



Board Report

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REVISED
AD HOC SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE
JUNE 15, 2016

SUBJECT: URBAN GREENING DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

ACTION: APPROVE PROGRAM CRITERIA

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE program criteria for **Urban Greening Demonstration projects**.

ISSUE

On January 28, 2016, the Metro Board of Directors approved an Implementation Action Plan for the recently completed Urban Greening Plan and Toolkit (Metro Green Places). Among the actions included in the implementation plan was the creation of a program for small scale demonstration projects and direction to staff to return to the Board with program criteria. This report proposes program criteria for Board approval.

DISCUSSION

The Board-approved Urban Greening Implementation Action Plan includes the following components:

- developing a carbon calculator;
- training and outreach to cities;
- demonstration projects;
- inter-agency collaboration;
- internal training;
- consideration in Metro programs;
- online mapping tool;
- funding options research.

The intent of the Urban Greening Plan and Toolkit is to foster better integration of community and environmental function in transit station areas, as reflected in various Metro policies notably, the Countywide Sustainability Planning Policy. The Implementation Action Plan created distinct steps to further develop, test, and evaluate the ideas included in the plan that foster broader implementation actions. Key among those implementation steps was the creation of a program for demonstration

projects.

At this time, staff is proposing program criteria for demonstration projects that would lead to an application and selection process. The criteria are based on and further elaborate key goals of Metro's urban greening efforts. Of note, the program is proposed to be a matching or challenge grant where applicants would be required to provide dollar for dollar match to the Metro grant.

Proposed Criteria:

As a Board-directed follow-up to the Urban Greening plan and toolkit, Metro is planning a series of small scale demonstration projects to implement and test tools included in the plan. Demonstration projects are intended to showcase any of the tools included on the Metro Green Places website (55 total tools) and should do so in a way that is visible and engaging for Metro riders and the general public. Projects will be selected through an open call for proposals, with requirements outlined here. Project submittals are strongly encouraged to:

- improve the experience of accessing transit,
- demonstrate creativity,
- achieve the overall goals of the program in a cost effective manner,
- combine multiple benefits,
- showcase multiple tools where possible,
- reflect local community needs and desires.

Goals of the demonstration project effort are:

- Demonstrate the value of urban greening in a transit station area context,
- Demonstrate the value of placemaking in a transit station area context,
- Demonstrate greening and placemaking as a component of first/last mile improvements,
- Engage and involve community stakeholders,
- Evaluate and quantify benefits and refine approaches for subsequent Metro efforts,
- Include educational, communication and other public facing components.

Lead applicants must be public entities in Los Angeles County, including but not limited to LA County, cities, city/county departments, subregional COGs, and special districts, and colleges and other educational institutions. Lead applicants should have the authority to implement projects as proposed.

Lead applicants are strongly encouraged to partner with community based organizations (CBOs) with an interest in greening and/or placemaking and who will have a distinct role within the project. CBOs may be co-applicants, but must partner with a lead applicant as described.

Application requirements

Applications will consist of a brief project description, evidence of committed partnerships, certification of dollar-for-dollar matching funds, schedule, and a budget. Preliminarily selected projects will subsequently be required to provide documentation that the project is viable and can be delivered, and failure to adequately do so will disqualify the project and free up funding for the next highest ranking project.

Eligible activities will include implementation of any one or combination of tools featured in the Metro Green Places toolkit. Activities can include:

- purchase and installation of equipment
- programming costs for events
- creation of interpretive materials/signage, landscaping plan and installation.

Applicants should note, however, that grants are anticipated to be small (~\$50,000) so permanent installations are unlikely.

Selection

Metro will assemble a selection panel composed of Metro staff and representatives of the Urban Greening Technical Advisory Committee.

Projects will be scored and ranked based on criteria outlined here, with scores as follows:

- Creative/innovative approach -25 points
- Community involvement - 25 points
- Community need, including connection to transit- 25 points
- Cost effectiveness - 25 points

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

There is no anticipated safety impact associated with the recommended action. This action would prompt the creation of small scale demonstration projects that will not directly affect operations.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The Board's prior action approved \$200,000 for urban greening demonstration projects, and it is included in the FY17 Proposed Budget under Cost Center 4340 (Sustainability Policy and Programs), Project 450009 (Sustainable Transp Demo).

Impact to Budget

The source of funding will be determined as part of the overall budget process. We currently are considering Proposition A, Proposition C, and TDA Administration, which is not eligible for bus/rail operating and capital uses.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

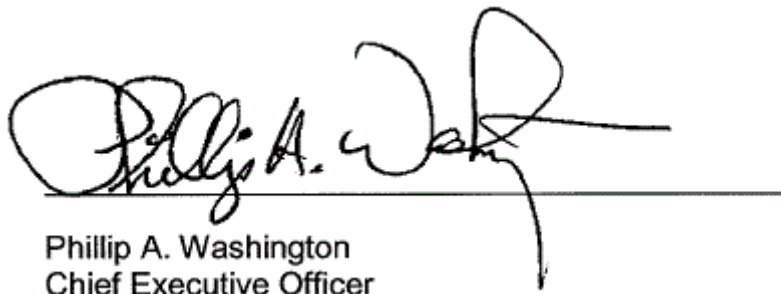
The Board may choose to not proceed with demonstration projects, or may wish to consider a revised set of criteria. The criteria as proposed are recommended due to alignment with overall program goals as previously directed by the Board.

NEXT STEPS

If approved, staff would proceed with an application process to select demonstration projects. Staff will provide updates to the Committee as the program progresses. Grants are expected to be awarded with implementation beginning in early 2017. Staff will provide updates on other Urban Greening Implementation Action Plan items at the next meeting of the Ad Hoc Sustainability Committee.

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