



Legislation Text

File #: 18-1449, **Version:** 1

Chief Administrative Office recommending the Board approve and authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to sign a letter of endorsement supporting California State University Chico Geographical Information Center's proposal to US Economic Development Administration Disaster Recovery for funding to identify high speed broadband connections to fairgrounds and develop designs and cost estimates for a California fairground wireless network.

FUNDING: N/A

DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND

The El Dorado County Fairgrounds was recently contacted by California State University Chico Geographical Information Center (Chico State) and CA Fairs Financing Authority (CFFA) to support a grant proposal to the US Economic Development Administration Disaster Recovery (EDA).

The proposal is for a statewide project that would assess broadband connectivity at fairgrounds and develop designs and cost estimates for a wireless network across each fairground for the purpose of emergency response and economic development. High speed connections to serve first responders and provide wireless internet access to evacuees during disasters would enhance the County's ability to manage response and recovery during disasters. The connections could also allow alternative uses of the fairgrounds to support economic development.

If the project is approved and funded, the County would work with CSU Chico and the CFFA to provide information about our fairground and review best practices for fairground-based economic development coupled with high speed broadband. In order to be included in this grant proposal and to for El Dorado County to be approved for funding, the project manager at CSU Chico is requesting a letter of support from the CAO to be included in the application to EDA.

ALTERNATIVES

The Board could choose not to authorize the letter of support.

OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

Planning and Building

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no direct cost associated with issuing a letter of support for the proposed Legislation. This project would be submitted to the EDA request for proposals, which has a reduced match for those counties that were covered by a federal disaster declaration in 2017. With this reduced match requirement, Chico State is able to provide all of the match and there is no funding request requested of the fairgrounds or County.

If the project results in the opportunity for broadband infrastructure at the Fairgrounds, CSU Chico will develop the information needed for the CEQA review and can prepare draft documents. However, the project funding does not include costs associated with an Environmental Impact Report, should

one be needed. It is likely that almost all of the projects where cable service is available will be either a categorical exemption or not be a project within the definition of CEQA, so the burden on county staff should be minimal. Planning and Building has indicated that staff hours needed for a categorical exemption for such a project would be approximately one hour.

CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

None.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT

Economic Development; Safety

CONTACT

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