



BOSTON CITY COUNCIL

Committee on Environmental Justice, Resiliency, and Parks
Gabriela Coletta Zapata, Chair

One City Hall Square 5th Floor, Boston, MA 02201 ♦ Phone: (617) 635-3040 ♦ city.council@boston.gov

REPORT OF COMMITTEE CHAIR

April 8, 2025

Dear Councilors,

The Committee on Environmental Justice, Resiliency, and Parks was referred the following dockets for consideration:

Docket #0292, Message and order authorizing the City of Boston to accept and expend the amount of One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000.00), awarded by the Donor Group to be administered by the Parks & Recreation Department. The grant will fund the maintenance of the City of Boston Animal Shelter, and assistance with medical care for sick or injured animals (whose owners are Boston residents), through donations in an amount not to exceed Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00).

This matter was sponsored by Mayor Michelle Wu, and was referred to the Committee on January 29, 2025.

Docket #0395, Message and order authorizing the City of Boston to accept and expend the amount of Eight Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$800,000.00) in the form of a grant, for the UCFC-Program, awarded by the United States Department of Agriculture, passed through The Corps Network, to be administered by the Office of Workforce Development. The grant will fund the historic workforce investment of boosting the City's tree cover in various neighborhoods.

Docket #0399, Message and order authorizing the City of Boston to accept and expend the amount of Four Hundred Forty-Nine Thousand Seven Hundred Ten Dollars (\$449,710.00) in the form of a grant, for the Boston MVP Action Grant, awarded by the MA Executive Office of Energy and Environment Affairs to be administered by the Public Works Department. The grant will fund building a database and map of current and projected flooding impacts, focusing primarily on storm water and riverine flooding.

These matters were sponsored by Mayor Michelle Wu, and were referred to the Committee on February 5, 2025.

Summary of Legislation

Docket #0292 would authorize the City of Boston to accept and expend a grant awarded by the Donor group in the amount of \$150,000 to be administered by the Boston Parks and Recreation Department. The grant will fund the maintenance of the City of Boston Animal Shelter, and assistance with medical care for sick or injured animals (whose owners are Boston residents), through donations in an amount not to exceed \$50,000.

Docket #0395 would authorize the City of Boston to accept and expend a grant awarded by the United States Department of Agriculture, passed through The Corps Network, in the amount of \$800,000. This grant would be administered by the Office of Workforce Development and will fund the historic workforce investment of boosting the City's tree cover in various neighborhoods.



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Docket #0399 would authorize the City of Boston to accept and expend the Boston MVP Grant in the amount of \$449,710 awarded by the MA Executive Office of Energy and Environment Affairs. This grant would be administered by the Public Works Department and will fund building a database and map of current and projected flooding impacts, focusing primarily on storm water and riverine flooding.

Information Received at Hearing

The Committee held a hearing on Monday, April 7, 2025 to discuss three environmental-related grants. The Committee was joined by Steve Bickerton, Deputy Commissioner of the Boston Parks and Recreation Department, Jodi Sugerman-Borzan, Deputy Chief for the Office of Labor Compliance and Worker Protections; Rachel Luna, Interim Director of Green Infrastructure; and Joseph Le, Chief of Staff for the Worker Empowerment Cabinet - all of whom provided testimony on behalf of the Administration.

Deputy Commissioner Bickerton discussed Docket #0292 and stated that this is an annual grant that the City receives through a fund that was established through the Treasury Department that allows the City to accept donations for the Animal Shelter. All of the funds raised go directly to the care of animals and are not used for administrative costs. Deputy Commissioner Bickerton highlighted the importance of these funds by providing examples of the kind of help and care that was given to animals with the use of these funds. He added that the Animal Shelter cares for about 600 to 700 animals each year.

Chief Le discussed Docket #0395 and stated that the funds from this grant would be directed to the City's Power Corp program, a ten month green industry workforce program which provides 18 to 30 year olds with career readiness training and provide connections to employers in the environmental sector. Under this "learn to earn" model, participants are provided a stipend. This grant allows the Power Corp program to provide citywide assistance in improving Boston's tree canopy. Deputy Chief Sugerman-Borzan discussed the success of this program stating that more than 120 people have graduated from Power Corp - many of whom have moved on to urban forestry industry. The latest cohort to graduate not only gained college credits and career skills but planted about 40 new trees across Boston, pruned 58 trees, removed 248 bags of invasive materials, and 77 percent of this graduating class already have received jobs in the green space sector.

Director Luna discussed Docket #0399 and stated that this grant would fund building a database and map of current and projected flooding impacts, focusing primarily on stormwater and riverine flooding. She provided an overview of the project which includes an inland flooding database, data display, site prioritization, concept designs, and an interactive display and resources. Director Luna discussed using crowd-sourced flood impact data to collect real-time reports, access local and historical knowledge, assist in citywide data collection, and to engage the community in flood planning. She also provided examples of various current uses of green infrastructure to combat stormwater and flooding.

Committee Chair Recommended Action

As Chair of the Committee on Environmental Justice, Resiliency, and Parks, I recommend moving the listed docket from the Committee to the full Council for discussion and formal action. At this time, my recommendation to the full Council will be that this matter **OUGHT TO PASS**.



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