



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: September 12, 2023
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 Fire Chief, 805-681-5501
SUBJECT: Agreement with Dudek to develop a Community Wildfire Protection Plan and Transportation Study for the Santa Barbara Foothill Communities

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 and authorize the Chair to execute an Agreement with Dudek to develop a community wildfire protection plan and transportation study (CWPP) for the Santa Barbara Foothill Communities at a total amount not to exceed \$240,500 with a period of performance from September 15, 2023 to June 25, 2025; and
- b) Approve and authorize the Fire Chief, or designee, to make immaterial amendments in accordance with Agreement section 25; and
- c) 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:

The Fire Department requests the Board of Supervisors (Board) approve an Agreement with Dudek for the development of the Santa Barbara Foothill community wildfire protection plan and transportation

study (CWPP). Dudek projects the overall timeline for the development of this CWPP to be sixteen months after the execution of the Agreement.

In August of 2022, the Board of Supervisors authorized execution of a Standard Agreement between the State of California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) and the Santa Barbara County Fire Department to access Block Grant funding to develop the CWPP. Subsequently, the General Services Department's Purchasing Division posted a Request for Proposals on May 11, 2023. After reviewing and scoring the two proposals, Dudek's submittal was chosen to develop the CWPP.

The recommended actions will allow the Santa Barbara County Fire Department to begin the CWPP development process outlined by the County of Santa Barbara.

Background:

In 2021, Santa Barbara County Community Services Department (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.

In 2022, the Fire Department was awarded the grant to develop the CWPP and the Board of Supervisors approved the signing of a Standard Agreement between the Fire Department and HCD in order for the County to receive the funds. After signing the Standard Agreement, the Fire Department initiated the Request for Proposals process with County Purchasing and received two qualifying bids. Three individuals scored the two bids and the scores were submitted to County Purchasing. County Purchasing compiled the scores and determined Dudek submitted the superior proposal.

The Fire Department and Dudek have extensive experience in the development of CWPPs within the County. The Fire Department assisted in the development of the Mission Canyon, Eastern Goleta Valley-San Marcos Pass and Gaviota Coast CWPPs, and has provided various aid and support to a number of CWPPs within the County. Locally, Dudek successfully completed the Gaviota Coast and the City of Santa Barbara's CWPP.

The CWPP will become part of the County's network of community plans to address wildfires along the south coast of Santa Barbara County. The project, in conjunction with the network of existing CWPPs, 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.

Project Implementation Plan:

After the Board authorizes the execution of the Agreement with Dudek, the Fire Chief will designate Fire Department personnel to begin the CWPP development process. The CWPP development process will begin a performance period ending no later than 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, 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 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.”

Executing the Agreement addresses an important element in the development of a CWPP by securing Dudek's services. Subsequent to the Agreement, regular Development Team meetings will be 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 projected timeframe for the completion of this CWPP is 12 to 16 months, well within the grant’s performance period.

Performance Measure:

Benchmarks for the HCD grant agreement for the development of the CWPP include the RFP process, contract with consultant, community team recruitment, time certain draft benchmarks, and community presentations which culminate with approval by the Board of Supervisors.

CEQA Compliance:

Approval of this Agreement to develop the CWPP is exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15378(b)(4). 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. The contractor services are included in the FY 2023-24 Adopted Budget.

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	\$ 240,500.00		\$ 240,500.00
Fees			
Other: Fire District			
Total	\$ 240,500.00	\$ -	\$ 240,500.00

Narrative: Funding for the Agreement is included in the Fire Department’s FY 2023-24 Adopted Budget. Funding for this Agreement is a pass-through from the federal government, no General Fund dollars will be utilized.

Staffing Impacts:

There are minimal staffing impacts for the implementation and management of the CWPP for the Santa Barbara Foothill Communities. No additional County 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 Agreement and minute order to the Fire Department, attention: Frederick Tan.

Attachments:

- A. Agreement with Dudek including Appendix 1

Authored by:

Rob Hazard, Fire Marshal

cc:

Shawna Jorgensen, Deputy Director and Chief Financial Officer

Frederick Tan, Battalion Chief

Diane Sauer, Fiscal Manager