



COMMISSION FILE NO: 24-108-7 **DATE INTRODUCED:** July 8, 2024

INTRODUCED BY: Executive Director (Signature on File in the Office of the Commission)

REFERRED BY COMMISSION CHAIRPERSON TO: Policy, Finance, and Personnel Committee

RELATING TO: Contract P-3215, Host Organization for an Environmental Justice Advisor

SUMMARY:

This Commission is requested to award and to direct the Executive Director to execute on behalf of the District Contract P-3215, Host Organization for an Environmental Justice Advisor (EJA), to Milwaukee Water Commons. Milwaukee Water Commons was the highest scoring proposer based on a qualifications-based selection method among five proposals received.

The EJA is an essential component of a three-year collaborative agreement between the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), known as the Milwaukee Estuary Area of Concern (AOC) Environmental Justice (EJ) Program Initiative. This contract will support ongoing efforts to demonstrate and test the community engagement and Community Advisory Committee (CAC) model piloted in the Milwaukee Estuary AOC, with one element being the addition of an EJA. The EJ Program Initiative is fully funded by the collaborative agreement with the EPA from April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2027.

With the numerous projects, partners, and initiatives happening as part of the Milwaukee Estuary AOC, it is important to ensure that EJ efforts are coordinated and prioritized. The EJA will develop an EJ approach to projects to ensure that AOC projects include an approach, goals, and deliverables beyond the scope of the core restoration project objectives to address the community's EJ concerns.

The budget for the host organization is not to exceed \$370,954.

ATTACHMENTS: BACKGROUND KEY ISSUES RESOLUTION
FISCAL NOTE S/W/MBE OTHER _____

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COMMITTEE ACTION: _____ **DATE:** _____

COMMISSION ACTION: _____ **DATE:** _____

BACKGROUND

Contract P-3215, Host Organization for an Environmental Justice Advisor

The Waterway Restoration Partnership is a group of long-standing, trusted partners in the community that have been working together for years to improve the area's water quality. The CAC is a diverse group of dedicated individuals who work to ensure that Milwaukee residents, especially those underrepresented and historically excluded from environmental decision making, play an active role in shaping the decisions during the AOC delisting process. The Milwaukee Estuary AOC CAC has been building (and testing) a new model of what public participation can and should look like, all based around EJ and antiracism action principles.

The Milwaukee Estuary AOC EJ Program Initiative proposal represented hours of candid conversation among Waterway Restoration Partnership members, including over 12 community-based organizations, including the Milwaukee Estuary AOC CAC, funders, and multiple local and state governmental entities. Together, this dedicated group consider the question, "What does EJ look like in Milwaukee?" Through this process, partners collaborated to develop a proposal, which received approval from the EPA. They were then instructed to submit a workplan detailing its implementation. It was decided that MMSD was best suited to serve as the administrative agent. The host organization will be responsible for recruiting, hiring, onboarding, and supporting the EJA.

The EJA will be responsible for:

- Developing, operationalizing, and implementing three to five EJ strategies to achieve shared goals for the AOC job training initiative. The job training initiative is intended to build a skilled workforce to implement AOC projects covered by the approved management action list for the Milwaukee Estuary AOC.
- Coordinating and encouraging participation of AOC stakeholder groups and community members in the job training initiative, which is developing a workforce for 24 projects in the Milwaukee AOC.
- Ensuring that AOC projects include an EJ audit and identifying an approach, goals, and deliverables beyond the scope of the core restoration project objectives to address the community's EJ concerns. The EJA will develop three tools to help to ensure that all projects, no matter the lead entity, are adhering to the same EJ focus. These tools will include:
 - EJ Guidance Document: This document will create a unified understanding of what EJ means for the Milwaukee AOC work, why it matters, and how it affects work in Milwaukee.
 - EJ Project Implementation Template: This template will identify what specific approach, goals, and deliverables project teams will implement for the project to be implemented in the most environmentally just manner.
 - EJ Project Evaluation: During and/or at the end of the project, this evaluation tool will allow the project team to reflect if the project is meeting the goals, approach, and deliverables outlined at the beginning of the project. If not, it will allow the team to realign before moving further along in the project.

RESOLUTION

Contract P-3215, Host Organization for an Environmental Justice Advisor

RESOLVED, by the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District Commission, that the Executive Director is authorized to execute Contract P-3215, Host Organization for an Environmental Justice Advisor, with Milwaukee Water Commons in an amount not to exceed \$370,954.