

COMMISSION FILE NO: 19-139-10 **DATE INTRODUCED:** October 14, 2019

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: Authorization to Execute a Maintenance Covenant for Project No. P-2872 to Plant Stormwater Trees

SUMMARY:

The Commission is requested to authorize the Executive Director to execute a maintenance covenant for Project No. P-2872 between the City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works (DPW) and the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (District) for the installation and maintenance of 250 trees in an amount not to exceed \$155,000. The total project budget spread across several contracts in different locations is \$300,000, with the District contributing \$200,000 and a Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grant contributing \$100,000. This project is included in the proposed 2020 Budget.

Under this maintenance covenant the District will:

- Identify tree locations, species, and maintenance plans in coordination with DPW.
- Provide compensation not to exceed \$155,000 for costs associated with purchasing, labor, installation, and initial maintenance of the trees.

DPW will:

- Install agreed upon tree species.
- Maintain trees for the duration of the maintenance covenant.

ATTACHMENTS: **BACKGROUND** ☒ **KEY ISSUES** ☐ **RESOLUTION** ☒
FISCAL NOTE ☒ **S/W/MBE** ☐ **OTHER** ☒ Proposed Maintenance Covenant

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COMMITTEE ACTION: _____ **DATE:** _____

COMMISSION ACTION: _____ **DATE:** _____

SUMMARY (Con't)

Authorization to Execute a Maintenance Covenant for Project No. P-2872 to Plant Stormwater Trees

The District is piloting this stormwater tree project to demonstrate how to implement and then scale up stormwater tree canopy across the region. This pilot project uses federal funds. As factors to success of the project are determined, the District will look to replicate the approach across the region in the future. The District is implementing a stormwater tree pilot project across multiple locations that will plant 300 trees on public sites on Milwaukee's northwest side. Some of these expenditures are below the threshold for Commission action. Two hundred fifty trees will be planted by DPW, and 50 trees will be planted by other partners. This project will reduce runoff by up to 18,585 gallons in any given storm. Partners include City of Milwaukee Forestry Services (a part of the DPW Operations Division), Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee, Havenwoods Economic Development Corporation, and MKE Plays.

The maintenance covenant with DPW will formalize the agreement to plant up to 250 trees in the project area. The District will provide funding for the initial costs associated with the trees in an amount not to exceed \$155,000. DPW will be responsible for all maintenance activities per the terms of the agreement.

BACKGROUND

Authorization to Execute a Maintenance Covenant for Project No. P-2872 to Plant Stormwater Trees

This pilot project will reduce stormwater runoff on Milwaukee's northwest side while also providing a host of other benefits. For instance, the community is comprised of 85% minorities, with 33% of residents living at or below the federal poverty line. Environmental justice studies show that low income and minority residents are affected more by lack of environmental amenities, such as urban trees. The project geography has seen a historical trend in disinvestment; this trend also affects the surrounding public spaces and urban forest. Providing stormwater trees in this area will reduce the amount of runoff entering the Milwaukee River tributaries, reduce stormwater runoff that contributes to localized flooding, and reduce the urban heat island effect.

This pilot project advances the following plans:

The District's Regional Green Infrastructure Plan (2013) calls for implementation of watershed-specific green infrastructure, including 10 new stormwater trees per city block. This project area has been ranked as medium to high priority for opportunities to install green infrastructure.

The District's Resilience Plan (2019) looks to mitigate the impact of climate change and urbanization by identifying the top risks and developing actionable recommendations that reduce those risks. Four of the top six risks will be addressed in this project and include financial constraints, social equity, climatic hazards, and vulnerability of critical infrastructure.

Wisconsin's Statewide Forest Action Plan (2010-20) identifies goals related to protection and sustainable management. Milwaukee County is ranked at the highest level of risk for forest health and is susceptible to catastrophic events like flooding due to climate change. Goals include:

- Mitigating climate change through carbon sequestration by increasing and maintaining existing urban tree canopies and stormwater mitigation.
- Expanding diverse urban forests with greater tree canopy by planting trees in urban areas to increase the social, ecological, and economic benefits through energy conservation, stormwater runoff prevention, and air pollution reduction.

The City of Milwaukee's Sustainability Plan ReFresh Milwaukee (2013) identifies a goal of increasing tree canopy cover from 22% to 40% by 2023 and increasing the volume of stormwater runoff captured through green infrastructure by 10% annually.

BACKGROUND (Cont'd)

Authorization to Execute a Maintenance Covenant for Project No. P-2872 to Plant Stormwater Trees

The United States Environmental Protection Agency's (USEPA) Lake Michigan Lakewide Management Plan (2008) identifies the importance of trees that filter polluted runoff and provide a transition zone between water and human land use. Trees are part of the USEPA's 2007 Green Infrastructure Policy that recommends them as a cost effective and environmentally preferable approach to reduce stormwater and excess flows entering combined and separate sewer systems.

RESOLUTION

Authorization to Execute a Maintenance Covenant for Project No. P-2872 to Plant Stormwater Trees

RESOLVED, by the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage Commission, that the Executive Director is authorized to execute on behalf of the District a maintenance covenant for Project No. P-2872 with the City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works for installation and maintenance of 250 trees in an amount not to exceed \$155,000 and to execute all deeds, purchase agreements, easements, leases, permits, memoranda of understanding, maintenance covenants, and any other documents necessary to carry out the terms of this covenant.