



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 2/27/2024

File #: 24-184

To: Board of Supervisors

From: County Administrative Office

Agenda Section: Consent

Vote Requirement: Majority

SUBJECT:

Provision of Professional Services to Support Long-Term Economic Planning and the Completion of the Humboldt County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Ratify the fiscal year (FY) 2022 Community Project Funding (CPF) Grant Agreement NO. B-22-CP-CA-0106 between the County of Humboldt and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) (Attachment 1);
2. Authorize the County Administrative Officer (CAO), or a designee thereof, to execute any ancillary documentation, modifications and amendments related to the CPF Grant Agreement, the project or the scope of services therein, subject to prior review and consent from County Counsel and Risk Management;
3. Authorize the CAO, or designee thereof, to execute the attached Professional Services Agreement (Attachment 3), and any subsequent amendments, between the County of Humboldt and Thomas P. Miller & Associates to perform economic development studies and analyses of target industries in Humboldt County; and
4. Approve and authorize the County Administrative Office Economic Development Division to advertise and distribute the attached request for proposal (RFP) (Attachment 4) soliciting proposals from qualified firms to assist in the completion of the Humboldt County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs).

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
U.S. Economic Development Agency (EDA)
Economic Development (1120275)

DISCUSSION:

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) FY 2022 Community Project Funding

(CPF) Grant

On May 18, 2021, the Board authorized the County Administrative Officer to transmit a funding request to Senator Alex Padilla for \$218,000 through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) FY 2022 Community Project Funding (CPF) grant program to support Project Rebound. Funding for Project Rebound would be used for a community-wide effort led by the County of Humboldt, in collaboration with its partner communities and jurisdictions, to deconstruct and rebuild the County's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The project is designed to focus on creating specific, measurable and actionable economic strategies that emphasize economic recovery, economic self-sufficiency and economic equity.

In July 2022, the County of Humboldt was sent a Letter of Invitation from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to initiate the Community Project Funding (CPF) grant for Project Rebound. Following HUD's review of the project proposal and requested material, staff received an award letter on Feb. 13, 2023, with instructions for accepting the award. On Nov. 20, 2023, the county's Economic Development Director, Scott Adair, was sent the fully executed FY 2022 CPF Grant Agreement NO. B-22-CP-CA-0106 (Attachment 1) for Project Rebound.

Professional Services for Project Rebound

As part of the grant budget submitted for Project Rebound, \$150,000 was allocated toward economic studies and analyses. Due to funding delays and time constraints around completion of the CEDS, staff issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) No. EDD-2023-01 (Attachment 3) on Nov. 17, 2023, soliciting consulting services to conduct economic studies and analyses of key industries in Humboldt County as part of Project Rebound. This work will be vital for informed decision-making, attracting investment and fostering sustainable economic development by identifying growth opportunities, guiding resource allocation and promoting industry diversification. The results will inform the county's CEDS, scheduled for completion by June 30, 2024.

Following the issuance of the RFP, county staff, in collaboration with the Headwaters Fund Board and the Humboldt County Workforce Development Board, evaluated ten proposals from various qualified firms. Subsequently, interviews were conducted with the top two candidates, leading to a final decision on January 4, 2024, to recommend awarding the contract to Thomas P. Miller & Associates (TPMA). This decision is underpinned by the confidence placed in TPMA's experience and demonstrated capability to execute the services outlined in the proposed Professional Services Agreement (Attachment 4).

Professional Services for Completion of the CEDS

On June 5, 2023, the County of Humboldt was awarded \$70,000 in Technical Assistance grant funding through the Economic Development Agency (EDA) to support the completion of the new Humboldt County CEDS. Staff is soliciting proposals from qualified firms to provide specified professional consulting services that will assist the County with the completion of the CEDS, RFP No. EDD-2024-01 (Attachment 4). The successful consultant will work closely with the county to develop a robust and impactful CEDS document that aligns with the guidelines set forth by the EDA. This document will synthesize key data, insights and actionable strategies into a single, unified plan for sustainable, equitable and resilient economic development in Humboldt County.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Expenditures (1120, 275)	FY23-24 Projected
Budgeted Expenses	\$314,547
Total Expenditures	\$314,547
Funding Sources (1120, 275)	FY23-24 Projected*
General Fund	\$26,547
State/Federal Funds	\$288,000
Total Funding Sources	\$314,547

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

Narrative Explanation of Financial Impact:

Per the FY 2022 Community Project Funding Grant Agreement NO. B-22-CP-CA-0106, Project Rebound will be entirely federally funded. By securing this external funding the County protects the General Fund from bearing the burden of Project Rebound expenses, thus ensuring the sustainability of ongoing county operations and services. On Sept. 27, 2022, the Board adopted the FY 2022-23 budget, which included a \$73,000 allocation to Economic Development, 1120275, as a match for the EDA Technical Assistance Grant. \$46,453 of these funds were expended in FY 2022-23, leaving \$26,547 of funding available for the project in FY 2023-24.

STAFFING IMPACT:

The majority of the remaining funding for both Project Rebound and the completion of the Humboldt County CEDS is allocated for external professional services. As a result, staff impact at this time will be minimal and will align with existing duties and responsibilities.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

This action supports your Board’s Strategic Framework priority of supporting business, workforce development and creation of private-sector jobs.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD)
U.S. Economic Development Agency (EDA)

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Your Board could choose not to ratify the HUD grant agreement, not approve the agreement with TPMA or not approve issuance of the RFP to complete the CEDS. This is not recommended as these are funded and critical to planning for Humboldt County’s economic future.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. FY 2022 Community Project Funding Grant Agreement NO. B-22-CP-CA-0106
2. Request for Proposal No. EDD-2023-01, Project Rebound Studies and Analyses
3. Professional Services Agreement, Thomas P. Miller & Associates

4. Request for Proposal No. EDD-2024-01, Humboldt County CEDS

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: D7, I1

Meeting of: May 18, 2021, Sep. 27, 2022

File No.: 21-641, 22-1177