requested	Match or leveraged funds	Total program budget (auto-calculated)
Design/ Architecture/ Engineering			
Permitting			
Construction (including materials, equipment, 3rd party labor, etc)			
Land Acquisition Costs			
Costs associated with land acquisition (including appraisals, due diligence, surveying, etc)			
“Capped Capital Costs” limited to 10% ¹ (e.g. provider staff time, overhead and indirect costs as defined by the IGA, utilities, rent, telephone, fiscal administration)			
Contingency			
Other (if needed, please provide other budget category descriptions below and details in the budget narrative)			
Total			

¹Only for expenses directly related to program.

Budget narrative

Please describe the program budget, including revenues and expenditures that directly relate to your program narrative. Include how the budget was estimated, and whether it is high, medium or low confidence. Provide explanation of how figures were derived; describe personal and/or professional services costs (name of individual or company, rate, # of hours, etc.) and any other relevant information. Describe matching sources; list contributors and amounts.

SCOPE OF WORK

In the online full application, please complete the two charts under this tab: the Scope of work chart and Grant project assessment chart.

SCOPE OF WORK CHART (TWO PAGES MAXIMUM)

In the online application, please briefly list the schedule, specific tasks, and responsible parties. This information should directly relate to the program goals and purpose stated in your pre-application. Two pages are requested, however additional space is provided.

SCHEDULE	SPECIFIC TASKS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
What is the schedule and timeline for your activities, key deliverables and milestones?	What are your activities, key deliverables and milestones at each phase of the project? How many of each do you expect to complete? Be as specific as possible.	Who or what organization will lead and participate in each activity, key deliverable and milestone?

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

Grant program assessment chart (two pages maximum)

In the online application, please describe how and what you will assess during the grant program to determine its success, using the provided chart of Setting goals, Assessing your goals, and Setting measures. Please tie your goals to the Bond program goals and principles listed below, additional goals that tie to your project or organizational goals are also welcome. If awarded the grant, grantees will submit program progress reports every six months and a final report at the end of the project. Please describe the goals, methods of assessment, and measures you would report for your project in the progress reports and final report. Two pages are requested, however additional space is provided. See more detailed examples below.

SETTING GOALS	ASSESSING GOALS	SETTING MEASURES

Setting goals (Goals)

What Nature in Neighborhood community grant goals and organizational goals do you hope to fulfill through this project? What do you hope to accomplish by implementing this project? List your goals for your Nature in Neighborhood community grant.

For example:

PURPOSE

These projects will protect and improve water quality and fish and wildlife habitat, support climate resiliency and/or increase people's experience of nature at the community scale.

The Nature in Neighborhoods Capital Grants program will fund community-led projects, with an emphasis on benefitting historically marginalized communities.

PRINCIPLES

All of the following principles will guide the Nature in Neighborhoods Capital Grants program in its selection of the whole package of grant investments. Individual projects must meet one or more of the following principles.

- Serve communities through inclusive engagement, transparency and accountability.
- Advance racial equity through bond investments.
- Protect clean water for people, fish and wildlife.
- Protect and restore culturally significant native plant communities.
- Protect, connect and improve habitat for native fish and wildlife.
- Take care of what we have.

- Make parks and natural areas more accessible and inclusive.
- Connect more people to the land and rivers of our region.
- Invest in trails for biking and walking.
- Support community-led parks and nature projects.
- Make communities more resilient to climate change.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND RACIAL EQUITY CRITERIA

The whole package of Capital Grants investments must satisfy **all of the following community engagement and racial equity criteria**. *Individual projects must meet one or more of the following criteria.*

- Meaningfully engage with communities of color, Indigenous communities, people with low incomes and other historically marginalized communities in planning, development and selection of projects.
- Prioritize projects and needs identified by communities of color, Indigenous communities, low-income and other historically marginalized groups. Metro has found ways to prioritize these communities in ways that do not violate the law, like outreach or reducing barriers.
- Demonstrate accountability for tracking outcomes and reporting impacts, particularly as they relate to communities of color, Indigenous communities, people with low incomes and other historically marginalized communities.
- Improve the accessibility and inclusiveness of developed parks.
- Include strategies to prevent or mitigate displacement and/or gentrification resulting from bond investments.
- Set aspirational goals for workforce diversity and use of COBID contractors and work to reduce barriers to achieving these goals; demonstrate accountability by tracking outcomes and reporting impacts.

