



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

100 East Erie Street
Chicago, IL 60611

Legislation Text

File #: 15-1177, **Version:** 1

TRANSMITTAL LETTER FOR BOARD MEETING OF OCTOBER 15, 2015

COMMITTEE ON STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Mr. David St. Pierre, Executive Director

Authorization to execute a partnership agreement with Cook County and provide a letter of financial commitment for implementation of stormwater management projects in connection with the Community Development Block Grant National Disaster Resilience Competition

Dear Sir:

Authority is requested to execute a partnership agreement with Cook County and provide a letter of financial commitment in connection with the Community Development Block Grant National Disaster Resilience Competition (CDBG-NDRC). Contingent upon the award of funds from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the CDBG-NDRC, the District will carry out eligible activities within its authority and jurisdiction as provided in Cook County's CDBG-NDRC application, which is currently being finalized for submission later this month.

The activities to be performed by the District as referenced in the partnership agreement include stormwater management projects to address flooding issues in the south suburban pilot area selected by Cook County for their application, which includes the municipalities of Blue Island, Calumet City, Calumet Park, Dolton, Riverdale and Robbins. Numerous flooding-related issues have been identified through outreach by Cook County and the District, and several approaches are being developed to address these concerns. Cook County's CDBG-NDRC application will include flood control projects located in the communities of Blue Island, Calumet Park, Riverdale, and Robbins, as well as other community-based programs to assist with residential rehabilitation, private flood protection systems, and overall economic revitalization of the south suburban pilot area, which also includes the communities of Dolton and Calumet City in addition to those referenced above.

The District is currently performing preliminary engineering of flooding problems within Cook County's NDRC pilot area communities, and based on an evaluation of various solutions to address flooding issues in these communities, structural solutions involving green and grey infrastructure improvements appear feasible. As shown on the attached exhibit, the NDRC pilot area overlaps significantly with the current Stormwater Master Plan project area for the Little Calumet River/Calumet-Sag Channel drainage area. These solutions have been further analyzed by the District through work performed by ARCADIS, U.S., Inc. in support of Cook County's application through the aforementioned Stormwater Master Plan. Based on the additional analysis performed and the potential for NDRC funds to be used to address flooding in these communities, the solutions may be implemented in a manner that goes beyond the District's traditional approaches to address flooding, and create opportunities to realize multiple co-benefits including overall economic revitalization.

Based on the NDRC applicant requirements, Cook County and its partners must provide firm financial commitments to leverage any grant funds received from HUD. NDRC funds, if awarded to Cook County, must be obligated no later than September 30, 2017, and all funds must be spent by September 30, 2019, unless a waiver extension request from Cook County is approved by HUD. Accordingly, the District will provide a letter

indicating its commitment to support the County's overall activities proposed in the application, and a direct financial contribution towards the cost of implementing the stormwater management improvements within the pilot area. Based on the analysis performed by ARCADIS and the District's preliminary engineering work, the cost to implement specific stormwater management projects to address flooding issues in the south suburban pilot area is estimated at \$29 million. These preliminary cost estimates will be further refined during the design of the associated individual projects. Subject to approval by the Board of Commissioners, by leveraging District funds in the amount \$20 million over the next 4 years towards the stormwater management projects estimated at \$29 million, along with funding from Cook County and the NDRC grant, these south suburban communities may be able to realize solutions that not only address existing flooding problems but also help to prepare them to be more resilient. District funding would be limited to design and construction related costs associated with stormwater management projects to address regional and local flooding problem areas. The projects to be undertaken by MWRD include both green and grey infrastructure projects, and would be supplemented by additional stormwater management measures funded by Cook County and its other partners including private flood protection systems and improved stormwater best management practices on private property to achieve the goal of increasing the area's resiliency to disasters.

Funds for design and construction related expenditures for 2016 through 2019 are contingent on the Board of Commissioners' approval of the District's budget for those years.

If awarded funds by HUD, Cook County and the District will negotiate and enter into a sub-recipient agreement detailing the terms and conditions of the proposed partnership before the use of any CDBG-NDRC funds for the reimbursement of eligible costs associated with the stormwater management projects included in the County's application. Additional requests to the Board of Commissioners for authority to negotiate and enter into the sub-recipient agreement with Cook County will be submitted for approval in the future.

Based on the foregoing, the Engineering Department recommends that the District be authorized to execute a partnership agreement with Cook County and provide a letter of financial support committing \$20 million for the implementation of stormwater management projects subject to the award of NDRC funding, and that the Chairman of the Committee on Finance, the Clerk, and the Executive Director be authorized to execute said partnership agreement, and letter of financial commitment on behalf of the District, upon approval by the Director of the Engineering as to technical matters and by the General Counsel as to form and legality.

Requested, Catherine A. O'Connor, Director of Engineering, WSS:JPM

Recommended, David St. Pierre, Executive Director

Respectfully Submitted, Michael A. Alvarez, Chairman Committee on Stormwater Management

Disposition of this agenda item will be documented in the official Regular Board Meeting Minutes of the Board of Commissioners for October 15, 2015

Attachment