CARD Stakeholder Meeting
February 3, 2016

Mary Sue Lobenstein
R&D Program Administrator
Conservation Improvement Program
Introductions

Conservation Improvement Program (CIP) Staff
Jessica Burdette, CIP Supervisor
- Anthony Fryer, CIP Coordinator
- Mary Sue Lobenstein, Research & Development Administrator
- Adam Zoet, Analyst and Energy Planner
- Laura Silver, Analyst and Project Manager
- Mark Garofano, Analyst and Engineer

Energy Grants and Contracts
- Morgan Grelson, Sr. Grants Specialist
Goal of Today’s Webinar

Ensure successful CARD program that addresses needs of Minnesota's utility Conservation Improvement Program (CIP)

• Communicating more clearly
• Soliciting input & feedback
• Implementing improvements

RESULT: even better proposals & more effective research projects

Building the Road to Success
Agenda

1. CARD History & Background
2. CARD RFP Process
3. Creating Successful Proposals
4. Questions & Answers
5. Input & Feedback
Agenda Item #1

1. CARD History & Background
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MN Applied Research & Development Fund

Purpose to help MN utilities achieve 1.5 % savings goal by:

- Identifying new technologies or strategies to maximize energy savings;
- Improving effectiveness of energy conservation programs;
- Documenting CO$_2$ reductions from energy conservation programs.

Minneapolis Statutes §216B.241, Subd. 1e.

$3.6 million annual utility assessments
Legislatively Mandated Funding

SB 2030 - $500,000

CERTs - $500,000
Conservation Applied Research and Development (CARD)

$2.6 million annually

Request for Proposal (RFP) process

Six RFP funding cycles 2008 - 2014:

• Nearly 300 proposals
• 74 projects funded
Past Grantees

- Service Providers
- Program Implementers
- Non-profits
- Universities
- Research Institutes
- Consulting Firms
- Minnesota Utilities
CARD Spending by Sector

R&D Spending by Sectors thru FY2014

- Commercial, 38.5%
- Residential, 22.0%
- Industrial, 9.9%
- Multifamily, 8.2%
- Agricultural, 3.4%
- Multi-sector, 18.0%
Locating CARD Projects and Final Reports

CARD Research Project Search Tool
Locating Info on CARD Program

Minnesota Department of Commerce Website
Agenda Item #2

1. CARD History & Background
2. CARD RFP Process
3. Creating Successful Proposals
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Overview of CARD RFP Process

Overview

1. Identify funding topics & develop RFP
2. RFP posted
3. Notice of Intent (NOI) unless RFP topic very specific
4. Responders submit full proposals
5. Proposals evaluated & projects selected
6. Contracts negotiated and fully executed
7. Work begins
Step 1
Identify Funding Topics

Sources include:

• Input from utilities/stakeholders
• Reports, bulletins, blogs, webinars, conferences, etc.
• Technical Reference Manual (TRM) needs
• CIP overall and annual priorities

Both specific & general topics RFPs

No communication about specific topics
Examples of Topics

General Funding Topics
- Field Studies of New Technologies
- Market Potential Characterization Studies
- Innovative Program Strategy or Design

Specific Funding Topics
- Assessments of Plug-Load Control Devices
- RTU Characterization & Performance Baseline
- Small Embedded Data Center Program Pilots
- Combined Heat and Power White Paper
Step 2
Publicly Post RFP

Commerce RFP page
State Register
CIP Newsletter

Email to subscribers of certain email topics

- CIP topic
- Request for Proposals topic
- Funding Opportunities topic
Step 3
Notice of Intent (NOI)

Used for general topics only

Two-page summary of idea

• Project goal
• Funding topic fit
• Project justification
• Overview and outline of scope of work

Makes proposal process more effective

• Responders can focus on specific ideas of interest
• Evaluation more efficient

No longer require project partners at this stage
Step 3 (continued)
NOI Review

Reviewed blind as to Responder

Pre-screen project ideas

• Fit into CARD funding purpose
• Meet current CIP priorities
• Have appropriate timing

In the past, about half have typically passed

An NOI which passes goes to full proposal
Step 4
Full Proposal

Only those that pass NOI

Narrative is key element

• Topic & objectives
• Scope of work, deliverables & timeline
• Project team
• Project impact