CLIMATE RESILIENCE CRITERIA

The whole package of Capital Grants investments must satisfy **at least one of the following climate resilience criteria**. *Individual projects must meet one or more of the following criteria.*

- Protect, connect and restore habitat to support strong populations of native plants, fish and wildlife that can adapt to a changing climate.
- Protect and restore floodplains, headwaters, streams and wetlands to increase their capacity to handle stormwater to protect vulnerable communities from flooding.
- Increase tree canopy in developed areas to reduce heat island effects.
- Use low-impact development practices and green infrastructure in project design and development.

PROGRAM CRITERIA

The whole package of Capital Grants investments must satisfy **at least one of the following program criteria**. *Individual projects must meet one or more of the following criteria.*

- Build wealth in communities of color, Indigenous communities, low-income and other historically marginalized communities through contracting and jobs.
- Improve human mental and physical health, particularly in communities of color, Indigenous communities, low-income communities and other historically marginalized communities.
- Nurture a relationship with land and create educational opportunities (including Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math [STEAM] opportunities) and promote careers in the environmental and agricultural sector, especially for people and youth of color.
- Demonstrate leadership by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color in project identification, selection, design and implementation.
- Increase accessibility of public, park, and other natural spaces.
- Create easy access to nature from transit and for people walking or biking.
- Consider and approach the issue of houselessness in a sensitive and humanizing way.

ORGANIZATION MISSION, GOALS OR STRATEGIC PLANS

- Mission, goals from your organization or project's strategic plan, or your project's purpose or goals.

Assessing your goals (Data collection methods)

How do you plan to find out if you achieved these goals? List as many as apply.

For example:

- **Counting things:** E.g. This can include things such as the number of people who participated in your project, new partnerships with organizations, number of plants or acres restored, length of stream stabilized, or other money you were able to get because of the Metro grant. Your end product could be a simple list of things that matter. It is helpful to describe in your final report if the numbers met your expectations.
- **Self-assessment:** E.g. Your thoughts on how the project went are important. What did you learn? How did the grant impact the habitat or community? Are things different as a result? What worked well and what could be better? In addition, Metro may be following up with grant recipients to understand how participating in this grant program has impacted you and your organization and to improve future rounds.
- **Interviews:** E.g. One-on-one discussion with project team members or participants reveal how others responded to your project. Questions can focus on things that matter most to you, but be open to things you may have not thought to ask.
- **Surveys:** E.g. Short surveys, either in-person or online, can reach many people and give you immediate feedback on things that matter to you.
- **Project debrief meetings:** E.g. Talking with your project team and/or participants after the project is a useful way to understand what worked well and what could be better. Were people satisfied with how things went? What would they do the same or differently?
- **Other methods to measure your goals.**

Setting measures (Outcomes)

How will you know if your project is achieving your goals? List one to three things for each goal that you will measure to understand if the project is meeting your goals. Measurements listed can reflect the efforts

undertaken through the grant project or any impact of the grant funded project on the region’s environment or communities.

For example:

- **Vegetation:** E.g. Habitat type. Number of acres planted. Number and/or density of plants. Non-native plant species and area (acres) treated. Survival rate for new plantings.
- **Fish passage:** E.g. Number of culverts or structures improved for fish passage. Stream miles with improved access for fish. Stream reach. Number and type of structures in channel. Total feet or miles treated. Changes or types of materials used to stabilize the sides of bank.
- **Community engagement:** E.g. Number of participants, volunteers, community organizations that helped shaped the project and participated in project decision-making with a focus on communities who have been underrepresented in past public engagement processes, description of participant demographics (geographic, age, race, etc.), and participating helped participants view themselves as conservation leaders within their communities .
- **Partnerships:** E.g. Description of community-based organizations serving diverse audiences engaged in the project, the impacts to the capacity of non-profit organizations or communities from participating in project design and/or implementation on ability to advance conservation work and accomplish their missions. as a result of this project or other..
- **Economic:** E.g. Description of communities that benefitted from this project by being adjacent to the project, through contracting or workforce opportunities, through building participant knowledge and skills and career readiness skills or other.
- **Other measures that will help you know if you are meeting your goals through efforts or outcomes or efforts or investments catalyzed by this grant funded project.**

Uploads

In the online application, please upload the following additional attachments to support, expand on and provide additional detail about the program as described in full application.

