



**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER**

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: County Executive Office
Department No.: 012
For Agenda Of: June 27, 2023
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Time: N/A
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department: Mona Miyasato, County Executive Officer
Director(s):
Contact Info: Brittany Odermann, Deputy County Executive Officer

DocuSigned by:

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SUBJECT: Local Agency Technical Assistance (LATA) Broadband Grant Acceptance and Agreement with Santa Barbara County Association of Governments for LATA Grant Implementation

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: Risk

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:

- A. Approve and authorize the Chair of the Board to sign an Agreement in a form substantially similar to that included as Attachment E and with the review and concurrence of the County Counsel, Risk Management, and the Auditor-Controller’s Offices, with Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) in an amount not-to-exceed \$1,000,000 for the Santa Barbara Connectivity Preparation Project using the Local Agency Technical Assistance (LATA) Grant funding from the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC);
- B. Approve, ratify, and authorize the County Executive Officer’s designee’s signature on behalf of the County of a LATA Consent Form agreeing and accepting all grant terms, conditions and requirements set forth in the Resolution adopted by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) as part of a LATA grant and authorize the County Executive Officer or designee to sign any documents required in connection with the grant; and
- C. Approve and authorize the County Executive Officer, or designee to approve minor amendments to the Agreement per Agreement section XXIII and to shift funding between budgeted categories in Exhibit B so long as the cost of the Agreement is not increased; and

- D. Determine that the recommended actions are not the acceptance and approval of a project that is subject to environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(4), finding that the actions consist of the creation of government funding mechanisms or other government fiscal activities, which do not involve any commitment to any specific project which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment.

Summary:

The CPUC established the Local Agency Technical Assistance (LATA) grant program for eligible pre-construction work facilitating broadband network projects to areas in need. The program has a \$50 million budget for eligible local agencies and tribal entities in California, including a \$5 million set aside for tribes. In coordination with SBCAG on broadband strategic planning efforts, the County of Santa Barbara applied for a LATA grant in the amount of \$1,000,000 for the development of a Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (EIR), network high level design, formation of a Joint Powers Authority for Broadband, and broadband coordination efforts per your Board's direction on [January 24, 2023](#). On May 1, 2023, staff were notified the California Public Utilities Commission approved a resolution awarding the County of Santa Barbara the LATA Grant in an amount up to \$1,000,000.

As detailed in the application project proposal, (Attachment C) the County plans to work with SBCAG to administer the Santa Barbara Connectivity Preparation Project with the LATA grant funds. Staff recommends your Board approve and authorize the Chair to sign a subrecipient agreement with SBCAG to administer this program that will result in broadband JPA formation, a Countywide Programmatic EIR, and High-Level Network Design. In addition, staff recommends the ratification of the County Executive Officer's designee's signature of a consent form agreeing to all grant terms, conditions and requirements (Attachment B), which was required in order to accept the grant funds. The CPUC award letter dated May 1, 2023 states that the County must submit the executed Consent Form within 30 days of the date of the letter or the award will be void (Attachment A). The executed Consent Form was submitted timely to the CPUC to meet the deadline on May 10, 2023.

Background:

On [August 16, 2022](#), your Board approved having the County Executive Office apply for a LATA grant in the amount of \$500,000 to implement the Countywide broadband strategic plan for a Programmatic EIR and high-level network design. This submission was written in coordination with SBCAG on their LATA grant submission for the formation of a Joint Powers Authority on Broadband and broadband coordination efforts. On August 17, 2022, staff submitted a LATA grant application to the CPUC requesting a \$500,000 grant award.

Upon review of both the County and SBCAG grant applications, the CPUC notified the County of their recommendation to consolidate both grant applications into one submission by the County, for the total amount of \$1,000,000. On [January 24, 2023](#), your Board approved having the County Executive Office submit a modified application to the CPUC consolidating both the County and SBCAG LATA grant applications to further broadband implementation efforts. The application included the intention that SBCAG will provide program oversight and administration for the project.

On April 27, 2023, Resolution T-17785 was approved by the CPUC during their regular Commission hearing for the amount of up to \$1,000,000. On May 1, 2023, staff received the LATA Award Letter from the CPUC notifying the County of the grant award (Attachment A). Due to the 30-day timeline to accept grant funds, the County Executive Officer authorized a designee to sign the consent form (Attachment B).