Project Budget
Step 5
Proposal Evaluation

Evaluation based on criteria in RFP

- Content
- Qualifications
- Impact(s)
- CIP Priorities
- Budget

Responders notified

No announcement of result
Steps 6 & Step 7

Step 6
Contracts Negotiated

State standard contract

No work on project can begin during negotiation

Step 7
Work Begins

Individual project once its contract is fully executed

Press release after all contracts are fully executed
CARD RFP Process

RFP Timeline – typically about 1 year

- **Step 1**: Identify Topics, Develop RFP (~ 3 - 4 mos.)
- **Step 2**: Post RFP (~ 1 mo.)
- **Step 3**: NOI Due (~ 2 mos.)
- **Step 4**: Proposal Due (~ 1.5 mo.)
- **Step 5**: Evaluation & Project Selection (~ 3 mos.)
- **Step 6**: Negotiation & Contract Execution
- **Step 7**: Work Begins

**Project Timeline – typically 1 to 3 years**
Agenda Item #3

1. CARD History & Background
2. CARD RFP Process
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5. Input & Feedback
Commerce is Looking for...

GOOD working understanding of MN CIP

Applicability in MN to CIP

*Innovative* technologies, approaches & strategies
Working Understanding of CIP

Role Commerce plays with utilities
MN CIP program process
Types of utilities in State and their priorities
Utility regulator requirements

At minimum, no misunderstanding
Applicability to MN CIP

Results and deliverables geared to incorporation into utility CIP portfolios

Ideally some plan on how to directly transfer research into CIP program offering

Research related to the Technical Reference Manual (TRM)
Technologies and Approaches

Savings/applicability not yet documented

Savings/applicability documented but

- Climate differences
- Market barriers
- Other issues

Not in wide use in MN already

MN market potential

Reviews of secondary research
Commerce is NOT Looking for...

Proprietary product development
Technology or approach already well-documented
Targeted technology which has high penetration
Targeted technology for which a utility incentive is not required to move market
No or limited applicability to CIP
Some Things You Can Do

Review your evaluations from previous years

Review proposals & evaluations of others

Reviewing past proposals/evaluations

• 2013 and newer use Commerce Actions and Regulatory Documents Search

• 2012 and older, appointment with Energy Contracts staff
Review Proposals/Evaluations

Commerce Actions & Regulatory Documents Search

Select “Energy Request for Proposals”
Other Things You Can Do

Leverage existing (or build new) relationships

Partner with organizations/individuals

- Understanding of CIP
- Field research
- Program implementation
- Statistical analysis
- Communication

Conduct preliminary assessments or literature reviews

Consider matching funds

Call or email me with questions
Some Things You Shouldn’t Do

Once an RFP is posted, do not discuss with State program staff

- Specific funding topics in RFP
- Specific ideas or proposals in response to RFP

All the information should be in RFP

Contact Energy Contracts
Other Things You Shouldn’t Do

• Expect CARD to fund long-term, ongoing support for programs or operations
• Use CARD project funding to promote specific proprietary product or service to utilities
• Seek project partners or utility support at last minute
• Ask utilities for matching funds
Agenda Item #4

1. CARD History & Background
2. CARD RFP Process
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Questions & Answers

Please submit your questions via the chat box function if you have not already done so.
Agenda Item #5

1. CARD History & Background
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5. Input & Feedback
We want to LISTEN to you and your ideas on how we are doing and how we might improve the CARD program and/or the RFP process

Areas of possible input

• Communication about CARD program
• CARD RFP process/timeline
• Dissemination of CARD project results
• Channels for your input
• Other comments on CARD program
Communication about CARD

How easy is it to find and access information on the CARD program?

Are there communication methods that you think are working particularly well?

Do you feel like you know who to contact when you have a question about the CARD program?

What are ways we could improve?
CARD RFP Process/Timeline

How is RFP process working?

How easy is it to find out about RFPs?

How easy is it to find out about results of RFPs?

Are there things about the process that you think work particularly well?

What are ways we could improve?
Dissemination of CARD Results

How easy is it to find out about completed CARD project results?

What forms of disseminating information work best for you?

• Newsletter articles
• Websites (our or grantees)
• Final reports
• Webinars
• Conference presentations
• Directly from grantee

What forms are not working for you?

What are ways we could improve?
Channels for Stakeholder Input

Is annual CARD stakeholder webinar useful?

What additional formal channels of providing feedback would be helpful?

Would you take the time to fill out a survey regarding the CARD program if we sent one to you?

What are ways we could improve?
Other Feedback/Input on CARD

ideas?
Recording of Webinar

CARD Program Webinar page of website
CARD Stakeholder Meeting
Wrap-up & Closing

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