

SUMMARY and FISCAL NOTE*

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** Note that the Summary and Fiscal Note describes the version of the bill or resolution as introduced; final legislation including amendments may not be fully described.*

1. BILL SUMMARY

Legislation Title: AN ORDINANCE authorizing Seattle Public Utilities to execute agreements under [RCW 70A.140.040](#) for projects and programs that prevent water pollution using green stormwater infrastructure and other nature-based approaches.

Summary and background of the Legislation:

The legislation authorizes the General Manager/CEO of Seattle Public Utilities, or designee, to execute service agreements under [RCW 70A.140.040](#), for the delivery of water pollution control projects, as part of the RainCity Partnerships program or as part of subsequent programs that emerge from the [Shape Our Water](#) planning process. Selection and development of water pollution control projects will adhere to transparent eligibility and performance criteria, and the selection of a service provider will include a full and formal public recruitment solicitation, evaluation, selection, and contracting process.

2. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Does this legislation create, fund, or amend a CIP Project? ___ Yes No

This legislation provides authority for the preferred delivery model for this program. The program is funded within SPU's 2021-2026 budget, with additional budget placeholders beyond 2026 identified.

3. SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Does this legislation amend the Adopted Budget? ___ Yes No

Does the legislation have other financial impacts to the City of Seattle that are not reflected in the above, including direct or indirect, short-term or long-term costs?

The RainCity Partnership program will manage stormwater and deliver additional public value at a lower cost than could be administered by the City alone. This provides long term savings to ratepayers. Other benefits include the potential for private funding, community support and commitment, transfer of risk, and opportunities for greater innovation and accelerated adoption of sustainable practices.

Is there financial cost or other impacts of *not* implementing the legislation?

Not implementing the legislation would result in less efficient implementation of green infrastructure projects to address drainage and wastewater system capacity and water quality priorities. This legislation would enable a new delivery mechanism, which is anticipated to yield both cost savings and greater total value for SPU ratepayers, per unit of stormwater

management/water pollution control achieved.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

a. Does this legislation affect any departments besides the originating department?

The legislation does not directly affect other departments. Creating the RainCity Partnerships Program will result in additional stormwater infrastructure projects requiring permits and related plan review via SDCI business processes. SPU consulted with SDCI and determined the increase in SDCI workload would be *de minimus*. The overall financial impact is anticipated to be revenue-neutral for the City.

b. Is a public hearing required for this legislation?

No.

c. Is publication of notice with *The Daily Journal of Commerce* and/or *The Seattle Times* required for this legislation?

No.

d. Does this legislation affect a piece of property?

No.

e. Please describe any perceived implication for the principles of the Race and Social Justice Initiative. Does this legislation impact vulnerable or historically disadvantaged communities? What is the Language Access plan for any communications to the public?

Improved and expanded racial equity outcomes are a significant driver for the proposed legislation. The decision to pursue the project delivery mechanism enabled by the legislation was influenced by the initial Racial Equity Toolkit (RET) process conducted by SPU. RET process participants recommended SPU not pursue a grant program structure to achieve its goal of accelerating voluntary green infrastructure retrofits and better serving ratepayers with multiple-value infrastructure. The project delivery mechanism enabled by the legislation allows SPU to define program-scale community benefit requirements that are consistent with direction to City departments articulated in the City of Seattle's Equity and Environment Agenda.

The delivery mechanism enabled by the legislation will also expand the geographic eligibility boundaries for voluntary green infrastructure retrofit projects, to include more areas identified as high priority in the Office of Planning and Community Development's [Racial and Social Equity Index map](#). The RainCity program requirements to meaningfully engage and appropriately resource place-based community organizations in the identification and development of projects – together with the programmatic community benefit targets outlined above – are strategies the RainCity pilot enabled by this legislation will use to counter-act the potential for 'green displacement' pressure associated with infrastructure improvements. These strategies are part of SPU's broader work to partner with sister City agencies to address and prevent displacement and to meaningfully contribute to our communities' ability to thrive in place.

Climate Change Implications

1. Emissions: Is this legislation likely to increase or decrease carbon emissions in a material way?

The legislation is not expected to substantively impact carbon emissions.

Predominant sources of carbon emissions in green infrastructure projects include emissions associated with concrete production and emissions from construction equipment. As a sector, green infrastructure relies more heavily on plant- and soil-based living systems (than on underground concrete pipes), though concrete elements are still sometimes necessary. Green infrastructure and riparian restoration also include tree planting, which provides an opportunity for modest carbon sequestration that is not provided by conventional gray-only infrastructure approaches. Green infrastructure systems typically do not require pumps or other electricity-using elements, once installed.

2. Resiliency: Will the action(s) proposed by this legislation increase or decrease Seattle's resiliency (or ability to adapt) to climate change in a material way? If so, explain. If it is likely to decrease resiliency in a material way, describe what will or could be done to mitigate the effects.

Investing in voluntary green infrastructure development is promoted as a key climate adaptation and resilience strategy by prominent national and local environmental agencies and organizations as well as by justice-oriented organizations, including: [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#), [American Society of Landscape Architects](#), [WA State Department of Commerce](#), [Front and Centered](#); and [Seattle's Office of Sustainability and Environment](#). Additionally, green infrastructure, particularly trees, can play a critical role in reducing urban heat island effect in densely populated urban centers.

f. If this legislation includes a new initiative or a major programmatic expansion: What are the specific long-term and measurable goal(s) of the program? How will this legislation help achieve the program's desired goal(s).

Enabling this additional delivery model to accelerate green infrastructure implementation will support SPU's work to integrate community benefit targets with standard stormwater management performance targets in program delivery. These include targets such as:

- Priority hire/local hire requirements for project planning & design and construction & commissioning
- WMBE Utilization Plan and similar approach to community-based organizations
- Organizational and/or business mentorship, for entities interested in elements of the growing green infrastructure economy
- Paid internships, starting in Year two of the program in green infrastructure planning and design in green infrastructure construction, commissioning, and maintenance

The final set of community benefit targets for the RainCity pilot enabled by this legislation will be determined via the service provider selection process and contract negotiation process.