



Legislation Text

File #: 15-0340, **Version:** 1

Resolution to Approve an Agreement with the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner to Support and Fund the 2015-2017 Rain Garden Program Partnership and Online Rain Garden Training Grant Program (\$206,596.00 over two years; City Cost \$32,166.00)

Your approval is requested for an agreement with the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner's Office (WCWRC) to support and provide partial funding for the 2015-2017 Rain Garden Program Partnership. The total cost of the 2-year program will be \$199,930.00, with the City funding a portion (\$32,166.00) of the total. The City has had a long-standing relationship with the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner's Office and supports their efforts to coordinate local units of government to improve water resources. This agreement will result in a Rain Garden Assistance Program for the community jointly funded by the City and the WCWRC, which includes assisting landowners with installation of their own rain gardens, and a Master Rain Gardener Certification Program which will train and support individuals to design and install rain gardens. Exhibit A to the Agreement lists the Program components and their associated costs.

A community rain garden program satisfies a need for both the City and the WCWRC to engage in public involvement, public participation, public education and post-construction stormwater best management practices under the NPDES (National Pollution Discharge Elimination System) stormwater permitting program. In 2011, the WCWRC proposed a Rain Garden Program Partnership with the City to assist both agencies in addressing water quality goals within the Huron River Watershed, including all creeksheds within the City. In 2011 and 2012, the agencies entered into one-year agreements, and in 2013, the agencies entered into a two-year agreement with activities similar to those in this proposed two-year agreement.

Rain gardens installed upstream in the headwaters of a watershed are a very effective "best management practice" for stormwater management as they capture runoff from privately-owned impervious surfaces such as roofs and driveways and infiltrate it into the ground and vegetation rather than having it all drain into the City's storm sewer system and move directly downstream, resulting in a positive impact on downstream water quality. Rain gardens are a viable method of infiltrating stormwater runoff and by providing well-maintained, attractive examples in the community the program provides inspiration to others to install rain gardens on their own property. The City's Stormwater Utility encourages residents to install rain gardens on their property to obtain a credit in their utility fee. It is imperative for the success of these installations, that residents have opportunities for training and education about rain gardens.

Funding for these services is available in the FY16 Stormwater System Operations and Maintenance budget and is anticipated to be available in the FY17 Stormwater System Operations and Maintenance budget.

Prepared by: Jennifer E. Lawson, Water Quality Manager, Public Services

Reviewed by: Craig Hupy, Public Services Area Administrator

Approved by: Steven D. Powers, City Administrator

Whereas, It is beneficial to the environment and the community to install rain gardens to promote

stormwater infiltration, reduce stormwater volumes, and clean stormwater;

Whereas, Community members who have installed their own rain gardens become advocates and sources of information about rain gardens;

Whereas, Installing well-maintained, attractive rain gardens provide a visible inspiration for others to install rain gardens on their own property;

Whereas, A community rain garden program satisfies needs for both the City and the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner's Office to engage in public involvement, public participation, public education and post-construction stormwater best management practices under the NPDES (National Pollution Discharge Elimination System) stormwater permitting program;

Whereas, Rain garden improvements provide water quality improvements and improve the integrity of the stormwater system;

Whereas, The City's Stormwater Utility Program allows residents to seek credits for their stormwater fee with the installation of a rain garden on their property;

Whereas, The Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner's Office has presented a work plan to jointly fund a Rain Garden Assistance Program, which includes a Master Rain Gardener Certification Program and Grant-funded Online Rain Garden University Training;

Whereas, The City of Ann Arbor has a long standing history of successful collaboration with the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner;

Whereas, It is desirable to continue this collaboration;

Whereas, The Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner's Office has successfully partnered with the City with education and outreach for both the City's and the County's stormwater permit requirements in previous years; and

Whereas, Funding for the City share of these services is available in the approved FY16 Stormwater System Operations and Maintenance budget and the second year will be contingent on the availability of funds in the FY17 Stormwater System Operations and Maintenance budget, if so approved by City Council;

RESOLVED, That the City and the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner shall jointly fund a Rain Garden Assistance Program, which includes assisting landowners with the installation of their own rain gardens and a Master Rain Gardener Certification program, which will train and support individuals to design and install rain gardens;

RESOLVED, That the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized and directed to execute the Agreement with the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner's Office for collaboration and funding of the Rain Garden Program in the total amount of \$206,596.00 with the City funding a portion of the program (\$32,166.00.00), following approval as to substance by the City Administrator, and approval as to form by the City Attorney; and

RESOLVED, That the City Administrator be authorized to take all necessary actions to implement this resolution.