

# Partners in Water Info Session Transcript

September 12, 2024

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9:12

My name is Susan Tallarico.

9:15

I am a manager for the Education Engagement for Wastewater Treatment Division at King County, and I'll be facilitating.

9:27

Today we're going to go through talk about the Partners in Water program and the opportunities for collaboration with King County Wastewater.

9:41

There'll be a few different folks, really me and a couple of different folks who are really managing the projects and taking.

9:50

They're going to introduce the opportunities of the specific projects and we'll all be here to answer questions at the end.

9:59

So forgive us.

10:00

There's going to be kind of a lot of talking at you for the beginning, but then we will move into lots of time.

10:07

There's plenty of time for questions as it relates to the program, the projects, the grants, the application, all of it at the end, but I'll go ahead and introduce.

10:18

I'll have the two folks who are going to be talking about the projects introduce themselves as well.

10:24

Julia, did you want to introduce yourself?

10:26

Yeah.

10:27

Thank you, Susan.

10:28

Hello, everyone.

10:30

My name is Julia Yen.

10:31

I work in King County Wastewater and I'm a part of the Community Services.

10:37

We've been here.

10:40

Welcome.

10:41

Happy to have folks join us in our info session today.

10:46

And Lauren, I think you're the other person speaking who's representing our Human Resources project.

10:53

Hi everybody, my name is Lauren Johnson.

10:56

I've been with the county for about a year and a half in WTD wastewater treatment division and I am with the HR group today.

11:04

Nice to meet you.

11:05

I'm happy to have you all here.

11:08

Thanks, Lauren.

11:10

There's a lot of other folks, some are internal wastewater staff who are also part of their teams but won't be speaking.

11:23

We have some other human resource folks as well as some other folks who are part of our other granting programs.

11:29

In the last meeting, there was some conversation about some of our other grant programs, Waterworks grant program as well as our Rain Wise grant program.

11:38

And we do have some staff here.

11:39

So at the end, if folks happen to have questions about those, we can answer those questions too.

11:43

There are also other granting opportunities, but I'm going to go ahead and dive in and pull up our presentation here.

11:55

Where is it?

12:00  
Hold on a second.

12:05  
No, why is this not pulling up?

12:08  
Sorry, technical difficulties.

12:09  
Did you see?

12:10  
Oops sorry I normally use Teams so I'm like OK zoom how do I get how do I pull up at the presentation?

12:24  
Anybody want to give me some thoughts on that?

12:27  
Hold on, Partners in water is a screen being shared right now or?

12:43  
No, it is not Now it is now it is.

12:48  
OK, just needed a second, I think I'm sharing my screen.

12:52  
Susan.

12:53  
Oh, at all Helpful.

12:57  
OK, sure.

12:59

Yeah.

13:00

OK.

13:00

Go for it if you want to do slideshow.

13:02

Sorry.

13:02

Got it.

13:03

Can you still see it?

13:05

Yeah, we can.

13:07

Thank you.

13:08

Yeah.

13:10

All right.

13:10

Welcome again to Partners Water, our info session I already introduced myself.

13:16

If you didn't see this will be recorded.

13:20

The first session should be already posted on our website.

13:23

This one will be posted as well, likely by tomorrow.

13:29

So if you have folks who are part of your organization or other and they couldn't attend, you can always send them to the posted recordings of the meetings as well.

13:42

All right, we're going.

13:50

I'm going to give you a general overview.

13:52

Then like I said, we'll have two folks who are going to talk about the specific projects that we're hoping that amazing community organizations that are here will partner with us on.

14:05

And one of them is focused on our capital projects and improving our capital projects and really engaging community in a meaningful way.

14:14

The other one is about our human resources, and it has to do with careers and jobs and how we can all work together for those efforts.

14:25

We'll also go over how to apply.

14:27

Like I said, we'll have a good amount of time for questions and answers.

14:31

And then at the very end we'll put a link for feedback from this session right in the link.

14:38

If you wouldn't mind at the end just taking couple minutes and filling out that survey, we would appreciate it.

14:45

Susan, just to make sure, are you seeing the like presentation view or the like note's view?

14:50

We're seeing the notes view.

14:52

We're seeing the notes view.

14:52

OK, would someone else who's making that?

