



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2026 Draft Work Plan

General Information

ID Number: 2026-155

Staff Lead: Michael Varien

Date this document submitted to LCCMR: October 29, 2025

Project Title: Preparing Resilient Communities with Model Land Use Ordinances

Project Budget: \$468,000

Project Manager Information

Name: Kristin Mroz Risse

Organization: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

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Project Reporting

Reporting Schedule: February 1 / August 1 of each year.

Project Completion: June 30, 2029

Final Report Due Date: August 14, 2029

Legal Information

Legal Citation:

Appropriation Language:

Appropriation End Date: June 30, 2029

Narrative

Project Summary: Develop and improve Minnesota-specific model ordinances for economic, environmental, and social resilience. Facilitate cohorts and provide examples so planners can tailor the templates to their community's unique needs and priorities.

Describe the opportunity or problem your proposal seeks to address. Include any relevant background information.

Strong community resilience and long-term environmental benefits aren't possible without good, future-forward ordinances and policies in place. Local governments have the unique role of setting strategic direction for guiding planning and land use decisions for their locality.

Local planners are at the center of development, natural resource preservation, and resiliency, often wearing many hats, especially in rural communities with fewer staff. Minnesota-specific model ordinances have and will continue to play a pivotal role in providing capacity to planners to meet statewide goals and maintain local control: from protecting tree canopies to reduce urban heat, to addressing new technologies like data centers through land use regulation.

In 2000, the Environmental Quality Board led 'From Policy to Reality: Model Ordinances for Sustainable Development'; updated by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency in 2008. Today, the only place where these model ordinances are listed is through the GreenStep Cities program, which provides sustainability technical assistance and best practices for Minnesota communities.

Nearly 20 years later, goals and best practices have evolved. There are many examples of communities taking action that improve resilience and maintain community values. Funding for this project will provide updated resources and local examples that highlight how communities are implementing ordinances.

What is your proposed solution to the problem or opportunity discussed above? Introduce us to the work you are seeking funding to do. You will be asked to expand on this proposed solution in Activities & Milestones.

This proposal requests a staff Coordinator to work with partner organizations and local governments to update and create new Minnesota-specific model ordinances. The work will include comprehensively researching and reviewing the 2008 model ordinances, leading technical review teams that can help prioritize which topics to update, working with local governments to share stories, and facilitating cohorts to implement ordinances. The Coordinator will draft updates, suggest additional topics to develop model ordinances for, and provide opportunities for local staff and leaders to address concerns and make improvements.

Model ordinances to review and update cover a wide range of resiliency topics, including energy efficiency, natural resources protection, multi-modal transportation, landscaping, and local food systems. Additional topics will also be reviewed and prioritized for model ordinance updates including: district energy systems, tree protection, tiny homes and accessory dwelling units, construction/demolition waste management, adaptive reuse, urban agriculture, autonomous vehicles, etc.

The Coordinator of this proposal will also develop and facilitate training and technical assistance for implementation of the model ordinances. Upon completion of the model ordinances, a cohort model will be used to support local governments interested in learning more about and adopting updated model ordinances, resulting in reduced staff time and costs.

What are the specific project outcomes as they relate to the public purpose of protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's natural resources?

Utilization of model ordinances will benefit natural resources statewide with guidance that both directly and indirectly focus on local protection, conservation, preservation, and/or enhancement. Up to 21 existing model ordinances will be

reviewed and updated and 12-15 new resilience-specific topics will be incorporated into the models for local planners to use and adapt to their community. Additionally, a team of subject matter experts and a cohort of approximately 15 communities will review the updates. Stories will be collected to highlight how ordinances are being used and their impact on local environments. Technical assistance will lead to strengthened local adoption.

Project Location

What is the best scale for describing where your work will take place?

Statewide

What is the best scale to describe the area impacted by your work?

Statewide

When will the work impact occur?

During the Project and In the Future

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Improve resilient land use model ordinance resources through comprehensive research, analysis, engagement, and review

Activity Budget: \$346,710

Activity Description:

This proposal seeks to hire 1 full-time, two-year temporary unclassified position to oversee the development of model ordinances for use by Minnesota local governments. The Coordinator will initially research current model ordinances and resources to identify tools that are currently available. Next, the Coordinator will analyze the topics included in current resources and identify topics that are not included in the 2008 model ordinances to ensure a comprehensive approach to providing updated content.

The Coordinator will engage local staff and leaders and technical experts to identify and prioritize the need for updating model ordinances by topic. Small and rural communities will be included throughout engagement and additional resources will also be developed to provide alternatives and considerations for their unique needs. Case studies will be developed to highlight specific examples of local governments addressing the model ordinance topics.

