



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2026 Request for Proposal

General Information

Proposal ID: 2026-155

Proposal Title: Preparing Resilient Communities with Model Land Use Ordinances

Project Manager Information

Name: Kristin Mroz Risse

Organization: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Office Telephone: (651) 757-2793

Email: kristin.mroz-risse@state.mn.us

Project Basic Information

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.

ENRTF Funds Requested: \$480,000

Proposed Project Completion: June 30, 2029

LCCMR Funding Category: Resiliency (A)

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

Narrative

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.

Activities and Milestones

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

Activity Budget: \$350,000

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: \$129,900

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

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	October 31, 2028
Final Report for review by MPCA, GreenStep Cities program, and project partners	November 30, 2028

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

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.

Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

Project Manager Name: Kristin Mroz Risse

Job Title: GreenStep Cities Coordinator

Provide description of the project manager's qualifications to manage the proposed project.

Kristin Mroz has worked with cities across Minnesota for more than a decade, supporting their sustainability and resilience efforts across multiple disciplines. Since 2021, Kristin has led the MN GreenStep Cities and Tribal Nations program at the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) as the Program Coordinator and Co-Director. In this role, Kristin supports 178 cities and 5 Tribal Nations across Minnesota with assistance and recognition in the GreenStep program, including land use and resilience topics. Coordinating the program involves budgeting, grant management, program development, communications, and other skills that qualify Kristin as the project manager of this proposal.

After graduating from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point with a degree in Natural Resource Management, Kristin served as an Environmental Educator in Nicaragua as a Peace Corps volunteer for two years, developing community programs and activities in conjunction with local leaders. Following, Kristin spent 3 years as the Environmental

Coordinator at the City of Elk River, Minnesota. In this role, Kristin continued engaging the community through environmental education and outreach but also led environmental land use and planning efforts, including writing and updating ordinances. Kristin also participated on behalf of the city with the University of Minnesota's Climate Smart Municipalities program which formed exchanges between Minnesota and German cities working on local climate action and resilience efforts. During her time in Elk River, she coordinated the city's participation in the MN GreenStep Cities program, implementing sustainable best practices and tracking program metrics and outcomes.

The work in Elk River was a deciding factor that led to Kristin's transition as the Local Government Coordinator at the Environmental Quality Board for 4 years. This role was split between co-directing the MN GreenStep Cities program and providing technical assistance to local governments through the Minnesota Environmental Review process.

Organization: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Organization Description:

Through the authority of state and federal statutes and guidelines, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency focuses on preventing and reducing the pollution of air, land, and water, and leads Minnesota's efforts to protect against the devastating effects of climate change. We work with regulated parties, businesses, governments, organizations, and Minnesota's 11 tribal nations to develop innovative, community-centered approaches that protect our natural resources, improve human health, and foster strong economic growth.

The MN GreenStep Cities program is housed within the Resource Management & Assistance Division which administers grants for innovations in recycling and pollution prevention, and houses solid waste and recycling programs, environmental review, and technical assistance to local governments.

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		\$350,000
							Sub Total	\$350,000
Contracts and Services								
Great Plains Institute	Subaward	GPI will provide expertise on energy and transportation topics and build off of their existing networks to provide technical assistance to communities across Minnesota. GPI will oversee and facilitate cohorts for assistance and implementation. GPI will oversee the project review team and provide team member stipends.				0.46		\$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 4 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.					\$2,100
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	Lodging - 5 trips for up to 2 nights each for up to 4 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.					\$8,000
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	Meals - 5 trips for up to 2 nights each for up to 4 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.					\$1,720
							Sub Total	\$11,820
Travel Outside Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-

Printing and Publication								
	Printing	Manual handouts (20 pages) for 5 events for up to 100 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.					\$3,000
	Printing	Signage for 5 events	To provide wayfinding and education materials for workshop and cohort attendees.					\$3,930
							Sub Total	\$6,930
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	\$480,000

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
---------------	---------------------	-------------	--

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: \$700,000

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

Administrative Use

Does your project include restoration or acquisition of land rights?

No

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 proposal:

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