14:58

Yeah, I can, I can do mine.

15:00

I just didn't have it up in the right way.

15:03

So on it, is it working now?

15:06

Can people see this here?

15:07

OK, gotcha.

15:08

Just want to make sure, OK, so and also, we'll e-mail everyone who has registered will e-mail you a copy of this as well.

15:24

This PowerPoint.

15:25

So who's wastewater and what do we do?

15:28

Some of you maybe are super familiar with us.

15:31

Some of you are here who have collaborated with wastewater treatment division.

15:35

You'll hear me say WTD, short for Wastewater Treatment Division.

15:41

And but what we do is, you know, really is we try to keep the water clean and that is to protect health, the environment.

15:53

We also take all that waste and turn it into valuable resources and recycle it for the whole Puget Sound region.

16:03

Our service area.

16:05

So everything in blue here is our service area.

16:07

You may notice our service area, even though we are King County government, our service area doesn't cover all of King County.

16:15

As you'd imagine, not everybody is hooked into pipes or our pipes.

16:19

And we kind of don't stop at the King County border because water and pipes doesn't start, stop, or start at a border.

16:26

So our service area extends slightly into Snohomish and a little bit into Pierce County.

16:33

We serve about 1.9 million people and partner with many different agencies.



16:41

And the fact that the small local pipes, like if you happen to live in Seattle, your water bill comes from Seattle Public Utilities.

16:50

Those smaller pipes lead into King County's pipes.

16:53

And we treat a lot of the agencies and cities around the area water.

17:00

The big piece about service area and why this is super important, and you'll see this on the grant application materials is that in order to be eligible for this grant funding and to collaborate and work with us, you need to be an organization that's located in our service area with reach.

17:21

The communities that you're working with, and such are within the service area as well.

17:27

And if you have questions about that, again, I'm going to leave lots of time at the end for questions for folks.

17:33

And if you're like, I'm not sure I'm not sure.

17:35

Again, in the application materials, there's an easy simple link you click on it, you can put in the address of where your organization is, and it'll tell you exactly if you're in or out of our service area.

17:45

If you're kind of like, well, we look like we're on the border so you can go in and look.

17:51

So how and why we built this program.

17:55

So many of us who work in the field of community engagement at Wastewater

Treatment of Vision saw that there was a big need to bring community organizations in our organization and have them have more influence over decision making programs and policies that we wanted stronger relationships.

18:25

And so we saw a lot of opportunities.

18:28

We also wanted more consistent funding that would go to communities, and we just wanted a better process for having longer term relationships.

18:39

And in doing that, we really wanted to address course, you know, some of our needs internally.

18:45

That's a big piece, but also addressing the needs of community organizations going forward.

18:51

And so we saw opportunities in 2023, there was a partnership with six, six organizations where this program, this partners and water program was literally Co created.

19:02

We kind of started with, I don't say we started with nothing.

19:05

We had we had an idea, we had thoughts, but we brought in representatives from six community-based organizations and said how if you were going to collaborate with King County, what would that program look like?

19:17

How would we communicate?

19:18

How would we fund you?

19:19

How would we set this up?

19:21

And so this really was a Co creation with community which led to the Partners in Water program.

19:28

We discussed, you know, like I said, everything from billing and reporting to application and got input and then developed this.

19:37

And from that time through the summer, we worked with internal groups who were really interested in becoming part of this program, internal WTD workgroups, community services and human resources being two of them who said, you know, we'll be a part of this pilot project.

19:56

And there's a couple of projects that we would love to have long term help with from community organizations.

20:07

The program itself, you know, we have, obviously these are some of the goals of it once all of it was created.

20:13

It was obvious that these were some of the goals associated with the program is to advance mutual priorities and needs, like I said, internal, but also the needs of the community.

20:24

Provide the community's opportunities to influence WT DS programs, processes, decision making and make this whole process more efficient and effective and consistent across our own agency.

20:41

Knowing that that's been a piece that we need to improve on.

20:48

So as I said they're we're starting with two pilot projects.

20:55

Now those pilot projects we decide to start small 2 projects, two groups internally who are interested in those projects for right now are slated for a one-year project.

21:08

However, both projects have and it's in the application materials and information that it is very possible that they could be extended for multiple years.