The Coordinator will manage the process for drafting model ordinance language updates, following the prioritizations identified. Ample opportunities for gathering feedback from communities and partners will be included throughout the drafting process. Finally, the Coordinator will develop and publish model ordinances for public use and communicate resources to local planners and partners.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
1 FTE Coordinator position posted and hired	December 31, 2026
Initial research and review of model ordinances and resources completed	January 31, 2027
Analysis and initial prioritization of ordinance topics and resources to be included in scope	February 28, 2027
Review team identified and engaged on prioritization and project scope	March 31, 2027
Model ordinances drafted and review team feedback gathered and incorporated	December 31, 2027
Develop resources specific for small and rural communities	December 31, 2027
Develop case studies to highlight specific examples of local governments addressing the model ordinance	December 31, 2027
Final model ordinances published and communicated	March 31, 2028

Activity 2: Coordinated technical assistance and cohorts for local governments to implement and utilize model ordinances

Activity Budget: \$121,190

Activity Description:

This proposal requests funding for providing technical assistance in an effort to increase the implementation and adoption of model ordinances by Minnesota local governments. The Coordinator (see Activity 1) will provide one-on-one assistance and support to communities. In addition, the Coordinator will oversee the facilitation of cohort-based groups and/or training workshops for local government staff or officials interested in adopting a model ordinance.

The Coordinator will also work with partner organizations and subject matter experts to provide technical assistance in their topic areas of expertise. The Great Plains Institute will provide facilitation support for cohorts and share expertise related to energy and transportation. State agency experts will be called upon to engage and assist communities.

Professional associations and expert practitioners (i.e. APA-MN, regional development organizations, etc.) will help inform the project and communicate resources to their members.

Using a cohort-based system, the Coordinator and partners will determine specific topic-based cohorts to collaboratively assist multiple local governments with their ordinance implementation efforts. Past cohorts have proven successful by bringing communities together to address common issues in real-time. Cohorts also provide a sense of collective action, allowing local governments to adopt new ordinances at the same time as others.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Technical assistance and communication plan completed	February 28, 2028
Technical assistance team selected and kickoff meeting	February 28, 2028
Cohort topics identified and schedule developed	March 31, 2028
Cohorts completed	November 30, 2028
Provide ongoing technical assistance	June 30, 2029

Activity 3: Evaluation and recommendations for ongoing review, updates, and technical assistance to local governments

Activity Budget: \$100

Activity Description:

The Coordinator will provide a report to document the process taken under Activities 1 and 2. The report will include an analysis of potential benefits and co-benefits identified in the model ordinance topics prioritized and published under Activity 1. An evaluation of community and cost benefits will further support the implementation of local ordinances. The Coordinator will also include recommendations for how the MPCA, the GreenStep Cities program, and other partners can maintain an ongoing review process for the newly updated model ordinances provided through Activity 1. Recommendations may include a schedule for reviewing and updating language and resources and identification of roles and responsibilities for all partners. The Coordinator will also consider how to maintain ongoing technical assistance identified through Activity 2 to local governments for implementing the model ordinances.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Draft Report for review by MPCA, GreenStep Cities program, and project partners	May 31, 2029
Final Report for review by MPCA, GreenStep Cities program, and project partners	June 30, 2029

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
American Planning Association - MN Chapter	American Planning Association - MN Chapter	Review model ordinance topics to prioritize; Supply resources and network opportunities; Review draft model ordinances; Promote model ordinances; Coordinate Certification Maintenance (CM) credit opportunities for members to engage with project review and implementation; Identify opportunities to engage members at the Annual Conference and events; Provide technical assistance to members	No
Great Plains Institute	Great Plains Institute	Review model ordinance topics to prioritize; Support and review draft model ordinances (with expertise for energy and transportation); Promote model ordinances with networks; Facilitate cohorts and provide technical assistance; Coordinate review team stipends	Yes
Practitioners and Experts	Local government staff and leaders, technical assistance providers, regional development organizations	Review model ordinance topics to prioritize; Review draft model ordinances through Review Team; Supply resources and network opportunities; Participate in and/or provide technical assistance and cohort opportunities; Promote model ordinances	No

Dissemination

Describe your plans for dissemination, presentation, documentation, or sharing of data, results, samples, physical collections, and other products and how they will follow ENRTF Acknowledgement Requirements and Guidelines.

