



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: Fire
Department No.: 031
For Agenda Of: August 23, 2022
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Time:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Mark Hartwig, Fire Chief / Fire Warden, 805-681-5500
Director(s)
Contact Info: Rob Heckman, Deputy Chief of Administration, 805-681-5501
SUBJECT: **Approval and Execution of Standard Agreement (17-MITPPS-21021) between the County of Santa Barbara Fire Department and the State of California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), to receive \$280,000 under HCD's Community Development Block Grant Mitigation-Planning and Public Services (CDBG MIT-PPS) program**

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: Risk Management

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Approve, ratify, and authorize the Fire Chief to execute Standard Agreement 17-MITPPS-21021 (Attachment A) with state HCD for funding in the amount of \$280,000 under HCD's CDBG MIT-PPS program; and
- b) Determine this action is exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15378(b)(4), finding that the action is a 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 impact on the environment.

Summary Text:

In August of 2021, HCD announced that the County of Santa Barbara's application titled Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) in the amount of \$280,000.00 was eligible for the CDBG MIT-PPS program. As part of the process, HCD required the execution of an Authorizing Resolution, prior to

drafting the Standard Agreement with grantees. The Authorizing Resolution was approved by your Board on December 14, 2021.

Standard Agreement 17-MITPPS-21021 was drafted and delivered to the County of Santa Barbara on June 28, 2022. HCD required the Standard Agreement to be reviewed, signed and returned within 30 days in order to draw down funds for this project. Fire Chief Mark Hartwig signed the Agreement on July 22, 2022 in order to meet HCD's imposed deadline. The Fire Department is now bringing the Agreement to your Board for approval.

If approved, this grant funded project will develop a CWPP for the Santa Barbara South Coast Foothill communities. The CWPP project will also include a transportation study to assess access and egress in the CWPP development area. While the CWPP project will be managed and implemented by the Santa Barbara County Fire Department (County Fire), the Santa Barbara County Community Services Department (CSD) will continue to serve in a facilitative role to coordinate with the State and County departments, as well as assisting with informational and administrative requests. The development of this CWPP will help make the Santa Barbara Foothill communities more fire-safe by identifying and managing fire risk in the wildland-urban interface.

In the event your Board does not approve the execution of the Standard Agreement, the Fire Department will not proceed with the development of the CWPP.

Background:

Santa Barbara County CSD approached the Fire Department regarding the availability of funds for planning projects from HCD's Community Development Block Grant Mitigation Resilient Planning and Public Services (CDBG MIT-PPS) program. As a result, the Fire Department submitted an application to HCD to fund a grant to develop a CWPP for the Santa Barbara South Coast Foothill communities in the amount of \$280,000.00.

The Fire Department has extensive experience in the development of CWPPs within the county. The Fire Department has assisted in the development of the Mission Canyon and Eastern Goleta Valley-San Marcos Pass CWPPs, is currently assisting with the development of the Gaviota Coast CWPP, and has provided various aid and support to a number of CWPPs within Santa Barbara County. The plan will become part of the County's network of community plans to address wildfires along the south coast of Santa Barbara County.

The project will identify and recommend measures to reduce wildfire ignitions, decrease structural ignitability, prioritize areas for hazardous fuel-reduction treatments, and improve transportation infrastructure to support evacuation plans. These recommendations can then be developed and implemented as projects with defined and verifiable impact.

Given the nature and extent of the scope of work in regard to the specialized area of focus, the Fire Department will be the principal over project implementation, progress and financial reporting. For its part, CSD will collaborate, confer and assist in those areas of CDBG MIT-PPS oversight particular to mutual roles and expertise in the area of CDBG MIT-PPS regulations and compliance.

Project Implementation Plan:

After the Board ratifies the Fire Chief's execution of the Standard Agreement 17-MITPPS-21021, the Fire Chief, or designee will begin the CWPP development process. Once the Agreement is signed and executed by HCD and the County of Santa Barbara, the CWPP development process will begin a 36-month performance period ending on June 25, 2025.

