



Legislation Text

File #: 21-1722, **Version:** 1

Chief Administrative Officer requesting the Board:

- 1) Authorize the Chief Administrative Office, County Counsel, Library, Health and Human Services, Environmental Management, and Planning and Building to use funding from the Caldor Fire Relief Designation to hire extra help positions for the Caldor Fire recovery and Right of Entry process;
- 2) Adopt and authorize the Chair to sign Resolution **138-2021** to approve:
 - a) The addition of 1.0 full time equivalent (FTE) Management Analyst - Limited Term in the Chief Administrative Office;
 - b) The addition of 1.0 FTE Mental Health Worker I/II - Limited Term and 1.0 FTE Social Worker I/II - Limited Term in the Health and Human Services Agency;
 - c) The addition of 1.0 FTE Associate Civil Engineer; 1.0 FTE Assistant/Associate Planner; and 1.0 FTE Development Technician I/II in Planning and Building; and
- 3) Approve a budget transfer reducing the Caldor Fire Relief Designation and increasing appropriations in Department 15, Chief Administrative Office, Child Support Services, County Counsel, Library, Health and Human Services Agency, Environmental Management, and Planning and Building departments.

FUNDING: Caldor Fire Relief Designation.

DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND

The Caldor Fire has destroyed hundreds of homes and had a profound impact on the County's population, environment, and resources. To assist the recovery and rebuilding effort, the Chief Administrative Office, County Counsel, Library, Health and Human Services Agency (HHS), Environmental Management, and Planning and Building departments are requesting to hire extra help, limited term, and regular employees to assist in the Caldor rebuilding and recovery process. Generally, temporary positions that are unbudgeted and are hired for the purpose of carrying out eligible work activities are reimbursable for both overtime and straight time, with a County match component. These positions can work on other duties not related to Caldor within reason, but any hours not dedicated to eligible Caldor work would not be eligible for reimbursement. Departments will work to ensure maximum eligibility for reimbursement.

The Chief Administrative Office is requesting to hire one extra help Sr. Administrative Analyst who will be the primary point of contact for all Caldor Fire grants. This position will research, write, and submit grants on behalf of any County department impacted by the fire. They will submit grants to the State, Federal government, and other agencies. They will cooperate with outside agencies and non-County entities to submit grants related to fire assistance and recovery. The approximate cost for the remainder of the fiscal year is \$60,000, assuming utilizing the maximum 960 hours for an extra help appointment. It is anticipated this position will continue into future years and cost approximately \$60,000 per year at the maximum 960 hours. This work may be an eligible FEMA expense and may be reimbursed.

The Chief Administrative Office has reassigned a Management Analyst to the Caldor Fire Recovery Team Operations Section to help administer and coordinate recovery efforts across departments and

agencies. The Chief Administrative Office is requesting a 1.0 FTE Management Analyst - Limited Term allocation to backfill the administration and budget duties of the Management Analyst during their reassignment. The approximate cost of this position for the remainder of the fiscal year is \$105,000. The approximate annual cost of the position in future years is \$163,000. It is not likely the cost of this allocation will be reimbursed by FEMA as they will not be dedicated to Caldor Fire recovery efforts and the reassigned Management Analyst will not be eligible for reimbursement under FEMA guidelines as they were already budgeted in the fiscal year.

The Chief Administrative Office, Community Development Finance and Administration Unit has requested one extra help Administrative Technician to assist with support activities related to the Departments of Environmental Management, Planning and Building, and Transportation. The approximate cost for this request is \$27,000 per year utilizing the full 960 hours for an extra help appointment. This work is an eligible FEMA expense and costs for this work are likely to be reimbursed. Additionally, this position will assist in the preparation of FEMA claim reimbursement work papers, gather salary reporting logs, and carry out procurement activities related to the relief efforts.

County Counsel is requesting to hire one extra help Legal Secretary and one extra help paralegal. These employees will assist with paperwork and filings for the property abatement process. The approximate cost for this request is \$46,000 per year utilizing the full 960 hours for an extra help appointment. It is not certain whether property abatement activities will be eligible for reimbursement.

The Library is requesting 1.0 FTE extra help Community Health Advocates to offer assistance to victims of the fire. These positions will direct victims to resources and connect victims to community partners. The approximate cost for the remainder of the fiscal year is \$29,000. It is anticipated that the Community Health Advocate positions may continue into future years; the approximate cost for a full year is \$44,000. Staff is working with FEMA to determine whether these activities are eligible for reimbursement.

The Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) is requesting 1.0 FTE limited term Mental Health Worker I/II to provide crisis counseling to El Dorado County residents impacted by the Caldor Fire, provide linkage to ongoing Behavioral Health treatment resources if needed, track data, and address community wide Caldor Fire trauma impacts. HHS is also requesting 1.0 FTE limited term Social Worker I/II allocation to implement housing grants/programs and provide case management for victims of the fire. The approximate cost for the remainder of the fiscal year is \$125,000. It is anticipated these positions will continue into next fiscal year, and the approximate cost for a full year is \$194,000. These positions will be carrying out work FEMA would not consider Debris Removal, Emergency Protective Measures, or Permanent Work (repairs to a facility) nor would the work being performed be tied specifically to a Caldor emergency project listed on El Dorado County's Damage Inventory, therefore the labor associated with these positions would likely not be reimbursable.