Please upload letters of support by active partners; each letter should describe the role of that partner.

- More detail:
- Letters from ALL project partners stating their commitment to the project
- Letters of support from community

If applicant is not the land holding government agency, please upload a letter stating permission to use property by government sponsor/public land owner certification letter. (maximum one page).

If applicant is not a government agency, please upload the 501(c) (3) tax-exempt status statement or your organization’s 501(c)(3) IRS determination letter, or the following 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status statement (maximum one page).

- “I certify that the above information is correct and that I am authorized by the governing board of this organization to submit this grant application to Metro. Further, I certify that this organization is in good standing with the IRS and retains its official 501(c) (3) tax-exempt status and is further classified as public charity and *not* a private foundation OR qualifies for exempt status as a public school, government agency, or religious institution.” *Signed by the executive director or a board member.*

If applicant is not a government agency, please upload **Government Sponsor certification** letter with statement indicating that the appropriate governing body has approved the application.

- More detail:
- All applications must include a letter from the public jurisdiction that owns or will own the property or easement acknowledging the following:
 - The project shall be recorded as a fixed asset in the jurisdiction’s audited financial statement
 - The accounting treatment for this project is consistent with other similar transactions
 - The jurisdiction will be required to enter into an agreement with Metro committing to capitalizing the asset and accepting maintenance responsibilities. (A sample of the Intergovernmental Agreement is on the Capital Grants webpage).
- This letter can also include information on how the agency will participate in the project, whether they will be providing any of the matching resources, and if the project has been identified as locally significant in any planning or policy documents.
- If the property is owned by Metro, you will still need to include a letter from the local agency that will be responsible for managing and maintaining the asset. In addition, you will need to include a letter from Metro stating that Metro has no plans for developing the site and that the project is consistent with the goals of the bond measure under which it was acquired.

If requested, please upload responses to review committee questions provided to you in the feedback letter.

(Optional) If desired, please upload any additional materials that help to describe or illustrate the project to the review committee. Please note: ZoomGrants has a file upload limit of 25 megabytes per file. If a file is larger, please add a link in ZoomGrants or contact the Grants Program Manager for access to a secure file-sharing option. Materials could include:

- Full Project Budget
- Vicinity or site map
- Concept and design plans (no larger than 11x17)
- If land acquisition, original appraisal and letter from appraisal review
- Photos of the project site – (maximum of 4)
- Supplemental attachments

POST-AWARD

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Grant recipients will be required to report on the progress and outcomes of the project throughout the project period. A final report will be required that includes full and final accounting of all expenditures, the value and

source of matching funds, a description of work accomplished, volunteer hours and participation, Project photos (including a photo of the signage acknowledging the Nature in Neighborhoods Capital Grants Program participation), and data on evaluation measures.

To evaluate the impact of the PN Bond, grant recipients will provide information about community engagement, contracting and workforce activities annually as part of their regular reporting and participate in brief interviews and surveys. More detail about the PN Bond related reporting requirements will be articulated in the grant agreement.

Metro is committed to successful project implementation for all grant recipients and will work cooperatively to ensure project success.

AGREEMENTS

Metro staff will work with the successful applicant to enter into the necessary agreements for the project between Metro and the applicant and any partner (e.g., local government partner). There are three potential agreements that may be used.

- Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA): This template is used when the applicant is a government agency.
- Grant Agreement: This template is used when the applicant is a community-based organization.
- Government Sponsor IGA: This template is used for the government agency when the applicant is a community-based organization. It is used together with the Grant Agreement discussed above.

Metro staff will provide a first draft agreement to the grantee(s) based on Metro templates. Grantees may propose edits and once both parties are satisfied, the agreement can be executed.

CHANGES TO SCOPE OF WORK OR BUDGET AFTER EXECUTED AGREEMENT

Amendments to the agreement can be made to extend the grant period up to three years, make necessary budget adjustments or make other alterations that are still consistent with the project scope and conditions approved by the Metro Council.

If the need arises to redirect capital grant funding to a new project element that was not part of the original scope of work, the following criteria will be considered.

- The new project element addresses the same problem or need identified in the grant application.
- The originally funded project element is not feasible, was funded by some other funding source, or did not cost as much as anticipated at time of application.
- The new project element is consistent with the intent of the Nature in Neighborhoods Capital Grant program as defined by the 2019 natural areas bond measure.

