
Sponsor: Public Works

Meeting Date: 9/23/2025

Title: Grant Agreement with the Metropolitan Council for Pierce Butler
Route Tree Canopy Improvement Project

File Number: 2025-361

Background and Rationale:

In April of 2024, the county board adopted the Climate Equity Action Plan. The plan was developed to mitigate and adapt to climate change, with a priority on work within climate-vulnerable populations. One of the focus areas, climate-smart natural land, includes the goal of managing, protecting, and expanding urban tree canopy. County staff have worked to identify opportunities to fund tree canopy expansion projects in prioritized neighborhoods in the county that are vulnerable to climate change.

In March of 2025, the Metropolitan Council issued a request for grant applications to fund projects that support healthy tree canopy in the region. Key criteria for the Metropolitan Council included the following priorities: removing and replacing ash trees that pose safety concerns and funding projects located in census block groups with a supplemental demographic index score in the 70th percentile or higher. County staff prepared an application to propose a project for tree canopy expansion on Pierce Butler Route. Pierce Butler Route is a transportation corridor that has been identified as an area that experiences extreme heat, and the Frogtown community is vulnerable to climate change impacts. This was a competitive grant application process, with \$2,500,000 of funding made available, with \$5,537,897 in funding requests. The project proposed by county staff was selected for funding by Metropolitan Council staff.

The outcomes of this project are a healthy and resilient tree canopy that will reduce the heat island effects in the Frogtown neighborhood and increase resilience to future tree pests and diseases through the planting of a diverse mix of tree species. Additionally, this project will address public safety concerns posed by dead and declining trees. Action by the board will support this critical work in addressing heat islands on county property and public safety.

Recommendation:

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners resolved to:

1. Ratify the submittal of the grant application to the Metropolitan Council in the amount of \$171,050 for the 2025 Community Tree Planting Grant.
2. Accept a grant award and approve a grant agreement with the Metropolitan Council for 2025 Community Tree Planting Grants for the period of May 1, 2025, through June 30, 2027, in the amount of \$171,050.
3. Authorize the Chair and Chief Clerk to execute the grant agreement.
4. Authorize the County Manager to enter into agreements and execute amendments to agreements in accordance with the county's procurement policies and procedures, provided the amounts are within the limits of the grant funding.
5. Authorize the County Manager to establish a grant budget of \$171,050 for the Pierce Butler Route Tree Canopy Improvement Project in the Public Works budget.

A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Miller, seconded by Commissioner Jebens-Singh.

Motion passed.

Aye: - 7: Jebens-Singh, McGuire, McMurtrey, Miller, Moran, Ortega, and Xiong

By: 

Jason Yang, Chief Clerk - County Board