21:22

Some of the feedback we actually got during the Co creation was that folks want stable funding, but they also don't want to be locked in.

21:30

So it was kind of like, OK, well, we'll try to make both those things happy.

21:34

So a one-year contract, but with possible extensions as we're going in and expansion possibly.

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You know, again, this is a pilot.

21:44

So thank you if you decide to do this journey with us.

21:48

This is a pilot project, but we're really excited about think that these projects are going to be really, really valuable going forward.

21:58

So in the future, we will create more projects, new projects, and different areas of WTD and different focus areas.

22:11

So we have, like I said, 2 pilot projects.

22:15

One is with our community services, community partnerships and infrastructure projects.

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Basically, we build a lot of things, and we fix a lot of things that we've been around for a long time.

22:27

And in doing that, that's our infrastructure or capital projects.

22:32

You'll hear us see our capital program, that is what we're referring to.

22:37

And in this we engage, we have historically engaged community, but we're looking for ways to improve that process.

22:44

And I'm going to let Julianne take over.

22:46

She's our community services representative who works on these projects and will describe their program further.

22:53

Thank you for the tee up, Susan.

22:54

That was a great explanation of high level what we do.

22:59

Hi everyone, I'm Julia yen again.

23:02

I work with King County in the community services unit.

23:06

And so to give some context about what it is that we do, our team works on these large projects.

23:16

We improve wastewater infrastructure that might be like old and outdated.

23:23

And really the purpose of what we do is to protect public health and the environment, namely our precious Puget Sound.

23:32

And so kind of three areas in which how we make sure we deliver that.

23:39

First, we provide project information to impacted communities.

23:43

As you can imagine, a lot of our infrastructure is embedded all over.

23:48

There's pipes everywhere.

23:49

And so, you know, when we're repairing pipes and whatnot or facilities, we're potentially impacting other residents, neighbors, businesses, you know, potentially parks.

24:03

And so our goal is to keep neighbors informed about what they can expect for these projects.

24:11

Second, we troubleshoot community concerns.

24:14

Sometimes our infrastructure may not be working, maybe there's a horrible odor that's coming through.

24:23

And so our job is to really communicate with the community what their concerns are and make sure that those problems get solved and that, you know, we can increase any kind of odor control.

24:40

That's just one example.

24:42

And then third is being able to identify equity and social justice opportunities.

24:50

Like I mentioned before, our projects are located all over King County.

24:55

And you know, sometimes that's going to impact certain neighborhoods, certain parks in varying scales.

25:02

And so because of that, are we able to improve certain components of it of a neighborhood?

25:10

For one example, we have a pump station facility that's located in a park.

25:17

You know, what are some potential ways in which we can think about relocating that pump station that actually removes the pump station out of the park and we can give back that green space to the public.

25:30

And so that's just kind of a high-level example of what it is that we do in trying to increase our equity and social justice opportunities in our projects.

25:44

And then the next slide.

25:45

Thank you, Susan.

25:50

There we go the work ahead.

25:53

So kind of what we're asking in this potential partnership is we're looking to collaborate with community organizations, community organizations, you know, you guys are the

experts of your community, you guys have a strong understanding of what your community's needs are, what the gaps are and whatnot.

26:13

And so we're really looking to collaborate and consult with community organizations to develop some guidance on how we integrate communities needs in these large projects.

26:32

And so we're just, you know, we're looking for from some help and some guidance from you all to figure out a plan, what are the opportunities, what are the gaps that we might be missing if we just kind of confer with ourselves.

26:46

And so to have community be a part of that process, it ensures that we are doing right by community in our work.

26:57

Kind of the next step is grantees will work with us with WTD staff to create deliverables and success measures in in the negotiation phase.

27:10

And so some expected outcomes.

27:12

These are just a list of ideas.

27:15

We're not limited to these.

27:17

We definitely want to hear from you all what creativity you can bring in terms of potential outcomes, but just to name a few and put some vision onto the board is potentially creating a community organization engagement principle.

27:33

You know, there's some very specific ways that community likes to be engaged in that King County wastewater is not attuned or accustomed to.

27:46

Second could be some sort of tool kit on community partnerships.



27:53

A third example is a training module.

27:57

You know, how do we integrate community values and priorities into our projects?

