



Legislation Text

File #: 17-0306, **Version:** 1

Chief Administrative Office recommending the Board;

1) Find there exists a public benefit to the County's membership in the Sierra Planning Organization/SEDCorp JPA, that there is a public benefit to the production the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) plan, which is necessary to the County's continued membership in the Economic Development District as defined and recognized by the federal Economic Development Agency; and

2) Authorize the County to submit payment of El Dorado County's Fiscal Year 2016/17 annual contribution in the amount of \$7,572 to the Sierra Planning Organization/SEDCorp in recognition of the County's membership in the organization and for the production of the annual CEDS in Fiscal Year 2016/17. It is further recommended that the Board authorize the dues payment to be made to SEDCorp as fiscal agent if paid prior to March 31, 2017, authorize dues payment to be made to Sierra Business Council as fiscal agent effective April 1, 2017, and authorize the Auditor-Controller to process the payment.

FUNDING: General Fund.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION

Chief Administrative Office recommending the Board find there exists a public benefit to the County's membership in the Sierra Planning Organization/SEDCorp JPA, that there is a public benefit to the production the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) plan, which is necessary to the County's continued membership in the Economic Development District as defined and recognized by the federal Economic Development Agency, and authorize the County to submit payment of El Dorado County's FY 2016-17 annual contribution to the Sierra Planning Organization/SEDCorp in recognition of the County's membership in the organization and for the production of the annual CEDS in FY 2016-17. It is further recommended that the Board authorize the dues payment to be made to SEDCorp as fiscal agent if paid prior to March 31, 2017, authorize dues payment to be made to Sierra Business Council as fiscal agent effective April 1, 2017, and authorize the Auditor-Controller to process the payment.

DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND

Chief Administrative Office recommending approval to submit payment of El Dorado County annual contribution to the Sierra Planning Organization, SEDCorp as fiscal agent, for FY 2016-17, and authorize the Auditor-Controller to process the payment.

The annual payment for FY 2015-16 (file #15-0736) was considered by the Board and payment approved on August 18, 2015.

Formed through a joint powers agreement by the counties of El Dorado, Placer, Nevada and Sierra in 1969, the Sierra Economic Development Corporation (SEDCorp) is a private non-profit organization devoted to supporting the economic development of the rural communities north and east of Sacramento. SEDCorp has served as the fiscal agent for the Sierra Planning Organization and has

received all annual membership payments and provided for the completion of the CEDS. The annual membership contributions from the four member counties is what provides for the local match funding to bring \$75,000 of federal Economic Development Administration funding to the four-county economic development district. EDC has remained a member of the federal Economic Development Administration (EDA), which recognizes the four-county group as the regional Economic Development District, and retained this on-going public benefit with regards to potential grant proposals which benefit the county and its residents, including the recent EDA award of \$75,000 to support a Broadband Feasibility Study in El Dorado County for the analysis of and planning for expansion and provision of broadband services to un-served and under-served areas of El Dorado County.

SEDCorp has traditionally served three primary functions. First, SEDCorp has supported local jurisdictions in their economic development efforts, providing expertise often lacking in small local governments. Second, SEDCorp has supported local businesses with a variety of training events ranging from single-subject sessions on such topics as bookkeeping and local business resources, to intensive three-day business "boot camps" to teach the fundamentals of sound business planning from inception to retirement. Last, SEDCorp has served as a small business lender providing a number of loan products sourced from the U.S. Small Business Administration (<http://www.sba.gov/>) and the Department of Agriculture (<http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/>) to a service area that extends across all the counties touching the border with Nevada from Sacramento to Oregon.

Recently, the member counties have focused on the long-term viability of the SEDCorp non-profit, in terms of the services that each county receives within the Economic Development District. Through discussion at the SEDCorp Board level, the SEDCorp Board voted to dissolve the non-profit and to transition management of the District to the Sierra Business Council (<http://www.sierrabusiness.org>). The Sierra Business Council will serve as the fiscal agent for the SPO/District, and will ensure completion of the CEDS on behalf of the four member counties within the fiscal year, as required by the EDA. It is anticipated that this transition will be effective April 1, 2017. Existing loan portfolios are being transitioned to alternate loan servicing organizations, and all existing loans will continue to be provided and local funds will be revolved within the respective counties. Sierra Business Council will continue with business assistance training as well, and currently offers many of the same services on a regional level.

SEDCorp had worked with Cal.Net, a regional broadband provider, on an application to the State California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to fund infrastructure for approximately 2,000 residents in predominately rural locations in El Dorado County deemed as being, "underserved" in broadband capacity. SEDCorp's efforts have led to significant increases in broadband availability in previous projects that have benefited El Dorado and Sierra counties. Sierra Business Council will continue to pursue and manage this and other related Broadband efforts, and currently is involved in regional broadband efforts.

ALTERNATIVES

The Board could decline to authorize this payment, in which case the Auditor-Controller would not make payment. El Dorado County would not participate in funding its share of the economic development district, or providing local match assistance for the district and the production of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy document.

OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

None.

CAO RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board approve this item.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The County's annual membership payment for FY 2016-17 is \$7,572. This is the same amount as the FY 2015-16 membership payment. Sufficient appropriations were included in the FY 2016-17 Adopted Budget for Economic Development to cover this specific annual payment.

CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

None.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT

Economic Development

CONTACT

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