Discussion:

SBCAG and the County, with the support of each of the region's local governments, completed the countywide broadband strategic plan in December 2022 and have been coordinating broadband efforts. Applying for this broadband funding is consistent with recommendations made in the Broadband Strategic Plan.

In late summer 2022, staff worked closely with SBCAG and Broadband Consortium on coordination of LATA grant applications. In August 2022, SBCAG applied for a LATA grant for the development of a Joint Powers Authority for Broadband and the County applied for a LATA grant for a Programmatic EIR and network high level design, as approved by your Board. The two projects were intended to work hand in hand. Based off of input from the CPUC, staff consolidated the SBCAG application and the original County application and resubmitted the grant application as one grant in the amount of \$1,000,000 in January 2023. Upon execution of the subrecipient agreement (Attachment E), County staff will partner with SBCAG to administer and manage the development of the Programmatic EIR, conduct high level network design that enables the last mile of infrastructure to connect unserved and underserved areas, coordination of broadband efforts, and the formation of the Joint Powers Authority. SBCAG will also lead efforts for administration and formation of the JPA. County staff will be working closely with SBCAG as the project administrator and the County will be a participant in the JPA. The breakdown of costs is shown in the table below.

Table 1. Budget Summary

Work Product Costs		Environmental Impact Report	Design Engineering	JPA Formation	Totals
	Engineering Firm		\$100,000.00		\$100,000.00
	Environmental Firm	\$350,000.00			\$350,000.00
	Legal Firm			\$198,000.00	\$198,000.00
					\$0.00
	Subtotal Work Product Costs	\$350,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$198,000.00	\$648,000.00
Staff and Administrative Costs		Environmental Impact Report	Design Engineering	JPA Formation	Totals
	SBCAG Staff - Broadband Project Manager	\$93,465.72	\$114,853.57	\$93,465.72	\$301,785.00
	SBCAG Staff - Support and Administrative	\$10,444.93	\$7,521.23	\$32,248.83	\$50,215.00
	Subtotal Staff and Administrative Costs	\$103,910.65	\$122,374.80	\$125,714.55	\$352,000.00
TOTAL COSTS		\$453,910.65	\$222,374.80	\$323,714.55	\$1,000,000.00

The purpose of the Countywide Programmatic EIR is to analyze the overall impacts and benefits from approving and permitting the construction and installation of ubiquitous high-speed Internet infrastructure throughout Santa Barbara County so that each proposed broadband project can be evaluated in the context of the net contributions to advancing the official policy of the Board. A Countywide Programmatic EIR is intended to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), if required, effectively and efficiently to facilitate accelerated deployment of ubiquitous broadband infrastructure in the County.

Additionally, work is underway as part of the Santa Barbara County Broadband Strategic Plan to create a regional network concept based on the planning and participation of local governments, broadband providers, and the State of California's emerging Golden State Network (GSN). The next step of moving the concept to reality is the performance of a high-level design of areas that are gaps (projects necessary)

to complete the network. The design should validate the overall concept and provide project definitions with sufficient detail to secure funding for detail design and engineering, the forecast of potential costs, and development of an operations model.

Lastly, as part of the Santa Barbara Connectivity Preparation Project, SBCAG staff will:

1. Continue stakeholder outreach and engagement.
2. Support SBCAG Board and committees to build on policy framework.
3. Form Joint Powers Authority for Broadband.
4. Provide support and capacity building for project implementation.
5. Obtain additional funding for project implementation and operations.
6. Coordinate education and outreach program to improve digital literacy.
7. Prepare yearly program evaluation and evolution.

Staff recommends the Board approve and authorize the Chair to sign the subrecipient agreement with SBCAG to administer the project; and approve, ratify, and authorize the CEO's designee's signature of the consent form, accepting all terms of the LATA grant with the CPUC to further broadband implementation efforts in the County. The County submitted the executed Consent Form within 30 days of the date of the letter (May 1, 2023).

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Staff will return with a budget revision in FY 2023-24 to appropriate the funding.

Special Instructions:

Please return one electronic copy of the executed Subrecipient Agreement to Jasmine McGinty at jmcginty@countyofsb.org, ext. 3108.

Attachments:

- Attachment A – Santa Barbara County LATA Award Letter
- Attachment B – LATA Consent Form
- Attachment C – LATA Project Proposal
- Attachment D – Grant Terms/ CPUC Resolution T-17785
- Attachment E - SBCAG Agreement

Authored by:

Jasmine McGinty, Principal Analyst, County Executive Office