



# Proposal to merge Metro Central and Suttle Road enhancement grant programs

Metro is seeking input on potential changes that would merge two grant programs that serve the North Portland communities and that are funded by fees collected on certain waste delivered to the Metro Central Station and Suttle Road material recovery facility. These grant programs are part of Metro's [Community Enhancement Program](#) that provides grants to address community needs and improve neighborhood livability, community services, access to natural areas and recreation, recycling and reuse opportunities and more in areas near the region's garbage transfer facilities.

The [Metro Central Enhancement Grant](#) Program is funded by fees from Metro Central transfer station located at 6161 NW 61<sup>st</sup> Ave., Portland, Oregon 97210 and began in 1993. Metro staff currently administers this grant program.

Fees on certain waste streams from the Suttle Road material recovery facility located at 4044 N. Suttle Road, Portland, Oregon 97217 funded the Vanport Legacy Enhancement Grant from 2017-2021. During that time the program was administered by the nonprofit North Portland Community Works. The organization closed its operations in June of 2022. The last year the program awarded enhancement grant funds was in 2021. Because the program has no current administrator, Metro proposes to merge administration of this grant program with the Metro Central enhancement grant program begin investing grant funds again into the Suttle community. A potential combined program would be administered by Metro program staff.

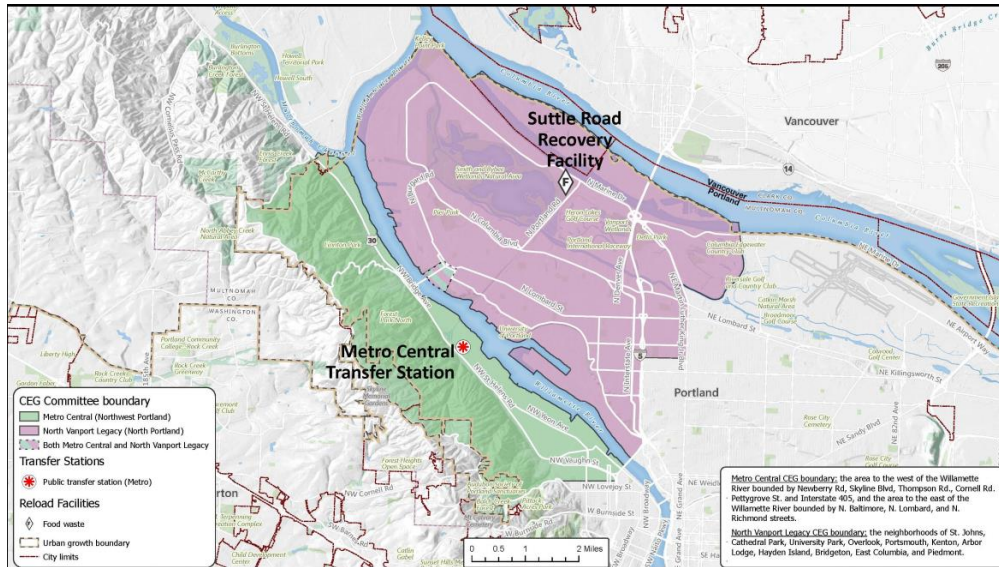
Metro staff proposes to combine the Suttle Road and Metro Central enhancement grant programs into one grant program that will serve a new geographic boundary encompassing an area around both waste transfer station facilities. Metro staff who are currently administering the Metro Central grant program would continue to administer the combined program.

## Frequently asked questions

### **Q: What groups would be eligible to receive these grant funds?**

A: All enhancement grant funds must be awarded to projects that serve communities within a designated boundary around the waste facility determined by the solid waste community enhancement committee. Below is a map that shows the current boundaries for the two separate grant programs. If the Metro Central Station and Suttle Road material recovery facility grant programs are merged into one grant program, a new geographic boundary would be developed that would likely encompass the areas around both northeast Portland facilities.

The final grant boundary for a combined program would be determined by the Metro Central Enhancement Grant review committee, which would include community members who represent areas around the Metro Central transfer station and Suttle Road material recovery facility and District 5 Metro Councilor Mary Nolan.



**Q: What entities within the grant boundary will be eligible for these grants?**

A: Community enhancement grants are designed to serve community groups, nonprofits, schools and school groups, government agencies, faith groups and service groups with nonprofit or other tax-exempt statuses. Projects must occur within the target area and benefit the residents, businesses or visitors to the area.

**Q: Where does the funding for the grants come from?**

A: As part of the regional [Community Enhancement Program](#), solid waste facilities in the Metro region that operate as disposal sites, transfer stations, reload facilities, food waste compost facilities, and energy recovery facilities collect a \$1.00 enhancement fee on each ton of putrescible solid waste delivered to the facility. These fees accumulate throughout each fiscal year and are then reinvested back into surrounding communities through community enhancement grants.

**Q: What is the amount of fees collected each year? How much funding has been available for grants in the past?**

A: The amount of enhancement fees collected annually and available for grants is dependent on the amount of tonnage the facility receives each year. The amount can vary from year to year. For example:

- FY 21-22 Metro Central enhancement fee revenue: \$267,854
- FY 22-23 Metro Central enhancement fee revenue: \$262,000
- FY 21-22 Suttle Road enhancement fee revenue: \$60,659
- FY 22-23 Suttle Road enhancement fee revenue: \$34,000

If the grant programs are combined, the funds from both Metro Central and Suttle Road would also be combined into one pool of grant funding for both areas.