28:04

And you know, how do we present that to our division staff to gain a better understanding of that and to have more buy in into the collaboration with community.

28:19

And so what you will do, grantees can expect to be providing your input that is representative of the communities that you serve.

28:32

Again, you guys are the experts.

28:33

We're really looking for your expertise to consult with us on, you know, how to best navigate these projects and how to integrate community voice into it.

28:46

We're also wanting grantees to provide input and guidance to wastewater about engagement principles and then to also attend and fully participate in all of the sessions.

28:59

Those sessions PBD to be determined and then from our end from our unit community services, we can promise that we will coordinate and lead an onboarding process.

29:14

Wastewater is a very complicated utility sometimes.

29:21

And so it there's going to be some, some onboarding to get you some, some wastewater muscle knowledge.

29:29

And then we would also want to create some sort of communication structure between ourselves and with the organization.

29:38

And then you can fully expect us to coordinate and lead up to two to three meetings a month.

29:46

And again, all of that, that kind of stuff will be determined in in our contract negotiation.

29:54

And so what we're looking for, we're looking to work with four separate community organizations.

30:03

That's four grants in the amount of 27,500 each.

30:09

And you know, again, this is just the pilot and there's definitely potential to renew in year 2 or year three as Susan had mentioned.

30:20

And so really excited about this opportunity.

30:23

This is something that we've been needing for quite some time.

30:26

And we're our, our team is really eager to, to work with community organizations to develop a relationship and ultimately really have our eyes and ears and understanding community organizations values and priorities and how it can really intersect with the work that we do.

30:49

So, yeah, thank you.

30:57

Thanks, Julia.

30:59

All right, Hi, everybody.

31:01

Again, my name is Lauren Johnson, and I am with the HR group.

31:06

And I'm going to share a little bit more about our project, which is the Career Pathways project, OK.

31:15

So within Human resources for wastewater treatment, our commitment is, you know, we're always committed to providing for opportunities to contribute to King County's continued growth and success.

31:29

And more about what we actually do.

31:31

We manage recruitments.

31:32

So this can look a lot like posting job descriptions, reviewing applications that we receive, communicating with different candidates, answering questions, and then through the process, things like extending offers and pretty much anything you know, any steps that you've gone through when applying for and getting a job.

31:52

Also community engagement, things like career fairs.

31:55

The team has attended lots of different career fairs at places like UW Highland Community College and other community colleges, other union sponsored events and lots of others.

32:04

We've also partnered with groups like Work source and MLK Jobs to share more about the open positions that we have to really spread the word more about it and attract more candidates who maybe wouldn't know what wastewater is otherwise.

32:18

And then also supporting equity.

32:20

We're super focused on creating a recruitment process that is as equitable and inclusive as possible to meet the needs of our community.

32:29

Next slide.

32:30

OK, So the work ahead, we will partner with two different organizations for this project and that's going to look like creating a career development program that will support job seekers and we will also help communicate or excuse me, help educate communities about King County and WTD.

32:53

And these organizations, you know, they can be really complicated, and we want to try and bridge that knowledge gap.

32:59

On the next slide, we'll talk a little bit more about what this career development program can look like.

33:04

Next slide.

33:07

All right, so what is possible with this?

33:10

With these grants, we would collaborate with the selected groups to build a program that can include things like career fairs and workshops.

33:18

Workshops could be things like resume, resume workshops, or other sort of mock interviews.

33:25

Also different community outreach events.

33:27

Basically coordinating and creating an event with other local organizations, and then also job shadowing and education.

33:37

WTD is really big.

33:39

There's over 800 people in wastewater, so it could be shadowing someone in one of our plants or maybe someone in our admin corps or even someone in capital programs or in a position like Julia's.

33:51

So lots of different possibilities there.

33:54

And then another thing that could be possible is an online Resource Center, so some sort of a one stop shop.

34:01

Julia also mentioned something similar with their group with their project, so it could house information when it comes to applying the jobs, the interview process, posting slide decks or different information about different workshops or things like that.

34:16

That may be that we've done it.

34:18

It's really a collaborative effort and we want to build something that's going to work for the organizations.

34:26

All right, next slide.

34:27

So the details.