Model ordinance development, including presentations, reports, research, data, meeting minutes, etc. will be posted on the MN GreenStep Cities website. When plausible, Review Team meetings will be recorded and posted publicly for the duration of the project. All materials will also be saved on the MPCA's internal server for long-term storage.

Final model ordinances and any other resources produced through this project will be disseminated through already available means. Links to PDFs and other documents will be posted on the MN GreenStep Cities website. Links may also be shared through partners such as the Great Plains Institute, American Planning Association – Minnesota Chapter, League of Minnesota Cities, and other GreenStep program or LCCMR project partners. Partners will also be encouraged to share published resources with their network through newsletters, emails, social media, and other means. A communications toolkit will be developed and shared to ensure that all ENRTF requirements are included.

All published content and media (including webpage, print materials, social media, etc.) will include ENRTF logo and/or attribution language per ENRTF communication guidelines.

Long-Term Implementation and Funding

Describe how the results will be implemented and how any ongoing effort will be funded. If not already addressed as part of the project, how will findings, results, and products developed be implemented after project completion? If additional work is needed, how will this work be funded?

This proposal is a short-term (2-3 years) request to oversee model ordinance resources and add capacity for implementation at the local level. It is intended to address currently needed model ordinance updates and does not require additional years for review beyond this time frame. However, the proposed Coordinator will make

recommendations for how to continue a regular review cycle for model ordinance updates and provide ongoing technical assistance for implementation. Additionally, GreenStep program staff will continue to collect and share updated stories of how ordinances are being used, following the end of the grant period.

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
1 Coordinator		This proposal seeks to hire 1 full-time Coordinator to oversee project development and management. The Coordinator will initially conduct research and analyze information. The Coordinator will oversee engagement opportunities, gather specific examples to highlight in case studies and stories, draft and finalize resource updates, gather feedback, and publish resources. Following development, the Coordinator will develop a technical assistance and communication plan, manage assistance providers and cohorts, and support direct assistance to communities. Finally, the Coordinator will conduct a final report addressing ongoing needs for updates and technical assistance.			34%	2		\$346,710
							Sub Total	\$346,710
Contracts and Services								
Great Plains Institute	Subaward	Per ENRTF guidelines ,GPI will provide personnel (\$82,500) for expertise on energy and transportation topics, cohort facilitation to communities for assistance and implementation, and coordination of the project review team. GPI will provide team member stipends of up to \$1500 for qualified participation of experts, officials, etc. (\$22,500).				0.52		\$105,000
							Sub Total	\$105,000
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
							Sub Total	-
Capital Expenditures								
							Sub Total	-

Acquisitions and Stewardship								
							Sub Total	-
Travel In Minnesota								
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	Travel - 5 vehicle trips of up to 300 miles each one way for up to 2 staff directly involved in the project	To engage geographically diverse local governments across the state in technical assistance and cohort opportunities for utilizing and implementing model ordinances specific to their community needs. Also, to further provide direct assistance to small and rural communities with limited capacity.					\$1,050
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	Lodging - 5 trips for up to 2 nights each for up to 3 staff directly involved in the project	To engage geographically diverse local governments across the state in technical assistance and cohort opportunities for utilizing and implementing model ordinances specific to their community needs. Also, to further provide direct assistance to small and rural communities with limited capacity.					\$5,000
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	Meals - 5 trips for up to 2 nights each for up to 3 staff directly involved in the project covering breakfast, lunch, and dinner costs	To engage geographically diverse local governments across the state in technical assistance and cohort opportunities for utilizing and implementing model ordinances specific to their community needs. Also, to further provide direct assistance to small and rural communities with limited capacity.					\$1,190
							Sub Total	\$7,240
Travel Outside Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-

Printing and Publication								
	Printing	Manual handouts (20 pages) for 5 events for up to 50 attendees per event and additional supply	To provide information and resources available for workshop and cohort attendees to readily review and utilize for implementation. Include additional considerations and materials for small and rural communities. Provide templates and worksheets to facilitate implementation.					\$1,500
	Printing	Signage for 5 events	To provide wayfinding and education materials for workshop and cohort attendees.					\$1,300
							Sub Total	\$2,800
Other Expenses								
		In-person workshop meeting room rentals - 5 sites for hosting up to 100 attendees for up to 2 days	To engage geographically diverse local governments across the state in technical assistance and cohort opportunities for utilizing and implementing model ordinances specific to their community needs. Also, to further provide direct assistance to small and rural communities with limited capacity.					\$6,250
							Sub Total	\$6,250
							Grand Total	\$468,000

