



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 5/7/2024

File #: 24-778

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Public Works

Agenda Section: Consent

Vote Requirement: Majority

SUBJECT:

Authorize the Humboldt County Department of Public Works to Accept and Administer \$150,000 in Grant Funding Made Available through the California Fire Safe Council County Coordinator Grant Program and Authorization for the Auditor-Controller to Establish an Interest-Bearing Account

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Authorize the Humboldt County Public Works Director, or a designee thereof, to execute a grant agreement with the California Fire Safe Council, in a form substantially similar to the attached agreement, and any other documents, including, without limitation, professional services agreements, necessary to accept and administer funding made available through the County Coordinator Grant Program following applicable review from County Counsel, County Administrative Office, and Risk Management; and
2. Authorize the Humboldt County Auditor-Controller to establish an interest-bearing trust account and/or fund for advance payments of grant funds.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) as part of the California Climate Investment Program; awarded through the California Fire Safe Council's County Coordinator Grant Program.

DISCUSSION:

In November of 2021, the County of Humboldt, by and through its Department of Public Works - Natural Resources Planning, was awarded a competitive grant in amount of \$175,000.00 from the 2021 County Coordinators Grant Program, administered by the California Fire Safe Council (CFSC). The application was developed in coordination with former Humboldt County Board of Supervisors Chair, Virginia Bass, the County Administrative Office, members of the Humboldt County Fire Safe Council, and other wildfire preparedness partners. This first round of County Coordinator grant funding supported a successful program within the term of the agreement which ended in Mar. of 2024. The program significantly increased engagement with and the capacity of the full spectrum of wildfire mitigation groups operating throughout the county and supported the collective implementation of the Humboldt County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). The funding supported dedicated professionals to assist with planning processes, meeting organization, and technical assistance, which helped local groups and the countywide Humboldt County Fire Safe Council increase operational capacity.

On Feb. 28, 2024, the County Administrative Office authorized Natural Resources Planning staff to apply for a second round of County Coordination funding. An application was developed through a non-competitive project scoping process and was submitted on March 13, 2024 (application provided in Attachment 1). The CFSC is now offering an allocation of \$150,000.00 to support the "Humboldt County Coordination Team: Round 2" project. Attachment 2 provides a draft grant agreement where additional details

can be found. The agreement stipulates that advance payments must be deposited into an interest-bearing account and the interest earned on advance payment funds must be accounted for and used toward offsetting the project cost.

This second round of funding will support the county’s ability to continue to educate, encourage, and develop countywide collaboration and coordination among various wildfire mitigation groups operating within the State Responsibility Area. The project aims to catalyze progress on the implementation of the CWPP through enhanced countywide collaboration resulting in increased capacity and partnerships among local wildfire mitigation groups and ultimately, reduced risk of loss from catastrophic wildfire. A team approach was proposed to both educate and learn from these groups as they collectively work to broadcast a shared vision of a wildfire resilient Humboldt County.

Staff now request that the Board authorize the Humboldt County Public Works Director, or a designee thereof, to accept and administer a second round of County Coordinator funding and authorize the Auditor-Controller to create an interest-bearing account.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

<i>Expenditures (1720289)</i>	FY23-24	FY24-25 Projected*
Budgeted Expenses	\$10,000.00	\$140,000.00
Total Expenditures	\$10,000.00	\$140,000.00

**Projected amounts are estimates and are subject to change.*

<i>Funding Sources (1720289 4510)</i>	FY23-24	FY24-25 Projected*
State/Federal Funds	\$10,000.00	\$140,000.00
Total Funding Sources	\$10,000.00	\$140,000.00

**Projected amounts are estimates and are subject to change.*

Narrative Explanation of Financial Impact:

Acceptance of the funding made available through the County Coordinator Grant Program will bring \$150,000.00 of state funding into Humboldt County to support continued work to reduce the vulnerability of rural communities to damage from wildfire. Because this was a noncompetitive funding allocation process, the anticipated grant funds were already incorporated into the proposed 2024 -2025 Fiscal Year Budget Natural Resources Planning budget 1720289. In addition, there are sufficient appropriations in the current Fiscal Year 2023-2024 adopted budget in Natural Resources Planning Budget 1720289 to support project activities through the end of the Fiscal Year. This is possible because current budget revenue estimates are higher than our anticipated expenditures through the end of the Fiscal Year due to other multi-year state funded grant programs making less progress this year than expected.

STAFFING IMPACT:

Acceptance of this grant will help maintain current Department of Public Works - Natural Resources Planning staffing levels. Activities planned through this funding will complement and expand upon existing programs currently funded through grants that are expiring.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

This action supports the following areas of your Board’s Strategic Framework.

Core Roles: Strengthen climate change resiliency

New Initiatives: Seek outside funding sources to benefit Humboldt County needs

Strategic Plan: N/A

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The Humboldt County Fire Safe Council and the California Fire Safe Council.

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Board of Supervisors may choose not to accept the funding made available through the County Coordinator Grant Program. However, this alternative is not recommended because of the community fire safety benefits that will be gained from

File #: 24-778

implementation of the Humboldt County Coordination Team Project.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Humboldt County Coordination Team Round 2 Application
2. Humboldt County Coordination Team Round 2 Draft Grant Agreement

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: N/A

Meeting of: N/A

File No.: N/A