The Health and Human Services Agency also requested the following allocations: a limited term Health Educator, a limited term Supervising Health Education Coordinator, an additional limited term Mental Health Worker I/II, and an additional limited term Social Worker I/II. The Chief Administrative Office is supporting one limited term Mental Health Worker I/II and one limited term Social Worker I/II allocation but is not supporting the other allocations, as some of this additional support to the community might be provided by FEMA if Individual Assistance is granted. If Individual Assistance is not approved by FEMA, staff may return to the Board to request additional allocations.

The County is currently processing Right of Entry forms for the victims of the fire. This Right of Entry process is vital to start the recovery and rebuilding process. Although Right of Entry Forms are due November 15, Environmental Management is estimating that the total work resulting from the review, submittal to the State, and debris removal process could take up to 18 months, and is requesting 5.0 extra help Development Aide positions be funded for that duration. The approximate cost of these positions for the remainder of this fiscal year is \$102,000 assuming each appointment reaches the 960 hour extra help appointment maximum. The approximate annual cost for these positions is \$102,000 with the five positions reaching the 960 hour extra help appointment maximum. This work is likely an eligible FEMA expense and may be reimbursed.

The Planning and Building department is requesting to hire the following positions:

Regular positions

- 1.0 Associate Civil Engineer
- 1.0 Assistant/Associate Planner
- 1.0 Development Technician I/II

These positions will assist in the recovery and rebuilding process by conducting infrastructure and watershed assessments and conducting plan reviews. The approximate cost for the remainder of the fiscal year is \$239,000. The approximate annual cost of these positions is \$375,000. A Program Manager position (1 FTE) was also requested. Although it is not recommended to be allocated as part of this initial request, staff is working to evaluate the need and classification and may return to the Board to request that this position be added.

Although some disaster-related work to be performed by these positions will not be reimbursable, any review of permit applications, training of other staff, outreach to the public, inspections, monitoring, and code enforcement work performed within 180 days of the disaster declaration is reimbursable under the Disaster Recovery Reform Act of 2018 (FEMA Policy 204-079-01). Staff is working with FEMA to get an extension to the 180 day time period.

Extra help positions

- Engineering Aide I/II
- Building Inspector I/II - 2 positions
- Development Technician I/II
- Office Assistant I/II - 2 positions

These extra help positions will assist in reviewing and processing permits and conducting building assessments. The approximate cost for the remainder of the fiscal year is \$178,000 assuming each appointment reaches the 960 hour extra help appointment maximum. The approximate annual cost for these positions is \$178,000 with the five positions reaching the 960 hour extra help appointment maximum. This work is an eligible FEMA expense and costs for this work are likely to be reimbursed.

The Chief Administrative Office is requesting that these positions be funded by the Caldor Fire Relief Designation that was established at the September 21, 2021 Board meeting, with the hope that much of the costs will eventually be reimbursed by FEMA.

Planning and Building has also requested \$636,500 in funding for equipment for new staff (\$66,500), overtime for existing Planning and Building staff (\$160,000), on-call, as-needed consultant contracts for planning review and plan check (\$390,000), and fuel and vehicle rental for inspection work (\$35,000), offset by a decrease in the staff development budget of \$15,000. It should be noted that although the Caldor Fire Recovery Ordinance allowed for permit fee waivers in some cases, a portion of these costs will be funded through fees. Other costs including overtime and contract work are reimbursable costs, depending on the specific activities. The Chief Administrative Office supports this request for other Caldor Fire recovery costs in Planning and Building.

In addition to the funding requested for the departments listed above, the Chief Administrative Office recommends making \$250,000 available in Department 15 from the Caldor Fire Relief Designation to cover costs incurred during the evacuation period related to sheltering, such as portable toilets and showers, security for the animal shelters, staff costs for redeployed workers, etc. The Adopted Budget included \$50,000 for this purpose, so an additional \$200,000 will be moved from the designation.

The budget transfer that is being brought for Board consideration appropriates the funds as outlined above and increases the Net County Cost in the departments. The transfer includes the use of \$1,760 of the \$250,000 of evacuation period costs to cover staff time by Child Support Services staff at the Local Assistance Center that cannot be covered by their State funding, increasing their Net County Cost. The Chief Administrative Office has asked all departments to report their Caldor Fire Recovery actual expenses to the Chief Administrative Office so that a reconciliation of actual expenses to budgeted expenses can be completed to ensure that any unused funding from the Caldor Fire designation can be rebudgeted in future years for Caldor Fire recovery efforts or returned to the designation.

ALTERNATIVES

The Board could decide not to fund these positions and requests with funds from the Caldor Fire Relief Designation.

PRIOR BOARD ACTION

Sept 21, 2021 Legistar #21-1503 - Creation of the Caldor Fire Designation

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The approximate total cost of all positions and other costs is \$1,747,500. If approved, \$3,252,500 will remain in the Caldor Fire designation. The Chief Administrative Office will reconcile actual expenses to budgeted expenses at the end of the fiscal year to ensure that any unused funding from the Caldor Fire designation can be rebudgeted in future years for Caldor Fire recovery efforts or returned to the designation.

CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

Send a copy of the executed Resolution to Human Resources.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT

Good Governance

CONTACT

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Chief Administrative Officer