**Q: What types of projects and costs will the grants fund?**

A: Community enhancement grants aim to enhance communities around the region's garbage transfer facilities. Generally, funds can support programs, services, events and small capital investments. Eligible costs include staff time and benefits, contractors, equipment or building upgrades, volunteer stipends, materials and supplies and approved indirect costs. More information about reimbursable expenses is outlined in the program handbook.

The program supports projects that advance one or more of the following goals:

- Provide programs, training or services that benefit underserved populations;
- Increase reuse and recycling opportunities;
- Improve the environmental quality of the area;
- Preserve or improve natural and recreation areas; increase public access;
- Rehabilitate and upgrade property owned or operated by non-profits; and
- Improve the safety, appearance or cleanliness of neighborhoods.

Example projects:

Metro Central Enhancement Grants: educational programming, youth development and job training, tree pruning, food assistance, improvements to non-profit buildings, cultural events, debris clean up events, environmental justice and housing organizing and student support.

Vanport Legacy Enhancement Grants (funded by fees from the Suttle Road material recovery facility): family shelters, youth outreach, tool lending library, playground equipment, student support, higher education, food assistance, cultural podcast, nature trail, home gardens, cultural signage and trauma support for seniors.

**Q: How would decisions be made about grant awards?**

A: Decisions regarding enhancement grant awards are made by a committee consisting of neighborhood, environmental and business stakeholders within the target area boundary. The Vanport Legacy Enhancement Grant committee discontinued in 2021 after North Portland Community Works was no longer administering the grant program. The Metro Central Enhancement Grant review committee is active and includes District 5 Metro Councilor Mary Nolan and community members who represent the boundary area. If the grant programs are combined, Metro will form a new committee that includes existing Metro Central Enhancement Grant committee members and adds additional members representing the Suttle Road area. This committee will review and award grant requests for the combined areas.

**Q: What are benefits for combining the two grant programs?**

A: The boundaries for the two programs are currently adjacent, with a small portion of the St. Johns community that is in both boundaries. Many funded partners work within both geographic areas. Having one grant program with a single process will help avoid confusion and remove duplication for community organizations who previously applied for funds in both grant programs. Combining programs will also make more funds available to a larger number of organizations.

Combining the grant programs would situate Metro Central Transfer Station more centrally in its funding boundary and support more communities whose residential and commercial garbage and recycling are taken to Metro Central Transfer Station.

Metro staff is currently administering the Metro Central Enhancement Grant program. Metro implements grant-making practices that center community decision-making and investing resources in underserved communities. These practices would continue through a committee that would make funding decisions for the merged program. Members of that committee would include community members and District 5 Metro Councilor Mary Nolan.

**Q: What are potential drawbacks of combining the two grant programs?**

A: The Metro Central enhancement grant funds would be distributed within a larger geographic area and available to more applicants than currently have access to the Metro Central boundary area. This will increase competition for grant funds currently available only within the Metro Central enhancement grant boundary.

**Q: Why not partner with a non-profit to administer these grants funds?**

A: Metro has partnerships with nonprofit organizations to administer other enhancement grant programs in the region and is committed to grant-making that centers the community in grant decisions. When we do partner with nonprofits, we want to make sure that the organizations are fairly compensated for their time. Per Metro Code, the administrative costs paid to a nonprofit partner to administer the grant program are taken from the available grant funding.

Because the Suttle Road material recovery facility generates a relatively small amount of annual enhancement funding there is less funding available to support the needs of an organization to administer the grant, and subsequently less funding to reinvest back into neighboring communities. By merging the grant programs, Metro would use existing staff to administer the combined program, making more funding available for communities without additional spending on administrative costs.

**Q: What happens if the programs are not combined?**

A: If the Metro Central Station and Suttle Road enhancement grant programs are not combined, then the Suttle Road grant program will remain inactive until another solution can be found about how to administer the grant. Grant funds that have been accruing from Suttle Road material recovery facility in 2022 and 2023 have not yet been allocated. When decisions are made about how to administer the Suttle Road grant funds, this money will be distributed back into the community.

**Q: How can I share my feedback on this proposal?**

Metro staff is collecting feedback on this proposed code update in October 2023. Below are ways to provide your input.

**Opportunities to Engage**

We will host virtual and in-person drop-in sessions for people to provide input on both of these proposals. People interested in sharing their thoughts or asking questions can come by in person or join the virtual room at any time during the open hours. There is no agenda or presentation for these drop-in sessions. Staff are also available for individual conversations. For questions contact Alejandra Cortes, [Alejandra.Cortes@oregonmetro.gov](mailto:Alejandra.Cortes@oregonmetro.gov).

**In-person drop-in anytime sessions**

Wednesday, November 1, 2023  
 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.  
 Rewild  
 8940 N Bradford St, Portland, OR 97203

Tuesday, November 7, 2023  
 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
 Friendly House  
 1737 NW 26th Ave, Portland, OR 9721

**Virtual drop-in sessions**

Thursday, November 2, 2023  
 11 a.m. to 12 p.m.  
[Meeting Link](#)

Wednesday, November 8, 2023  
 4 p.m. to 5 p.m.  
[Meeting Link](#)

Stakeholders can share fill out an online survey to share their opinion through Monday November 27, 2023. [Click here to access the survey.](#)

Questions? Contact:  
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 503-797-1745  
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