34:29

So we are having two \$25,000 grants that will go to two different organizations for a total of \$50,000.

34:38

And much like has already been said, if things go well and we meet the goals that we agree on at the beginning of the process, these grants could be renewed after a year.

34:51

OK.

34:52

And who does what the selected community business organizations ideally will help us create, plan, and manage the program.

35:00

Again, like I said, we're looking for a group, groups who want to be very collaborative with the process that will share their knowledge and guidance of their best practices and strategies to help meet their community's needs.

35:13

And then we also expect that the organizations will want to attend and fully participate in the process and all the sessions, and you know, obviously mutually agreed upon times and all that.

35:25

And what will we do as the HR team?

35:27

We'll lead this collaboration by helping the organizations learn more about WTD and also King County, help with all the planning sessions, scheduling meetings, really anything like that that will help support the group and make you know, help make clear and educate on us to help you.

35:50

And we'll also provide recruitment support and anything that they would need to know along those lines.

35:57

Basically, bottom line, we're here to help and build a program that's going to work for everyone.

36:03

Thanks.

36:12

All right, thank you.

36:13

Thank you, Lauren.

36:14

Thank you, Julia, for giving us information, a little bit more information about those projects.

36:23

So a little more information.

36:25

I know, sorry, we're, we're doing a lot of talking at you, but hopefully we'll have some good conversation in just a, just a little bit.

36:34

So the process and timeline, you saw that the advertisement went out.

36:39

It was posted on September 3rd.

36:42

This is the second informational webinar.

36:48

And again, for folks, if anyone popped in late, we would have these posted.

36:52

The first one was already posted on the website.

36:54

This one will be as well.

36:56

So if there's other folks who you know who missed this, they can watch the webinar as well as our other folks within your organization.

37:06

The grant application.

37:08

It's due September 30th.

37:12

We will notify awardees October 25th.

37:17

And then there's a pretty long, you might think, wow, that's two months of contract negotiation.

37:22

The reason why it's, it is quite long is because part of that is also kind of scoping out the final, the final scope of what organization WTD as well as the organizations we're working with are agreeing to.

37:40

And in part of that, there's still obviously room for flexibility and things come up and change.

37:47

We, we get that, but we're, the idea is that the scope and what we really want to do is we want the community organizations to really take the lead and say, hey, this is what's best and possible for our communities.

38:02

And then projects plan is to for them to begin in the new year.

38:06

So 2025 S the grant.



38:09

Would basically run all of 2025 again with possible extensions.

38:20

How to apply?

38:23

Hopefully folks have had some time to look at our application materials.

38:28

If you haven't and you don't know where the e-mail went or something like that, you can always just go to Partners in Water, go to King County website, search Partners in Water and it'll go to our website, and you will be able to find all the information you need.

38:47

It looks a little bit like this.

38:48

There's a little green box that says how to apply and it has the materials that you can download and it's a pretty simple application process.

39:03

That was another piece of feedback we got from folks is that they wanted a really simple process.

39:09

You're really just downloading a Word document, filling in the boxes and emailing it back to us.

39:15

It should be pretty simple and available for most, most folks.

39:20

However, we're really want this process to be as accessible as possible.

39:25

So we have are materials that are translated into Spanish, but if you or your organization really wanted some of the application or other materials translated into other languages, you can contact us and let us know.

39:40

We also can Offer Up interviews and basically filling out the application through an interview process as well.

39:51

Again, we didn't want there to be any barriers for folks to apply again, I know I said this once, but I will say it again because it's super important who can apply.

40:04

You have to be located within our service area.

40:06

Again, on our website there's this link here use this map.

40:11

You go on it.

40:13

You can put in your address and find out if you're within our service area boundaries.

40:20

We have to because.

40:23

We are funded by all of the users of our service.

40:28

This project as well and these projects as well.

40:32

We have to be accountable for making sure that we are working with organizations within that service area.

40:39

You have to be a 501C3 nonprofit status and if there are, if you would need to secure or a fiscal sponsor that is five O 1C3 nonprofit.

40:56

The other piece that we're really looking for is working with communities that are underrepresented, underserved, have faced historic inequities.

41:06

That's BIPOC communities, immigrants, refugees, people living with low incomes, women, gender, non-conforming LGBTQIA plus people, people who live and work outside with limited English skills, and people with disabilities.

