



## Legislation Text

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**City Council Meeting Date:** March 20, 2018

**To:** Mayor and City Council  
City Administrator

**From:** David Bennett, P.E., Public Works Director/City Engineer  
Justin Wagner, Utilities Manager

Consider Resolution Approving Application to Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Environmental Assistance Grant for Greater Minnesota Recycling and Composting

**Action Requested:**

The Northfield City Council approves the attached Resolution for application to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's Environmental Assistance Grant for Greater Minnesota Recycling and Composting.

**Summary Report:**

The purpose of this grant application is to increase infrastructure for food waste through a collaborative effort with Northfield Community Action Center's (CAC) food shelf, which is housed within the City of Northfield's Community Resource Center. The CAC is a newly "In Progress" SuperShelf partner. SuperShelf transforms food shelves, creating welcoming environments for communities to access appealing, healthy food. Partnering with food shelves across Minnesota, SuperShelf uses behavioral economic principles to promote healthy food choices, works with food shelves to meet specific SuperShelf stocking standards and values, and transforms the physical space to create an appealing environment.

Northfield's CAC is seeking to add a walk-in cooler/freezer to facilitate an increase in food recovered from local grocery stores and farms to be distributed through the community food shelf. The MPCA requires that the grant be submitted by a government entity, hence the City making the application in working with the CAC.

In 2017 the CAC rescued over 249,000 pounds of food from local retailers, including Aldi, Cub and Target and they plan to increase that amount through the SuperShelf model. Adding to their refrigeration capacity would allow for a greater percentage of the recovered food to be used to feed people. This is a potential diversion of thousands of pounds of food. We look to this project to build a partnership between the City of Northfield, the Community Action Center, Carleton College's Center for Community and Civic Engagement and Carleton College's Sustainability Office to expand the community wide food recovery efforts. Northfield aspires to be a model community for food recovery, organic waste reduction and share this knowledge with other cities and communities.

With the addition of the walk-in cooler/freezer, the CAC expects that food recovery expansion will have roughly a 10% increase from local grocers and the addition of at least one farm site. This is a potential diversion of 25,000 pounds of food per year.

Councilor Zweifel and Carleton College had originally brought this grant opportunity to the attention of City Administrator Martig inquiring whether there were any potential projects for the City that would apply. There were no city specific projects but Carleton was separately working with the Community Action Center (CAC) on the project that is being proposed. During their review, it was determined that the grant required city participation in order to receive funds. Ultimately, the CAC and other volunteers including Councilor Zweifel completed the grant application and related details. City Staff including Public Works Director Bennett and Utility Manager Justin Wagner reviewed it from the City perspective but their role on the actual grant preparation was limited. If awarded, staff will need to manage the grant including funding, solicitation and oversight on installation.

**Alternative Options:**

N/A

**Financial Impacts:**

The City will have no costs associated with the grant application and the project except for staff time to solicit bids and coordinate the installation of the equipment.

**Tentative Timelines:**

- The grant application was due on March 13, 2018 and has been sent in.
- If the grant is approved by the MPCA to the City, staff will begin coordination of the project with an anticipated completion this summer.
- Food diversion will begin upon installation.