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
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Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	\$ Amount
State				
In-Kind	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency	Coordinate grant application and management. Facilitate agency hiring process for Coordinate position and supervise work duties. Oversee project advancement and outcomes. Promote communications and engagement with participating program communities. Maintain records and information. Track outcomes and deliverables. Provide ongoing technical assistance to communities.	Pending	\$35,000
			State Sub Total	\$35,000
Non-State				
In-Kind	Practitioners and experts - individual organization budgets	Local government planning staff and their consultants or other community leaders involved in reviewing model ordinance updates and/or participating in implementation cohorts (# estimated: 80). Technical assistance providers that include assistance to communities in the scope of their regular work activities. (# estimated: 25) NOTE: Does not include those individuals or organizations receiving a stipend to participate.	Potential	\$185,000
			Non State Sub Total	\$185,000
			Funds Total	\$220,000

Total Project Cost: \$688,000

This amount accurately reflects total project cost?

Yes

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [e77b18fb-1b0.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

1-page handout with information about model ordinance definitions, benefits, and connection to natural resources. Also includes a list of model ordinance topics that will be addressed with this project proposal....

Supplemental Attachments

Capital Project Questionnaire, Budget Supplements, Support Letter, Photos, Media, Other

Title	File
Great Plains Institute Letter of Support	c761d0d8-8d6.pdf
American Planning Association - MN Letter of Support	6d4782b1-fff.pdf
Izaak Walton League - MN Letter of Support	0b7114f9-226.pdf
Mid-Minnesota Development Commission Letter of Support	c3f93565-01c.pdf
Region Five Development Commission Letter of Support	b21d933c-1f3.pdf
West Central Initiative Letter of Support	bf8b0de2-748.pdf

Difference between Proposal and Work Plan

Describe changes from Proposal to Work Plan Stage

- Added clarity to subcontract budget and expenses (Budget).
- Added clarity to Dissemination about use of ENRTF logo and attribution language in print and media (Dissemination).
- Requested change to update report schedule (Narrative).
- Amended Activity 1 Budget (Activities and Milestones)
Reduced proposed FTE cost by \$3290 to account for change in reduced budget.
- Amended Activity 2 ENRTF Budget (Activities and Milestones)
Reduced proposed cost by \$8710 to account for change in reduced budget. (see budget on page 8+ for more detail)
- Added milestone (#5) to Activity 2 (Activities and Milestones)
“Provide ongoing technical assistance” to ensure that TA continues after cohorts end.
- Edited approximate completion dates (Milestones #1, #2) in Activity 3 (Activities and Milestones)
Added additional time for reporting due to timeline of grant funding.
- Added Dissemination Efforts description (Dissemination)
Description of how materials will be shared during and after the project.
- Amended budget amounts under Personnel, Travel and Conferences, Printing and Publication to adjust to new LCCMR approved budget (Budget).
Reduced FTE by \$3290
Reduced travel from 4 staff to 2-3 staff – reduced by \$4580
Reduced printing by \$4130

Additional Acknowledgements and Conditions:

The following are acknowledgements and conditions beyond those already included in the above workplan:

Do you understand and acknowledge the ENRTF repayment requirements if the use of capital equipment changes?

N/A

Do you understand that travel expenses are only approved if they follow the "Commissioner's Plan" promulgated by the Commissioner of Management of Budget or, for University of Minnesota projects, the University of Minnesota plan?

Yes, I understand the Commissioner's Plan applies.

Does your project have potential for royalties, copyrights, patents, sale of products and assets, or revenue generation?

No

Do you understand and acknowledge IP and revenue-return and sharing requirements in 116P.10?

N/A

Do you wish to request reinvestment of any revenues into your project instead of returning revenue to the ENRTF?

N/A

Does your project include original, hypothesis-driven research?

No

Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?

No

Does your project include the pre-design, design, construction, or renovation of a building, trail, campground, or other fixed capital asset costing \$10,000 or more or large-scale stream or wetland restoration?

No

Do you propose using an appropriation from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund to conduct a project that provides children's services (as defined in Minnesota Statutes section 299C.61 Subd.7 as "the provision of care, treatment, education, training, instruction, or recreation to children")?

No

Provide the name(s) and organization(s) of additional individuals assisting in the completion of this project:

Catherine Kemp, Great Plains Institute

Do you understand that a named service contract does not constitute a funder-designated subrecipient or approval of a sole-source contract? In other words, a service contract entity is only approved if it has been selected according to the contracting rules identified in state law and policy for organizations that receive ENRTF funds through direct appropriations, or in the DNR's reimbursement manual for non-state organizations. These rules may include competitive bidding and prevailing wage requirements

N/A