41:24

And so we love, I know our projects, the folks running these projects really would love diverse groups to work with and groups where have not historically had a lot of voice in their community or certainly within government.

41:46

Again, as I said, you could just download the documents.

41:49

There is the advertisement, that's one document.

41:52

You'll see it in a green box just like here.

41:54

And then there are two applications.

41:58

You will, if you as an organization wanted to apply to both, you have to actually apply using you.

42:07

You can't just use one application.

42:08

They are very, they are very different, and they have different questions.

42:12

There are some questions that are similar, so you could just cut and paste into the other one, but they're just simple word docs that you can fill out.

42:19

And then you would e-mail them back to us, the career pathways project.

42:28

And again, this information is in there, but it explains exactly we have, we will have a rating system, we have a committee that will review all applications.

42:40

Once they are all in it will sit down with project team and others who are doing review process.

42:46

They'll rate each application based on this criterion that is here and we'll go forth with the groups that score the highest.

42:59

And you can see it's certainly, we have a focus obviously on what you think you can do, the scope of the work, some of the experience of your organization and qualifications working in this type of work or working with community, engaging community, understanding your community as well as equity and social justice.

43:25

And then there is a budget worksheet.

43:31

Tips for a good proposal Start now I've, I've done a lot of grants myself.

43:39

It's always good to like to start early because you're going to refine it and make it even better if you look at it the second time and then you get someone else to review and then you do it again.

43:48

So if you are doing the proposal, the biggest thing is it has to be in on time.

43:54

We will not accept any late applications.

43:56

I'm sorry.

43:57

It's just, it's, it's just how it works.

44:00

We can't accept them past the due date and time.

44:05

Make sure you really read over the information in about the projects in detail.

44:14

You know, what are some of the things we're wanting to address?

44:16

What are the gaps we have as division?

44:19

How do you see how that connects to your community?

44:23

Things you might already be doing in the community or opportunities within your community, especially if it has to do with the career pathways.

44:31

There's a lot of community aspect that can be involved in that.

44:35

The capital project is a little more just you there as a representative, but we're open to very creative ideas.

44:45

And that's number four.

44:46

Be creative.

44:47

If you have ideas how to promote jobs or how to guide our staff to engage, we want to hear them.

44:56

Double check your math on budgets.

44:57

Always good to double check your math always.

45:05

So kind of how this is, oh, sorry, I went, I went to one.

45:14

How will this go forward once things are funded there?

45:19

Like I had already said, there's a high-level involvement during the contract negotiation to home in on what's possible, taking those creative ideas and coming up with solidifying things that are a little bit more possible.

45:30

What is possible, what are we planning?

45:32

Projects again will start in January.

45:35

And when we say projects start, we don't mean literally on the ground boom.

45:39

But it all these projects, you know what makes this a little bit different than a traditional granting program is that you will be doing this truly in collaboration with WTD staff.

45:51

And so that's developing the final scope, that's doing a, a section of onboarding, getting to know us, us getting to know you.

46:03

We have found that when we know the organizations we're working with really well, it's a better collaboration.

46:10

Everybody understands each other much, so much more.

46:12

So they'll be an onboarding reciprocal onboarding time period and then it will require ongoing meetings and those again would be with WTD staff because we're really looking at these as being a collaborative effort.

46:35

One of the pieces when we Co created this program was folks gave us a lot of information about funding and their funding preferences and having some upfront money to be able to get the project going was very important to a lot of organizations.

46:51

So an upfront payment of up to 25% will be paid out and then we will have required quarterly reports and funding associated with a quarterly time period.

47:04

As we said a couple different times, pilot projects will be one year long but can be renewed.

47:10

So after this meeting, we'll post the information, this recording to our website.

47:19

As we said, the first one's already up.

47:21

We'll also e-mail folks who registered the PowerPoint and feedback survey.

47:32

I am not Claudia Pineda Reyes.

47:34

Again, my name is Susan.

47:36

Claudia Pineda is Reyes is our program manager and she will be the main contact for you with this program.

47:45

She needed to be out today, so I'm filling in for her facilitating today.

47:49

But Claudia would be your main contact for this program.

47:55

All right, and questions, I'm going to hold on a second.