CONTRACTING AND GRANT AGREEMENT

Grant agreement and insurance requirements

Metro staff will work with successful applicants to enter into grant agreements with Metro. These contracts will outline specific responsibilities and legal obligations of each party, including insurance requirements, reporting and acknowledgements. All grant recipients will be required to have the following types of insurance and provide proof of coverage during the contracting phase:

- Commercial general liability insurance covering personal injury, property damage and bodily injury with automatic coverage for premises and operation and product liability with a minimum of \$1,000,000 per occurrence is required. The Agreement is conditional upon review and approval of Metro's Risk Manager. Grantee must provide Metro with a certificate of insurance and endorsements that names "Metro, its elected officials, departments, employees and agents" as **additional insured**.
- Automobile bodily injury and property damage liability insurance with a minimum of \$1,000,000 per occurrence. If this is not included in your general liability certificate of insurance, a separate certificate will be needed. If you do not use vehicles and/or do not transport participants as part of your program or project, and therefore don't carry this insurance, please reach out to us via email so we can discuss waiving this requirement with Metro's risk manager.
- Proof of worker's compensation insurance is required for agencies with staff. A worker's compensation exemption form (provided by Metro) is required for those without staff or who are otherwise exempt from carrying this insurance.

RESOURCES

The following are data and information sources that applicants may find useful in the preparation of letters of interest and/or full applications. Applicants are encouraged to find resources listed here, and otherwise, that best support their project and grant application.

Regional Conservation Strategy. This document organizes conservation strategies for the Portland metropolitan region by landscape types – natural area, working lands and developed areas – as well as strategies for biodiversity corridors and for species of special concern. This document will be helpful when considering how a project advances biodiversity on a regional scale. It is available on the Intertwine Alliance website at www.theintertwine.org.

The Regional Conservation Strategy High Value Habitat viewer (<http://www.regionalconservationstrategy.org>) shows the high value habitat across the Portland- Vancouver region and within any watershed, jurisdiction, urban growth boundary/area, or custom shape that applicant choose. It can help applicants visualize the relative importance of habitats within a project area. Applicants can also view summary statistics about the land cover, habitats, and parks and ownership in a selected area. Comparing the high value habitats with the other layers on the map can help prioritize conservation efforts. For example, when viewing the parks and protected areas layer and the high value habitats at the same time, high value habitats not currently protected are revealed. Viewers can also determine whether any high value habitats exist that could connect currently protected habitats.

Public school districts. One source of local demographic data is neighborhood schools. Each public school maintains data on the percentage of students eligible for the free and reduced lunch program and students participating in English as a Second Language program.

[Metro's web site](http://www.metro.net) has a variety of maps and tools to assist with project research: MetroMap (<https://gis.oregonmetro.gov/metromap>) This is Metro's web mapping service for viewing and printing maps or data specific to an area of interest.

MetroMap allows viewers to see map-based information about a location of choice. View information on parcel and tax assessment, zoning, political boundaries, planning, flood plain and special districts. The results can be displayed in text-only format or on a map. Urban Growth Boundary tool

(<https://www.oregonmetro.gov/library/urban-growthboundary/lookup>) Enter an address to see a map that shows whether a specific property is inside, was added to, or removed from the urban growth boundary.

Resources and interpretation of bond and program criteria

As potential applicants think about whether and how their projects can address the bond and program criteria stated above, please refer to the following resources and toolkits on the [Local Share Website](#):

- Community engagement [toolkit](#), [planning guide](#) and [presentation](#)
- Climate resilience criteria [guidance](#)
- [Anti-displacement and gentrification presentation](#) and [memo](#)
- [Metro’s construction career pathways program](#) presentation and [construction careers regional framework](#)
[Contract equity and workforce equity presentation](#) and [memo](#)
- [Outcomes and evaluation presentation](#)
- [Accessibility presentation](#)
- [Culturally specific engagement and partnerships presentation](#)
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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

PUBLIC INFORMATION

ALL APPLICATIONS ARE SUBJECT TO THE OREGON PUBLIC RECORDS LAW.

PRE-AWARD ACTIVITIES

Notwithstanding any oral or written assurances, there is no obligation on the part of Metro to cover pre-award costs.