The CWPP development process was adopted by the Board on August 2, 2011. The Board adopted a policy document titled, *Recommended Community Wildfire Protection Plan Development Process for Santa Barbara County*, which identifies eight steps and identifies specific localized stakeholders and considerations. These eight steps will be initiated after Board approval of the Authorizing Resolution and Standard Agreement:

- Convene the CWPP Development Team
- Development Team reaches out to Federal and State agencies
- Development Team engages interested parties
- Establish a base map and boundary area for the CWPP
- Develop a community risk assessment
- Recommend hazard reduction priorities and measures to reduce structure ignitability
- Develop draft plan
- Finalize and submit CWPP draft

The Board's policy identifies two groups of individuals to facilitate CWPPs. The CWPP Working Group made up of County staff from the CEO, Fire, Planning and Development and other interested departments. The second group, the Development Team, is charged with drafting the CWPP. The staff report for the 2011 Board policy states:

"The local community priorities are established through the process of developing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan. CWPPs are developed as through a collaborative process that identifies and assesses fire risks and identifies and recommends best practices for eliminating or mitigating fire risks and structural ignitability. . . CWPPs may help to increase awareness of the possible ecological consequences of wildland fuel management practices, so that individual fuel reduction projects avoid or minimize harm to the environment where feasible.

Implementation of any recommended "best practice" or recommended hazardous fuel reduction within a particular CWPP might be modified, or not implemented at all, depending on a number of factors, including: environmental review; permit actions; and the availability of funding. Within any particular CWPP, County could make clear that any necessary environmental review required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and/or National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) shall be completed prior to commencement of any recommended hazardous fuel reduction."

An important element in the development of a CWPP is the consultant selection process. In the fall of 2022, the Development Team will initiate a competitive RFP process to select a consultant to produce the CWPP. After the Development Team chooses a consultant, regular Development Team meetings are scheduled to develop the elements of the CWPP. Early CWPP elements include developing and collecting community data and quantitative data through fire behavior modeling, risk modeling, and hazard assessment. The Development Team will also meet with both governmental agency and non-

governmental organization stakeholders for both feedback and to ensure a balanced approach to the plan strategies during the development of the CWPP.

The latter elements of CWPP development include plan preparation, review, and approval. These elements are a six to eight-month process. At least three public workshops will be conducted plus numerous stakeholder meetings. After the Development Team has completed draft edits, public workshops and stakeholder meetings, the CWPP will be presented to the Board for approval.

The performance period for this CDBG MIT-PPS grant is 36 months after the signing of the Standard Agreement. The projected timeframe for the completion of this CWPP is 12 to 18 months which is well within the 36-month performance period.

CEQA Compliance:

The development of this CWPP is exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15378(b)(4). The CWPP is a planning document with no ground disturbing activities or impacts on the environment. Approval of this action is a 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 impact on the environment.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Impacts to facilities are minimal; if any, for the life of the grant. The HCD’s Community Development Block Grant Mitigation Resilient Planning and Public Services program will fund 100% of grant eligible costs. A budget revision request will be processed at future date after the final approval of the grant agreement.

Fiscal Analysis:

<u>Funding Sources</u>	<u>Current FY Cost:</u>	<u>Annualized On-going Cost:</u>	<u>Total One-Time Project Cost</u>
General Fund			
State	\$ -		
Federal	\$ 280,000.00		\$ 280,000.00
Fees			
Other: Fire District			
Total	\$ 280,000.00	\$ -	\$ 280,000.00

Narrative:

Total state funding for this grant is a pass-through from the federal government at \$280,000, with total estimated CSD and Fire Department project funding at \$0.00.

Staffing Impacts:

There are minimal staffing impacts for the implementation and management of the CWPP for the Santa Barbara Foothill Communities. No additional County, CSD or County Fire staff will be required to implement and manage the development of the CWPP.

Special Instructions:

Upon Board approval and execution, the Clerk is asked to please return a copy of the minute order to the Fire Department, attention: Frederick Tan.

Attachments:

- A. Standard Agreement 17-MITPPS-21021

Authored by:

Rob Hazard, Fire Marshal

cc:

Shawna Jorgensen, Chief Financial Officer
Frederick Tan, Battalion Chief